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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, December 8, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

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CANADA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada.

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

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its participation in the bilateral mission to Accra, Ghana, from May 21 to 27, 2022.

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[*English*]

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-310, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (volunteer firefighting and search and rescue volunteer tax credit).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to table this bill. This bill calls on the Government of Canada to increase the tax

credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue responders from \$3,000 to \$10,000 in the Income Tax Act.

We know that search and rescue responders and firefighters always show up—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will ask the hon. member to start over. I am sure we all want to hear about his bill. I ask the hon. members to keep it down so that we can hear what is going on.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, please start from the top. For the history books, this is the first time I have had to stop everyone so that we can hear a private member's bill start over from the top. Please, go ahead.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, I think firefighters would appreciate that.

It is a privilege to rise today to table this bill. This bill calls on the Government of Canada to increase the tax credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue responders from \$3,000 to \$10,000 in the Income Tax Act.

We know that search and rescue responders and firefighters always show up in difficult crises such as fires, floods and accidents in our local communities. Ninety thousand of Canada's 126,000 firefighters are volunteer firefighters. These essential first responders give their time, training and efforts to Canadians on a voluntary basis. They often put their lives at risk, while allowing local governments to keep property taxes lower than if paid services were required.

Increasing this tax credit would allow these essential volunteers to keep more of their hard-earned money, which is likely to be spent in the communities where they live. An increase in this tax credit could also assist with the volunteer recruitment and retention.

I previously tabled Bill C-201 on this issue, but I brought forward this bill today because it would define eligible volunteer firefighting services and would provide clarity on when this tax credit would apply.

I thank the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs for their work on this issue as well as thank the many Canadians who have signed petitions in support.

Routine Proceedings

I hope all members in the House will show support for the bill and show respect for all those volunteer firefighters across Canada who put their lives at risk to serve their communities.

I thank my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for seconding this bill.

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

* * *

• (1005)

PETITIONS**HAZARAS**

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to present today from Canadians who are in solidarity with the Hazara community and the violence it has experienced in Afghanistan over decades.

The petitioners call on the government to formally recognize the 1891-93 ethnic cleansing perpetrated against Hazaras as a genocide and to designate September 25 as Hazara genocide memorial day.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I join my hon. Conservative Party colleague in tabling a petition. I have the honour to present today in the House a petition that was signed by citizens who, like us, want to stand up for the rights of the oppressed.

This petition seeks to have the government formally recognize the ethnic cleansing perpetrated against the Hazaras from 1891 to 1893 as a genocide and to designate September 25 as Hazara genocide memorial day.

If we do not speak on behalf of the oppressed, then who will?

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present a petition on behalf of Canadians across the country who are very concerned about the persecution and the genocide that has happened to the Hazara people, which goes all the way back to 1891. We know that Hazaras continue to face systematic and targeted persecution in Afghanistan, including the killing of newborn infants and the attacks on men, women, children and elders.

As Canada has a special relationship with Afghanistan, these citizens are calling on the Government of Canada to formally recognize the 1891-93 ethnic cleansing perpetrated against Hazaras as a genocide. They are asking us to designate September 25 as Hazara genocide memorial day.

HEALTH

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the growing number of senior Canadians comes an exponential increase in the onset of diseases of the brain and mind, which is creating a huge pressure on our health care system. It impacts our elderly, their families and their caregivers.

There is a need to bring together stakeholders with expertise to shape public policy on this issue. The petition calls for a national

brain and mind health week beginning every first Monday of October.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Falun Gong is a traditional Chinese spiritual discipline that consists of meditation, exercise and moral teachings based on the principles of truthfulness, compassion and tolerance. The petitioners are calling upon parliamentarians to do what they can with regard to organ harvesting and, in particular, to pass a resolution to establish measures to stop the Chinese communist regime's crime of systematically murdering Falun Gong practitioners for their organs.

I am presenting this petition because of what we will be voting on next Wednesday.

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of the good people of Winnipegosis who were forced to drive over 40 minutes to pick up their mail after Canada Post closed their local post office multiple times. These rural residents are feeling punished for simply living in rural Canada. These are valid concerns that are amplified by seniors, persons with disabilities and those who do not have the ability to travel.

The petitioners are calling on the Liberal government to provide a detailed explanation of why this essential service was closed despite the anticipated staffing shortages, and are calling on the government to work with Canada Post and the Minister of Rural Economic Development to ensure that these temporary post office closures in rural areas are not normalized. I support the people of Winnipegosis.

• (1010)

EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from people across my riding who are very concerned about expanded polystyrene, commonly known as styrofoam, and the impact it has on the marine environment. It is incredibly difficult to clean EPS off beaches and shorelines. We know that it is getting into the marine environment and causing a lot of challenges. We also know that the qathet Regional District and the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities have unanimously endorsed the prohibition of EPS in marine environments.

The petitioners are asking for the government to take action, and I hope it does so soon.

IRAN

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling two petitions today on behalf of my constituents.

The first petition is on behalf of Canadians of Persian heritage, as well as Rojhelat Kurdish heritage who live in Calgary. It calls on the government to immediately implement a Conservative motion passed in 2018 and to list Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization.

The petitioners remind the Government of Canada that Ukrainian International Airlines flight 752, which was shot down by the Iranian regime, claimed the lives of 176 people, including 57 Canadians and many permanent residents of Canada. They also remind the Government of Canada that the IRGC is responsible for terrorism across the Middle East. It is a huge part of the Iranian regime's forces, and it is being currently used to oppress the people of Iran who are fighting for their freedoms.

COST OF LIVING

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of constituents in my riding who are calling on the Minister of Finance to suspend the federal excise tax and carbon tax for Canadians until the cost of living crisis has been resolved.

They are reminding the Government of Canada, in their petition, that the price of gasoline is way up all across the country, that the clean fuel standard will cost the average family over \$1,300, that mortgages are going to be costing about \$7,000 more in the new year, and that the average costs for a family, because of the inflationary spending of the government, will be another \$3,000. Therefore, they are asking the government to cut the carbon tax and the excise tax on fuel, home heating and groceries.

FIRST RESPONDERS TAX CREDIT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise I am now tabling a petition on the firefighter tax credit. Firefighters, especially in rural communities, put their lives on the line. Petitioners from my riding of Courtenay—Alberni, from Courtenay, Cumberland, Royston, Dashwood, Parksville, Qualicum, Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek and Sproat Lake, have all signed this petition. The tax code of Canada currently allows volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers to claim a \$3,000 tax credit if they do 200 hours of volunteer services in a calendar year. The petitioners want to move that to \$10,000. They are calling for this action to take place. It is something hopefully all the House would support.

UKRAINE

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting one petition today from 136 esteemed Canadians who have recognized there are a number of issues when Ukrainians come to Canada. They are calling on the federal government to do the four following things: develop a federal program to bring Ukrainian children to Canada for temporary shelter; ensure they have access to the necessary medical services via provincial insurance programs; ensure they have access to education, services and scholarships in Canada; and ensure necessary financial support for Canadian families hosting those children.

Business of Supply

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand at this time, please.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC) moved:

That, given that, (i) Canada's Food Price Report 2023 states that a typical farm will pay \$150,000 in carbon tax per year when the carbon tax is tripled, (ii) families will pay an additional \$1,065 for groceries in 2023 for a total of \$16,288 due to increased costs being passed on to consumers, (iii) food bank visits were at an all-time high reaching 1.5 million in March 2022, a 15% increase from the previous year according to Food Banks Canada, (iv) 20% of Canadians are skipping meals and grocery price inflation is at 11%, the House call on the government to cancel the carbon tax that is applied to all food inputs and production, including: (a) all farm fuels; (b) grain drying; (c) fertilizer; (d) transportation; and (e) other appropriate aspects of the food supply system.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending December 10, the House will now go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill.

In view of current recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1015)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, Thursday, December 8, may go down in history. It is a great day for all Canadians, because today the House of Commons has a unique opportunity to give some relief to all Canadian consumers who are suffering the effects of inflation, the increase in the cost of living and the increase in the price of food by doing something that is only right.

I am very optimistic and fully hope that all of my colleagues here in the House will finally, this time, do the right thing and vote in favour of our motion, which will cancel the carbon tax applied to all food chain inputs and production.

We are giving all members of the House a unique opportunity to do what is only right to give some relief to all Canadians. This motion seeks to help get things back on track for Canadians who are suffering, those who are struggling to put food on the table.

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We asked for this many times. Many times we begged the government and the other parties to support motions simply seeking to reduce the carbon tax, or at least to not increase it. This time we are going a step further. We are asking them to cancel the tax on an essential need, namely food.

This is a day that may go down in history or that Canadians may remember for a long time. In fact, some parties may decide to vote against the motion seeking to give Canadians a break.

I would like to say something right from the start. I know that some members will probably ask why the member for Mégantic—L'Érable has risen to demand that the carbon tax be cancelled when it does not apply to Quebec.

I would remind the members opposite that Quebec is not self-sufficient when it comes to oil, food and supplies. Quebec has to buy products from around the world and especially, we hope, from everywhere in Canada.

The food that comes from the western provinces, the potatoes that come from the Atlantic provinces, all of that has to be brought in by truck. Unfortunately, the carbon tax applies to all of it, and the tax will increase over the next few years. Those are the facts. To deny those facts is to deny the reality that, right now, Quebecers live in the province most affected by increasing food prices, according to “Canada’s Food Price Report 2023”. This report was issued by Dalhousie University, the University of Guelph, the University of British Columbia and the University of Saskatchewan. We are talking about 11%. Quebec is the hardest-hit province. However, it is the only province that is not subject to the carbon tax. That is what the Liberals are going to say today, despite the fact that I just demonstrated that such arguments are totally ridiculous.

I would like to talk about something else. Who will the carbon tax hurt the most? It will hit agricultural producers and farmers in the western provinces hardest. They will have to pay much higher tax bills, and will probably have to cease production in the coming years if nothing is done, if the government does not do the right thing and eliminate the carbon tax.

What will happen if there are fewer producers in the western provinces to supply food to Quebec? We will have to get our food from farther away and pay more for the same product. If we purchase from farther away and pay more, it will take more fuel to transport the food to Quebec. That will completely offset any positive effects of the carbon tax, and we know full well that the carbon tax has not allowed the government to achieve any of its greenhouse gas reduction targets.

I will not speak any longer about everything happening in the west because my colleague from Foothills, with whom I will be sharing my time, will be happy to demonstrate the effects of the carbon tax on the western provinces.

Where are we today? The newspapers are publishing headlines like “The coming months will be really difficult” and “Multiple devastating effects”. Of course, we are talking about the interest rate hike announced yesterday by the Bank of Canada, combined with the increase in the price of food which I will address in a few minutes and which is clearly explained in Canada’s Food Price Report 2023.

• (1020)

I will read a paragraph from an article by Michel Girard this morning in *Le Journal de Montréal*, in which he says that the coming months will be really difficult: “Who is responsible? According to economists Jean-François Perrault and René Lalonde of the Bank of Nova Scotia...federal government spending on COVID-19 support programs forced the Bank of Canada to aggressively raise interest rates. They believe that federal support for COVID-19 victims, which amounted to more than \$200 billion, was 'welcome, but probably overdone'. This spending created excess demand, which the Bank of Canada is trying to curb by increasing the cost of borrowing.”

There you have it. As we said earlier, the government had to do something, but the Liberals were sloppy once again. That is what the Auditor General said this week in her report. The government was sloppy, it was wasteful, it spent too much, and that is why we are seeing skyrocketing inflation today. That is why the Bank of Canada had to raise interest rates. At the same time, if everything is going up, if inflation is increasing, if the interest rates are skyrocketing, it is not surprising that the price of food is going up as well.

Canada’s Food Price Report shows that the price of fish has increased by 10%, and the price of butter, by 16%. Even the price of fresh and dried pasta has gone up. When we were students and did not have much money to spend on food, we bought pasta. We ate pasta five days a week and, on weekends, instead of eating spaghetti, we ate macaroni. The price of pasta has gone up 32%. It is not surprising that students can no longer afford an apartment and have to live in their parents’ basement.

The problem is that the government caused this inflation. We could call it Liberal inflation. The price of everything is going up. For example, the report projected that food costs for a family of four would reach approximately \$14,700 in 2022. Based on what was observed in 2022, it appears that there will be a \$455 increase for 2022. Worse yet, next year, the increase for the same family will be \$1,065. That is a lot of money.

As I was saying earlier, Quebec is the province hardest hit by rising food prices. According to the report, the price of food has increased by 11% in Quebec. The increase across Canada varies between 9.2% and 11% in a single year. I do not know many people who received salary increases that will allow them to offset these increases. Moreover, it is not just the cost of food. I have not said anything about the cost of rent, mortgages or the additional costs of car loans. All of these new costs Canadians will have to pay in the coming years are outrageous.

It gets worse. According to HungerCount 2022 published by Food Banks Canada, food bank usage increased by 15% this year. The report states that high food prices are limiting Canadians' access to food. It is estimated that 23% of Canadians eat less than they should. That is what is happening in Canada in 2022. Normally, during the summer, the demand on food banks drops. That was not the case this year. This year, food banks faced their most difficult summer in 41 years.

The government can do something, Parliament can do something, the House can do something. Every member can do something today by voting for the opposition's motion, which asks that the carbon tax on food inputs and production, including all farm fuels, grain drying, fertilizer, transportation and other aspects of the food supply system be eliminated to give Canadians a little respite and allow them to put more bread, butter and milk on the table.

• (1025)

The Deputy Speaker: I am not sure why, but I am craving Kraft Dinner.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my opposition colleague for finally recognizing that there are at least some problems with the environment and the fact there is a price on pollution.

He talked about the price that businesses have to pay. Does he really believe that pollution should be free or does he believe that we should put a price on pollution? Should people be able to pollute without consequence or should we instead tell them that the more they pollute, the more they must pay?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, the carbon tax does not work. The only thing it does is take money away from Canadians and put it in the government's coffers, but that does not help the government meet any of its targets.

A recent international conference recently took stock of how different countries are performing. With its carbon pricing, Canada ranks 58 out of 63 countries. Let us remember that number. We rank 58 out of 63 with the Liberal carbon tax. That is not doing much to help the environment.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I used to eat ramen noodles when I was in CEGEP.

I would like to thank my hon colleague from Quebec, whom I hold in high esteem. It is always a pleasure to work with him.

Now, I agree that the federal government ranks near the bottom when it comes to protecting the environment and fighting greenhouse gas emissions. I think that is crystal clear. Statistics do not lie. Canada ranks 58th out of 63. That is not a great record. That being said, does that mean we should allow major polluters to pollute with impunity?

There is one thing that Conservatives never do when they talk about going after money. Have the Conservatives ever asked themselves why the big oil companies are making exorbitant profits,

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record profits, this year, and why the government does not go get that money and redistribute it to Canadians?

I have never heard the Conservatives wonder why the government is not going after big oil's huge profits. I would like my colleague to answer the question.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I went to do groceries with my wife last week, and I was walking up and down the aisles. When I saw that all the prices had gone up, I began to ask myself some serious questions. How can we help families deal with these price hikes?

The report said that the price of lettuce went up 12%. That is not correct. The price of lettuce actually jumped from 99¢ to seven dollars. Things are so bad that we can no longer even afford to eat vegetables. Imagine how much more expensive meat is these days. It is absolutely essential that we give Canadians a little breathing room. We need to focus on what Canadians need right now. They need to put enough food on the table to stave off hunger.

We could help them right now by putting an end to the carbon tax on everything up and down the food supply chain. I encourage my colleagues in the Bloc Québécois to think about that.

[*English*]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would offer that the impact on food prices from the climate crisis and from the price gouging of the big box stores and big grocery retailers far outstrips the impact of carbon pricing.

My question is this. When farmers across this country are facing massive crop failures and the infrastructure needed to ship our food is being ripped out by climate disasters, why do the Conservatives not have a plan to tackle the climate crisis, the most significant crisis facing us as a population? Why do they refuse to come up with a credible plan?

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I think there is some information that my colleague is not aware of. This year, in Canada, we had the third best harvest on record. Usually, when more and more food is available on the market, prices are supposed to come down for consumers. That is not happening. Despite the third best harvest in history, prices are at a 40-year high.

There is a problem. The main cause is the Liberals' carbon tax. We are asking them to eliminate this tax to give Canadians and farmers across the country some relief.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable for tabling this opposition motion today as it shows our farmers, producers and ranchers, as well as consumers across Canada, that the Conservative Party certainly understands food security and their economic viability.

In my opinion, the Liberals have a stark decision to make in the next few months. The decision is either to continue on this activist, ideological agenda, increasing carbon taxes and taxes on producers, or to start to understand that food security and the cost of food should be a priority for all Canadians. For a government that prides itself on making science-based decisions, clearly the policies it is putting forward are not based on sound science.

What is stark and what is really the impetus for the motion is the new 2023 food price report. It showed that by 2030, when the carbon tax would be tripled by the Liberals, farmers of a 5,000-acre farm, not a large farm by any means but a typical one, would pay \$150,000 a year in carbon tax. I would ask the government how it could possibly think a farm family is going to absorb that cost and still be able to produce affordable, nutritious food, not only for Canadians but to help feed the world.

How does the Liberal government possibly feel a farm family could absorb \$150,000 a year in carbon taxes alone and still remain economically viable? It simply cannot. That is the stark reality the Liberal government needs to understand sooner rather than later. When it makes these extreme ideological policies, there are consequences.

Part of that food report also stated that the average family of four would see its grocery bill go up more than \$1,000 a year to a total of close to \$17,000 a year in one year alone. The consequence of that, as we saw in March, is that 1.5 million Canadians were accessing a food bank, the highest number in our history. I cannot believe this is happening in Canada, a G7 country, where we are unable to feed our own people and where food security is at risk.

As my colleague said in response to the Bloc question, we did have the third-best harvest in our history this year. Why, if we had such a great harvest, are we talking about food insecurity and the economic viability of our farms, which are at risk? When there is a large harvest, the issue is that if the input costs far exceed the value of that crop, then the farmer is further behind at the end of the year rather than being ahead.

At committee yesterday, we had Rebecca Lee, executive director of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada, say that 44% of its members are selling their products at a loss. Almost half of the produce growers in Canada are selling their products at a loss. They cannot afford the massive increases in fertilizer costs. They cannot afford the massive increases in fuel costs.

How long does the Liberal government expect these farmers are going to stay in business? If they go out of business, we have to import more of those foods from other countries around the world. What will that do to our GHG emissions? What will that do to the government's climate change philosophy and policies?

We had Dr. Sylvain Charlebois at committee, one of the most respected food scientists in the country, from Dalhousie University. I am paraphrasing a bit, but he basically said, and I quote this part, the carbon tax is a bad idea. The carbon tax is putting farms out of business and putting our food security at risk. That is one of the top food scientists in Canada. He is saying the carbon tax is a bad idea and we are losing farms as a result of it.

When we lose farms, food prices go up. When food prices go up, food security is an issue. As a result, we see what has happened with more Canadians having to use the food bank.

There is more to that as well. This is where I think the Liberals are missing the point when they make these decisions not based on sound science and data.

• (1035)

For example, we asked the Minister of Agriculture yesterday at committee why the Liberals are imposing these massive carbon tax increases on Canadian farmers when we are already more efficient than any other country on earth. The data show that out of Canada's total GHG emissions, which is about 2%, 8% of that comes from agriculture. That is 8% of 2%. That is infinitesimal on the global scale. The global average is 26%. That is a stark contrast when comparing where we are to the rest of the world. Why is the Liberal government not celebrating those achievements of Canadian agriculture?

Instead of punishing farmers with massive increases in the carbon tax, which is going to have a profound impact on food security in Canada, why is the government not saying to the rest of the world, "If you want to reduce your GHG emissions from agriculture, we are already there and we will show you how to get there. Use our technology and our practices, and we will export our manufacturing"?

We are already using zero till. We are already using cover crop. We are already using precision agriculture. We manufacture air drills in Canada that we are happy to export for other countries to use in their production. We use 4R nutrient stewardship. All of these things are already being used in Canada, but they seem to be ignored by the current government.

We asked the minister yesterday how she expects the family farm to absorb these types of costs. Her answer was that she does not understand what our definition of a family farm is. She is the Minister of Agriculture. If anyone should know what a family farm is, it is the Minister of Agriculture.

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What makes it worse is the Liberals put forward Bill C-8, which included a rebate on the carbon tax for farms. We know from the Ontario grain farmers association that their members get back about 15% of what they spend on the carbon tax. Finance Canada said the average payback for a farm family is about \$860. The government can compare that to the \$150,000 that the farmers are going to be paying. They are going to get \$1,000 back. Does the Minister of Agriculture not understand that? She was saying the families are going to get that back, but that the farm is a business. Ninety-five per cent of farms in Canada are family farms, owned by the family. Yes, they may be incorporated, but they are family farms. It is not possible to separate one from the other.

That is why we put forward our private member's bill, Bill C-234, which would remove the carbon tax from natural gas and propane to help with grain drying, heating of barns and those operations that are integral to the family farm. We have the support of all the opposition parties on that private member's bill, including the Bloc, the NDP and the Green Party. The opposition understands how important agriculture is to the Canadian economy and our food security not only here at home, but around the world.

I am hoping the opposition parties also will be supporting our opposition motion today. It reinforces the importance of Canadian agriculture, and that the decisions impacting our families must be based on sound science and sound data. Instead of apologizing for the incredible achievements of Canadian agriculture, a Canadian government should be going around the world, as proud as it can be, being a champion of what we do and not apologizing for it.

• (1040)

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to serve on the same committee as the member opposite, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

The member mentioned in his speech Sylvain Charlebois, who came before our committee. Just the other day when asked a question about whether the price on pollution is affecting food price inflation he, very explicitly, said no. Does the member opposite recollect that?

The other thing I will just add is that the recent report done by the Canadian Climate Institute shows there is going to be \$25 billion in losses due to climate change by 2025, and that the number is going to rise to \$100 billion over the next 10 to 15 years. This actually undermines the entire growth of our economy. How does the member reconcile that with the statements he has made today?

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, at committee there are pushes to increase these carbon taxes to reach our climate change goals, but we will not have any farms left. There will be no farms and no food. If we tax them into bankruptcy, then what?

The most frustrating part is that the Liberals continue to ignore the accomplishments of Canadian farming, in terms of our standings with emissions, carbon sequestration, stewardship and conservation, but they increase these carbon taxes, and they have not met a single target. If they were increasing these carbon taxes, which they say is the best way to meet our GHG emission goals, they have not hit a single one. The proof is in the pudding.

They do not work and they are causing harm across Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I find that fascinating. Indeed, I am going to ask my Conservative friends the same question today and I think that not one will answer.

How is it that, in 2022, and probably in years to come, the oil companies, banks and major food chains are making record profits and that the Conservative Party, which professes to stand up for the middle-class and workers, is blaming the carbon tax rather than looking for the money in the excessive profits of the big corporations?

If Canada is ranked 58th out of 63 countries in the fight against greenhouse gas emissions, it is because it continues to subsidize oil companies, which are protected by the Conservative Party.

I would like someone from the Conservative Party to tell me when they are going to do something about the oil companies' excessive profits and give the money back to the people who are paying too much for gas.

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, I should have been prepared that this question was coming. Obviously, speaking as an Albertan, those energy companies are critical to our economy. They pay for those middle-class jobs and they ensure our economies, not only across Alberta but across Canada, are operating.

I am not endorsing taking the carbon tax off large emitters. In fact Alberta was the first province in Canada that implemented a carbon tax on large emitters like the energy companies. We understand there are ways we can incentivize improvements and innovation in technology, and there are areas in which those taxes should not be imposed. Canadian agriculture and food production is certainly one of those.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking my colleague for his excellent private member's bill. It would be an improvement for farmers.

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I am surprised, though, that the Conservative motion did not mention the grocery store chains. First of all, we know we are plagued by lack of competition. We know some of these chains actually hedge some money overseas and had to pay a CRA fine for hiding money in Barbados. They fixed the price of bread; the Competition Bureau proved that was true. They have excessive profits from COVID-related policies because restaurants were closed and the chains lacked competition. They ended hero pay to their workers unilaterally, despite the fact they should not be working together behind the scenes. Their CEO bonuses and manager salaries would make a robber baron blush. Finally, they have predatory pricing for local produce on shelves that restricts some of the distribution by farmers.

How can the Conservatives not mention the situation with the grocery store chains?

• (1045)

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague should remember the NDP has already put in a motion, which was passed in the House several weeks ago and is being studied at committee.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to split my time with my friend and colleague, the member for Hull—Aylmer, who will be up next.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in a debate on the higher cost of living that Canadians and the world are experiencing. Let me reassure the hon. member that the government is well aware of these challenges, and that our priorities remain helping the most vulnerable in our society cope with the higher cost of living.

That is why the government has an affordability plan, a suite of targeted measures totalling \$12.1 billion in new support in 2022. The affordability plan is designed to help address the needs of low-income Canadians who are most exposed to inflation. Because of investments the government has already made in the last two federal budgets, many of the measures in our affordability plan are in place right now to help Canadians.

In budget 2021, the government enhanced the Canada workers benefit, putting up to an additional \$2,400 into the pockets of modest-income families, starting this year. I am pleased to say that most recipients have already received this increased support through their 2021 tax return.

This enhancement of the Canada workers benefit is extending support to about one million Canadians and helping to lift nearly 100,000 people out of poverty. The government also proposes to provide automatic advance payments of the Canada workers benefit to people who qualified for the benefit in the previous year, with these advance payments starting in July 2023. Workers would receive a minimum entitlement for the year through the advance payments, based on income reported in the prior year's tax return.

We are also fully aware that Canada and the rest of the world have been experiencing a period of higher inflation, including for food and groceries. This is part of a global phenomenon driven by the impacts of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has led to sharply higher food and energy prices, as has been described today, as well as persistent impacts from supply chain disruptions and the

COVID pandemic. That is why we are also providing targeted support to roughly 11 million individuals and families by doubling the goods and services tax credit for six months. This is delivering \$2.5 billion in additional support to those who already receive the tax credit, including more than half of Canadian seniors.

With the passage of Bill C-30, many Canadians have already received this additional payment. Single Canadians without children are receiving up to an extra \$234, and couples with two children are receiving up to an extra \$467 this year. Seniors are receiving an extra \$225 on average. What is more is that the money is coming to them through a straightforward process. That is because the extra GST credit amounts are being paid to all current recipients through the existing GST credit system as a one-time, lump-sum payment. Recipients will not need to apply for the additional payment. They need only file their 2021 tax return, if they have not already done so, to receive both the current GST credit and the additional payment.

Finally, we know that the costs of climate change are significant. Climate change is real, and we know that carbon pollution pricing remains a pillar of Canada's climate plan as an efficient way to incent reductions and drive innovation. Carbon pricing lets industry, households and businesses choose the lowest-cost ways to reduce emissions and creates demand for low-carbon technologies, goods and services.

The pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution, announced in 2016, gives provinces and territories the flexibility to implement their own carbon pricing systems aligned with common minimum national stringency requirements, referred to as the "federal benchmark". The federal carbon pricing system serves as a backstop in jurisdictions that requested or that do not implement a system aligned with minimum national requirements. All direct proceeds from the federal system will continue to be returned to the jurisdiction in which they were collected.

• (1050)

In order for a provincial or territorial government to receive these proceeds directly to use as they see fit, they were required to request the application of the federal system and commit to not using the proceeds to negate the carbon price signal.

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More importantly, 90% of the projected fuel charge proceeds will be sent to households in the form of quarterly climate action incentive payments, administered by the Canada Revenue Agency. The majority of households will receive more back than they pay as a result of the federal system. This will help Canadians to pay for the food and basic necessities their families need.

Lower- and middle-income households will benefit the most. Also, there is a 10% supplementary amount for residents of small and rural communities. The other 10% of projected proceeds will be returned through federal programming, while 1% of the proceeds will be returned to indigenous recipients based on co-developed approaches and priorities; the remaining 9% of proceeds return through the environment and climate change programming for small and medium-sized enterprises in emissions-intensive, trade-exposed sectors.

Last month, the Minister of Finance specified climate action incentive payment amounts for the 2022 to 2024 fuel charge year. Those have been announced in the House. In provinces where climate action and incentive payments will continue to be paid, there will be four equal quarterly payments starting in April 2023, so that households will receive these ahead of costs incurred and are not out of pocket. A family of four will receive, each quarter, \$386 four times a year in Alberta; \$340 in Saskatchewan; \$264 in my home province of Manitoba, so over \$1,000 a year; and \$244 in Ontario.

In provinces where the federal fuel charge will start to apply in July 1, 2023, and where climate action incentive payments will be paid for the first time, there will be three equal quarterly payments starting in July 2023, in the following amounts for a family of four: \$248 in Nova Scotia, \$240 in Prince Edward Island and \$300 in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Overall, a price on carbon pollution reduces pollution at the lowest overall cost to businesses and consumers, and it provides an incentive for climate action and clean innovation, while protecting business competitiveness.

Just to conclude, the measures I have highlighted today are delivering timely, effective financial help to millions of Canadians. For our neighbours who need this support the most, this means more money for them this year to help make life more affordable. While putting a price on pollution remains the most effective way to fight climate change while making life more affordable for Canadians, not only does pollution pricing ensure it is no longer free to pollute anymore, but for the eight out of 10 Canadians who receive climate action incentive payments, the federal pollution pricing system actually puts more money back in their pockets.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member lives in Winnipeg. Just south of Winnipeg, I am sure there are a number of those 5,000 typical family farms that would be very near where he lives. What does he have to say to those operators, those family farms that he just accused of polluting through the use of fertilizer?

What will he say to Canadians when those farmers are looking at a potential additional \$150,000 by the time this tripling of the carbon tax takes effect? What is going to happen to Canada's emissions as those farmers go out of business and we are importing

more food? What is the price of our food going to be when this carbon tax is tripled?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, I invite the hon. member to Manitoba to see those beautiful landscapes. I toured that area this spring. It was under water. About a third of southern Manitoba was out of water. There was a late spring, so farmers could not plant their crops in a timely way.

However, in 2021, many of those farmers had to plow their canola fields under because we had the worst drought in 60 years. We had two one-in-300-year floods that cost \$1 billion each and destroyed agriculture in many parts of the Assiniboine Valley.

The impacts of climate change are real, and I would ask the hon. member where his climate plan is, because the Conservative Party has no plan.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I quite agree with my colleague that the Conservatives do not really have a climate plan, but maybe he should think about whether the Liberal plan is a good one.

The Liberals opened the door for the Conservative Party to criticize the carbon tax, because Canada ranks 58th out of 63 in the fight against GHGs. The problem is not the carbon tax itself, but the subsidies to the oil industry and the fact that the government is approving drilling off the coast of Newfoundland in areas where biodiversity is at risk.

The Liberal Party is great at controlling their image, but terrible at delivering results. I asked the Conservatives this question, but I did not get a response. Could my colleague tell me whether the Liberals have a different opinion? Are they going to go after the oil companies' excess profits? Are they going to go after the banks' excess profits? The big grocery chains are making excess profits. Are the Liberals going to go after that money and give it back to the middle class to address not only GHGs but also the cost of living?

[*English*]

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the hon. member that oil profits are at record levels. They need to put their shoulder to the wheel and help us reduce emissions. We are working hard with them to cap oil and gas emissions. We will be introducing a clean fuel standard, and we will be removing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. We have already removed eight. We are on our way to completely eliminating them two years ahead of schedule.

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Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we also agree that putting a price on carbon is critical. In British Columbia it was actually the right-leaning BC Liberal party that brought in the carbon tax in 2009, but it is now supported by all provincial parties, because we understand the impacts of climate change. We have seen Lytton burn down. We have seen flooding. We have seen the impacts of climate change, which I have talked to my colleague about a number of times.

My concern here, and I share this concern with the Bloc, is that there is no excess profit tax on oil and gas companies right now. We have seen the U.K. take leadership, as well as other countries around the world. We have seen over \$100 billion in record profits for the oil and gas companies, but we see Liberals and Conservatives standing side by side, letting them get a free ride.

It is unacceptable, because that money could be used for taking pressure off people today by removing the GST on home heating, which would apply to electric heating, something that Conservatives had in their platform but do not support today, as well as removing the unacceptable 39.5% surcharge on Canada Post.

Will my colleague finally charge oil and gas companies the excess profit tax that they should pay and take the pressure off everyday Canadians?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, I find myself agreeing with the spirit of the questions my opposition colleagues are asking me. Oil profits are up. Emissions must come down. The oil and gas sector and the energy sector must put their shoulder to the wheel. They must work with us. Come hell or high water, we must meet those emissions targets of 40% to 45% reductions in emissions below 2005 levels. We have emissions targets. We will meet them.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the wonderful questions being asked by our Bloc and NDP colleagues here as to the specific amounts. The PBO has done a report already. The windfall profits tax being called for by others would generate almost \$4.4 billion a year at a time when Imperial Oil made profits of \$6.2 billion in the first nine months of 2021 alone. They are making off like bandits in the midst of a climate crisis, and the federal government has already applied this to banks and life insurance companies.

Will the parliamentary secretary comment on the importance of applying the Canada recovery dividend to oil and gas companies in the midst of a climate crisis?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague and friend from the Green Party and I talk often about the importance of action on climate change. He is indeed a devoted advocate.

Again, I would agree with the spirit of his comments, if not the actual content. We are going to be working hard to get those emissions down, and we are not going to be giving the energy sector a free pass, as has been implied by opposition members.

• (1100)

[Translation]

Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague from Winnipeg

South for his excellent speech today and for his answers to the questions, because he really hit the nail on the head.

This opposition motion makes a brief reference to pollution pricing. Pollution pricing is a good thing, because pollution has a price. It is not free to pollute. My hon. colleague from Winnipeg South mentioned that in his province, floods that should only happen once every 100 years have occurred twice. It has happened twice.

In my own riding, the Ottawa River burst its banks and caused flooding in 2017 and 2019. Statistically speaking, such floods should happen once a century, but they happened twice in three years. The climate crisis is here, and we need to get rid of practices that are not working anymore. The days when individuals, businesses, organizations and governments could pollute with impunity have passed. That is why I am very proud to say that we are going to be putting a price on pollution.

I am a firm believer in capitalism. I think it is good for people to earn money. We applaud all those who want to make money by producing a good or providing a service. If they pollute while doing so, however, they must pay. I have confidence in the wisdom and ingenuity of Canadians, and certainly in our entrepreneurs, who will find ways to produce goods while reducing their carbon emissions. That means they will pay less, their product will be more efficient and cheaper, and people will buy it because it works. That is the idea behind pollution pricing.

However, the motion before us today attempts to link the inflation we are experiencing today, the increase in prices, with pollution pricing. There is no link. When my colleague from Whitby was asking a question, he referred to a witness who appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, on which my colleague sits. This witness is famous in Quebec and knows agriculture like the back of his hand. He was asked if the carbon tax was contributing to inflation and driving grocery prices up, and he said that it was not.

What is causing inflation is the global context. There are several factors. First of all, there was the pandemic. All the companies suddenly had to shut down to make sure that people were safe and that the COVID-19 virus did not spread. Eventually, thanks to the innovations that led to the development of vaccines, the economy started to reopen, following the advice of public health authorities.

• (1105)

All of a sudden, there were a lot of people all wanting to buy things at the same time. They wanted their freedom back. One or two people would have been okay, but when the whole world wants to buy things, it creates significant demand. Problems arose with supply chains around the world, especially in China because of its zero-COVID policy. That policy led to plant closures and disrupted supply chains worldwide. As if that were not enough, there is also Vladimir Putin's abhorrent war on Ukraine. It has hampered the flow of goods, creating product shortages and doubling price increases.

These are global trends that are happening, so what do we do? Canadians are facing price increases, but, unlike the official opposition, our government has an answer. Our answer is to help the most vulnerable Canadians. We are doing that in several different ways. Let me explain.

The first thing we want to do is make life more affordable for Canadians. With Bill C-30, we doubled the goods and services tax credit for a period of six months. The GST credit, which is in place to help the most vulnerable Canadians, is a tax-free payment to low- and modest-income individuals and families. Regardless of the circumstances, these people need a hand, especially these days. Our measure will put \$2.5 billion in the pockets of around 11 million Canadians, and these individuals and families will be very happy to have this money for the next six months.

With Bill C-31, we created the Canada dental benefit. Once again, this benefit will put about \$1,300 in Canadians' pockets to ensure that kids 12 and under have access to dental care. There is something else, too. We also paid \$500 to 1.8 million low-income Canadian renters who are struggling to pay the rent. This is another targeted, non-inflationary support measure that will make a big difference for those in need.

Earlier this year, we increased old age security by 10% for people aged 75 and over. I can also talk about the Canada workers benefit, which is another way we are providing targeted assistance to support Canadians in need. This benefit is a refundable tax credit offered to Canadians and families who are working but earning a low or modest income.

All of these targeted and reasonable measures will help Canadians get through this global crisis. We can do all this while also fighting the climate crisis. That is what we have done in Canada. This will create a more sustainable economy, a healthier environment, and social cohesion. As parliamentarians, what are we good for if not bringing everyone together?

• (1110)

[*English*]

Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his speech today. There were certain words in it that I had a bit of a challenge with. It was mostly when he was talking about the Liberal carbon tax and inflation. He said that they are probably not related and that we are talking about two different things.

This week, there has not been a lot of respect from members opposite toward the Auditor General's role, and I know the Governor

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of the Bank of Canada said, at FINA committee, that the carbon tax has increased inflation.

Does he agree with the comments from the Governor of the Bank of Canada?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with the Governor of the Bank of Canada, but my colleague should not quote out of context. Quoting out of context is just a pretext for saying things that are not true. What he said is true in theory, but the effect is minimal, and that is what matters.

The real causes of inflation are the broken supply chains, which take time to fix; China's zero-COVID policy, which has disrupted all the supply chains; and Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine, which has also thrown supply chains around the world into chaos.

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are debating a motion on the carbon tax, which, according to the Conservatives, is the enemy of humankind.

What is more, we have before us Bill C-234, which will give our farmers some tax relief on farm fuels and the sales tax on propane used for drying grain. We have many farmers in my riding of Mirabel. I would like to know what the government thinks about that. We know that, previously, the government and even the Minister of Agriculture voted against farmers. I am wondering whether they have changed their minds in that regard. This is very important for farmers in Mirabel. They have talked to me about it many times.

Hon. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I am not completely familiar with that private member's bill. Nevertheless, I know that the government is always there to support our farmers.

We will support them by fighting against climate change. We are well aware that the climate crisis is something that we have to deal with today, tomorrow and in the coming years.

Farmers know in their gut that climate change is coming. We have to work on that, and that is why we always need to put a price on pollution and implement a number of policies that will help create a greener, more sustainable Canada.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat ironic that the Conservatives have raised the fact that Canada is number 58 when it comes to climate action and spoke to our ability to tackle the climate challenge and live up to our commitments. It is ironic because the Conservatives do not have a plan to address climate change, but it is also a problem because number 58 is not where we need to be as a country.

Despite having a carbon pricing system in this country, Canada continues to be laggard, to not live up to the commitments we have made and to not perform. We are not on track to meet the targets we have set. What needs to be done to improve Canada's approach to climate and to stop being such a laggard on this critical issue?

• (1115)

The Deputy Speaker: That is a big question, and we only have about 30 seconds to answer it.

[Translation]

The hon. parliamentary secretary, for a brief response.

Hon. Greg Ferguson: Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to give a brief response. That is a great question from my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

The reason Canada has fallen behind is that, for too long, we felt the effects of the Harper government's non-plan for the environment.

Now we have a realistic plan in place, one that is recognized throughout the world and is one of the best plans because it is detailed. It includes very specific and very strong targets, as well as initiatives that, finally, are rigorous.

That is why I am very optimistic about the future.

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou.

Mr. Speaker, I went to the cafeteria on the first floor yesterday to get a grilled cheese, and I was really hoping to see you there. You are very charming and I really appreciate you. In the end, upon reflection, it was just as well that you were not there, because I ran into a Conservative member who spilled a coffee on his pants and found a way to colourfully blame it on the carbon tax.

I thought to myself, yes, that is obviously the source of all evil. I knew today was going to be a Conservative opposition day, so I made a bet with myself that the Conservatives would move a motion to give the bogeyman a new name, the carbon-tax man.

I read the motion last night, and I am pleased to say I was right, because that is essentially what this is. This entirely predictable motion portrays the carbon tax as the source of all evil and its abolition the solution to every problem under the sun. This is not really a motion about buying power or the price of food. It is not really about helping our farmers. This motion is further evidence that the Conservatives are trapped in their ideological cage, an ideology that says abolishing the carbon tax is the only way to fight climate change and make a transition. It is an ideological cage, and they are

imprisoned inside it. Public debate is also being held captive, but the premise is false. It is false to say that this is the only solution.

The Conservatives are talking about our farmers. I would like to talk about farmers in the Lower Laurentians. The Union des producteurs agricoles, the UPA, recently held a convention in the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. I went to the UPA convention and talked to farmers. They thanked the Bloc Québécois for supporting Bill C-234, which gives them a little GST relief on fuel for their tractors, agricultural equipment, propane and grain drying. They applauded our responsiveness, our pragmatism and our openness. They recognize that and told me so. That is always good to hear.

Instead of proposing a targeted approach, they are engaging in a generalized attack against the infamous carbon tax, which does not apply directly to Quebec, because Quebec has a cap-and-trade system. The basic principle of these systems is to increase the price of inputs or goods that pollute, while at the same time returning the tax-generated revenues to households. The relative price of these goods will be higher because they pollute more, but, in return, people will get help with their purchasing power. In the long run, it means that people will choose inputs and goods that pollute less. However, for these changes to be made, we must be realistic. There also needs to be a vision for the long-term transition. We must give people more options. Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals are offering that. That is why we are still stuck in our current situation. Bloc Québécois members are realists. We think it is possible to walk and chew gum at the same time without getting stuck like the Conservatives.

This is why we supported the part of their motion that deals with agricultural fuels and which is the object of Bill C-234. That is why we support the elimination of the tax on propane used to dry grain. At the UPA central union in Sainte-Scholastique-Mirabel, they looked me in the eyes and told me that it was important. However, that is the object of Bill C-234, so the Conservatives do not need to waste time with their motion.

With respect to fertilizer, I would like to commend the extraordinary work of the member for Berthier—Maskinongé. I myself participated in meetings where the member for Berthier—Maskinongé, our agriculture critic, had gathered everyone around the table, including farmers. There were meetings with firms to ensure that fertilizer supply contracts, which had been signed before the war in Ukraine, are not subject to sanctions. These honest farmers had the right to get their fertilizer at a predictable price. We were there for them.

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The issue of transportation is important, because that is where we will have cut emissions the most over the next 10, 20 and 30 years, if we exclude electricity generation itself in most provinces. We have adopted a smart, focused and temporary approach that is compatible with the transition and shows compassion for the people who pay. This helps taxi drivers, truckers and those who are temporarily affected by the vagaries of the geopolitical tensions that we are currently experiencing.

I would remind our Conservative colleagues that the price of oil is currently determined by a cartel, by their friends in Saudi Arabia and their friends in Venezuela, who are communists. This is OPEC+, which includes Russia, which, again last week, decided to cut production to keep prices high, to the great delight of Alberta's public finances.

• (1120)

That is why we supported Bill C-234. If we must point the finger at a party that does not support farmers, it is the Liberal Party. When we voted on Bill C-234, I was there and the Bloc Québécois was there for farmers from Quebec and the whole country. I was the first of 338 members of the House to say on social media that even the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food had voted against farmers. The central unions of the Union des producteurs agricoles noticed that.

The reality is that we must embark on a transition; this was not decided on a whim. The Conservatives have never tabled a motion that would allow us to assess and appreciate how we can embark on a transition that would reflect the ambitions of the west. They are still fixated on the carbon tax.

The International Energy Agency, however, believes that demand in energy will drop by 7% by 2050 because some countries are making an effort, although Canada is not.

The European Union believes that energy demand will drop by 30% to 38% by 2050. Why? It is because some countries are doing their part. Canada is not among them.

France expects its energy demand to drop by 40% by 2050. Why? It is because France is a G7 country that is making an effort. Here in the House, whenever a Conservative motion is put forward, the substantive problems are forgotten in the rush to score partisan points. I have no interest in going down that road. We deserve better in the House.

When faced with the kinds of things I am saying now, the Conservatives attack Quebec. Just last week, Conservatives posted misleading statements on social media, saying that a metric tonne of carbon is cheaper in Quebec, with our cap-and-trade system, than in the rest of the country. The reason is simple: Our system is based on controlling quantity, and prices fluctuate. A metric tonne is cheaper in Quebec because there is less demand. There is less demand for allowances because we pollute less.

This system was the Western Climate Initiative, which originally included Canadian provinces and U.S. states. Some of them dropped out because they wanted to pay less, because they do not want to transition and because they knew it would cost them even

more. Today, they refuse to consider possible solutions. That is what put us in the position we are in today.

Let us get back to the issue of inflation. All of this does not mean that no one is facing higher prices for groceries or fuel. The people I meet on a daily basis are experiencing these difficulties. We must address the weaknesses in our supply chain. It is not because of the Bank of Canada that we are having a hard time getting Japanese cars. There is just one Conservative telling us that. It is not the Bank of Canada's fault that lumber is in short supply. Last time I checked, the governor of the central bank was not out cutting down spruce trees in the Saguenay region. I did not hear anything of the kind.

It is not Canada's fault that we have seen record prices for resources such as wheat, rice or commodities. At the Chicago stock exchange, a few weeks ago, no one cared about Alberta's carbon tax. There is just one Conservative saying that and misleading the public.

Over the long term, global warming will cause even more disruption and instability in the supply chain. There is just one Conservative telling us it is a myth. This week, I heard a Conservative say that the holes in the ozone layer were a myth. They are the only ones who think that way.

When the Bloc Québécois moves motions on the prayer in the House or on the monarchy and the fact that we kneel before entering the House to pray to a foreign sovereign who is up to his ears in monarchy, the Conservatives lecture us about priorities.

I would have liked to see the Conservatives move a motion about our dependence on oil and how we can reduce it in a way that is fair to workers. I would have liked to see them present a targeted plan for low-income individuals or targeted support for our farmers. That is what our farmers are asking for, to deal with the structural weaknesses of our supply chains.

I would have liked to see them present a plan for building social housing for those who need it. Trickle-down economics does not work for housing. We must build housing for people who are living on the streets.

I would have liked to see a motion proposing solutions to address the weak links in the supply chain. Quebec's seaports are telling us they need help.

The next time the Conservatives call our priorities into question, I will tell them to buy a mirror, because they are on sale at Rona.

• (1125)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reassure my colleague, who is also my office neighbour, about three things.

First of all, there will be no visits from our Saudi Arabian friends this holiday season in my riding because we have Valero Energy, the largest refinery in Quebec, which sources its crude oil from Canada and the United States.

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Second, in his speech, my hon. colleague talked about the fact that, with the bill, farmers would get GST refunds. The GST is already refunded. It is an input. The GST and QST have been refunded for the past 30 years.

Here is my final point. I wonder if my colleague has ever seen a propane bill from one of the farmers in his riding that shows the carbon tax rate, which is increasing in line with the Liberal formula.

Has my colleague ever personally seen a real-life propane bill for drying grain in Quebec that includes the carbon tax rate?

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows that I appreciate him.

I welcome the fact that Valero Energy refines Canadian oil for domestic use. This further confirms that we do not need to increase production for export. I thank him for pointing that out. The Conservatives do not seem to understand that most days.

Second, they need to understand that abolishing the carbon tax in provinces that are not environmentally responsible creates unfair competition with producers of various goods in other provinces that do pay their carbon tax. Conservatives love competition until it involves oil.

Third, I would like to say hello to Claude, a member of the Union des producteurs agricoles in Sainte-Scholastique. At a meeting two weeks ago, he thanked me for our support for Bill C-234, which addresses the cost of propane used for drying grain. I want to tell him that I am very much looking forward to visiting him at his farm.

[*English*]

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party motion today proposes the elimination of the carbon tax. I wonder how that would affect or come into force in provinces that have their own carbon tax plan, as well as the issuance of refunds or rebates that may be part of their plan. How would the federal government tell provinces not to implement the carbon tax when it is the province that is responsible for it?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, today I want to reiterate how proud I am to be a Quebecker.

When everyone was drawing back, pulling out of the Western Climate Initiative and renegeing on their climate responsibilities. Quebec, as a nation, decided to take responsibility and set up its emissions trading system. Today, it is working so well that the Conservatives are jealous and are attacking it.

In politics, when you are attacked, it is often because you are right.

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I would like him to explain how this tax affects Canadian agriculture as a whole. We are pork, chicken and grain exporters.

What impact will this tax have if our farmers' prices go up compared to other countries? Will our farmers be able to sell their prod-

ucts? They will have to sell them at a loss on the international market. What is he going to tell people in his riding of Mirabel?

• (1130)

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, many of our competitors that produce agricultural commodities are subject to similar tax measures in competing countries. What I tried to tell my colleague earlier in my speech, not my question, is that we recognize the impact on farmers, so we want targeted measures.

What my colleague forgot to mention is that the carbon tax applies to markets in general. We care about farmers, and we are sensitive to the problems they are dealing with, which is why my colleague is indirectly asking me whether we should abolish the tax for all industries, including western Canada's oil industry, which is the most polluting of all.

We need targeted measures. That is the problem with the Conservatives, and that is the problem with their motion. They are better at changing the subject than they are at identifying problems.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the opposition motion before us today is the kind of Conservative motion we have had to debate since this session began. The message this motion sends is one of goodness, of awareness-raising of the financial difficulties that people are facing now. These struggles are real. Consumer prices have gone up. I have no doubt about my colleagues' goodness and desire to raise awareness on this subject. I have no doubts whatsoever, and I want to clarify that.

That said, when we take the time to analyze the motion, looking at its contents in greater detail and checking the facts, what we find under this lid of goodness and awareness-raising is a pot of soup filled to the brim with pieces of political and electoral interests, bits of misuse of information and incomplete facts.

The first premise of the motion sets out some frightening numbers for farmers, who are already struggling to get a sufficient income. According to this first premise, farmers will have to pay \$150,000 a year in carbon taxes when they triple. That is a huge, terrifying amount. However, the motion fails to mention some information. For example, by 2030, the amount of the carbon tax will triple from what it is now. Consequently, the motion does not refer to a current or even near event. It also fails to mention that by 2030, a host of transitional measures will be in place to reduce the production of greenhouse gases. Yes, taxes are increasing, but if our GHG production is reduced, the amount to be paid in 2030 should be roughly the same as today.

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Now let us talk about some inconsistencies. Concerning the first point, today's motion fails to mention one very important aspect. It boggles the mind that it could have been left out. I am talking about the fact that the Conservative Party, namely, the hon. member for Huron—Bruce, introduced Bill C-234, which is intended specifically to remove the carbon tax on agricultural facilities. The bill is now in committee, and everyone agrees that it should progress quickly. In short, it seems as though the right hand did not know what the left one was doing when it was time to write this motion today. The first premise of the motion could be described as misinformation, since the information contained therein is incomplete.

I want to take my colleagues back to their intro to philosophy class in college. Disinformation is caused by three main elements. The first is omitting to provide all the information necessary to understand the facts. That is what we have here. The second is distracting the reader from the information. That is what the motion does by blaming all the world's woes on the carbon tax, when rising consumer prices are the result of a multitude of factors. The third is deliberately sharing false information. The good news is that this is not the case here, but we do have two of three elements of misinformation.

The next few premises also contain big numbers, ones that are accurate. Nevertheless, because of the first premise, we might believe that the carbon tax alone is causing consumer prices to rise. However, as I just said, consumer price increases are caused by a multitude of factors, not just the carbon tax.

Now let us talk about what the motion calls for. The first two points are about eliminating the carbon tax on farm fuels. As I just explained, Bill C-234 addresses that. The right hand has no idea what the left hand is doing. The third point is about eliminating the carbon tax on fertilizer. Bill C-234 does not cover that, which is too bad. A bill to that effect could be brought in quite quickly with all the goodwill that I know Parliament is capable of showing. Having said that, farmers are suffering the consequences of the sanctions imposed on Russia and its fertilizer exports. That needs to be addressed. Those sanctions have nothing to do with the carbon tax. They were imposed because of the war. The fourth point is about eliminating the carbon tax on transportation. What kind of transportation are we talking about?

• (1135)

It cannot be agricultural transportation, because that is already covered by the first point about farm fuels. Therefore, it must mean other modes of transportation. Does it mean heavy trucks, trains, planes?

In the case of trucks, technologies are already in place to reduce the pollution they create. Thanks to these technologies, which include diesel exhaust fluid, trucks will be emitting far less pollution by 2030, when the carbon tax will be \$170 a tonne. Aircraft technology is also changing a lot in terms of fuels and greenhouse gas emissions. That just leaves trains. We need to figure out how to move beyond Canada's 19th-century rail system. I dream of high-speed electromagnetic trains, not high-frequency rail. I dream of real modern trains. That would be so amazing.

Lastly, the fifth point of the motion is overly vague. It calls for the carbon tax to be cancelled on all other appropriate aspects of the

food supply system. What are all those other aspects? Does that mean electricity, coal, factories, oil industries? I have no idea. I will not dwell on this point any longer than necessary, because it is as blurry as a desert mirage.

As I said, inflation has multiple causes: labour shortages affecting agricultural businesses and companies in general; natural disasters, such as floods, drought, hurricanes and fires; corporate wage increases; and war, which we have to include in the list. By blaming the increase in consumer prices on the carbon tax alone, this motion blatantly oversimplifies a far more complex phenomenon, and that oversimplification amounts to disinformation.

There are viable and responsible solutions that I would have loved to hear my colleagues suggest. First of all, pensions could be increased to help seniors between the ages of 65 and 74. They should also be allowed to work, if they so choose, without being doubly taxed. They pay more taxes than a family, when they have already paid taxes their entire lives. Furthermore, their pension gets clawed back once their income reaches a certain threshold. That makes no sense. Second, a program could be implemented to support the people hardest hit by rising gas prices, such as farmers and truckers. I want to mention that since these people are dependent on gasoline, they are also at the mercy of fluctuations in gasoline prices. As part of the transition, we must provide these people with solutions so that they are no longer subject to fluctuations. Third, the supply chain could be stabilized by strengthening critical links and promoting local production.

Of course, Quebec does not pay a carbon tax because it participates in the carbon market. However, I would like to remind members, as did my colleague, that when Quebec became a member of this market it tried to convince all Canadian provinces to join as well, but it was met with outright refusal. Quebec was alone in finding this to be a good idea. Quebec was also alone in 1982 when the provinces stabbed it in the back by going back on their promise. Quebec was alone on child care, as well; Canada's provinces insulted us for 20 years by saying that Quebec could not afford it, but it suddenly became a good idea when the federal government agreed to pay for it. Quebec was also alone in standing up for aluminum compared to steel, the aerospace and pharmaceutical industries, and others.

Given that the premises of the motion are incomplete, that a bill to provide farmers with relief will be passed and implemented, we cannot vote in favour of this motion.

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• (1140)

[*English*]

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned in her speech that the motion put forward by the official opposition was like a stew and should have a lot of ingredients. She mentioned that one of the main ingredients should be meat. Can she please explain to the House why she believes there is not much meat in this stew from the official opposition?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of my speech, I talked about a lid of goodness and consideration.

I believe that all members, be they Conservative, NDP or Liberal, are capable of goodness and consideration. They have shown this to be true. However, I said that the contents of the pot might come across as campaign-flavoured because of the information that was left out. That is what I explained in my speech.

When they talk about inflation, they point to one factor. They say it is because of the carbon tax, but they do not talk about other factors, such as environmental disasters, war and a weak supply chain. We can and must work on those other weaknesses.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speech by my colleague, which contained a lot of dreams and assumptions, but I would like to talk about something tangible. In 2030, the carbon tax will represent \$30 an acre in Canada. Over 400 million acres, that means Canadian farmers will have to pay \$12 billion a year.

According to my colleague, what part of that \$12 billion could go back to the farmers, if they even get one cent?

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, my colleague talks about assumptions when the question itself contains one.

First, in 2030, transition measures will have reduced green house gas emissions. Will the carbon tax represent \$30 an acre? Yes, but because of the reduced GHG emissions, that \$30 an acre will be less significant because fewer GHGs will be emitted.

Second, I really hope that Bill C-234, which we are studying at report stage, will be in force in 2030 and that for that reason, farmers will be exempt from the carbon tax.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was surprised that there was no mention of grocery store chains and no connection to getting the produce of local farmers and their production into the chains without farmers being taken advantage of or being in a situation with a lesser advantage regarding product placement and so forth. I think this was at least worth a mention, because it is affecting the price of groceries. At the end of the day, if Canadian access is prevented from being competitive, it really hurts consumers.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, the situation with the big grocery store chains is worrisome. The increase in consumer prices caused by a desire to maintain a profit margin is worrisome. That being said, I delivered a 10-minute speech to explain why we are

against this opposition motion and to propose other solutions. There are many other solutions that I did not mention. I only had 10 minutes, not 20.

[*English*]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise on this beautiful day to speak to the opposition motion before us.

I will be splitting my time with the wonderful member of Parliament for Nunavut. Mr. Speaker.

It feels funny to be speaking on this topic, a little like Groundhog Day. It seems like no matter the problem, the tool is always the same for the Conservatives. I guess when the only tool one has is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

The climate crisis, the very pressing issue of astronomical food prices and the impact on Canadians is a serious problem that requires serious tools.

The motion before us is ostensibly about farmers. I want to take a moment to talk a bit about the farmers in northwest B.C. who do such an incredible job, such as the dairy and beef farmers.

I met in Terrace the other day with the owners of a new goat dairy. It wants to produce its own artisanal goat cheese and goat milk in the northwest, which is a really amazing endeavour. That includes the vegetable farmers as well, the market gardens and producers who sell their food throughout the northwest. We have a really burgeoning local food culture in northwest B.C. and it is something of which we are very proud. All those farmers, no matter the size of their operations, should be rightly proud of the work they do.

It is right that farmers are facing many challenges. One of those challenges is the cost of the inputs that they require for their operations, but it is not the only challenge. Of course, longer term, one of the biggest challenges facing farmers is the impact of the climate crisis. It is somewhat ironic to debate an opposition day motion that seeks to undermine Canada's approach to the climate crisis when the people who feel the impact of the climate crisis most intimately are farmers across our country.

I want to talk a bit about the farmers who would be affected by this, but I also want to talk about the farmers who would not be affected by this. I appreciate my colleagues in the Bloc highlighting that the Province of Quebec is part of a cap and trade system, a carbon market, that is provincial in nature, with which the federal government has no tie-in. British Columbia is in a similar situation because it has a provincial price on carbon.

It concerns me that at the heart of this motion is a bit of deception, because it talks about helping farmers across the country, yet it is not going to help farmers in Quebec nor farmers in British Columbia, like the ones I represent. There is going to be zero help for those farmers if this opposition motion were to pass and the government were to act accordingly.

The real problem faced by farmers who are struggling is with the cost diesel for their tractors. I talked to one neighbour on the south side of Francois Lake, who has a beef operation. The price that he was paying for diesel for his tractor was unbelievable. This is a real challenge. However, if we are looking to Canada's carbon pricing system as the villain in this, we are looking in the wrong spot. The real challenge, when it comes to gas and diesel prices, is the absurd gouging by the oil and gas companies.

Members do not have to believe me; they can ask the President of the United States, Joe Biden. He called it war profiteering and he threatened to put an excess profit tax on oil and gas companies in that country. They are not just gouging farmers, but all Americans who require petroleum products in their lives.

We could also look to the United Kingdom, where a Conservative government has put a 25% excess profit tax in place on the oil and gas companies. It will take the revenue from that excess profit tax and drive it back into affordability measures so the British people can benefit during hard times when inflation is out of control.

Those are the kinds of real measures that the NDP has been advocating for the government to get serious about in cracking down on profiteering and excess profits during a time that is difficult for so many Canadians. We need that kind of action.

● (1145)

When we think about the carbon tax in British Columbia, it has an interesting history. It was brought in in 2007-08 by the noted eco-socialist premier of British Columbia, Gordon Campbell. He did that because, to his credit, he believed climate was the existential issue of our time and we needed to act in a way that was rigorous and evidence-based. He was a very Conservative political leader, as the Speaker well knows, and he believed that markets were the best way to do that. Part of the Conservative philosophy is that the best way to tackle things is through markets because they are efficient and often provide the lowest-cost approach to tackling big problems.

Therefore, if we believe that the climate crisis is a problem, then it makes sense to choose a tool that is efficient and low cost. That is why the Conservatives, in their last election platform, sort of had a price on carbon. They wanted to use a market-based mechanism, albeit a bit of a goofy one, that would charge people a carbon tax and then put that money into a special savings account that could only be used to buy eco-friendly things like bicycles and solar panels. It was a bit of a weird implementation of the idea, but at its heart was the idea of using a pricing mechanism. They did that because almost every economist in the western world agreed that pricing carbon was the most efficient way to go about it.

Members might be surprised to hear that I am a bit agnostic on the topic. I want to ensure that we use whatever tools it takes to drive down emissions and tackle the climate crisis so my kids, and

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all members' kids, can have the kind of stable future, prosperous economy and good quality of life that I and my parents enjoyed. That is what we need. This motion would do not achieve that.

When we talk about the cost of the climate crisis, it is astronomical. If we do not act in a definitive way, not only to drive down emissions but to adapt our communities and our infrastructure, we will pay dearly for this crisis.

In British Columbia, we have already felt that. We lost the entire community of Lytton, which burned to the ground. Flooding in the Lower Mainland took out a huge amount of key infrastructure and crippled our supply chain just this past year. In 2018, there were devastating wildfires across northwest B.C. that affected so many parts of our economy and community.

This crisis deserves a serious approach. The affordability crisis and the crisis of inflation and food prices are serious issues that deserve a serious approach. We do that by cracking down on profiteering. We do that by having a real climate plan that uses credible evidence-based tools to drive down emissions. I am agnostic as to whether those are regulations or pricing mechanisms.

We need urgent action and political leaders who have a plan, who are transparent about their plan and can tell the Canadian people that this is the issue of our time and they intend to tackle it with all the seriousness that it deserves. Our kids are worth it. People in our communities who are struggling with the price of food are worth it. Seniors in Terrace, Smithers, Prince Rupert and Kitimat who cannot afford groceries are worth it.

Motions like this, which are inherently deceptive and try to fool British Columbians, Quebec residents and people across the country into believing that somehow removing carbon pricing from certain sectors is going to solve these problems, frankly, are unfair, unjust, and not the way to approach very serious issues in our country.

● (1150)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the issues I have brought up is that the Conservatives seem to be on their own island when it comes to the price on pollution, but it has not always been that way. As the member will recall, in the last federal election, all major national parties supported a price on pollution. Even the Conservatives made a commitment to have a price on pollution. I wonder if he can provide his thoughts on this, that what the Conservative said at that time was fairly misleading, given the fact they told the electorate that they would support a price on pollution and given the position they are taking today.

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Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Speaker, honesty in politics is one of the most important things. All political leaders need to be upfront and transparent with Canadians about how they intend to tackle the biggest issues of our time. When they do that, it needs to be based on evidence and they need to show the work, show the math, and how they will actually tackle the problems we face.

We know a lot about the climate crisis. The majority of Canadians support urgent action on the climate crisis. However, I would argue that the government has not done nearly enough in this regard. We need policies that are rigorous enough to drive down emissions and ensure it is done in a way that is affordable for Canadians. At the end of the day, the numbers do not lie, and Canada's numbers are not good.

• (1155)

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I like the revisionist history in my colleague's speech and the colleague across the way. Positions change. It was only in 2009 when the NDP leader in B.C. was going to scrap the carbon tax. She felt that it was going to be punishing for B.C. residents. It is ironic that there is this massive change in position now.

The New Democrats position on this upsets me a bit. They are going support Bill C-234, and I appreciate that. It is an important message to our producers. This motion is very similar. We would be expanding the exemptions on the carbon tax. I do not want to see this dividing one area of Canada from another; people in B.C., Quebec and the rest of Canada who are paying the carbon tax. This would help B.C. farmers.

B.C. farmers are buying fertilizer. B.C. farmers are moving cattle from one area of the country to the other. Would my colleague not agree that his farmers will be impacted by the carbon price in 2030, which will cost every farmer at least \$150,000 a year? How does he expect his farmers in Skeena—Bulkley Valley to absorb that cost?

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague noted, we support targeted efforts to help the farming industry, and we have supported the private member's bill brought forward by his party. It is one approach and certainly something that has been well received.

However, the reality is that the measures in the motion before us would not be equally applied across the country. If we are talking about helping farmers, let us have proposals that help all farmers across the country, not just ones in some provinces that happen to pay the federal carbon price. That would be a fair approach and it is an approach that I would be more willing to look at.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think things have been clear since the beginning of the day. From what we can see, the Liberal's plan to address greenhouse gas emissions is not working and, before the carbon tax, the Conservatives unveiled an ideological plan that will not work either. We know what the outcome of this motion will be. We already know how the parties will vote. It will come as no surprise to anyone.

Since we are here debating, could we not use this day to talk about how ineffective both the Liberal and Conservative parties are when it comes to fighting climate change?

[*English*]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Speaker, I share my colleague's dismay that not only are we talking about the same topic for the sixth time now, but we are doing so in the context of the government and an official opposition, neither of which are doing enough to tackle the climate crisis.

We need a more rigorous approach on this most important issue, as I said in my remarks. Frankly, we could use this opportunity today to highlight the ways in which the Liberal approach is not putting us on the path to meeting our targets and providing the kind of safe future that our kids deserve.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I am happy to rise as the member for Nunavut. I thank my constituents for their trust in me and for allowing me to continue to amplify their voices and indigenous people's voices as well.

People are struggling. There is a rising cost of groceries, gas and housing. We all know this. This is a reality that Nunavummiut have been experiencing for decades. It is unfortunate that, while we have been suffering these high costs of living for decades, it has recently been the experience for most Canadians. I am glad, at least, to see that most Canadians now can understand what the struggles have been for my constituents in Nunavut.

Billionaires are getting rich while more people are suffering in poverty. Time and again, I have stood in this place to talk about the profits of major grocery stores, which continue to keep showing increased profits. This is at the same time that we have seen, as mentioned in the opposition motion, increased use of food banks.

New Democrats are showing leadership. We are speaking to seek accountability. We have seen the impacts of our good work. I have risen a few times in the House to talk about subsidies that are being provided to grocery stores, such as the nutrition north program.

Nutrition north is subsidizing for-profit corporations such as Northmart, which continues to show profits. The Northern stores are major grocery stores in northern Canada, not just in Nunavut. They are also in northern Ontario and northern Quebec. These subsidies going to grocery stores are completely unacceptable.

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To speak to farmers, I see from my notes that there are already huge exemptions provided for farm fuels in the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, so I think this motion may be quite ineffective if passed. This motion by the Conservatives would not do anything for provinces that have their own pollution pricing schemes, such as British Columbia.

I will return to my speaking notes about the food costs because that, to me, is something we can all try to do something more about. To remind the House, the CEO of Sobeys was awarded \$8.6 million in 2022. Sobeys, a grocery store, is having so much profit that it is awarding its CEO \$8.6 million.

Honestly, we have to ask, in this House, how we can make sure there is tax fairness. How can we make sure they are paying their fair share in taxes, so we can help ensure that we are actually alleviating poverty, as well as making sure that families are getting the help they need?

How does this party defend to their constituents that this is okay?

What do the New Democrats want? We want to force CEOs and large corporations to pay their fair share on excess profits. They need to be taxed for all of the profits they are making. There needs to be a launch of an affordable and fair food strategy that would address the profit motives of grocery companies, including requesting the Competition Bureau to investigate the profits of chain grocery stores.

• (1200)

While advancements in green technology are being developed to replace carbon-based fuel sources, we need to have supports for farmers with relief for high grain-drying costs and the costs of heating and cooling buildings used for raising and housing livestock. We need to support and increase investments for Nunavut to transition from diesel to renewable energy.

There needs to be a reform of the nutrition north Canada program. To date, the for-profit grocery stores being subsidized by the nutrition north program self-monitor the program. The federal government does not monitor how these for-profit corporations are doing in the program.

There needs to be a removal of GST from heating bills.

Finally, I will conclude by reminding the House that, while Canadians pay the price for rising food costs, billionaire Galen Weston, chairman of Loblaws, has increased dividends to shareholders from \$118 million to \$125 million in 2022.

• (1205)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue of the price on pollution is something that has been around for many years. We have seen provincial governments of different political stripes bring it in. We have seen the national government in support of a price on pollution, along with New Democrats, the Bloc members and the Greens. It would appear as if the Conservative Party is alone in its opposition to a price on pollution.

I wonder if my colleague could provide some of her thoughts on the caribou population and the impact on environmental change in northern Canada, just to get a better sense of awareness for our Conservative friends of the real impact of climate change.

Ms. Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, climate change indeed has been impacting my territory for years. I would like to thank Nobel Peace Prize nominee Sheila Watt-Cloutier, who published her book, *The Right to Be Cold*, to raise awareness about just how early on she started raising awareness about the impacts of climate change.

Hunters are telling me that the caribou are at risk with the climate. When it warms up, then rains and then freezes right away, caribou are losing their source of food. It makes it very difficult for them to chip away at the ice to reach their source of food, so it is absolutely having an impact.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ): Madam Speaker, the situation in Nunavut and in northern Quebec and Canada is very worrisome. I would say that those are the areas of Canada that are being hit hardest by climate change.

Members spoke about caribou. I remember when I was in the near-northern town of Fermont that people could hunt caribou there. That is no longer the case. Caribou do not even venture that far south anymore.

What other major effects is climate change having on my colleague's constituents and even on the infrastructure in her riding, including housing?

[English]

Ms. Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, there are other factors as well that are contributing to climate change and the impacts on calving grounds of caribou. Too much of the mining industry is looking to interrupt calving grounds. There are specific projects that are having impacts that we need to hold accountable to the mining industry, which continues to push for mining to continue in our territories, especially on calving grounds, which we need to protect so dearly. Even though the mining sector stakeholders say that they will do mitigation, they do not do enough.

We saw the impact of Inuit uniting when they called for their rejection of Baffinland's phase 2 project, which would have had a deeper impact on the caribou population. We thank the Minister of Northern Affairs for listening to Inuit and rejected the expansion of that project.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member for Nunavut for helping us all understand the devastating impacts of the climate crisis in the north. She and I agree that we need to be phasing out all fossil fuel subsidies. In the Liberal-NDP confidence and supply agreement, there is a commitment to get an early start on that by the end of this year.

I know how effective the hon. member is in this place. Could she comment on what she can do to help advance that to ensure there is follow up on that agreement?

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• (1210)

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, there are projects that are trying to go ahead, such as the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link project. We need to see commitments go through on that. The Inuit community in the Kivalliq region has done great work to address its needs and does what it can to make sure there is renewable energy to replace reliance on diesel. It has been working with other great indigenous nations to make sure that this project can go ahead.

The federal government needs to do its part to make sure that this project—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, as always, it is a privilege and honour to rise and bring the voice of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to this place.

I will be splitting my time with my hon. friend and colleague from Thornhill.

Food inflation remains a top priority for Canadians from coast to coast, with almost six million people reportedly living in food-insecure homes in Canada last year. This is per Canada's Food Price Report. This number is expected to be even higher in 2022.

Food inflation is impacted by a number of factors, including general inflation, supply chain issues, geopolitical situations and, of course, internal policies. General inflation in Canada has reached the highest level in decades, as the more the government spends, the more things cost.

We have seen local supply chain issues caused by the global pandemic, and there are global impacts on food, especially fertilizer supply, as a result of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Yes, these events are not controlled here, but here at home, the Liberal carbon tax continues to drive up the price of all goods, along with all of the other non-pandemic-related spending that the government has chosen to do.

Canada's general inflation rate is 6.9%, the highest it has been in 40 years, and food inflation has exceeded general inflation for 13 consecutive months, with food prices surpassing even the high-end predictions for 2021 to an astonishing rate of 10.3% this past September. This has led to food banks experiencing their highest level of demand in decades.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has had global impacts on food prices through trade restrictions and further supply chain interruptions. This ongoing conflict has especially affected the fertilizer market here in Canada, and more than it should have since Canada should be far more self-sufficient in nitrogen and potassium than it is. We have the national gas here to provide our nitrogen fertilizers, but not the pipelines across Canada to get the gas to eastern Canada. Railcars do some of the cross-Canada shipping of our petroleum products, which ties up and makes more expensive the option of railing potassium to eastern Canadian markets. Saskatchewan is a very large producer of potash, or potassium, but instead of using our own, we have become dependent on imports.

As Russia is also the world's largest exporter of fertilizer and as trade restrictions remain in place, the shortage of fertilizer puts pressure on global prices. However, instead of helping farmers, the government has demonized our farmers' use of fertilizer. The introduction of a fertilizer emissions reduction target of 30% could not have come at a worse time, and this unscientific scheme is not based on any measured baseline data. Progress could not even be directly measured, because there is no base to measure from, nor a way of directly measuring emissions. Canadian farmers are already outproducing the world on sustainability and continue to improve their environmental record, as they are already up to 70% more efficient in fertilizer use than many other countries.

Russia is also the largest gas exporter in the world, meaning that sanctions imposed on Russia by Canada and a number of other countries have placed pressure on other suppliers of gas, once again driving prices up. Higher fuel costs affect food prices in every step of our food value chain, as suppliers are forced to pass along their increased costs at every step up the chain and then, of course, ultimately to consumers.

The government's carbon tax, the subject of today's opposition motion, is yet another factor driving up food costs across Canada, as its exemptions are currently limited to only on-farm fuels and it is still applied in many other areas of the food supply chain. Not only does the carbon tax directly raise costs for Canadians, but it has far-reaching indirect effects as well, especially if the government insists on tripling it. It is important to note that a large part of inflation, and certainly the carbon tax, is the result of internal policies over which the government has control.

In my remaining time, I want to spend some time on an important issue that has been a priority for me since I first became a member of Parliament. It is the role that grocery retailers play in our inflationary challenges.

On the one end, our food supply chain continues to be crippled by the government's cash grab carbon tax, and we are certainly hearing about that in the House today. However, let us look at the other end of this equation and at the role of the large grocery retailers that complete the double whammy of the carbon tax.

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• (1215)

The government has the opportunity to address the crisis of food inflation and lower food costs, namely through the implementation of a grocer code of conduct. Farmers are often called the first step in the food value chain. However, the “field to fork” expression is a bit of a misnomer. Farmers have many suppliers, so they are not the first step in the value chain. These suppliers, in turn, incur the carbon tax on many of their products and of course on the transportation of their products to the farm, and these costs are once again passed along to the farmer. Food manufacturers and processors are next, and then on to food distribution, which is either retail or the food service industry. The carbon tax is incurred at each step of this chain, eventually ending on the consumer's lap.

There are two seemingly contradictory statements being bandied about these days. The first is that retailers are seeing record profits. The counter-argument from the industry is that retailer margins have not changed in percentage terms throughout the pandemic. Both these statements can be true, as retail volumes have increased during the pandemic since consumers shopped more retail versus the food service that supplies the restaurants and institutional trade.

The carbon tax, which applies to the delivery of farm inputs and outputs and to the transportation all along the food chain, has increased costs, so retailers, maintaining their margins in percentage terms, which is what they are claiming, are applying this margin to a higher cost from suppliers and to higher volumes generated by the change in the market from consumers shopping retail versus food service. Of course, their profits then set records.

However, there is an opportunity before us that could accomplish many goals if we get it right. When properly implemented, it would result in increased profits for food manufacturers because of fair trading practices and reduced administrative costs in attempting to comply with the many “rules” applied by retailers. It would also lead to reduced costs for the retailers themselves in administering all these programs allegedly used as profit centres. Most importantly, it would reduce food costs for consumers.

Right now, shelf listing fees, fines for short or late deliveries and a host of other administrative exercises are adding costs that eventually end with the consumer paying a higher price. There is certainly an international precedent for such a solution, as the U.K., Ireland and Australia have all gone down this road with varying degrees of success.

Initially, retailers were afraid imposing a code would lead to a reduction in the number of retailers with gross sales meeting the threshold for the application of the code. However, the U.K., since fixing its original attempts, has seen more retailers succeed. At the outset of the program, only 10 retailers reached the threshold of dollar value throughput, but now 14 are large enough, meaning that the code has not driven consolidation.

In addition, and this is very important as well, it would allow the 10,000 independent grocers, which are crucial to so many parts of rural Canada, to be treated on par with the big five that control 85% of the grocery retail trade.

In conclusion, an appropriately structured code results in lower consumer prices and fairer trading practices within the value chain.

Punishing farmers with an unscientific fertilizer emission target and applying a carbon tax to almost every step of the food value chain only serve to drive up food prices and drive more Canadians to the food bank.

• (1220)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the motion asks us to eliminate the carbon tax from various entities throughout the country. How would that apply to provinces that brought in their own carbon tax and have had it in use for a number of years? Would that change their way of doing things, or would we only select provinces where the backstop is brought in by the federal government, leaving the other provinces to continue with their programs?

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Newfoundland is very familiar with the fact that the federal government and the provincial governments have different jurisdictions, and with the trepidation that any federal government would have over imposing a tax on the provinces. However, this would certainly help the majority of provinces where there is a federal program and would go a long way in showing leadership. Removing the punishing carbon tax from our food value chain would set the example, and I do not think those provinces would continue with this.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is not all bad.

Some parts of it are not so great, particularly with respect to businesses. It will hurt small and medium-sized businesses more than large businesses and large emitters that are benefiting from carbon cost relief programs, which are designed to encourage oil and gas production. Farmers are affected, but there are measures to help them, some of which will be implemented soon.

Would it not be better if the carbon tax actually targeted the companies that pollute the most? Should we not stop giving them carbon cost breaks?

[*English*]

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, as stated earlier, we are not opposed to having incentives or disincentives placed on large emitters where it makes sense, where there are options and where there are other practices that can lead to a reduction in our greenhouse gas emissions. A carbon tax is not that plan across the food value chain.

Business of Supply

That is the point of our opposition motion today. All the carbon tax does is raise food prices for consumers. Of the 2% of greenhouse gas emissions that Canada adds to the world, 8% come from our agriculture. The motion would not impact our climate change targets, and the carbon tax, as it is being presently administered across Canada, will not impact Canada's goals.

Our neighbour to the south has been meeting and will be meeting its climate targets, and there is no carbon tax there. Our agricultural and food systems are so interrelated that we are being made uncompetitive by the additional environmental charge here that is not helping us address our climate targets.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is like *Groundhog Day* in here. We have another Conservative opposition day about lifting a federal carbon tax that does not apply to six provinces and a territory.

There are other issues the Conservative Party could take on. It has 112 members of Parliament. I just met with the MPP for Kiiwetinoong, Sol Mamakwa—

Mr. Blake Richards: Why is he supporting the government?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Could we have some order, please? The hon. member is asking a question, and it is his right.

The hon. member.

Mr. Gord Johns: Madam Speaker, I have a very serious question. I was talking to the Ontario MPP for Kiiwetinoong, Sol Mamakwa, just now. He has 14 nations in his riding that do not have clean drinking water. The Conservatives could have used an opposition day to call on the government to tackle that. No Canadian should go without clean drinking water in this country.

Instead of bringing forward motions that cannot be applied nationally, will the Conservatives take on that challenge? That area is actually represented by a Conservative in the House. This is a very important issue.

• (1225)

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, if I recall, it was a Conservative government that put the truth and reconciliation recommendations in place, and it is the Liberal government that has not followed through. I will gladly support clean drinking water for every first nation, but there were 1.5 million trips to the food bank by Canadians.

Every single Canadian eats. This opposition day motion would reduce the cost of food and would not hinder our environmental targets. I will support ensuring that every Canadian eats.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to add my thoughts to the debate. It is shocking to watch the mental gymnastics taking place in the House to say that the rising inflation, which every Canadian is feeling, and the carbon tax have nothing to do with the cost of food. I have heard that a number of times.

Anyone watching in this country right now is affected by the price of food. Regardless of all other important things we talk about in this place, if people cannot feed themselves, they cannot do anything else. If people are worried about feeding their families, they

simply do not have the luxury, necessarily, of worrying about some of the other issues we discuss here. If kids are not eating, then their school, their growth and their health all suffer.

We usually think of things like mass food insecurity happening in other nations that simply do not have the bounty that Canada has, but we never think about it in our own country on such a mass scale. The sad state of affairs in Canada right now is such that more people are being driven into poverty by failed economic policy from the government. Many rely on food banks, and some are not eating at all. If that is not important, then I think we should all question why we are here.

How do we know this? Our constituents tell us every day. Just last week I got an email from somebody in Thornhill. He said that he has lived in Canada for eight years. He is a student. He works and pays his taxes. His rent is being increased and food is being increased. He is living on one student's salary and is in so much debt. Instead of building their lives here, they are being ruined by the piling debt because of government inefficiency. That is from constituents. I assume members in the House are hearing a similar refrain.

It is not just people in our communities who are telling us this. It is also the statistics. A survey from Angus Reid found that, not too long ago, nearly 60% of Canadians were having a hard time affording enough food for their families. Food Banks Canada recently revealed that food bank use in 2022 was at its highest level ever recorded and that nearly 1.5 million Canadians used food banks in one month. That is up 35% in two years.

I want to make something clear. We are G7 country. We are one of the richest countries in the world. When people cannot even afford food, there is something wrong in Canada. We should ask what it is. Then we should ask how we can make it better.

I have heard a lot of rhetoric from the other side today about these two questions. The Liberals say it is all because of Putin's war, and it is all due to international phenomena. They say this even though we know that 0.3% of our trade is with Russia and Ukraine combined, and that inflation in this country was already two and a half times higher than the target rate when the war started.

It is always something else. It is always someone else. It is always somewhere else. It is a complete abdication of responsibility by the people in charge of this country. These are people who continue to want more control and less responsibility.

Business of Supply

What do we see the NDP members saying? The entire inflation crisis is due to what they are calling greedflation. There are companies taking on unreasonable amounts of profits, and there is nothing else at play here.

They are missing the bigger picture. There is somebody else taking away more money than their fair share from Canadians' paycheques and hard work. That is the same Liberal government that they are propping up in their supply and confidence agreement. The greed that is making this crisis a crisis is the greed of the federal government, the greed of power and the greed of politics, because they are profiting from inflation.

The fall economic statement has shown that the government revenues went up more than \$40 billion, because the cost of everything is going up. People are having a harder time making their paycheques last, and the Liberals want a share of that too. They are increasing the tax or the premiums on EI and CPP. Then there is the plan to triple the carbon tax. This is the tax they said they would not hike and the one that Canadians are paying more into than they are getting back. It is the one tax that has not met a single environmental target that the government has ever set.

• (1230)

We know that people are struggling and they are looking for hope. They are looking for real leadership and a real plan from the federal government. It is no surprise that the people who got us into this mess have no plan to get us out of it. What they are proposing is more of the same: tripling the tax on food, on gas, on home heating and on nearly everything else.

More than that, there are new fertilizer restrictions on Canadian farmers that are going to make it even harder for them to grow good, nutritious and affordable food here in our country. They are going to keep the reckless spending and the deficits. They are going to keep the waste, the tax hikes and the mismanagement. It is making inflation even worse.

Yesterday we saw another rate hike of 0.5%. That is the seventh in a row. How are people going to pay for this? We know that the Liberal plan is costing Canadians. The Governor of the Bank of Canada said so, and the previous governor said so too. It is not just because of them bringing us to where we are, but it is also where we are going. The latest "Food Price Report" released this week estimates that food prices are going up another 5% to 7%. That is \$1,000 of after-tax income for a typical family to pay a typical grocery bill. Where do families find that money?

We have to do something, because this is not sustainable and it is not okay. If the Liberals are not going to listen to the millions of Canadians who are ringing the alarm bells, at least there is one party in the House, it seems after today, that is listening.

Conservatives are calling on the government to cancel the carbon tax on everything related to food production, including farm fuels, grain drying, fertilizer and transportation. To bring immediate relief, the Liberals can do something now. They hear it when they go back to their constituencies. They hear it from people who cannot afford to eat in a G7 country, in a rich country like Canada.

Conservatives have taken major steps already on this. Bill C-234, introduced by my colleague from Huron—Bruce, would exempt the carbon tax from natural gas and propane used on farms. I would remind colleagues from the NDP and the Bloc that they voted for that, and they can vote for this motion. They can do the right thing by their constituents.

There is even more that we could be doing. We could be growing more food right here in Canada. We could be supporting good-paying jobs. We could be lowering prices at the same time. If members in the House do not think this issue is important and they talk about it being Groundhog Day, then it might be the case for them, but this is what Canadians are talking about and struggling with.

When our neighbours are making decisions about feeding themselves, we have lost the plot. Canadians will remember that this is the government that told us interest rates would stay low. It told us that the carbon tax would not go up. It told us that the problem was deflation, not inflation, and that everything would be okay.

We have record inflation. There is a plan to triple the carbon tax. We have the highest interest rates since the 1990s, the highest in the G7, and everything is not okay. It is time that the inflationary taxing and deficits that have led to this stop. It is time that we put people back in control of their lives. Let them keep their own money. This is not our money.

We have to be able to do the very basic thing and help Canadians feed themselves in Canada. Reducing taxes, capping government waste and removing red tape are just some of the best ways to end the inflation crisis. We talk about it here every day. This has trickled down to people's ability to feed their families, to feed themselves and to be productive.

The solution is not going to be bigger budgets. It is not going to be higher taxes. It is never going to be more government. It is the exact opposite of what we are seeing. My time here is limited, but if I were to list all the things we could be doing better, I would be here all day. I want to be clear. This specific proposal today is not the silver bullet that is going to make all of the problems go away. It is not the magic fix, but it will help. Anything that we can do to help Canadians right now is something worth doing. They are watching.

When our neighbours' and constituents' ability to feed themselves is at risk, it is incumbent on us to act in this place, because it is too important not to. Supporting this is just a start, and I hope that members in the House will do the right thing and spare Canadians their support for a failed carbon tax, one that they said would not go up, one that they said would reduce emissions and one that is costing consumers by driving the cost of everything up.

Business of Supply

Today, I hope members will find an ounce of courage to start with food and to start with the production of the very basic things we need to feed ourselves in this country. That is the least they can do by supporting this motion.

● (1235)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member can provide her thoughts in regard to the last federal election.

In the last federal election, the member, like 337 other Conservative candidates, adopted a policy platform position saying to all Canadians that the Conservative Party of Canada supported a price on pollution. Today, contrary to what they told Canadians they were committed to doing and advocating for, they have taken a complete and absolute reverse on that position. I am wondering how the member can justify that policy reversal to her constituents today.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I do not have all day, but if we want to talk about all of the broken promises from all of the platforms of the last number of elections from the Liberals, we could be here all day.

The fact of the matter is that the carbon tax does not work. The Liberals have not met a single target. It costs Canadians more than they pay, and they said the opposite. They also said that it would never go up. This is not the carbon tax that they presented to Canadians. This is not the carbon tax that was voted for.

This is not even the government that Canadians put in place because of the supply and confidence agreement, which is based on policies they never brought to the Canadian population. That is what the member should be asking about. Why continue to support a failed carbon tax that costs more and does nothing in terms of their own targets?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Madam Speaker, I think we have talked about the carbon tax enough during this parliamentary period. Perhaps we could have a debate on whether it works or not. One thing is certain, the fight against climate change is not working.

Having said that, there is another way to look at this. I would agree that there are people who have serious needs and that rising costs mean we need to take action. Does my colleague agree that now is not the time to lower taxes, but rather the time to implement targeted measures with a fairer redistribution of wealth to the most vulnerable?

In economics, it seems to me that in difficult times—

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

The hon. member for Thornhill.

[*English*]

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member acknowledging that the carbon tax may not work. I appreciate the member acknowledging that Canadians are struggling to pay their bills. What I do not understand is how there is a complete dis-

connect in the House in that \$500 billion of debt, 40% of which had nothing to do with COVID, is not driving up inflation and is not making life harder. That is more than \$200 billion wasted, according to the Auditor General who, apparently, the Liberals do not listen to anymore.

We have heard it from experts. We have heard it from the Governor of the Bank of Canada. We have heard it from economists across the country. I cannot understand how members in the House can stand up and say that the cost of government is not driving up the cost of everything else in the country. We have a solution today, and members can support it.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, there are a couple of things that the Conservatives have broken promises on. They broke a promise to bring in a price on carbon. They broke a promise to remove the GST on home heating, which is something they had in their last couple of campaigns. Then they brought forward a motion today that is unenforceable in many of the jurisdictions in this country.

We need to have a real conversation. The member talked about the disconnect with the debt, but what she did not talk about is the disconnect with the record profits. We do not need experts. Every-day Canadians know that big corporations are having record profits in the hundreds of billions of dollars, and the government is not charging an excess profit tax like many countries. The U.K., Germany and other Conservative governments around the world have an excess profit tax. Germany also has a carbon tax, as does the EU, Japan, U.K., New Zealand, Sweden and Norway.

When will the Conservatives get on board and understand that we need to make sure that some of those excess profits are returned to Canadians to help take the pressure off them?

● (1240)

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I get that the member does not like the opposition motion, and perhaps he can use his own day, but NDP members consistently choose politics over principle. They are there to protect their pensions over the paycheques of Canadians. They are choosing to tell Canadians about GST on heating when they voted to triple the carbon tax. They are supporting the government. The NDP—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming 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.): Madam Speaker, it is an interesting process we have with our rules in the House. Opposition members are afforded the opportunity to bring opposition day motions. I have talked about this in the past in terms of how opposition parties will establish different types of priorities.

I will give credit to the Conservatives. They are definitely focused. They are focused on the price on pollution. They are on a little island of their own, not only here in Canada but around the world, where they are now convinced that a price on pollution is bad.

I believe this is the seventh time the Conservative Party, as the official opposition, has decided to bring this issue to the floor. I do not know if it is because it likes to feel really important, being the only party in the House that supports getting rid of a price on pollution.

After all, the Bloc supports a price on pollution. The New Democrats support a price on pollution. Members of the Green Party support a price on pollution. We all know the Government of Canada supports a price on pollution. It should be no surprise.

Back in 2015, the world came together in Paris. In the dialogue that occurred there, Canada was well represented by all sorts of stakeholders, including provincial entities. What came out of that, and was one of the ideas that really resonated, was the need to have a price on pollution.

Shortly after forming the government, we made the decision to listen to what Canadians were saying, appreciate the importance of our environment and implement a national policy ensuring a price on pollution.

In Canada, we were not alone. There were provincial jurisdictions that already had a price on pollution. Members might be surprised to know this, but in potentially the first jurisdiction in North America to take the principle of a price on pollution and put it into a budgetary measure, the Conservative Party did this in the province of Alberta many years ago.

The Province of Quebec, under Jean Charest, brought in a price on pollution. There have been a few leadership contests within the Conservative Party, but in the most recent one, interestingly enough, Jean Charest was one of the candidates. He received substantial support, and he too was an advocate.

His Liberal government, in the province of Quebec, brought in a price on pollution. The Province of British Columbia has a price on pollution.

People around the world are looking for ideas. We came back from the Paris conference saying we needed to get onside and recognize that a price on pollution is one of the most effective ways of being able to deal with the climate crisis of the century.

I can appreciate there are climate deniers within the Conservative Party. There are actual members of Parliament on the Conservative side who do not recognize that climate change is a reality.

When we first brought in a price on pollution, the Conservative Party actually opposed it. In the lead-up to the last election, not the last Conservative leadership race but the one before that, the Conservatives actually changed their position from their original one of opposing the price on pollution.

● (1245)

Just last year, during the election, the then leader of the Conservative Party actually put it forward in the Conservatives' platform.

Business of Supply

All Conservative candidates, in 338 ridings in Canada coast to coast to coast, had a platform document that said the Conservative Party of Canada supports a price on pollution.

Another leadership contest took place and the Conservatives now are not really too sure what they are saying. They just skip answering the questions when asked about the price on pollution, as I just finished demonstrating by my question for the deputy leader of the Conservative Party. They made the decision that it is just bad, that Canadians should believe them and that we should just be getting rid of the price on pollution. So says the new leader of the Conservative Party.

Do members remember the other idea the leader of the Conservative Party had, about cryptocurrency? The leader of the Conservative Party told Canadians that, if they want to fight inflation, they should invest in cryptocurrency. How did that idea pan out for the Conservative Party? Much like the most recent position of the Conservative Party on the price on pollution, that idea did not fly.

At the end of the day, those individuals who followed the advice of the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada have lost a great deal of money, well over 60% of their investments. In fact when I say "over 60%", I am probably being a little conservative in that estimate, as many people have lost a lot more. Let us think of the seniors the Conservatives often talk about, as if they were advocates for seniors. We still have not even heard any regret or apology coming from the leader of the Conservative Party or from any Conservative candidate in regard to that idea.

What are the Conservatives waiting for now with the price on pollution? They like to say they are going to get rid of the carbon tax, as they call it. In Winnipeg North, eight out of 10 people actually get a net benefit with the price on pollution. There is the climate incentive cheque, which is given out four times a year. The Conservatives should be saying that, if they are going to get rid of the price on pollution, they are also going to be getting rid of those rebate cheques. Winnipeg North is not alone. Eight out of every 10 homes in the country receive them.

When the Conservatives say there is going to be a tripling of the price on pollution, and of course they are not talking about this year but about an increase over the next eight years, what they do not tell Canadians is that the rebate will also increase. We have the price on pollution and we have the rebate. All the Conservatives want to talk about is the price on pollution. They are more concerned about the bumper sticker, going into the next election, saying, "Axe the carbon tax." That is what their priority is. It is not about the environment. It has nothing to do with the environment for the Conservatives. They do not even have a plan, as has been illustrated time and again. The last time they actually had a plan was for the price on pollution, and they abandoned that plan.

The Conservative Party is not reflecting the desire of Canadians to see some sort of plan dealing with the environment. To make matters even worse, they are spreading misinformation intentionally.

Business of Supply

● (1250)

If the Conservatives were to come into Winnipeg North and we were to do a bit of door knocking, the Conservative candidate would stand beside me and say they were going to get rid of the price on pollution. However, I would say that if they get rid of the price on pollution, it would mean they would also get rid of the rebate. A person would get more money because of the rebate than they would pay on the pollution, generally speaking, for 80% of my constituents. Then, not only that, but at least as a government we are recognizing that the environment does matter and is an important issue, unlike the Conservative Party.

I suspect that if the sole debate were on that issue in the constituency of Winnipeg North, I would get more votes than I received in the last federal election. I am very grateful for the over 50% I got in the last election, but I believe I would even get more support if that were the only ballot issue being decided, because the rebate puts more money in the pockets of my constituents, and it deals with the price on pollution for climate change.

When we talk about farmers, the department of agriculture spends far more today than it did when Stephen Harper was the Prime Minister. In fact we are spending literally hundreds of millions of dollars, well past a billion dollars, supporting farmers, supporting our prairie farmers. We had one Conservative member say that this year was the third best on record in Canada for our farmers, and in particular our prairie farmers. My focus in Manitoba is canola, wheat and flax, all of these wonderful bumper crops, not to mention the other commodities, whether in the pork industry, the cattle industry or our chicken industry. All of these industries, we value.

That is why we have a very proactive Minister of Agriculture. Not only is she proactive, but we are providing cash support. We are ensuring we can move toward a greener economy, just like other countries around the world. There is an expectation that Canada has to demonstrate leadership, and I believe it is important we do just that. By recognizing the importance of moving forward in a positive way with the environment, we will be in a much better position in the months and years ahead to ensure opportunities well into the future. We need to do this so Canada can continue to play that important role it does in the world, whether by providing food or through the many other industries Canada leads in.

The Conservative Party likes to say this is all about the issue of inflation. Inflation is a very serious issue. I like to think it does not matter what side of the House we are sitting on. We all recognize how important inflation is to address as an issue. The Conservatives bring forward a motion that really would not deal with the issue they are talking about in a tangible way that would assist the majority of Canadians. We have put into place, over the last number of months in particular, a series of policy announcements that do deal with and support Canadians in a very real and tangible way.

When the Conservative Party says that it is concerned about inflation and the government needs to do more to support Canadians, unlike the Conservative Party, we are not going to sit back and just watch things take place. There is a role for government.

● (1255)

Before the Conservatives make the suggestion, as they are now, that government should not play a role, let me talk about the larger picture of inflation outside of Canadian boundaries. We know Canada is doing better with its inflation rate than the United States of America. We are doing better than England and many different European countries. We are well below the average of the G7 countries overall. From a world perspective, our inflation rate is doing well.

I find this interesting. I looked up the inflation rates of the United States and Canada over the last two years of Stephen Harper. I think this is appropriate, because the Conservatives are trying to tell us what we need to do, as if they have wonderful experience in dealing with inflation. In the last two years of Stephen Harper, the United States of America's inflation rate was lower than Canada's. In other words, Canada had a higher inflation rate in the last two years of Stephen Harper. Today, if we look at our administration, in the last two years our inflation rate has been lower than that of the United States.

I do not think we need to follow the advice of the Conservative Party of Canada, in particular the leader, who recommends things like cryptocurrency, to deal with the types of policies that are not only important in having an impact on the overall inflation rate, but that we can use to support Canadians at a time when inflation hurts. Even though I pointed to the U.S.A. and how Canada is doing relatively well, my constituents, like everyone else in Canada, are hurting with respect to inflation. We are very much aware of the grocery prices and how much it hurts their pocketbooks. I too am offended that farmers are putting their blood, sweat and tears into ensuring we have food production but are not reaping in huge profits or rewards for their efforts to anywhere near the same degree others are. There are things we can do to help, and I could list them off.

We can talk all we want, but the Conservatives continue to vote against measures to support Canadians, whether with respect to issues like the dental program for children under the age of 12 or the Canada housing benefit to provide rental subsidies that would benefit two million Canadians. There are already 35,000 children who have put in applications for the dental program since we brought it in a couple of weeks ago. Also, the doubling of the GST rebate for the next six months will benefit 11 million Canadians. When it comes to the Canada workers benefit, by making quarterly payments, thousands of Canadians will benefit from that. There is the elimination of the federal interest on student loans, which will benefit thousands of students, and that is not to mention child care.

This government, unlike the Conservative Party, recognizes there is something the Government of Canada can do, and I can tell members that every Liberal member of Parliament will continue to fight, day in and day out, to ensure that we can marginalize the negative impacts of inflation, because that is the right thing to do, even though as a nation we are still doing better than the U.S.A. and most G7 and G8 countries.

Business of Supply

• (1300)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Madam Speaker, the main problem with the carbon tax is that it taxes carbon emissions without capping them. People can pollute as much as they want as long as they can afford to pay the tax. That will not necessarily reduce GHGs. Those who can afford the tax will not necessarily be motivated to reduce their GHG emissions.

In 2013, Quebec enrolled in a carbon market, which is a type of exchange or auction among greater and lesser carbon emitters that helps limit GHG emissions.

Quebec tried to encourage the other Canadian provinces and Canada to enrol in the carbon market. I have a very simple question. Why did Canada not take this route to truly cap carbon emissions not only here but across the continent?

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the specifics of that answer would probably be best put, in terms of a question, to the Minister of Environment, but what I would note is that with respect to the province of Quebec, I need to recognize Jean Charest. He was, even though he was a Liberal premier at the time, very progressive in his thinking in regard to the environment. He ultimately led the country, through the province of Quebec. He was a very strong nationalist who understood that the environment matters and who led a lot of initiatives.

That is why I think, when we take a look at it, with regard to that last federal Conservative leadership race, where Jean Charest actually did quite well, he has got to be looking at the Conservative Party's positioning today from a Progressive Conservative position of saying that a price on pollution is good and remembering how he led the country through the province of Quebec while he was the premier. To see the Conservatives taking this sort of position, I suspect there are a lot of Conservatives who are wondering what the heck has happened to the Conservative Party of Canada.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg North spoke about all the great work that the Liberals are perceived, in his mind, to have done. I would like to ask him if he could explain to the House why they felt the need to give CERB payments to prisoners.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: What does this have to do with the motion?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I am being asked what this has to do with the motion. It is inflationary spending, which has led to the cost of living crisis that we are in.

Could the member explain the need for prisoners and public servants to be paid CERB, or for high school students living at home to be paid CERB? I wonder if he could explain to the taxpayers of Canada why that was necessary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, first of all, I am not going to blame the recipients of CERB payments as the reason for inflation. Families found it very difficult. We are talking about millions of families, nine million families, virtually, who needed to have CERB for a wide variety of reasons.

The Conservative Party might want to try to blame those families, but from the government's perspective we needed to be there to support Canadians going through the pandemic. Had the Conservatives been in power, it is obvious that they might not have done that.

As the result of a Liberal government doing it, as a result of a Prime Minister who understood the importance of having Canadians' backs, we were in a better position to be able to get out of the pandemic in the fashion in which we have. I will compare our record to any G8 country that is there today. We have done exceptionally well. There is always room for improvement, and at the end of the day I look forward to continuing the dialogue on that particular issue.

• (1305)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for listing all the initiatives that the NDP have brought forward, like dental care and the rent subsidy, but my question for him is a bit more concrete. I have been sitting in the House all week, listening to the Liberals asking Conservatives how they can face their constituents when the Conservatives promised to put a price on pollution and are now against it.

I am wondering how the member faces his constituents when the Liberal government promised to put that price on pollution and promised to deal with our climate crisis and has done so in such a poor way that we have met none of our targets and are at the bottom of the barrel for actually dealing with the climate crisis in this country.

On one side, we have some Conservatives who have been, frankly, very dishonest with their constituents. On the other side, we have the government, which has actually done nothing for our climate crisis.

How does he face his constituents?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I talk to my constituents about putting into place a national policy, so that in every province, no matter where a person lives, there is a price on pollution. I talk about the two billion trees that are going to be planted as a result of policy.

It is interesting. We often get the question, "Where are those two billion trees?" They start as seedlings, and it takes a little while for them to grow. I am very confident that we will continue to look at ways, whether it is the banning of single-use plastics or the planting of trees or having a price on pollution, not to mention the numerous budgetary measures to support getting Canada on the right road to a greener economy. That is what I would be telling my constituents.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, the member knows through the interventions I have shared in this place that if the governing party were serious about the climate crisis, it would start by taking the Canada recovery dividend that is already in Bill C-32 and apply it to oil and gas companies.

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I will move to a different topic. One thing I think we agree on is addressing affordability, particularly for those who need it the most, and that is people with disabilities across the country who are disproportionately living in poverty today. They have been calling out for an emergency response benefit to address the rising cost of living, food and day-to-day life. If all parliamentarians were serious about addressing affordability in this place, they would be directing funding to those living with disabilities.

Could the member share his level of support for addressing poverty for those living with disabilities through an emergency response benefit?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the issue of disabilities and how we can assist and support those disabilities was really amplified by the problems during the pandemic, when it came time to ensure that we could provide direct payments to people with disabilities.

At the time I thought it took a while before we could ultimately create the databank or the mechanism that would ensure there would be a disability payment going out. We were able to do that. I know the minister responsible also has some fairly historic legislation. I do not necessarily know all the details of it. I am open to it. In the legislation the member just referenced, there is the intergenerational credit for housing, which helps seniors and people with a disability for whom additional suites can be built. That is a positive thing.

This might not be the type of detailed answer the member would want, but that is the best I can give at this point.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to give the hon. member a chance to highlight, once again, the things we have done as a government to support Canadians through this affordability crisis, and compare them to what Conservatives have supported or not supported.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I happen to have a list here.

The doubling of the GST rebate for six months helps 11 million people. The Conservatives originally opposed it, as the member might recall, but they were shamed into supporting it. We are glad they flip-flopped. We thank them very much.

The Canada housing benefit was opposed by the Conservatives. That was to help two million people with rental support.

The Canada dental benefit is the program that 35,000 children have already put in an application for. The Conservatives opposed that one, too.

The Canada workers benefit creates more payments and helps at a time of need, i.e. a time of high inflation, as the member knows. The Conservatives opposed that one too.

Wiping out the federal interest on Canada student loans was also opposed by the Conservatives, unfortunately.

Child care is a really big one. We are talking about a lot of money. The Conservatives said it was absolutely wasted and we should not have done it. It was to ensure that child care is affordable from

coast to coast to coast. In fact, Conservatives say they will rip it up and will not support it. Obviously, they voted against that.

If I had more time, I am sure I could come up with even more details.

● (1310)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to rise today in the House to address the concerns of my constituents in Perth—Wellington and Canadians across the country.

I will be splitting my time with my deal colleague, the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, Madam Speaker.

It is appropriate that we, as the Conservative opposition, are debating this opposition day motion today. Today is the last opportunity that the opposition can bring forward an opposition day motion. We are focusing on the issues that we have been hearing about from constituents over the past year and before. These are issues we have been raising time and time again in the House, in question period, and the issues we are hearing time and time again from constituents in our ridings across the country.

The cost of living and the cost of everyday essentials keep going up. We hear this from constituents who are struggling with home heating, groceries and putting gas in their tanks. I have been receiving emails and phone calls daily, hourly, by the minute basically, from constituents sharing their concerns with me.

Sam from Arthur wrote me a heartbreaking email about how she and her husband, a carpenter, were nearing retirement and they were struggling to get by. She wrote:

Balancing a budget was incredibly difficult before COVID but now it is beyond me. Speaking for myself, basic essential groceries absorb at least half of my income.... In our case, we tried to plan well. We took care of my husband's parents until they required fulltime care and we did our very best to conduct our affairs in the right way, for the right reasons. Now that we are at the point where we should be celebrating life with each other, we are struggling to try to make ends meet!

Sam is not alone. She expresses the concerns of so many in our communities.

Danny from St. Marys wrote:

I have been very closely watching the parliament broadcasts and what is going on with gas prices and the inflation that is going on right now. Honestly I am very disgusted with the way the liberal government is looking at these issues. I am disgusted with the way the Liberal government...continues to misinform, evade and deflect on every single topic.

My weekly gas price to go to and from work was approx. \$150.00 a week, that is now \$250.00 a week. My Wife and I generally buy the same groceries all the time, our grocery bill has gone from \$160 a week to \$250 a week. This is 200 a week more that is being spent each and every week right now. That is pretty close to \$1000 a month, just in inflation.

Anthony from Perth South wrote, "I have a really big concern with the gas prices. When are we going to see affordable prices.... Buying an electric car is not a viable option" given the cost even for a used car.

Pam from Mount Forest in the north part of Wellington County wrote:

I almost cried talking to my husband last night about how much our expenses have been in the past month. Last weekend we picked up a modest "freezer pack" and a few other things from the butcher, which was over \$450 and being realistic it will last my family of four...maybe a month. Then picked up our groceries...another \$250. \$700 and we will have to get more from the grocery store the end of this week.

Walter from West Perth had to go back to work after retiring. He wrote, "Gas is driving everything up except for my pension, so now I get to go back to work. So much for a nice retirement. There has to be a way to get this liberal govt under control or out of office."

People in Perth—Wellington are struggling. People across Canada are struggling. While the Liberal government is making more and more inflationary spending, the impact of this inflationary spending drives up the prices and makes matters worse for everyday Canadians.

Over the past few months, the Liberal response to the criticism has varied from pathetic to downright infuriating. This past Monday in question period, I asked the government about the cost of groceries and the rising number of Canadians who were forced to use food banks. How did the government respond? The parliamentary secretary gave a non-answer, repeating the same false claim that the carbon tax was necessary to fight climate change, yet, as we have seen, emissions keep going up as the carbon tax goes up. These evasive and cowardly answers fail to address the real concerns.

• (1315)

Unfortunately, the Liberals have taken the approach that if they say the same thing time and time again, it might eventually become true. The fact is that it has not. The carbon tax has the impact of driving up the costs of growing, processing and transporting food, making it more expensive for farmers, farm families and Canadians across the country who are trying to feed their families.

Yesterday, I was up in question period again and asked another question that received an evasive answer. Instead of getting a response from the Prime Minister or Minister of Finance, I received a response from a different minister, who took the opportunity to boast about the money that went out for CERB. What she neglected to acknowledge was that the day before, the Auditor General reported that nearly \$13.4 billion had gone out in overpayments to those who were ineligible or to people who should be investigated further. She also said that those in prison received the CERB.

When a Liberal minister stands and says the Liberals' spending is helping those in need, it simply does not stand up to scrutiny.

Creating more and more inflationary spending will only drive up the costs in the short term and in the long term create structural economic problems, which have been going on since 2015.

When we are out visiting our constituents, we often get asked what we would do if we were in power. This opposition day motion is our answer. We would take the carbon tax off all food inputs, all inputs that are used for production of the food that feeds each and every Canadian. We have been trying to do this for months now.

In March, we had a motion calling for a tax reduction on gas and diesel prices. The Liberals and NDP rejected it. In September, we introduced a motion calling for a moratorium on new taxes. The

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Liberals and NDP rejected it. In October, we introduced a motion calling for a tax exemption on home heating. The Liberals and NDP rejected it. This is in Canada, where it gets exceptionally cold in the winter, and they rejected our call to remove the carbon tax on home heating. Every time we propose meaningful solutions for families and Canadians across the country, these proposals get rejected.

What would this motion do? On our last day of the supply period, we call for five simple things: to cancel the carbon tax on farm fuels, grain, drying, fertilizer, transportation and other appropriate aspects of the food supply system. Canada quite literally helps to feed the world, but we are handcuffed in that ability when the input costs keep going up on farmers and farm families.

In fact, just yesterday, at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, which I had the honour to sit in on, the member for Regina—Lewvan asked a very simple question of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. The member asked, "Madam Minister, do you know what percentage of Canadian farms are family-owned farms?" The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food responded "No." The answer to that is 95% of farms in Canada are family owned.

Farm families feed families across Canada, and this motion serves to make it more affordable for farm families to feed our country and more affordable for families to feed their families. When we read heartbreaking emails each day about families struggling to make ends meet or when we hear that 1.5 million Canadians are using a food bank in a given month, half a million of those being children, we have the opportunity and the necessity to act. We need to remove the carbon tax on essentials. We need to remove the carbon tax on what it takes to feed our country.

We put this motion before the House, and I am incredibly hopeful that the Liberals, the NDP and the Bloc Québécois will join our Conservative opposition in making it more affordable for Canadians to feed their families.

• (1320)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to read something for the member. It says, "We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms." This is from the platform that the member ran on and was elected on in his riding on September 20, 2021. He ran on a platform of pricing pollution, and now the Conservatives stand before the House and suggest they are dead set against it. The people who voted for him thought he believed in this. How can the Conservatives be so hypocritical as to now come and demand everything but this option of pricing pollution?

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Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member for Kingston and the Islands quoting from our 2021 platform. I would encourage him to read the whole thing because there is a lot of good stuff in it. If he wishes, I would encourage the member to steal any ideas from it, because there are some great ideas in it.

What we promised in our platform was to make life affordable for Canadians. We were against a consumer carbon tax. We were against forcing Canadians to bear the brunt. We were against making it harder and harder for Canadians to afford to feed their families.

In fact, if he keeps reading that platform, he will see that we were in favour of a grocery code of conduct. That was one of the key elements of our platform and it would have reined in the powers of the grocery store to make it more affordable for Canadians, while supporting farmers, farm families and Canadians across the country.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limouilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, let us review for a moment. In 2020, the price of gas was under a dollar per litre. People talked about how cheap that was. I told my partner that oil companies would get their revenge once people went back to work and started driving again. That is exactly what happened. In some places, prices climbed over two dollars. The oil companies may have lost money, but they got it all back and more later.

Would it not be a good idea to limit or index oil companies' massive profits in an attempt to shut down what is basically a coalition that drives up the price of a litre of gas?

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Beauport—Limouilou for the question.

Let us be clear. Many Canadians work in the oil industry and that industry provides a lot of benefits to our economy. It contributes nearly \$48 billion to the government in taxes. Canadians need to be able to drive to get to work.

What is more, it is important that we, as members of the opposition, propose ideas and solutions to make life more affordable for Canadians.

• (1325)

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, while I certainly do not agree with many of the things the member brought forward, it was interesting.

He did talk about how we could make things more affordable for Canadians. I think and hope that is something everyone in the House is eager to do. However, the Conservatives have voted against many of the initiatives that the NDP have brought forward, things like dental care, the rent subsidy; taking GST off of home heating.

One of the other things that we could be doing, that we should be doing, is what the Conservative Party in the U.K. is doing. It has put in place a 25% excess profit tax on companies that made massive profits during the pandemic.

Would he vote against that initiative as well or would he be supportive of something like that?

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, the hon. member touched on ideas from different parties and different countries. One of the things I always think is important to do is to look to other jurisdictions and see what they have proposed. In fact, in 2009, the British Columbia New Democrats had a great idea. I am quoting from a headline from the very respectable Toronto Star, which said “B.C. NDP promises to kill carbon tax.” That is a great idea and one that we as Canadians would support.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to follow my colleague who gave a very entertaining speech. It is always a great honour for all of us to stand in our place to speak on behalf of the communities that elected us.

The debate today is about a motion we put forward that we think is very reasonable in the economic crisis we are experiencing right now, this cost of living crisis. It is a motion that calls on the government to remove the carbon tax on all those input costs of the food processes we have, whether it is through agriculture, or in my part of the world, elements that are affected by the pricing on fishing.

It is important because the carbon tax is really a tax on everything. Most people are probably aware of that, but the primary reason we are having this inflationary, some say a just inflationary, type of period is that we have a tax that is applied to everything, and it is pushing the prices up, combined with government spending.

I would like my colleagues here to understand a little bit about the effect of these costs. Some here, as we are paid a fairly good salary, may not feel the pinch the same way as people in my community do, where the median individual income is \$20,000 a year and the median household income is only \$44,000 a year. We are forced, in our province, to heat with either oil, 53% of which is oil that comes from Saudi Arabia, so dirty Saudi Arabian oil, or with electricity, which is generated in Nova Scotia with coal, of which 60% comes from Colombia. Therefore, we do not have the choice, because of decisions of the government, to use clean Canadian energy in our province. We are forced to use these methods, which is dramatically increasing the cost of living. When one has a median income of \$20,000, these increases are huge.

Some of the constituents have written to me, and we are all getting calls, I am sure, on all sides of the House, from people who are suffering. I will tell members what Jeff Kinar from riding wrote to me.

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He said that he was absolutely shocked to pay over \$2 a litre for diesel for his truck. He is a pensioner living in a rural area of Nova Scotia trying to enjoy what he considers to be a well-deserved retirement. He did his time in the public service and has a modest pension income. Fortunately, he has few medical issues and he does own his own home, but these fuel prices are unbearable for those who are living in rural areas who must make regular trips to town for groceries, prescription drugs and medical appointments. He said that it was shocking to see that almost the entire crew of Liberals jaunted off to Europe while exhorting, or extorting, the Canadian public to do their part in the fight on climate change.

Now, Nancy Celic in my riding wrote—

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

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I was listening to my colleague. Is he saying that the Liberals are extorting the public?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I said “exhorting”.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, he said “exhorting”. Okay, I was just worried about what I had heard.

• (1330)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, the NDP member from the costly coalition is obviously very sensitive to any accusation that his friends and fellow caucus members are putting up the cost of everything.

I will go back to what my constituents have written to me. The member for Kingston and the Islands, I am sure, is getting emails like this. Nancy wrote to me to raise the issues facing those on a federal disability pension. The member for Kingston and the Islands is obviously not aware that people live on disability pensions.

She continued with asking us to please raise their pension. She wrote that her oil bill was over \$700, and she gets \$895 a month. She cannot afford prescriptions, power, cable, phone or Internet, to say nothing of food. She lives in rural Nova Scotia, so everything she needs, she has to drive to, but she cannot afford gas. She says she is usually home anyway, but this is ridiculous. She goes on to talk about her medical needs, and she says she is living a life like the early days of the pandemic because she cannot get out and misses appointments.

She then says that the government is giving away millions of dollars, and she understands why it has to do it, and she does sympathize, but she asks about Canadian citizens. She questions if the government cares about them. She then says that she finds it hard to see her mom, as she is 35 kilometres away, and Nancy cannot afford the gas to visit her. Her mother is on an old age pension too and cannot afford food.

I would think that the Liberals would care about these issues and vote for the motion.

We are seeing, for example, that food inflation is up 10.8% because of the policies of the government. Fish, which is very important in my riding, is up 10.4%. Butter is up 16%. Eggs are up 11%. Margarine is up 37%. I am not buttering members up on this. The

reality is it has gone up by 37%. Bread and rolls, which is something we butter up, have gone up 17%. I can go on. The food costs have grown enormously.

Fishing is an important part of my riding. It is lobster season and the winter has just started. It is a dangerous job, fishing in the north Atlantic for lobster in the winter during storms, with waves and snow. There are dangers when people are out to sea, 40 to 50 miles off shore.

I know I am going to get scoffs from the other side, but the cost of diesel for a fishing boat is \$2.70 per gallon, which is triple what it was at the start of the season last year. It is tripling. It is because of the policies of the government that we no longer have access to the necessary bait. We are not allowed to fish mackerel because of the decisions of the government. The reality is they have to buy bait from Europe and Norway, and the bait has now doubled to \$1.40 per fish.

There are people who have a loan from the provincial loan board. They are young entrepreneurs who have gotten into the fishing business and have upwards of a million dollars of loans, so they could buy their boat, their licence and their gear. Their loans have just rolled over this fall. Do members know what they are now? They were paying 2%. What do members think they have gone up to? They have more than tripled to 7% on a million-dollar loan.

This is an incredible burden on and cost increase to the food that we eat. That is why we are putting forward this motion. We are saying we have to give people relief. The government has to give relief to Canadians to stop the cycle of inflation it is causing, which is driving up food prices and making our constituents have to choose between heating and eating.

How did we get here? Those tiny deficits were promised in 2015 and balanced by 2019. Before COVID, we had \$110 billion of deficits spent by the government, which was supposed to have balanced budgets. Then during COVID, over \$200 billion was spent on issues that were not related to COVID, which added more debt to the country than all other prime ministers combined in the history of this country.

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That excessive spending puts more cash into the market, and it is chasing fewer goods, which means our paycheques cannot buy what they used to. It is basic economics. However, if we had a government that understood or paid attention to monetary policy, it would have understood that and saw it coming, as we did two years. We warned the government that this was going to happen. The Minister of Finance said she was worried about deflation. Do members believe that? She did nothing about understanding the basic economics of our economy.

• (1335)

I have a lot more to talk about on the wasted government spending that has led us to this point where we are calling on the government to give some compassion and relief, so people can afford to buy food and do not have to choose between food, heating and prescriptions in my province, and in some cases selling their houses.

I have asked questions here, and I had Debbie on the phone. Her mother has to sell her family house. She has to sell the family house because the price of home heating has gone up from \$200 to \$400 a month. We get calls every week from people having to sell their houses because they cannot afford to heat them anymore, and they have to make the choice between maintaining that home or eating, so they have to sell the home.

We are calling on the government to show a little compassion and reduce or eliminate its failed carbon tax, which has not met a single carbon target it has set out. The Liberals have not reduced carbon outputs in this country since they have been in government. It is an inflationary tax intended to drive up inflation, and it is not working, so we would urge all members in the House to please support this motion today. It is a brilliantly crafted motion, which would really help Canadians suffer through this terrible economic time we are in.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague, during his remarks, talked about government spending over the last two years, and some of that spending has included a national child care program, which has been rolled out across the country. Indeed, the Nova Scotia minister is actually an MLA within that member's riding. We just announced that child care fees are going to be going down by 50%, and that there will be another 1,500 spaces added in our province of Nova Scotia alone. That will help support families in my riding and in the member opposite's riding.

Does that member support that government spending over the last two years? Why does he not support it? Will he support the legislation we introduced today that would enshrine that moving forward, so that families in his riding and mine can be supported with important affordability measures that would make a difference to our young kids?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Kings—Hants, who represents a rural riding in Nova Scotia, will know that there is almost no institutional child care available in rural Nova Scotia. I have one institutional child care space that helps nobody in my riding, and there are over 70,000 or 80,000 families on the waiting list in Quebec for this program, and that is a mature program, so it is not going to help. I think it is highly misleading to the families

in my riding to think that somehow that would help them achieve their child care needs.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the colleague opposite mentioned two things that kind of caught my attention: the price of diesel, which somebody is burning in his riding, and the price of gasoline for somebody else to get to medical appointments or to visit their mom. How much of that price, because he quoted the actual price per litre in his speech, is a federally implemented carbon tax, or is it a provincially implemented carbon tax? Could he please—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, the member for Avalon does an excellent job chairing the fisheries committee, and I enjoy working with him on that committee.

On the question, there is no provincial carbon tax on that diesel because we did not impose a carbon tax provincially in Nova Scotia, and the price has gone up from 90¢ to \$2.70 because of the inflationary policies of the government. The policies of the government have also led to our dependence on Saudi Arabian fuel coming into Atlantic Canada, including to the refineries in that member's province, which has energy coming from Saudi Arabia. The—

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

The hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, in 2013, the Government of Quebec joined the carbon market with California, but the negotiations were held long before 2013. The Conservative government was in power at the time. The good thing about the carbon market is that it puts a cap on carbon emissions. Quebec tried to encourage the Government of Canada to join the carbon market, but it did not.

Looking back, does my colleague think that the carbon market is a better alternative to taxation, which only puts a price per tonne without putting a cap on emissions?

• (1340)

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, no, because the carbon market is basically allowing somebody to pay at the end of the day for continuing to pollute. It puts the price of everything up, even in the province of Quebec, and we have not seen carbon emissions come down as a result of that. The province with the most aggressive carbon tax in this country is British Columbia, and we have seen nothing but increases in carbon in that province for the almost 20 years that it has had a carbon tax in place.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I enjoyed my colleague's speech, especially when he read some of his constituents' concerns, which he highlighted. The cost here in Windsor, Ontario, is significant as well, and I would like to hear his perspective on a problem we have that is compounding everything. I have not heard the Conservative position on this.

The City of Windsor had to spend \$5.7 million to clear the illegal border crossing blockade at the Ambassador Bridge, which cost tens of millions of dollars per day to the Canadian economy. Does the member's party support making the city of Windsor residents whole? On top of all these other expenses, we now have to foot the bill of nearly \$6 million to clear the illegal blockade for the rest of the country, and most of the people came from outside this region. Does he support that restitution for the City of Windsor?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I am not an expert on the priorities of the City of Windsor's municipal government, but I think it enjoys having the responsibility of policing and not having the federal government do it. When the city takes those responsibilities on, it involves a cost throughout the year, whatever the challenges are.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Obviously, the procedural rules say that no member should suggest that another member has misled the House, but before me I have a report from the Nova Scotia government that talks about the number of registered day care spaces in South Shore—St. Margarets. Could we—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): That is debate.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Davenport.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am happy to be sharing my time with the very hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

I am very pleased to join in today's debate on the issue of the higher cost of living. It is one that is top of mind for our federal government and also for the residents of my riding of Davenport. It is also the top economic challenge facing our country right now.

We have been speaking with Canadians and know the real uncertainty they are feeling today. First, we have experienced a once-in-a-generation pandemic. We turned the Canadian economy off and then turned it back on. Then Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine. Now we are dealing with inflation. All of these things are related, of course. Global inflation has not been created by the decisions of any one government alone. Global inflation has been created by the combined aftershocks of two and a half years of historic tumult.

Fortunately, Canada is faring better than most other G7 countries in these very difficult times. However, that reality does not change the impact on Canadians when they are looking at their grocery bills or their gas receipts. Our federal government knows how challenging these past several months have been, and while inflation is down to 6.9% from a peak of 8.1% in June, it is still too high. It is also no comfort that Canada's inflation rate is one of the lowest of all G7 countries.

Affordability and covering the costs of everyday living will continue to be a top issue. It will continue to be a difficult time for a lot

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of Canadians, friends, families and neighbours. Our economy will slow, the same as economies around the world, as central banks continue to act to tackle inflation, as we heard from the Bank of Canada yesterday. There will be people whose mortgage payments will rise. Businesses will no longer be booming in the same way they have been since we left our homes after the COVID lockdowns and went back out into the world. Our unemployment rate will still be low but will not be at its record low.

We know that Canadians are worried about the higher cost of living and are also wondering when it will all end. For the Canadians who need it the most, namely those who are the most vulnerable and those who feel the bite of rising prices most acutely, our federal government is there with measures in our affordability plan right now, this year.

Our affordability plan has been providing up to \$12.1 billion in new supports throughout this year, with many measures continuing after this year to help make life more affordable for millions of Canadians. Let me go through some of those measures.

We have doubled the GST credit for six months, which is providing \$2.5 billion in additional targeted support to roughly 11 million individuals and families who already receive the tax credit, including more than half of Canadian seniors. Many received this additional payment last month.

The second thing we are doing is enhancing the Canada workers benefit to put up to an additional \$2,400 into the pockets of low- and modest-income families, starting already this year.

We also increased, on a permanent basis, old age security by 10% for seniors over 75. That began in July. This increases benefits for more than three million seniors and provides more than \$800 in the first year to full pensioners.

In addition, we have a \$500 payment this year going to 1.8 million Canadian low-income renters who are struggling with the cost of housing through a one-time top-up to the Canada housing benefit.

We are also cutting regulated child care fees by an average of 50% by the end of this year. I am delighted that we have introduced Bill C-35, legislation that will protect access to affordable, inclusive, high-quality early learning and child care now and ongoing. This legislation will make it harder for any future government to cancel or cut any child care in the future. I am very happy that this is happening and is currently under way.

We are providing dental care for Canadians without dental insurance who are in households earning under \$90,000 and have children under the age of 12. They are getting up to \$650 this year and up to \$650 next year.

Business of Supply

We are also indexing benefits to inflation, including the Canada child benefit, the GST credit, the Canada pension plan, old age security and the guaranteed income supplement.

● (1345)

All of these measures mean that Canadians are getting more money back in their pockets when they need it most. Also, when it comes to pollution pricing, we know a national price on pollution is the most effective and least costly way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and putting money back into the pockets of most Canadians.

I would like to take a moment to further highlight two other measures in this plan in more detail.

First, in the fall economic statement, we set out a plan to further improve the Canada workers benefit, in addition to already expanding and enhancing it in budget 2021 to reach up to three million Canadians who do important jobs but do not get paid very much. The federal government currently delivers the Canada workers benefit through tax returns. That means eligible Canadians need to wait until the tax year is over to receive the money they have already earned.

However, bills need to be paid throughout the year. That is why in the fall economic statement, we set out a plan to further improve the Canada workers benefit. With the changes proposed in the fall economic statement, the Canada workers benefit will reach up to 1.2 million additional hard-working low- and modest-income Canadians through advance payments that would be made in July, October and January based on a worker's income in the previous year. This means that in total, the Canada workers benefit would top up the income of up to 4.2 million Canadians. They are among the lowest paid Canadians, and no one who works 40 hours a week should have to worry about paying the bills or putting food on the table.

The second measure I would like to underscore is our federal government's investments to support early learning and child care. Child care is not just a social policy; it is an economic policy too. Affordable, high-quality child care will grow our economy, will help give every Canadian child the best start in life and will allow more women to enter the workforce.

I call this policy a game-changer. In fact, just last week, Statistics Canada reported that almost 82% of women in their prime working years had jobs in November, the most on record, as our implementation of the Canada-wide early learning and child care system continues to close long-standing gender gaps in conjunction with a tight labour market. At a time when the cost of living is top of mind for so many, the investments we have made are having a real, tangible impact on what is often one of the biggest monthly expenses for a family.

This is very popular among residents in my riding of Davenport. They love this national child care plan. They are absolutely using it. They very much appreciate the additional dollars, especially during months like December, when there are some additional family gatherings and they need additional dollars.

In budget 2021, our federal government has made a historic investment of \$30 billion over five years to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system. In less than a year, we have reached agreements with all 13 provinces and territories. As I mentioned earlier, by the end of this year, regulated child care fees will be reduced by an average of 50% by 2025-26. Child care fees will average \$10 a day by then for all regulated child care spaces from coast to coast to coast.

Today, that means parents across British Columbia can now save on average up to \$550 more per month for each child they have in licensed child care, representing up to an additional \$6,600 annual savings. This is on top of the existing savings of up to \$350 per month introduced by the ChildCareBC plan in 2018, for a total of almost \$900 in savings per month on average.

As we continue to work with the provinces and territories on the implementation of agreements, we are also creating an early learning and child care infrastructure fund. Through an investment of \$625 million, this fund will enable provinces and territories to make additional child care investments, including for the building of new facilities, all with the goal of making high-quality child care across Canada more accessible and more affordable.

When it comes to ensuring Canadians will get through this challenging economic time, we are providing inflation relief, through our affordability plan, to Canadians who need it the most: the most vulnerable, who are most exposed to inflation. We, of course, cannot support every single Canadian the same way we did with emergency measures at the height of the pandemic. To do so would only make inflation worse and more persistent. In saying that, I note we have been responsible with our spending, we are being compassionate and we are going to continue to have the backs of Canadians who need it the most, both now and moving forward.

● (1350)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Davenport, because she just admitted at the end of her speech that the more the government spends, the higher inflation goes. She just said it. She said that we cannot spend as much as at the height of the pandemic because it makes inflation go up.

I will get to my question for her, now that she was honest about that.

In listening to her speech, Canadians would think they have never had it so good, yet 1.5 million Canadians use the food bank every month. Does the member think this is a statistic that shows her government is doing well, yes or no?

Business of Supply

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, on the first part of the member's question, I said that we had to be very responsible in our spending, and that is exactly what we have been. We have been very responsible in our spending in our fall economic statement, in which we were very targeted in how we would actually spend money. We wanted to ensure we were providing targeted funding to those who needed it the most. I provided a number of those examples of how we were targeting that funding. None of that will add to us increasing inflation.

With respect to food banks, it is a very serious situation, something I definitely worry about in my riding of Davenport. All the measures we have put into place will continue to help the most vulnerable and will put additional dollars into their pockets. We are hoping that the use of—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, what is unfortunate is that, because of the government's inaction on climate change, the Conservatives have come here today with a populist motion saying that the carbon tax does not do anything to fight climate change since Canada is ranked 58 out of 63 and is among the worst countries when it comes to climate change performance. It is a good thing there is a carbon tax. Without it, I think we would likely be ranked 122 out of 63.

At a time when Quebeckers and Canadians are struggling to put food on the table, big oil companies, banks and major food corporations are making record profits. Meanwhile, the government is allowing oil projects to increase their production when every international body is calling for a reduction in oil production around the world. To me, it seems absolutely insane to think that Canada is bragging about being good at fighting climate change when it is ranked 58 out of 63.

My question is as follows. When is the government going to start taking money out of the pockets of big oil, big banks and major food corporations and give it to citizens who are working hard to live a decent life?

• (1355)

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I do think oil and gas companies are raking in the profits. They need to be using their profits and putting them toward reducing their emissions, to decarbonizing, to a just transition plan to help their workers continue to have well-paying jobs as we move forward to decarbonize and achieve our net-zero-by-2050 targets.

I do not agree with the hon. member that we have not done enough as a government. We have put in over \$100 billion. We have introduced over 100 actions to ensure we achieve our Paris accord targets and that we meet our net-zero targets by 2050.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague just read off a long list of NDP proposals that are there to help Canadians, such as dental care, doubling the GST tax credit and the rent benefit. We are glad to see that.

Many Liberals have read off lists of jurisdictions and countries that have a price on carbon. We are glad to hear that as well.

However, I have a list of countries that have an excess profit tax: Belgium, Czech, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, U.K., Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, and I could go on. They have had the courage to go after CEOs.

The member has said that the Liberals cannot help Canadians like they did in COVID, but they are helping CEOs like they did in COVID. They are helping shareholders like they did in COVID.

When is Canada going to make the list of countries that are taking on greedflation and excess profit from oil and gas companies?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, first, the supply and confidence agreement between the Liberals and the NDP was about us coming together and working on the things that we both believed in, such as the environment, housing, indigenous reconciliation, dental care and pharmacare. These are important priorities for Canadians and I am really glad we are working very hard together on achieving these objectives.

With respect to going after oil and gas companies and profit-making, we have already raised corporate income tax rates. We have increased it by 1.5% on Canada's largest and most profitable banks and insurance companies—

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

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I know that all my hon. colleagues in the House are very excited for question period to begin so I will just say a few remarks and then turn it back to you.

As many of us in the House know, the early learning and national child care agreement has come into application across the country. I know my family is quite blessed in many ways. The impact for us is a positive one. Our little one, who is 13 months old, just started day care this week. We received notification about the fees for that day care, which has been in existence for about 30 years.

First, I want to give a shout-out to all the early childhood educators taking care of kids across the country. I would also like to give a shout-out to our government. This accord is so transformational for families across the country.

Statements by Members

We are very blessed as a family and we can cover our fees without issue, but the fees have gone down 25% and there will be a further 25% reduction. For families across Canada, these reductions in child care fees and the after-tax savings for families is because of the child care agreement that our government negotiated with all provinces and territories. This is transformational for families and it is transformational for our economy, participation rates and so forth. I wish to applaud the government. I am very proud that our government was able to sign these agreements.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

LIZ BYRD

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to mourn the passing of a great woman whose impact will not soon be forgotten. Liz Byrd, who passed away in November at the age of 81, was the sort of community leader who was never afraid to roll up her sleeves and get to work.

Liz was a long-time councillor for the West Vancouver Council and a founder of the prestigious Collingwood School. Self-describing as “a bit of an activist”, Liz led a nationally publicized protest to protect the ecologically fragile Eagleridge Bluffs from destruction. She raised \$8 million for community initiatives and was a key advocate that led to the setting up of the Kay Meek Arts Centre.

Liz’s contributions have led to countless recognitions, including the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal, and she played a defining role in shaping West Vancouver as we know it. West Vancouver will forever be indebted to Liz for everything she has done and our thoughts and prayers are with Liz’s family and friends.

I thank her. May she rest in peace.

* * *

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2016, the government legalized medical assistance in dying for adults who had an incurable illness that was irreversible and caused intolerable pain. Many of us warned that we were now on a slippery slope, which would lead to many others being offered assisted death. We were assured that assisted suicide would never be expanded, yet a short six years later, it is being offered to those who give mental illness as their sole reason for ending their lives, and there are plans to extend this scheme to minor children.

Now we are hearing terrible stories of veterans being encouraged to end their lives rather than receive the mental health supports they need. Assisted suicide is even being approved for those who cannot find adequate housing or have fallen through the cracks of our social support system. The government has moved too fast and too far. Life is a beautiful gift.

Before we move from a culture of life to a culture of death, let us reconsider the precarious path we are on and pause any further expansion of assisted death.

* * *

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to commend several constituents from my riding of Cape Breton—Canso who are truly making a difference for their community this holiday season.

For the past 15 years, Inspector Billy Turner, Sergeant John Anthony and Constable Marvin MacDonald of the Cape Breton Regional Police Service have volunteered their time toward the department’s “Shop of the Class” initiative. Shop of the class is a program that pairs local elementary students with a Cape Breton Regional Police officer, an officer who volunteers his or her time to help that child fulfill his or her holiday wish through donations and sponsored activities.

Thanks to the work of dedicated officers like Inspector Turner, Sergeant Anthony and Constable MacDonald, 278 local children have incredibly had their spirits brightened so far.

This goes far beyond the call of duty. From the bottom of my heart and the hearts of my constituents, I am proud to thank these officers for all they do.

* * *

[Translation]

ANTI-SCAB LEGISLATION

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the striking United Steelworkers employees from Océan Remorquage of Sorel-Tracy. That company is a federally regulated business that provides port services. Workers demonstrated yesterday in Quebec City to demand decent working conditions and wages, as well as anti-scab legislation.

These workers have been on strike for more than five months and are dealing with a bad faith employer who chose to take advantage of the weakness inherent in the Canada Labour Code to hire scabs, thus allowing the dispute to drag on.

I would remind the House that the Minister of Labour has been mandated to introduce a bill to ban this practice, which greatly affects workers’ bargaining power. He will not do so until December 2023. There is no justification for this delay. He must act now.

The Bloc Québécois has introduced 11 bills to correct this injustice, and today we reiterate the importance of this issue by showing our support for these striking workers.

HUNTING

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to highlight the importance of hunting in our rural communities. Although I am not currently a hunter, I do enjoy wild game meat. Venison and moose meat are my favourites.

For my Franco-Ontarian community, I know that the tradition of hunting is rooted in its way of life. Whether it is back home, in eastern Ontario, or in the north, when hunting season arrives, time stops and people head for the woods.

In 2012, the current Prime Minister declared in Hawkesbury, where I was born, that the long gun registry was a failure. We have never targeted hunters with our legislation, including Bill C-21. It is not unusual for certain amendments to be debated at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

I salute the efforts of Liberal, Bloc Québécois and NDP members to ensure that hunters will not be mistakenly subject to this law.

Hunting is part of a legitimate way of life.

* * *

● (1405)

[English]

THE SINDHI LANGUAGE

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to honour my Sindhi friends Sufi and Muzafar, and to recognize Sindhi as one of the ancient languages of the world and one worth preserving today.

While Sindhi is recognized as an official language in the province of Sindh, in Pakistan, it is not recognized as an official language by the Consulate of Canada to Pakistan, in Karachi, nor by the High Commission of Canada to Pakistan, in Islamabad. This lack of recognition of a prominent regional language is resulting in a barrier of communication between the Canadian consulate and high commission and the Sindhi people.

This needs to be changed. The Sindhi people deserve to have consular services in their native tongue. For this reason I am calling on the Canadian consulate in Karachi and the high commission in Islamabad to consider recognizing Sindhi as an official language and to provide their services to the people in the Sindhi language. Sindhi is a rich, beautiful language and it ought to be preserved.

Mehrbaani.

* * *

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to congratulate Roberto Luongo, former Florida Panthers goaltender, on his induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

A native of my riding of Saint-Léonard who also grew up on my street, Roberto Luongo is known for his on-ice butterfly style of goaltending and remains one of only three goaltenders in history to have played over 1,000 games in the NHL. He is a recipient of mul-

Statements by Members

tle awards, mentions and trophies. He has appeared in three Winter Olympics and won gold twice, in Vancouver in 2010 and in Sochi in 2014.

Beyond his considerable hockey skills, Roberto Luongo is also a man with a big heart who has actively participated in multiple fundraisers for charitable causes and who has sponsored events for underprivileged children. Lou, as he is affectionately called by his devoted fans, continues to inspire our constituents who skate and hold their hockey practices in the arena that proudly bears his name.

Auguri to Roberto Luongo, our number one hockey player.

* * *

JWEST COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I was proud to announce a new investment of \$25 million to revitalize the Jewish Community Centre in my riding of Vancouver Granville. For generations the JCC has been the centre of Jewish life, and it has been the place where people of so many different communities have learned to swim, have gone to day care and attended seniors programs.

The new JCC will be at the heart of Vancouver Granville with more than 500 units of affordable housing, expanded day care spaces, an aquatic centre, a theatre and so much more. It will also house the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, which, at a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise, will be an important weapon in the fight against hate and ignorance.

The JWest will be a place of gathering, of learning and of helping us understand one another. Above all, it demonstrates the incredibly generous contribution of so many in the Jewish community in Vancouver in building a place where all of us can belong.

* * *

EVENTS IN REGINA

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Regina hosted two major events over the past month.

The 109th Grey Cup took place in the heartland of Canadian football. Even though Canada's team was not playing, Rider Nation still rolled out the red carpet and hosted an amazing Grey Cup week. It was a great game between Winnipeg and Toronto. Yes, Toronto still has a team. Over 33,350 fans packed Mosaic Stadium and watched the Argos squeak out a win over the Bombers. Sorry to the members from Winnipeg.

Next up was the 51st edition of the Canadian Western Agribition. People from across Canada and abroad came to see the best of the best of beef genetics, and the Maple Leaf Finals Rodeo was sold out every night. It was great to see the enthusiasm for Canadian agriculture, with over 100,000 people going through the gates at Agribition. It was a joy to walk through the barns and the trade shows and see the buzzing of activity. If they have never been to Agribition, I ask members to please make the time next year. It is a world-class show.

Statements by Members

These two events prove once again that Regina is the best place in Canada to host a party.

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[*Translation*]

SHERBROOKE CEGEP FOOTBALL VICTORY

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the amazing performance of the Sherbrooke CEGEP's Volontaires, who won the college football division 2 Bol d'or last month.

The team, which took home the title for the first time since 2010, played a great defensive game, as usual, and led a forceful offence. I congratulate all of the players and coaches.

Sherbrooke is making a name for itself on Canada's sports scene thanks to our athletes and sports teams.

Our government is taking action to make sports more accessible in Canada. Thanks to the leadership of my colleague, the Minister of Sport, our government is providing \$25.3 million in financial support over three years for gender equity in sports. What is more, budget 2022 proposes an investment of \$16 million over three years to support measures to create a safer sports system.

Together, let us continue to support our athletes by ensuring that national sport policies and practices reduce the risk of harassment, abuse and discrimination and create a safer and more inclusive sports system for everyone.

* * *

• (1410)

[*English*]

COST OF LIVING

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as families look forward to gathering for the holidays, rising food prices will buy them less while costing them more.

There is a cost of living crisis for millions of Canadians, and the Liberal carbon tax is only fuelling more inflation. New data show a family of four will pay nearly \$1,100 more for groceries next year. By the end of 2023, families will have paid almost \$16,300 just to put food on their tables. On top of that, farmers of a typical 5,000-acre farm will have to pay \$150,000 in carbon tax per year once the Liberals triple it.

Farmers need to dry their grain and heat their livestock barns. They are getting punished for no fault of their own. Every time the carbon tax goes up, the cost of transporting food also gets more expensive.

To help struggling farmers, it is time the Liberals reined in their inflationary spending and axed the carbon tax once and for all.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Champion Petfoods, with facilities in Parkland County in Morinville, is state of the art and provides jobs for hundreds of Al-

bertans. Its naturally sourced Orijen and ACANA pet food brands are internationally recognized for their quality.

Since February 2022, after an avian flu outbreak in Canada, China, Champion's largest market, placed restrictions on Canadian pet food exports. It did not do the same for the United States despite similar issues with the avian flu. The World Organisation for Animal Health has recognized that Canadian pet food products are safe, yet China maintains its unscientific restrictions on Canadian exports. It is the only country in the world to do so.

This represents an existential threat to thousands of Canadian jobs and billions in Canadian exports. This government needs to stand up to Beijing and protect market access for world-class Canadian products. It is time for the Minister of International Trade to step up to the plate and end this absurd ban on Canadian pet food.

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[*Translation*]

JAN ROK ACHARD

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Hochelaga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the circus world is in mourning.

Today I want to lift the curtain and give you a look behind the scenes at a pillar of the circus community in Quebec and Canada.

Jan Rok Achard was a visionary who was unfortunately not well known to the general public. He led the National Circus School of Montreal for 13 years. He co-founded TOHU and the En Piste group, Canada's only circus arts alliance.

Jan Rok Achard professionalized the art of the circus in Quebec and across the country by creating a structure around the milieu. He actively worked to innovate the art form and help it reinvent itself. He also helped propel it to international success and global recognition. The circus was his life.

Jan Rok Achard passed away last week at the age of 79 after a long illness. I offer my condolences to his family, and I join the entire circus arts community in their grief. Let us honour his memory and remain mindful of his vision of the circus arts.

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[*English*]

BORDER COMMUNITIES

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, border communities have suffered disproportionately during the pandemic and have yet to fully recover. Partly this is due to the shutdown of NEXUS centres, which has created an over 300,000-person backlog.

NEXUS allows commuters, workers and travellers into the U.S. and Canada to cross rapidly, which is essential to the trade between both of our countries, the largest economic relationship in the world.

In addition, the Windsor border blockade was a threat to our national economy. It cost municipalities nearly \$6 million in policing costs to remove it. The federal government has yet to reimburse the city, leaving local taxpayers on the hook for a national security action and thus becoming a delinquent deadbeat.

Even on Bill C-21, the Liberals have demonstrated ineptitude by not providing the necessary resources for our CBSA officers to stop gun smuggling.

Ignoring our border communities is poor short-term policy that will have long-term consequences for our economy.

* * *

• (1415)

[Translation]

WORLD CLIMATE DAY

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, December 8, is World Climate Day, a reminder of the very real threat of global warming and the need to take action to limit its effects on the planet.

What are we seeing today? An increase in carbon, extreme temperatures and methane; shrinking boreal, equatorial and tropical forests; forest fires; acidification and lower oxygen levels in the oceans; melting glaciers and Arctic ice; drought; extreme flooding; declining biodiversity; food insecurity; climate refugees by the millions, and so on.

The government is giving billions of dollars to help adapt to climate change. Money is good, but reducing our greenhouse gases is better.

I sometimes feel that here in Canada, just getting the government to understand the urgency to act would be a win.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, more and more people are finding themselves on edge as they struggle to feed their families during this Liberal-made cost of living crisis. Grocery prices are up by 11%, rising at the fastest pace in 40 years, and are expected to rise another 5% to 7%. One in five families are skipping meals, with 1.5 million people using food banks in a single month. In Ontario, first-time food bank usage is up a whopping 64%.

Nine in 10 are tightening household budgets as consumer debt rises 8.2%. The average credit card balance for Canadians is at a record high of \$2,100. RBC estimates households will have to allocate 15% of their incomes to just debt servicing alone. As well, earlier this week the Auditor General confirmed what Conservatives have been saying all along, which is that this cost of living crisis has been made worse by the Liberal government's wasteful spend-

Oral Questions

ing and absolute refusal to put any controls in place. Canadians are out of money, the Liberals are out of touch and the Prime Minister and his costly coalition have broken Canada.

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RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Don Mitchell, the former mayor of Whitby, who served our town for over 30 years. He made the difficult decision to not seek re-election and to retire this year.

Don was first elected in 1991 as a councillor and moved on to serve as mayor for over eight years. As a lifelong resident of Whitby and a lover of history, Don always worked to promote and preserve the rich history and heritage of our town while aiming to build modern and complete communities, both healthy and sustainable.

Don stood up for what he believed in and was relentless in his commitment to preserve the environment and address climate change. Under Don's leadership, Whitby became a more inclusive, sustainable and healthy place to live. I have no doubt his legacy as mayor has left its mark on Whitby.

On behalf of the people of Whitby, I want thank Don for all he has done for our community. He embodies the spirit and dedication it takes to build strong and more resilient communities, and I hope he looks back proudly on his work for Whitby and knows he made a real difference. I also want to wish him and his wonderful wife Liz all the best as they embark on this next chapter.

Happy retirement to my friend.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, enormous deficit spending by the Prime Minister caused the Bank of Canada to hike interest rates for the seventh consecutive time this year. An average mortgage will cost Canadians an extra \$7,000 in interest payments alone. The Prime Minister's reckless spending has already driven up the cost on gas and groceries, and his failed energy policies will make home heating costs double. He will further pile-drive Canadians financially when his failed carbon tax increases this year.

Oral Questions

Why will the Prime Minister not stop his wasteful inflationary spending and axe the failed carbon tax so Canadians can keep the heat on this winter and food on the table?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are nothing if not consistent. They continue to ask us to stop being there to support Canadians. They opposed the child care agreements we signed with the provinces, which we are enshrining into law with legislation we are bringing in to today. They opposed the dental supports for low-income Canadians to make sure kids have the best start in life possible. They opposed the rental supports we moved forward with to deliver for Canadians. They stood against the kinds of supports we were flowing to Canadians through the dark times of the pandemic.

We will continue to be there for Canadians and remain fiscally responsible, because that is what Canadians expect.

• (1420)

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is easy for the Prime Minister to sit in his ivory tower, blame everyone else and spend even more of Canadians' money to cover his own inflationary mess. His inflation tax is going to cost Canadians an extra \$3,500, according to the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

The Prime Minister is the architect of sending 1.5 million Canadians into a food bank, half a million of whom were children. He is responsible for one in five Canadians skipping meals. He keeps failing, and Canadians continue to be on the hook for it.

When will he understand that Canadians cannot afford any more of his failures and just want to eat and heat their homes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives say they stand with Canadians, but then they stand in opposition to measures that ensure Canadians can send their kids to the dentist. They stand in opposition to measures that will give families paying a large amount of their low incomes on rent an extra bit of help. They stand against, and continue to stand against, child care fees that have been cut in half across the country. That is not only giving opportunities for kids to get the best start in life and not only supporting parents when the cost of living and payments are so high, but it is ensuring that our economy grows as people participate fully in our growth.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister continues to keep his head in the sand when it comes to people's home heating bills. Someone from my community reached out to me recently saying they had to make the tough decision of whether to pay for their Fortis home heating bill or buy groceries. He chose to heat his home, even though the bill went from \$46 a month to \$163 a month. He said that now he has to go to a food bank just to feed himself, the same food bank he used to donate to.

Why is the Prime Minister tripling down on increasing carbon taxes for everyday Canadians who cannot even heat their homes now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have heard from Canadians right across the country that they are facing difficult times. We know how important it is to be there for Canadians, which is exactly what we are doing as a government despite Conservative politicians opposing that. We are there with dental supports. We are there with rental supports. We are there by cutting child care fees in half. I was just in the hon. member's province a few days ago to make the announcement that child care fees have been cut in half, saving families hundreds and even thousands of dollars a month.

We will continue to stand with Canadians despite Conservative opposition.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians woke up yesterday morning to news that is the stuff of nightmares. The Bank of Canada announced an increase in the interest rate, the seventh increase in a year, thanks to the Liberals and their inflationary spending.

For a family with an average mortgage, that represents \$7,000 more in interest per year and then they still need to heat their home. We know that the carbon tax applies to residential heating.

Will the Prime Minister cancel this tax so that Canadians do not freeze in their own homes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are all concerned about the rising cost of living for Canadians, but on this side of the House we are providing help to Canadians. The Conservatives continue to oppose it.

We are there with help for dental care for children, we are there with help for low-income renters, we are there to ensure more affordable child care across the country. We will continue to be there for people, even though the Conservative Party continues to vote against our measures to help people.

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty ironic to hear the Liberals say that they understand Canadians' suffering when they have no problem handing out \$32 billion in benefits to dead people and prisoners. What they need to understand is that we live in Canada. In winter, the temperature can drop to -45°C, and we are expecting record-breaking cold temperatures. Heating their homes in winter is not a luxury for Canadians.

Will the Prime Minister promise to do the only honourable thing left, which is to cancel the carbon tax so Canadians can stay warm?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable to see the Conservatives once again attacking the assistance we are providing to citizens, such as CERB. The member just ridiculed CERB. The reality is that, during the pandemic, the direct assistance we provided to Canadians and small businesses, to Quebecers and Canadians all across our country, was essential not just to get through the pandemic, but to ensure that our economy bounces back as quickly as possible.

We were there despite the Conservatives' opposition, and we will continue to be there to support Canadians.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the contract the government awarded to Sinclair Technologies, which is partly owned by Chinese interests accused of espionage, is extremely troubling. We know that the contract was just cancelled, but the government still gave a Chinese government-owned company access to the RCMP's classified frequencies. The contract was for a filtering system that ensures the confidentiality of the communications of the Prime Minister and foreign heads of state visiting Canada.

No one thought any security checks were in order. Can the Prime Minister explain this?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our eyes are always open when it comes to threats from hostile actors. We are very concerned about what happened with these contracts with Sinclair Technologies, and our government is looking at them carefully. We will take all necessary steps to ensure the integrity of our national security, and we will put measures in place to ensure that nothing like this happens in the future.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about those measures. The federal government has a Crown corporation whose mandate is to monitor communications security. It is called the CSE, the Communications Security Establishment. Nobody in government thought to ask CSE experts to assess the national security risk associated with this contract, which gave a company accused of espionage in the U.S. access to the RCMP's secret frequencies.

Nobody in government thought to ask the CSE to look into this. What is the Prime Minister's explanation for that?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we are concerned about the situation. That is why we asked the minister and officials to review two things. First, what should we do to ensure the integrity and security of our communications at this point? Second, how can we improve our systems to avoid problems like this going forward?

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while sick children are suffering and our children's hospitals are overflowing, the Prime Minister is trying to blend into the background. Worried parents are filling the waiting

Oral Questions

rooms with their little ones, but this Prime Minister is nowhere to be found. People are looking for him, but no one can find him. This is not the time to play "Where's Waldo".

At Sainte-Justine Hospital in Montreal, at the Centre mère-enfant Soleil in Quebec City and everywhere else, the crisis is reaching unprecedented levels. Our public system needs help. There is nothing scarier for a parent than having a sick child. Why is the health of our children not a priority for this Prime Minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a parent, I fully understand the concerns about families whose children require pediatric care. We are committed to ensuring that all families have access to the essential care and medications their children need. We will continue to work hand in hand with the provinces and territories to improve health care and deliver real results for Canadians. People know that our health care systems need improvement. The federal government will be there to ensure that the provinces deliver results for children and families.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is not present. That is the problem.

Ontario hospitals are so overwhelmed with sick kids that they are calling in the Red Cross. Staff at the Alberta Children's Hospital are worried that a child might die waiting for care because it is overrun with patients. Across Canada, the situation is dire and parents are horrified, but the Liberals are missing in action and Conservative premiers are moving to privatize health care.

Canadians expect leadership from their Prime Minister in a time of crisis. When will he call an urgent meeting with the premiers so our children get the care they need and deserve?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always defend our public health care system. We believe that all a person should need to get health care in Canada is a health card, not a credit card. That is why we are making sure that in our discussions with the provinces, as we pour more money than ever before into health care systems, we are asking for better outcomes and concrete results. We are making sure that Canadians get the health care they need.

We know the system is failing far too many Canadians right across the country. We will be there to ensure there are significant improvements.

Oral Questions

• (1430)

FINANCE

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have taken wasteful spending to the next level, whether it is tens of billions of dollars in wasteful COVID benefits, \$54 million on the arrive scam app or \$6,000 a night for a luxury hotel room for the Prime Minister. The Liberals have no problem reaching into the pockets of Canadians, taking their money and throwing it on the inflationary fire they lit.

Life has become unaffordable under the mismanagement of the Liberals. Will they stop their wasteful inflationary spending so that Canadians do not have to decide whether to feed their families or heat their homes?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the 13 million Canadians who got individual COVID benefits would agree that this was wasteful spending. We were there for them from the beginning when they needed it, and the Auditor General agreed. She said that we were able to get money into the hands of Canadians quickly, that the money was well spent and helped people stay home safely, and that we avoided significant economic and social consequences.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they absolutely got tens of billions of dollars into the hands of prisoners and the deceased very quickly. That is wasted money. It is money that the Liberals need to account for.

At the same time, we have heard from Ipsos polling this week that the majority of Canadians are scared they will not be able to put enough food on the table or put gas in the car to get to work. Four in 10 Canadians are worried that they are going to lose their jobs in an economy under the Liberals.

They have created a Canada where Canadians are afraid every day. Will they end their wasteful spending so that Canadians can feed their families and heat their homes?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have created and are creating a Canada where Canadians are there for each other and where the government is there for them in their times of need.

At the height of the pandemic, nine million Canadians accessed CERB. We will not apologize for being there for Canadians when they needed us. We start from a place of compassion and from a place of trust. That does not mean there are not controls in place, but unlike the Conservatives, we trust Canadians and we are going to be there for them when they need it.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was \$54 million for an arrive scam app, but the Liberals do not know who got rich. There is \$4.5 billion to cut chronic homelessness by 50%, yet tent cities continue to increase across this country. The latest is that \$4.6 billion went to COVID relief to people who did not even qualify.

The Liberals continue to spend billions and billions of Canadian taxpayers' money, so how do they have the audacity to expect them to pay for their incompetence?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how ironic is it that the Conservative Party of Canada's strategy to combat an affordability crisis is to do less for Canadians in their time of need? It comes as no surprise to me because at the beginning of the pandemic, their leader started with a press conference where he said these "big, fat government programs" would not receive the support of the Conservative Party.

Those programs kept food on the table for my neighbours and a roof over the heads of their children. Those programs kept open the doors of small businesses in my community, and the owners were able to keep the lights on. Those programs kept workers on payroll, which allowed them to afford the cost of living and, at the same time, maintain the benefits that their employer provided for them.

I regret none of these programs. We would do it again because it was the right thing to do then and it is the right thing to do now.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' inability to listen is inconceivable. We are not saying that this did not help people. They are not accounting for nearly \$30 billion that the Auditor General is calling for them to investigate. Who are they listening to when 1.5 billion people used a food bank, children are starving and people are dying by suicide? We are not saying that.

When will they listen, have some humble pie and quit their inflationary spending?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, whether the Conservatives like it or not, the Auditor General really did say in her report that the programs we put in place helped save lives and jobs.

We demonstrated courage. We looked after our economy. I have met many people in the community who have told me that they are glad the Liberals were in power during the pandemic. It would have been disastrous for them had the Conservatives been in power.

We will continue to look after Canadians.

• (1435)
[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it cost Canadian families a record amount to feed themselves in the last year, and unfortunately it is only going to get worse.

A new report confirms that it will cost over \$1,000 more for Canadian families to put groceries on the table this year, driving their food costs to over \$16,000 per year. Canadians who used to donate to the food bank are now lining up to use the food bank.

Why do the Liberals not put an end to their inflationary policies and stop driving up the cost of everything, so that Canadians can afford to feed their families again?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is because of the actions of the government and the measures that we have put in place that two million fewer Canadians are living in poverty today.

In just a few days' time, Canadians will be able to apply for a new rental benefit. This is a direct payment that would help Canadians make ends meet, and this is targeted spending in order to help vulnerable Canadians. Experts have all agreed that this is not inflationary spending. This is being there for Canadians.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal program and plan is a total and complete failure. Food inflation is at a 40-year high. One in five Canadians are skipping meals to try to make ends meet; 1.5 million Canadians used the food bank in one month alone, and 500,000 of them were children.

Canadians cannot afford these Liberal inflationary policies. They cannot afford to feed their families. Why do the Liberals not stop with the inflationary spending, stop making everything more expensive, and let Canadians get back to providing for their families?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians cannot afford is bad financial advice from the Conservatives opposite. If Canadians had taken their advice and invested in crypto, they would have seen their savings wiped out.

Instead, on this side of the House, we have been there to support Canadians. The Canada child benefit has lifted over 450,000 children out of poverty since 2015. Two million fewer Canadians are living in poverty thanks to the investments that the government has made in Canadians.

We trust Canadians; we believe in Canadians, and we are going to keep investing in them. I just wish the members opposite would do the same.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, urged banks to join the fight against climate change. He wants them to do one simple thing:

Oral Questions

Come up with verifiable plans for a swift transition to renewable energy.

Meanwhile, Canada's big banks are among the top 20 fossil fuel backers in the world. A lot of oil money comes from Canadian banks.

Will the government implement measures to encourage banks, our banks, to focus on renewable energy?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about everything we are doing for the environment. We said we would stop putting money into fossil fuels. We are also working hard to conserve and protect our lands and waters. We are doing that now. We are talking about it here, in Montreal and internationally. Everyone came to see what we are doing. We are proud of what we are doing to protect the environment.

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we know that the federal government subsidizes the oil industry, but so does the Canadian banking sector.

In two years, the Royal Bank of Canada's investments in oil rose from \$19 billion to \$39 billion. That is a lot of money. It more than doubled its investments in two years.

If the government was truly committed to fighting climate change, it would do two things. It would make it harder to obtain funding for polluting energies and it would provide incentives for investing in renewable energy. It has done neither.

What is the government waiting for? Will it take action only when there is not one drop of oil left to siphon?

[English]

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like the hon. member, we are committed to concerted climate action, and that is why we have the most ambitious climate plan in Canada's history: \$100 billion have been invested since 2015; we have a \$9.1-billion emissions reduction plan, and we are working to cap emissions from the oil and gas sector. We are going to be eliminating fossil fuel subsidies. We are introducing a clean electricity standard. We are going to reach our climate goals while building a clean economy.

Oral Questions

● (1440)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Monique Pausé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at COP15, the Prime Minister announced the creation of a million square kilometres of protected areas. That is extraordinary. The animals will be able to live in peace and the plants and trees will be protected. What a nice gesture for biodiversity.

The only thing is that these protected areas must not interfere in the development of natural resources. The areas will be protected unless there is an oil, gas, or mining project.

If protected areas can be used for any kind of development at any time, how exactly are they being protected?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will say again that we are doing a lot to protect biodiversity and our environment. We have the oceans protection plan and we are making investments in that.

I am very pleased that members opposite talked about what we did for the indigenous-led area-based conservation program. A big investment in that program was announced just yesterday. That is important for reconciliation and for the environment.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just moments ago the Assembly of First Nations, which represents indigenous people across Canada, issued a declaration publicly opposing the Liberals' Bill C-21. This Liberal hunting gun grab is not only a threat to the livelihood of hunters, trappers and sport shooters but a violation of the treaty hunting rights of all first nations.

When will the Prime Minister end his attack on law-abiding hunters and indigenous treaty rights and stop Bill C-21?

Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, alongside the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, requested two urgent meetings to be held immediately.

The premise behind this is to work together with the Bloc and the NDP. Unfortunately, the Conservatives continue to be part of the problem versus being part of the solution.

The mission here is to get guns off the street—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You are lying.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

An hon. member: Do not let us hear that again.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul want to withdraw the statement she made, please?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the statement.

The Speaker: Will she apologize?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to ask one more time for the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul to apologize.

She is not going to apologize.

* * *

● (1445)

NAMING OF MEMBER

The Speaker: Ms. Dancho, I must name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Pursuant to authority granted to me by Standing Order 11, I order you to withdraw from the House and video conferences for the remainder of this day's sitting.

[And Ms. Dancho having withdrawn:]

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary may finish what he was saying.

* * *

FIREARMS

Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity, as well, to thank the Bloc, and in particular its MPs, those who are on the committee and the one who brought the motion forward. I thank them for that, and I also thank the NDP.

The key here is that we work together with different organizations and different members of the House to ensure, once again, that we get those dangerous weapons off the streets.

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, consultation at this late stage in the process is an act of bad faith by the government. It is a slap in the face to reconciliation. The government needs to go back to the drawing board and consult with first nations and hunters across this country before coming up with any new legislation on this matter.

It is black and white. The Assembly of First Nations knows it; the Conservatives know it, and all other parties know it. The government denied it for weeks, saying it was not going after hunting rifles and shotguns, but now it is finally admitting it. It knows it was misleading the House. When will the government stop going after law-abiding hunters and sport shooters?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has been very clear that it is not targeting the guns commonly used for hunting. I applaud the members of the Bloc—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I would ask the parliamentary secretary to continue.

Oral Questions

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I applaud the members of the Bloc and the NDP for working with us to try to come up with solutions while the Conservative Party is just looking for problems. The committee is doing the important work it needs to do on this legislation. I invite the hon. members from the Conservative Party to join us in finding solutions and supporting our emergency motion for a meeting to invite witnesses to come to committee.

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing our Prime Minister hates, it is diversity, the diversity of opinion. He goes after anyone he does not agree with by insulting them, harassing them and restricting their rights.

His latest target is law-abiding firearm owners. He is banning thousands of firearms used for hunting, while giving gangs and smugglers a free pass. The PM should spend more time up in a tree stand and less time standing against hunters. The Liberals have missed the mark on Bill C-21. When will they stop targeting law-abiding hunters and farmers?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after what we just heard from our Conservative colleagues and the insults they have hurled at my colleagues, we will take no lessons from them on this.

When it comes to firearms, we have been clear from the beginning. We would never prevent hunters from hunting or prevent indigenous communities from practising their traditions. That is why we will continue to work with those who are willing to do so, in order to protect Canadians and get rid of the assault weapons and handguns that have been used to commit horrific killings, whether at École Polytechnique or the Quebec City mosque.

We call on everyone to act responsibly to protect Canadians.

• (1450)

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government's proposed amendment to Bill C-21 has become a textbook case on what not to do. This change was brought in at the 11th hour, with no consultation and no testimony. It has distracted from the original purpose of the bill, and it hurts rural communities.

Hunters, farmers and indigenous communities are outraged that some of the rifles and shotguns they use to provide for their families could be banned. The Minister of Public Safety blindsided Canadians when he made this mess. How is he going to fix it?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by acknowledging the good work the hon. member does on the public safety committee and the perspective he brings forward.

We will not be banning any guns that are commonly used for hunting. We spent two hours at committee today, getting very technical answers on what is included in the bill and the types of guns that are being considered under this legislation. I look forward to working with the hon. member, and in fact all members of the House, to make sure we get this legislation right.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that answer is not good enough for the people of north-western B.C. or people across rural Canada. We are not going to clean up the mess the Liberals have made of this bill, and people feel hoodwinked by these last-minute amendments.

This was meant to be a bill about limiting handguns and protecting victims of domestic violence, but now the Liberals are going after the tools that my neighbours use for hunting, predator control and backcountry safety. When is the Prime Minister going to realize the mistake he has made, fix this mess and back up the bus?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the important role that committees have is exactly what they are doing right now. We have been very clear from the beginning that the bill's intention is to remove assault-style weapons from our streets and handguns that are involved in terrible tragedies. There is the opportunity—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will let the government House leader start from the top, please.

Hon. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, in many different moments in time, when we are dealing with contentious legislation, we have an opportunity to work on our differences and find solutions. I would suggest in this instance, when we are talking about the type of weapons that are involved in terrible tragedies, tragedies like the one unfortunately we commemorated and memorialized just a couple of days ago with Polytechnique, our square focus must be on keeping our streets safe and being able to look into the eyes of victims, and making sure we are removing those guns that are offending. What we have said, in no uncertain terms, is that those guns used for hunting are ones we want to make sure are not included.

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CHILD CARE

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know how important child care is to families from coast to coast to coast. Families in my province of New Brunswick are already seeing the benefits of the significant investments Canada and the province are making. I was glad to see the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development introduce legislation earlier today to enshrine the principles of a Canada-wide early learning and child care system into federal law.

Could she please update the House on this important initiative?

Oral Questions

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day. This morning I introduced Bill C-35, an act respecting early learning and child care in Canada. Our child care plan is working. Fees are being reduced across the country, new spaces are being built and women are getting back to work. This legislation matters.

Let me remind the House that the leader of the Conservatives boasted in 2015 that his government had proudly cancelled Liberal child care agreements, and in the last election, every Conservative candidate ran on a promise to cancel affordable child care for Canadians. We are not going to let that happen. On this side, we are going to support children, families, women and our economy.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals recklessly awarded a contract to the subsidiary of a Beijing-controlled company to provide counterespionage technology, a company that literally faces 21 espionage charges and has been blacklisted from the U.S. as a national security threat.

The Liberals literally handed the keys of our national security over to Beijing. How could they be so incompetent?

• (1455)

Hon. Helena Jacek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister made very clear today, and the Minister of Public Safety and I yesterday, we also share these concerns around this contract that the RCMP had with Sinclair Technologies. The member will have heard that contract has been suspended.

As the central purchasing agent for the Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement will look very closely at this. I have instructed my officials to examine this issue. We are going to look at our procedures and our processes with the greatest intensity to ensure our security of our infrastructure.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Public Safety repeatedly claimed that vigorous security processes were in place, except that is not true. Government officials are on record saying that security issues were not considered when this contract was awarded, a contract that affects our national security directly.

When will the Liberals finally accept responsibility for this complete failure on their part to protect our national security?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more important than safeguarding our democracy. The RCMP has confirmed that the contract with Sinclair Technologies has been suspended and that it is conducting further reviews to ensure the integrity of our infrastructure is in place.

Given the current geopolitical dynamics, we are taking all actions to combat foreign interference.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is something. The Liberal government gave access to the RCMP's secured communications system to a company held by Beijing while the RCMP confirmed that it was investigating Beijing's interference into our election. There was no security check nor any questions about the company that the RCMP is going to entrust its secret codes to for its internal communications. Our American neighbours have known about this for a long time and that company was on their blacklist.

Instead of taking responsibility, as usual the Prime Minister is blaming others. Why is the Prime Minister always so slow and so spineless every time he needs to stand up to Beijing?

Hon. Helena Jacek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our priority was and remains protecting the integrity of Canada's contracting system.

As soon as threats are identified, we take action.

I gave our officials instructions to review the process in place for contracts and to target areas that can be improved.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a serious problem in Canada.

Judging by the Liberals' answers, the media is the Prime Minister's primary source of information on Beijing's interference.

Whether it is a network of candidates funded by China or a company held by the Chinese communist regime getting a contract to protect the RCMP's communications, every time the Prime Minister denies having been informed by his intelligence experts.

Either the Prime Minister has his eyes closed or he does not want to know; or he knows, but is voluntarily hiding the information.

Which answer are we going to get today?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

I think we all agree, as parliamentarians and as Canadians, that this contract should never have been signed. We all agree that national security is everyone's responsibility.

We on this side of the House have always taken steps to deal with foreign interference. My hon. colleague will recall that just a few months ago we blocked three transactions, precisely to protect critical minerals in this country.

When it comes to national security, we will always be there to defend the interests of Canadians.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Quebec's National Assembly passed a unanimous motion on academic freedom:

THAT [the National Assembly] reiterate that promoting greater representation of under-represented target groups must always happen in a context of equal qualifications;

THAT it denounce the interference of the federal government, which funds research chair programs according to certain criteria that do not reflect the specificity of Quebec.

Instead of imposing its ideological agenda, why will Ottawa not let Quebec manage research chairs?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that important question.

As he knows, Canada's research councils are independent from government. Canadians and Quebecers tuning in today should know that our government has invested more in science than any other government, nearly \$16 billion since coming to power.

I think that is the right thing to do because we all agree that the best decisions are the ones based on facts and science.

• (1500)

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is not about money, it is about criteria.

The research chair funding criteria no longer have anything to do with research. The nature of the research itself no longer counts. What counts is the nature of the researcher, assessed against the following criteria: skin colour, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation and disability. The last person anyone wants as a researcher is an average white man.

We agree that all kinds of people should be better represented. Among equally qualified applicants, under-represented minorities should get priority.

How is excluding a group of people consistent with a policy of inclusion?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

We all agree on inclusion and diversity. That is certainly the directive that the research councils have been given. As my hon. colleague well knows, the criteria are determined by the research councils.

What we are doing as the government is investing in science and in research chairs.

I am sure that, as members of the House, we all want to foster diversity and inclusion through science and society in general.

Oral Questions

[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has again exposed the incompetence of the government, saying \$32 billion were wasted paying COVID cash to prisoners, the deceased, people living overseas and non-eligible corporations. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has found more waste—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am hearing a lot of rumbling and people talking to each other.

I will ask the hon. member for Edmonton West to start over.

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has again exposed the incompetence of the government, saying \$32 billion were wasted paying COVID cash to low-income prisoners, low-income deceased, people living overseas and non-eligible corporations. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has found \$4 billion more wasted, with people being sent money who will actually earn more income than the program will allow them to qualify.

Will the Liberal government end its wasteful inflationary spending so Canadians can afford to put food on their tables and heat their houses?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the entire House approved an approach to the COVID benefits that was quick, that got money into the hands of Canadians quickly, that was based on attestation and that ensured there would be post-payment verification. We are going through that process now in a responsible and compassionate way. As the work is ongoing, I can assure the House that we will ensure we follow up with everything.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister spent so much money that he actually ran out of people to borrow it from, so he had the Bank of Canada create a complex scheme to pour billions of dollars into the accounts of wealthy financial institutions. As the bank raises interest rates to fight the inflation the government caused, the Bank of Canada is actually losing money.

For the first time in Canadian history, as the bank loses money, how much taxpayer money will have to go to bail out the Bank of Canada?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have heard us explain why it was important that we were there for Canadians. If we had to do it again, we would, because Canadians needed us and we were there in their time of need.

Oral Questions

What I do not understand is that in an hour's time, we will be voting on Bill C-32 and the Conservatives have consistently voted against the bill. The bill contains an important measure that will further lower the small business tax rate for our entrepreneurs in the country.

If the Conservatives wish to be consistent about their position, why are they voting against a tax cut for small businesses?

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the parliamentary secretary is not telling us is that 40% of all that new spending had nothing to do with the pandemic. The Auditor General has now told us that over \$30 billion was wasted. That is what is causing inflation.

The government's answer is to pour more inflationary gasoline on the raging fire. It is already taking a big bite out of Canadian households. As interest rates rise to fight inflation, Canadians have to pay more in interest payments to the banks, but so too does the Bank of Canada. The Bank of Canada has one shareholder, the Minister of Finance.

How much money will taxpayers be on the hook for to pay off the Bank of Canada's losses?

• (1505)

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives bothered to look at the facts, they would see that we have the lowest deficit and the lowest debt among G7 countries. They would also see that the international community and investors have extraordinary confidence in the Canadian economy. Thanks to the decisions that our government has made, we still have a AAA credit rating.

I would also note that were it not for the important supports we put in place during the pandemic, our economy would not have rebounded as quickly and as strongly as it did. It is among the strongest in the world.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Haiti remains a major concern. Canada has clearly expressed its support for Haiti and its intention to help Haitians in their quest for peace and democracy.

The Haitian crisis will require Haitian solutions. It also requires the support of the international community and regional partners. What measures have been taken under the leadership of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to ensure that other countries follow Canada's example and that our partners commit to supporting the Haitian solution?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his incredible question and also his leadership on the Haitian issue.

We have imposed severe sanctions on members of the economic and political elite in Haiti who are profiting from gang violence.

At present, our objective is to advance the political dialogue. That is why our ambassador to the United Nations, Bob Rae, is currently in Haiti. Our goal continues to be to support solutions by and for Haitians.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is truly out of touch. Canadians are worried. Everything costs more, including clothing, heating, housing and food. With butter costing \$6 a pound, some people are having to cut baking out of their holiday traditions. Others are hunting for bargains and buying products that are close to expired. A distinguished professor said that 2023 is going to be even worse.

Can the Prime Minister give hope and a bit of help to honest folks and cancel all tax increases?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I still do not understand how the Conservatives from Quebec can be against the actions our government is taking to deal with climate change. I understand that the Conservatives want to ignore climate change, but in an hour, we will be voting on Bill C-32, which will lower taxes for our SMEs and our entrepreneurs.

Why do the Conservatives systematically vote against tax cuts, including tax cuts for the middle class?

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Europe is facing an energy crisis this winter that will force people to choose between heating and eating. People are facing the trifecta of inflation, job losses and energy shortages. To address this, European governments have reversed carbon and excise taxes. What are the Liberals doing? They are increasing Canada's carbon tax by 30%. Even Scrooge would find this unacceptable.

When will the Minister of Finance realize that this crisis is not fiction and curb this tax increase on everything?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to remind the hon. member that I had the pleasure of making an announcement in Nova Scotia of a new national program that is going to see \$5,000 grants to help homeowners install heat pumps, which will save them thousands of dollars every year on home heating costs. This is in addition to a \$5,000 grant that was available through the greener homes grant program. That is not all. We have new measures, including the doubling of the GST rebate, more support for low-income renters, new grants in place now to help families with the cost of sending their kids to the dentist and much, much more.

*Oral Questions***HOUSING**

Every step of the way, our focus has been on affordability since 2015. I hope the Conservatives will finally put their money where their mouth is and support us for once.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know a shell game when they see one. The impact of actually taxing Canadians to say they are going to give it back in all kinds of programs means that we are all going to get better just by giving the government more money.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, an independent officer of Parliament, a 30% tax increase means an extra \$700 out of the budget of Albertans. Meanwhile, European governments have provided energy tax relief to the tune of 8,000 euros per family.

Let me ask again. Why is this finance minister the only one on earth who is ignoring the obvious inflationary effects of this tax?

• (1510)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are focused like a laser beam on affordability. I hope that in just a few short minutes, members opposite will vote for Bill C-32, which helps affordability.

Do members know what else helps affordability? It is the climate action rebate. It puts more money in people's pockets, and eight out of 10 families will benefit.

Do members know what they will not benefit from? The advice of the Leader of the Opposition to invest in cryptocurrency. There are a few days left in this session. I hope the hon. Leader of the Opposition has the opportunity to apologize. He should.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 10 months since Russia began its genocidal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The Ukrainian people have mounted a remarkable counteroffensive retaking territory and in so doing, defending our security and democracy around the world.

The NATO secretary general has said that Canada's military support, including our training of the Ukrainian armed forces, has been integral to Ukraine's progress on the ground.

Could the Minister of National Defence share with Canadians the work that Canada is doing to train the Ukrainian armed forces?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his leadership on this issue.

Since 2015, under Operation Unifier, the Canadian Armed Forces have trained more than 34,000 Ukrainian military personnel. We are training them in England. We are training Ukrainian engineers in Poland. Why? It is because their sovereignty, their stability and their security is global security as well, and we are there in the short term and the long term until Ukraine wins this war.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Bank of Canada's interest rate was hiked yet again. Interest rates have already fuelled the high cost of rent, and this will just make it worse. Canadians are now facing a nearly 12% rent hike. In Vancouver, a one-bedroom apartment costs over \$2,576, more than a 17% increase from last year.

The NDP has always said that the \$500 housing benefit is not enough. Will the government help renters by expanding and extending the housing benefit?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the hon. member has not stated all the facts.

The fact of the matter is that we are the government that introduced the Canada housing benefit, which is already delivering an average of \$2,500 to vulnerable renters across the country, and it is active in all 10 provinces and three territories. The \$500 top-up that the hon. member is mentioning is on top of that \$2,500 average payment. On top of that, we are moving ahead with the rapid housing initiative, the national housing co-investment fund and more supports for vulnerable renters.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, on December 6, I again questioned the government on the very serious matter of foreign interference. The government revealed that its strategy is to observe and report. Seriously? Its strategy is to observe and report to whom? Is it to the brain trust that approved Chinese communications equipment for the RCMP?

There are more protests in China and Iran against those regimes than action from the Canadian government. Mall cops observe and report. Why is the government failing to protect Canadians and stand up for Canada?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more important to us than safeguarding our democracy, and that is why, as a government, we are taking action to combat foreign interference. We begin with our national security agents. They conduct investigations and use all tools at their disposal. It includes the significant work that is being done to shore up Canada's institutions and critical infrastructure. Finally, it involves longer-term solutions, which is why we are exploring changes to legislation to strengthen Canada's defences.

Government Orders

[Translation]

JEAN PAUL RIOPELLE

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the House recognize the extraordinary contribution of Jean Paul Riopelle to the visual arts and invite the museums of Quebec and Canada to highlight his work and his unique contribution to the arts as part of the centennial of his birth in 2023.

• (1515)

The 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]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It troubles me greatly that during question period, while the member for Fredericton was asking me a question, the member for Haldimand—Norfolk called her an anti-Semite. I would ask that she withdraw that comment and apologize for it. It is unacceptable to say such things in this place.

The Speaker: I was not aware of that, but I will look into it and come back to the House, if necessary.

The hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk is rising on a point of order.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that unequivocally did not happen. I would like the recording re-played. It did not happen. I do not speak like that. I do not speak to my colleagues like that. I respect my colleagues across the floor equally. I do not do that. That did not happen.

The Speaker: I would ask members to place their questions and comments through the Chair.

It seems there was a possible misunderstanding. I do not want this to turn into a she-said-she-said.

The hon. minister.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, I hope the blues are checked. It was something that I heard as I was preparing to answer the question. It shocked me greatly. We do not use that kind of language in this House. I am quite troubled by it.

The Speaker: I will look at the Hansard to see if anything was recorded. If it was, then I will come back to this; if not, we will let it rest.

The hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I do require an apology. If this did not happen, and I know unequivocally that it did not happen, I require an apology.

The Speaker: As I said, I will check the Hansard and come back to the House, if need be.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

The House resumed from December 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: It being 3:18 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 at third reading stage of Bill C-32.

[Translation]

Call in the members.

• (1545)

[English]

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

(Division No. 237)

YEAS

Members

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

Government Orders

Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fergus
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Gerretsen
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lemire
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Normandin
Oliphant
Perron
Plamondon
Qualtrough
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Vuong
Wilkinson

Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Gill
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Joly
Julian
Kelloway
Khera
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Larouche
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Michaud
Morrice
Murray
Noormohamed
O'Connell
Pauzé
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Rayes
Rodriguez
Romanado
Saks
Sarai
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Simard
Singh
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Cooper
Davidson
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Falk (Provencher)
Ferreri
Gallant
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Rempel Garner
Roberts
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Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
d'Entremont
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Genius
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kmicc
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
Hoback
Koutrakis
Ng
Redekopp
Shields
Deltell
Kitchen
McKay
O'Regan
Sajjan
Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill read the third time and passed)

Business of Supply

The Speaker: I wish inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

* * *

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since this may be our last Thursday question of 2022, I would ask the government House leader to tell us what the business of the House is for the rest of this week and for next week, the last week before members return to their ridings for the holidays.

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. We will continue our discussions about when the House will adjourn for Christmas. This afternoon, we will continue debate on the Conservative Party's opposition day motion.

[English]

After that, we will vote on the adoption of the supply for the current period. Tomorrow, we will begin debate at report stage of third reading of Bill C-9, the judges bill.

Next week priority will be given to Bill S-8, the sanctions legislation; Bill S-4, COVID-19 justice measures legislation; and Bill C-18, the online news act.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to recommence speaking to such an important topic, but also on our government's record of assisting Canadians at this period of time.

[Translation]

Our government is well aware that many Canadians are struggling to put food on the table during this period of high inflation. We go to the grocery store and cannot help but feel discouraged to see the price of the food we eat every day continue to rise. Milk, meat, bread, fruit and vegetables all cost more now. Many families across the country are struggling to make ends meet these days because of inflation.

• (1550)

[English]

However, it is important to remember that inflation is a global phenomenon, and food inflation is no exception. It is the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and has been exacerbated by Vladimir Putin's illegal and barbaric war in Ukraine. To make things worse, snarled supply chains are affecting people and businesses around the world.

However, there is some room for hope in Canada. While inflation was 8.1% in June, it is now down to 6.9%, lower than what we see in many peer economies. For example, in the United States, it is

at 7.7%. The EU is in double digits at 10%, and in the United Kingdom is 11.1%. Still, inflation at 6.9% in Canada is too high.

I do personally, as an economist, forecast inflation going down in the quarters ahead, which will bring much needed relief to Canadian families.

On the bright side of things, as we are all bracing for a global economic slowdown, I believe there is no country better placed than Canada to weather the coming global economic slowdown and thrive in the years ahead. Indeed, Canada has an unemployment rate near its record low, as more than 500,000 more Canadians are working today than at the beginning the pandemic. We also have the strongest economic growth in the G7 so far this year and the lowest net debt and deficit-to-GDP ratios in the G7. On top of that, our country maintains its AAA credit rating from all three rating agencies.

[Translation]

However, we understand that a large number of Canadians will continue to struggle. The next few months will be difficult for our friends, families and neighbours because of inflation.

Many Canadians need help to get through the crisis, and our government is there for them. For example, with our affordability plan, we are putting forward a suite of measures totalling \$12.1 billion to help Canadians make ends meet and provide for their families.

[English]

It is important to note that the measures we are putting forward are not pouring unnecessary fuel on the inflation fire. They only provide targeted, fiscally responsible help to those who need it most.

I would like to remind my colleagues what our affordability plan has to offer. It would enhance the Canada workers benefit and put up to \$2,400 more in the pockets of modest-income families. That would assist nearly three million Canadian workers on a yearly basis.

We will cut regulated child care fees by an average of 50% by the end of this year. As I noted in the first two minutes of my speech prior to question period, my family received news that, for little Leia, who is in day care now, the fees have been reduced by 25% and a further 25% will occur by the end of the year. That is great news for not only my family, and we are quite blessed, but also for families who need that assistance and help.

There is a 10% increase in old age security, which we had put in prior to the increase in global inflation. This will be \$800 more for over three million seniors aged 75 and up who need it the most.

Regarding dental care, over 35,000 Canadians have signed up for their children under 12. These Canadians have incomes under \$90,000 a year and do not have private insurance.

We will make a \$500 payment to 1.8 million low-income renters who are struggling with the cost of housing.

There is the doubling of the GST credit for six months, which is providing additional relief to 11 million individuals and families.

Everything is indexed to inflation. As I mentioned earlier this week, when speaking to Bill C-32, then finance minister Paul Martin introduced the indexation of all benefits of all marginal income tax rates to avoid what is called “tax creep” due to inflation. It was very important. It was one of the largest tax cuts ever introduced in Canadian history and provided a boost to incomes. It is great to see that continue.

[*Translation*]

When we think about the increase in the cost of living, it is due to the cost of groceries, of course, but it is also due to the cost of housing. Our government believes that everyone should have a safe and affordable place to call home. That goal was taken as a given for previous generations, but it is increasingly out of reach for far too many Canadians. Rents continue to climb across the country, pushing people further and further away from where they work.

• (1555)

[*English*]

With Bill C-31, we move forward with a one-time top-up to the Canada housing program. This will provide a tax-free payment of \$500 to low-income renters, and 1.8 million Canadians will receive this. This payment will provide direct assistance to those who are most vulnerable to inflation and those experiencing housing difficulties.

These 1.8 million low-income renters include students who are struggling to pay for housing, and they will be eligible for this new assistance. This one-time top-up is part of a broader set of initiatives introduced in budget 2022. It will invest more than \$9 billion to help make housing more affordable, including by alleviating the supply shortage, which is one of the main causes of the high cost of housing, particularly in the GTA.

[*Translation*]

In addition, with Bill C-32, our government is moving forward with its ambitious package of measures to build more homes and make housing more affordable across the country.

[*English*]

In order to help Canadians afford a down payment faster, Bill C-32 proposes to move forward with a new tax-free home savings account. This account would allow prospective first-time homebuyers to save up to \$40,000 tax-free toward buying their first home.

[*Translation*]

As with the registered retirement savings plan, or RRSP, contributions would be tax deductible and, as with the tax-free savings account, or TFSA, withdrawals would be non-taxable. The tax-free

Business of Supply

first home savings account is a new tool that will help prospective first-time homebuyers save for a down payment.

We will also enhance the first-time homebuyers' tax credit. The professional fees associated with real estate transactions are another hurdle. That is why we are proposing to double the first-time homebuyers' tax credit. The enhanced credit would provide up to \$1,500.

[*English*]

I know my time is winding up, so I will stop there. I look forward to questions and comments from my hon. colleagues from all sides of this hon. place.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I commend the hon. member for his French.

We will now move on to questions and comments. The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I also commend my colleague for his French. He has really made a lot more effort than some. He spoke more in French than many of the Liberal members from Quebec that we have heard speak recently in the House. I commend him and thank him for that.

He spoke a lot about housing. Today, the federal housing advocate released a report on homelessness that is rather critical of what is currently happening in Canada. I will read an excerpt from her press release, which states, and I quote: “Today, the Office of the Federal Housing Advocate released a series of research reports on homeless encampments that confirm a human rights crisis is unfolding in cities across Canada”.

Here, in a G7 country, we are experiencing a human rights crisis when it comes to housing and homelessness. How will the government respond to that report?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question this afternoon. As regards housing and the cost of living across the country, it is very important to bring in measures to help all Canadians.

[*English*]

On the housing front, with the measures put in place by the fall economic statement, some of which will flow through Bill C-32 and the upcoming housing accelerator fund, we will work with all levels of government to ensure that the housing supply is boosted for Canadian families, for first-time buyers and for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Business of Supply

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is always important to help the Conservatives deal with their deep political amnesia. Let us go back to before Doug Ford tried to rip up the charter rights of janitors in schools and before Doug Ford tried to pave over the greenbelt to help wealthy investor pals.

Do colleagues remember his very first act? It was to attack the carbon-trading system that existed in Ontario, because the people in Ontario did not pay a carbon tax. It was Conservatives who brought a carbon tax into Ontario and then stamped their feet, shouted and hollered while Ontarians had to pay a carbon tax they never had to pay before. That was all because of Doug Ford.

Why is it that the Conservatives come up with one dumb plan after another to hurt ordinary people and then blame everyone else for the things they have inflicted on us?

• (1600)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, the hon. member always has insightful commentary. I have had the opportunity to travel with the member for a number of days, and I got to know him as well at committee. I consider him a friend.

Our government will continue to put in place measures that will continue to help Canadians deal with the affordability issues we see due to global inflation. We will continue to move this economy forward. We will continue to create good jobs and good futures for Canadian families across this beautiful country that we are blessed to call home.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I noticed at the beginning of my hon. friend's speech that he listed a litany of external reasons we are experiencing inflation. None of them are attributable to the government.

Since the government has added half a trillion dollars in debt, how much more debt does he think it would take for it to actually have an effect on inflation, if half a trillion is having no effect?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I am very good friends with the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington, and it has been an honour to get to know him these last several months. We have many mutual friends in that area.

The financial ratios and our AAA credit rating speak for themselves. Ever since the Liberals reobtained our AAA credit rating many years ago, we have ensured that our financial foundations are strong for today, for tomorrow and for future generations with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio and lowest deficit-to-GDP ratio. The numbers speak for themselves.

We will continue to put in place the programs to support Canadian families, and we will continue to put into place the programs to support investment in job creation here in Canada.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Beauce.

When I was first elected to this place, after about a year's time, I was approached by a member of the Liberal Party. He came to me and he was trying to make chit-chat. He took an interest in my riding and asked me where I was from. I said Alberta, and more formally Lethbridge.

He asked if that was a rural riding. I said, yes, it was mixed with a small urban centre. He asked if there were farms. I said, yes, we have farms. He asked what we produced, so I gave him the list: chicken, eggs, beef, pork, buffalo, grain, cereals, pulses and dairy. I am proud of this. He turned to me with an inquisitive look and he said, grain is produced there. I said, yes.

Then he said that it was not really produce for food though. It was just for fuel. I said excuse me, because I did not think I had understood him. He said that it was just for fuel. I explained to this member that some of it was, but mostly it was for silage, for animal food or for human consumption, which was the vast majority. He was a bit dumbfounded. He shrugged his shoulders and said, that was weird, because he thought most Canadians just got their food at the grocery store.

I will let this member remain nameless for his sake, but I share this story for a reason. It highlights how out of touch the Liberal government is when it comes to Canadians, when it comes to their way of life and when it comes to this big, beautiful, vast country we call Canada and all of the many incredible things that are done here. It shows the lack of knowledge that exists when it comes to rural areas and how hard-working, innovative, creative and entrepreneurial farmers are.

Meanwhile, the government likes to exercise its ego, engage in theatrics and virtue-signal, which is primarily what the carbon tax is all about. The government talks about the carbon tax as if it is a price on pollution. I am going to get to that in just a moment because I find it to be an interesting term. What I wish to highlight here is that the Liberals have put this in place, but they have not met a single climate target. That would mean that it cannot be a solution. It is simply signalling a virtue.

I would say it is a failed experiment. What is interesting to me is that even in signalling a virtue, it is a virtue that applies to all others, but not actually to the Liberal Party or the government. I will tell members why. We are talking about multiple Liberal members who will get on jets and fly halfway around the world, multiple times over, to go to climate conferences.

We are talking about a Prime Minister who has no problem getting on his private jet and going to places for frivolous reasons, like surfing, perhaps on important days. We are talking about a Prime Minister who has no problem living in one residence, having his food prepared for him in another, and then being driven in a vehicle that uses fossil fuels on a daily basis. It is interesting.

This virtue that is being signalled, which is to care for the environment, applies to everybody else but not the Liberal members. It is incredibly disingenuous. It is incredibly hypocritical, and it is harming Canadians because it is driving up the cost of everything.

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The Liberals' prescribed solution is simply therapy for their guilty conscience, but not something that is creating real change. It is shameful. It is punitive toward Canadians and it is just to help the Liberals sleep better at night while accomplishing nothing.

● (1605)

Let us talk about those farmers. Let us talk about what they really do. Contrary to some of the Liberals' beliefs, they do not just grow crops for fuel. They happen to feed not only our country but the world. Let us talk about them. Let us talk about those hard-working individuals.

In 1978, a radio broadcaster by the name of Paul Harvey gave a speech entitled "So God Made a Farmer." In it, he outlined the incredible characteristics that a farmer had to hold to be a fit caretaker of the land and the animals. He reflected that it is someone hard working and tough enough to bear the weight and struggle of adversity, yet gentle enough to care for the animals in a beautiful way.

In his speech, he hypothesized:

God said, "I need somebody willing to sit up all night with a newborn colt. And watch it die. Then dry his eyes and say, 'Maybe next year.' I need somebody who can shape an ax handle from a persimmon sprout, shoe a horse with a hunk of car tire, who can make harness out of haywire, feed sacks and shoe scraps. And who, planting time and harvest season, will finish his forty-hour week by Tuesday noon, then, pain'n from 'tractor back,' put in another seventy-two hours." So God made a farmer.

In this simple yet powerful tribute, he really does capture those who work night and day and who often overcome challenge and tribulation to care for the needs of not only our population but also the population of the world. It is remarkable.

We are talking about individuals who are pioneers in looking after the environment. These folks look after the land, the soil, the air and the water like nobody else, yet the government insists that they too need to be penalized with a carbon tax. We are talking about folks who heat their barns to care for their animals, dry their grain so they can get it to market, irrigate so they can have crops and transport livestock so we can pick it up in the freezer section. That is what we are talking about.

Of course, that cost gets passed down from the farmer to Canadians, and unfortunately we have seen grocery costs skyrocket due to poor Liberal management and terrible policies, such as the carbon tax. Some 20% of individuals are skipping meals. Food banks are serving people at an astronomical rate, more than ever. Canadians are finding it difficult to make their way to the end of the month while still being able to feed their families. They can expect in 2023 that their grocery bills will go up by another \$1,100 thanks to the Liberal government, the carbon tax, the mismanagement of the overall economy and out-of-control spending.

However, that is not where the Liberals want to stop. They also want to go after fertilizer use. Of course, we are talking about farmers who are already trying to run a business and are using fertilizer with great care, making sure their input costs are minimal by not using very much. Fertilizer is expensive, in case the folks across the way did not know, so farmers want to use as little as possible to get the greatest yield possible.

The Liberal government feels they need to be punished for that. How dare farmers want to feed the country. How dare they want to

feed the world. How dare they want to increase their yield. However, the Liberal government goes after fertilizer use and penalizes the farmers for it.

Meanwhile, the cost of living continues to increase. Canadians continue to pay the price. Farmers continue to be demonized instead of celebrated as the incredible people they are.

Today, the motion before us calls on the government to dare to lean in and understand the act of farming, to dare to understand the impact of their policies on the Canadian people and to give them a break for the sake of families, for the sake of seniors, for the sake of those living with a disability and for the sake of each and every woman, child and man across this country. They deserve a break.

● (1610)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I somewhat thank the member for her speech. Just for comparison, the member compares the whole Liberal bench to one question she asked one member back when she was first elected and maybe when that member was first elected.

She said she is from rural Alberta. Well, I live in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. I grew up in a household where we grew all our own vegetables. We never had to buy anything in the way of vegetables from one season to the next. We kept a horse. We raised a pig for food. Later, we would slaughter the pig and do whatever with it.

The member makes it seem like it is all about her and her constituents. It is about everyone in Canada, as members of Parliament know. Yes, I get a plane back and forth to Ottawa every time I come here. I do not walk here. I actually get two planes. I spend a lot of time sitting down and waiting.

Can the member please explain herself? Should we only abide by what she thinks people are like in the House, or do we all have our own identity?

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, indeed, the member is an honourable one, so we can call him that.

The member is asking a very good question and is making my point exactly. It seems rather ridiculous to be applying a carbon tax to something that people must use. In Canada, we do not really have a choice as to whether to heat our homes, so we do, but we get penalized with a carbon tax. Many of us do not really have a choice in this vast country as to whether we need a car to get to work. Why are those individuals being penalized for making a living?

The member opposite is a member of Parliament. He takes a plane here to represent his constituents. Why is that being penalized?

These are very good questions, and I encourage him to ask his government.

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[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, the problem with the Conservatives is that they say that we need to cut spending, but we never really know how they are going to solve the problems.

Last week, someone in my riding slit his throat open in front of a homeless shelter because he was dealing with mental health problems. He had applied to enter a facility to address his problems, but he had just found out that he could not get the spot that had been reserved for him. There was not enough room.

There were two issues at play in this incident: the issue of housing and the issue of health.

To take care of this person's problems, we need to invest in both health and housing. The health transfers we are asking for are the government's responsibility. The Liberals, on the other side of the House, do not want to invest in health.

Should the Conservatives come to power in a few years, not that we necessarily want that, but if it happens, will they provide the health transfers that every province from one end of Canada to the other is asking for?

- (1615)

[English]

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I fail to see the relevance. I recognize that to the member, that was an important question with regard to health care transfers. However, the topic of conversation today is the carbon tax and the government's mismanagement of the economy. It also has to do with the cost to Canadians.

Where I would perhaps find some commonality with the member is in the notion that indeed Canadians are in a really tight spot right now in trying to make ends meet, and they certainly need to be helped. One of the best ways to help them is by removing the carbon tax and other penalizing policies, including the printing of money, and by helping to put faith back in the Canadian people.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a few questions for the member.

First, is she aware that under the current Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, there are already wide exemptions in existence for farming fuels? That is written in the act.

Second, the member's colleague from Huron—Bruce sponsored Bill C-234. The only reason that bill on grain drying made it through committee and was reported back to the House was the support of the NDP. It would be nice to see some acknowledgement from the Conservatives that some of their measures are getting through because of the support of other opposition parties.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I am baffled as to why members of the NDP are consistently supportive of the Liberals. It is really interesting to watch, actually, because on one side of their face, they support the Liberals and all they do, and on the other side, they go after them. What is going on here? They should just make up their minds.

I would invite the member to truly be an opposition member and hold the government to account.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague from Lethbridge for her excellent and heartfelt speech on agriculture.

Today, I rise to speak to the Conservative Party's opposition motion, which seeks to cancel the carbon tax on food inputs and production. There is a great deal of partisanship and many different points of view in the House, but today I hope we can shed light on the situation that farming families are facing in Canada.

Everything has become more expensive in this country. Canadian families are struggling to put food on the table. Seniors and low-income Canadians are having a hard time paying their bills and heating their homes. They are even finding it difficult to keep the lights on because they have so little money. The cost of food is at a 40-year high. I find it hard to believe that the current government cannot see that its policies have caused the cost of food to increase here in Canada. The Liberals cannot blame the pandemic or the war in Ukraine. It is a problem that they have created. The carbon tax is preventing family farms from being viable. With the government's plan to triple the tax in January, things will only get worse before getting better.

According to "Canada's Food Price Report 2023", a typical farm will pay a carbon tax of \$150,000 per year when the tax increases in the new year. Family farms simply cannot afford this punitive tax.

The Liberals and New Democrats seem to be fine with bankrupting our farmers to feed their selfish ideology. Canadians need to eat. The data speaks for itself: This carbon tax does not work. This government has not met a single one of its targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in this country. We are far behind the rest of the world when it comes to finding tangible ways to limit pollution in this country. We currently rank 58th out of 63 countries, according to the latest studies.

I found the questions asked by the Liberals and other opposition parties today quite amusing. For those parties to stand up and say that our party does not believe in climate change is very comical. We are very much aware of the impact climate change is having around the world and in our country. My family has been farming for over 175 years on our family farm in Beauce.

In committee, all parties supported Bill C-234, a bill from a member of our party that seeks to add natural gas and propane for heating buildings and drying grain to the carbon tax exemption. However, this motion does not go far enough.

We cannot just pretend that our country is not facing food insecurity and poverty. Many families can barely put food on the table these days. Food bank use is at an all-time high in Canada. There were 1.5 million visits to food banks in March 2022. It is frankly a disgrace. Why can we not find solutions to the problem of food prices without being accused of denying climate change?

After seeing a massive 20% increase in people using its food bank, Moisson Beauce in my riding noted that one-third of its clients were children. We Conservatives are compassionate. We want to find a way to bring down food prices across the country, and that begins on the farm by eliminating the carbon tax. Not only has this government messed up with its carbon tax, but it has also decided to impose an extremely unfair 35% tariff on fertilizer needed by farmers. It also plans to limit fertilizer emissions by 30% without even analyzing the impact this could have on our farmers' yields.

This government is so out of touch. People in my riding are skipping meals to stay afloat financially. That is outrageous. I am starting to get the measure of this government, since I have been here since 2019.

• (1620)

After I finish my speech, a Liberal member will no doubt stand up to tell me that I do not know what I am talking about because the federal carbon tax does not apply in Quebec. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change loves reminding me about that in the most condescending way possible. I actually have a very good understanding of how it works in my province, and that comment is not even remotely true. Our province does business with every other province in the country, and they are all subject to this tax on food production. Whether the Liberals want to believe it or not, this tax affects every province and territory in the country because it affects the goods we import from other provinces and the transportation of those goods to put on our tables.

Now I would like to take a moment to thank our Canadian farm families and share some interesting statistics about their work. One study found that only 8% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions come from the agricultural sector. Does anyone know the average in the rest of the world? It is 26%. Our farmers are very advanced. They care deeply about the environment and are constantly adapting and adopting more environmentally friendly practices. Instead of thanking these hard-working Canadians, the government continues to demonize farmers collectively.

The Liberals recently outlined their plan to reduce fertilizer use in Canada by 30% by 2030. However, as I mentioned earlier, no studies have been done to show what impact this will have on our yields in the future. This will ultimately be an extremely expensive and unscientific plan that could not come at a worse time for Canadian agriculture and its consumers. The reality is that farmers are already outperforming the rest of the world in terms of sustainability. In fact, Canadian farmers are already up to 70% more efficient in their use of fertilizers and fertilizer supplements than other countries, on average.

Food prices have risen by more than 10% in the last year, and these avoidable increases will eventually make things worse. Grain drying and other sectors will be seriously affected by the Liberal

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carbon tax increase. Canadian grains are a very important commodity for our country. They are a major source of nutrition, but also one of our major exports. When natural gas and propane are taxed on top of other taxes, farmers have to wonder if they will even bother planting those crops the next season. Their margins will evaporate, and it will be no longer profitable for many of them to do business here in Canada.

In conclusion, we need to seriously re-evaluate many of these Liberal environmental plans. We need to clear the way for our farmers to feed our nation healthy, affordable food. The only way to reduce food inflation is to lower input costs, not triple them. Families want to shop local and eat Canadian products, but lately local produce has become increasingly expensive due to this government's mismanagement of priorities. How can local strawberries cost more at the grocery store in the summer, here at home, than strawberries from California? Our system is broken. Meanwhile, other countries are supporting their agricultural sector. Considering these foreign products are shipped to Canada, whether by plane, train, ship or truck, how can the government not see that this is what is really causing climate change?

This country needs to be more self-sufficient and more competitive. We need to look after Canadians by voting in and implementing meaningful changes in appropriate sectors. I therefore invite my colleagues opposite to carefully consider this motion. They can even propose amendments. The fact is, Canadians need lower food prices, and farmers need our help to remain profitable so our family farms can keep operating and feeding our people.

• (1625)

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have asked my question for the member a number of times and I hope he will answer it, because nobody else seems to want to.

Conservatives ran on pricing pollution. The member was elected in September of 2021. When his constituents went to the ballot boxes to cast their votes for him, they were under the impression that he and his party were in favour of pricing pollution. Now, time after time, Conservatives bring forward motions to the contrary.

Can the member please try to explain to the House and Canadians why Conservatives are suddenly taking a different position on this than the one that they ran on?

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, to hear my colleague tell it, it is like nothing happened in the past year.

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As I see it, what we really need to talk about is this government's mismanagement of many of the programs that were created.

I do not dispute that the CERB was very important initially, but it should have been adjusted. We have said so repeatedly during question period and over the past year. Incorrect payments were made.

What really matters right now is not tripling this tax as of 2023, because it will jeopardize Canadians' ability to feed themselves.

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Madam Speaker, it seems as though the Conservative Party is criticizing the carbon tax to score political points. I do not understand it, because we know that the carbon tax is more of a problem for companies. We are talking about SMEs that are being penalized, while major emitters are benefiting from carbon pricing relief programs designed to promote an increased production of hydrocarbons.

We are well aware that, at the last Conservative convention, there was a resolution to recognize the existence of climate change. They addressed that issue and the resolution was rejected by 54% of Conservative Party members.

How does my colleague explain the climate change denial and the constant attacks on the carbon tax?

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, first, we are not off to a good start because, just yesterday, at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Minister of Agriculture was not even able to differentiate between family businesses and individuals when asked a question by one of my colleagues.

We are being told that people benefit from a carbon tax rebate that is equivalent to what they paid, but that is only the case for individuals, not businesses like family farms. Even the minister did not know that, but we must not forget that 95% of farms in Canada are family farms, which are not eligible for the same tax rebate.

The government is penalizing our agricultural industry and our food supply at the same time.

• (1630)

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member talked about the carbon tax not being paid in Quebec, but I know his producers buy fertilizer and fuel and transport their goods to other parts of the country. We heard the other day at committee that 44% of produce growers are selling their goods at a loss. The government always talks about sustainability.

With \$150,000 carbon tax bills on Canadian farmers, is that sustainable for Canadian agriculture?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, I think that is really unsustainable for agricultural businesses. There will be significant losses and business closures if we do not put a stop to this carbon tax on agriculture.

I want to reiterate that this morning's motion does not seek to suspend the carbon tax on everything, but only on the inputs needed to produce food and to support our ability to feed the planet, because Canada is a major food exporter.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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 South Okanagan—West Kootenay, Climate Change; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Maritime Transportation.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kings—Hants.

Seven times since this Parliament was formed, Conservatives have brought in motions regarding pricing pollution like the one we have here today: March 23, 2022; April 4, 2022; June 7, 2022; September 28, 2022; October 3, 2022; October 4, 2022; and today. Seven times they have brought this in. Six times it has been defeated. In all likelihood it will again be defeated today, and they are absolutely relentless about this issue.

To make it even more confusing, they ran on this in the last election. On election day, September 20, 2021, when the Conservatives had their constituents go to the polls to vote for them, their constituents voted thinking that they agreed with pricing pollution.

This is from their election platform, which says, "Conservatives will work with the provinces to implement an innovative, national, Personal Low Carbon Savings Account. This will put a price on carbon". The plan goes on to compare it to the current plan that the government has, saying, "our plan is just as effective in emission reduction".

This is what they ran on, and since the election, they have brought forward seven motions against pricing pollution.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think it is very important that my hon. colleague be accurate. If he is saying the Conservatives thought they could be just as efficient as the Liberals on emissions, would that not be a sign that they were putting forward a failed plan?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This is a point of debate and not a point of order.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I have asked the question repeatedly of Conservatives as to why. It is not a trick question. I just want an answer. I want to wrap my head around what is going on.

However, time after time, whether it was the member for Beauce or the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes yesterday or countless Conservatives whom I have asked, I continually met with not just dancing around the issue, but complete and utter avoidance of addressing the issue. It is as though they are so incredibly ashamed of what they ran on in the last election that they will not even take the time to explain to Canadians why they have changed their minds.

An hon. member: They are embarrassed.

• (1635)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, perhaps they are embarrassed.

However, here is the best part about it. I will read what members of the Conservative Party said when they released this plan prior to the last election.

The member for Durham, as we know, brought forward the plan, because he was the leader at the time. He said, “We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms.”

The member for Calgary Centre, who I know has asked questions challenging this in the House today, said, “I think it's an evolution for parts of our party—but there's also many parts of our party that have been pushing forward for environmental solutions of all types.” This is a sitting member who is supportive of it, and this was what he said when he ran in the last election.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There seem to be other members debating against each other. I would ask members to please hold off, because it is the hon. parliament secretary who has the floor, and there will be opportunities for questions and comments.

On a point of order, the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I would like to apologize. I was just concerned that the member was accusing the Conservatives of believing in evolution, and I do not think that is fair.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, this is not a point of order.

On another point of order, the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, in response to the point of order, we just do not believe that the NDP—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I already indicated that these are points of debate and not points of order.

I would say to members that if they want to have conversations with each other that they may want to step out into the lobby to do that.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I think they might both be right.

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I am just trying to wrap my head around the position of the Conservatives. If the answer is that they had absolutely no faith in their previous leader and the decision he took, that is fine. They should just say it. If the issue is that Conservatives were upset when the member for Durham put it in their platform, I did not hear any of them voicing their concerns during the election.

This platform was issued in May or June. They started talking about this well before the election, and I do not remember hearing the member for Calgary Centre say he was against it. As a matter of fact, he said the exact opposite, as I just read out, and so did so many Conservatives. They just sat there and accepted it as being part of their plan.

They went out, knocked on doors and tried to convince Canadians of their plan. Albeit, it was a different and, in my opinion, flawed way of doing it because they were basically saying that, instead of putting a price on pollution and giving back a rebate of the exact same amount to everybody, they would have liked to put a price on pollution, but it would go into a savings account, then using that savings account, people would have a catalogue from which they could determine how to use their points, just like Aeroplan. They would have been able to choose what they wanted with their points. They could have gotten a bicycle. They could have given carbon credits somewhere. They could have done this or that.

I do not think it was a good plan, but at least it was a plan, and at least it was a plan that understood and respected how the market works. If we put a price on something, it will change the way people look at making their purchases. This is not rocket science. This is economics 101. If we make something more expensive, fewer people are going to want to buy it. It eventually changes the way people look at making their purchases, and they move in another direction. It is not the first time this has happened. We can look at purchasing cigarettes, for example. Every time they get a bit more expensive, people start to make the choice that maybe it is time for them to quit.

This is not something that is brand new. Conservatives would want us to believe that this is something that is absolutely foreign, out there and incomprehensible. The party whose members tout themselves as the stewards of the economy and those who know how an economy works better than anybody else cannot even understand the basic fundamental principle that, if we put a price on something, it will make it less attractive for people to buy, but that is where we are.

I find it very hypocritical and very rich that Conservatives come in here, time after time, bringing forward these motions, seven since the last election, to challenge something that they supposedly believed in. In the last election, they did believe in it, and they put it in their platform.

The member for Regina—Lewvan, who looks like he is ready to ask me a question, even though my time is not up, ran on it. He knocked on doors and said that he would like to talk about securing the environment. They had a plan to secure the environment, the Conservative plan to combat climate change.

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He ran on it. He knocked on doors. He was convincing people that this was the right way to go, yet here we are. Now he is involved in seven motions basically saying the exact same thing, which is that pricing pollution does not work, and all I really want, and why I have asked it countless times today and leading up to today, is for one Conservative to get up and explain why.

They could just say that they had absolutely no confidence in the member for Durham when he put forward that proposal, that they regret he did it and wish he had not. That would at least attempt to explain what is going on here, but instead, I am met with complete and utter avoidance and silence when I ask that question. I just want to understand why Conservatives have done a 180° turn on this issue.

I know that life is very difficult for Canadians right now, and in particular those who are the most vulnerable. They are really struggling.

• (1640)

I do not think it helps when Conservatives get up to say that the price on pollution is going to directly affect them, when they know full well that the money that is collected through that pricing mechanism is redistributed. As a matter of fact, more people get more back than they end up spending.

The Conservatives should know this. They do know this, but they will not miss an opportunity to try to convince people that that is not the case. Why are they doing it? They are doing it solely for political gain. In their calculus, they have decided that, if we try to convince people that this price on pollution is going to make their lives worse, that means people will vote for us in the next election. It is extremely unfortunate that Conservatives would use this as an opportunity when we are talking about trying to protect and save our environment. It is unfortunate that they would do this when we know that we have to act quickly now for future generations, in particular for our children.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the member's ability to stand for 10 minutes and talk about nothing but Conservatives. I think it is a testament to himself and how little he really thinks about what Canadians are going through during this difficult time.

I do have a question for him. It is interesting, when we are talking about campaign platforms. A CTV News article from August 2019 states, "Environment Minister Catherine McKenna says her government's climate strategy, including the federal carbon tax provisions, will stay the course. She dismissed claims by"—and I am quoting here, so I can use the name—"Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre that the government would stretch its promised \$50 per tonne"—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member cannot be naming members, even if he is quoting. He needs to refer to him as the Leader of the Opposition or by his riding.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, the article states, "She dismissed claims by the [Leader of the Official Opposition] that the government would stretch its promised \$50 per tonne price cap by 2022, if re-elected this fall.

I would like this member to tell his constituents why the Liberals broke their promise on raising the carbon tax past their committed \$50 a tonne.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, first of all, it is easy to talk about Conservatives for so long when they give me so much material. Second of all, I will answer that question. Clearly, at some point along the way, it was determined that it would be most effective to raise the rate again, and that is why they did it.

Did members see how easy that was? I answered the question. A decision was made after the fact that we actually needed to increase it again.

Now, I would love for a member from the Conservative Party to stand up and show me exactly how easy it is to answer the question of why they have done a complete 180 on this issue of pricing pollution.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, one has to be some special kind of incompetent to get lower percentage marks in the polls than Danielle Smith, but then Doug Ford can step forward. He tried to rip up the charter rights of janitors in schools and thought it was a good idea, and he is a guy who is trying to pave over the green belt for his buddies.

People forget the first thing Doug Ford did was to rip up the carbon pricing system in Ontario. People did not pay a carbon tax in Ontario. Doug Ford said that he was going to rip up the system that makes it possible for Ontarians not to pay a carbon tax, and now Ontarians are going to pay a carbon tax. That allowed Doug Ford to jump up and down, holler and shout, and go to the Supreme Court and say he was going to fight a carbon tax that was imposed because of his dumb decision.

We see Conservatives, time and time again, coming into the House with policies that are making it more and more difficult for people while the planet is in crisis. I would like to ask my hon. colleague what he thinks it is about Conservatives in Ontario supporting someone like Doug Ford on such a dumb position?

• (1645)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely right. In 2006, it was Ontario and Quebec that made the cap-and-trade deal with California. Then as soon as Doug Ford came along, he ripped it up and said that he was out of this deal.

What do we see five, six years later? We see Quebec and California having progressed so much further in environmental protections, in electrifying their grid and in encouraging electric vehicles. They seem to be light years ahead now.

Ontario got stuck behind because Doug Ford thought, just like these Conservatives do, in my opinion, that they can play to fears and they can play to people's emotions when they start talking about issues like this. We should not be surprised about this since Conservatives voted 54% at the last convention that climate change does not exist. I guess we should not be surprised that they take policy decisions like this.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague is truly the champion of slamming Conservatives in the House. He is the all-around champion. Every time he gets up, he slams the Conservatives for 10, 15 or 20 minutes. It is stunning.

He talked about the Conservatives' climate change plan, but let us talk about the Liberals' plan. Let us talk about their record. Since the Liberals have been in power, greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise. Canada is ranked 58th out of 60 countries, as was said at COP27. Canada is the second-largest investor in fossil fuels in the G20. The government has said that we are investing \$8.5 billion U.S. per year. It said that in 2023—that is, in 24 days—that investment will drop to zero. Is that really going to happen?

What is the Liberal government's plan to combat one of the greatest crises of our time?

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, what am I hearing here? Is the Bloc Québécois now suddenly against pricing pollution? That is what it sounds like.

The Bloc Québécois is falling into the exact same trap that the Conservatives have, which is saying that emissions in this particular sector have gone up and, therefore, it is a failed plan. They are doing that because they know there are too many variables that go into this. It is not as linear as the member would like to suggest, and there is more to it than just the simple answer he gave.

[Translation]

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to speak to the opposition motion today. As I usually do, I will go over the parts of the text and address each part accordingly.

First, the Conservatives keep saying that the price of pollution will be tripled, but they fail to mention two very important things. First, the money collected will be given back to individuals and businesses and, second, the price will increase progressively over the next eight years until 2030.

The second part of the motion is on the estimated increase in the price of food in 2023. I think that the Conservatives failed to illustrate and quantify the role that the price on carbon plays in this increase.

[English]

When one actually reads through the report, it makes clear that the key drivers to food inflation we are seeing, both in 2022 and what is being projected next year, are because of the war in Ukraine. Ukraine and Russia represent 27% of the global grain market, which has been restricted and we have seen access

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challenges. We are seeing rising prices on oil and gas as a result of the war as well.

Supply chains are also being affected. We have just gone through COVID and there is still a zero-COVID policy in China, one of the major manufacturers and distributors of products for around the world. I know there can be a really important foreign affairs discussion on the Canada-China relationship, but right now, the supply chain is still being affected.

There is labour as well. We have a million unfilled jobs in Canada, and western countries around the world are dealing with similar challenges with demographics. As baby boomers retire, that large demographic works its way out of the system of workers. For me, that is what is driving this, and that is what the report says, at page 15, which is extremely important. However, the Conservatives are laying this all on one policy choice, and I do not think they have been able to illustrate how that represents a significant increase whatsoever in the price increases we are seeing.

It is also important to recognize that nearly all farm inputs are exempt from the carbon price. Yes, transportation fuels and other indirect costs can and will have an impact, but with Bill C-234, which is before the House right now, as it has been reported back from committee, we might see an exemption altogether on direct farm costs associated with any type of carbon pricing. That is because there is a recognition that, yes, we are encouraging farmers, and farmers are taking on great innovation themselves. The government has put almost \$1.5 billion in the last couple of budgets to help make that transition, but some of those commercial technologies are not readily available. That is the balance that we have walked thus far.

• (1650)

[Translation]

The third and fourth part of the motion concerns the challenges in financial affordability. On this side of the House, as I have already said, we are concerned about the cost of living and we are bringing in measures to address that. This gives me the opportunity to talk about the current economic situation, the days to come and what we need to do to find a balance between supporting vulnerable people and maintaining our solid financial position.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

It does give me an opportunity to talk about where Canada's economic and relative debt position is. It is important because there might be some folks in the public gallery who have been watching this debate or watching it at home, and my God, they would think that things are completely broken in this country. That is the message the leader of the official opposition sends and it is very problematic. Canada actually has one of the strongest records in the G7 on economic performance. As I mentioned, I do not think any parliamentarian in this House would somehow suggest that there are not challenges and that there are not affordability difficulties, but when we look at our economic position to comparative countries, we are extremely strong.

I find it ironic that members of the Conservative Party stand up and talk about government spending when they were supportive of many of the measures that this government took during the pandemic. Now that the Conservatives have been in place and now that there has been a cost to the Canadian treasury to make sure we were protecting Canadians and protecting businesses, they talk about how government is spending too much money. It is that hypocrisy.

The member for Kingston and the Islands said it far better than I can in saying that the Conservative Party actually ran on a carbon price just 13 months ago during the election in 2021. He is right. Thirteen months ago, the Conservative Party said this was a good idea. Now the Conservatives stand before us saying they never would have thought up such an idea. It is that mixed messaging that creates challenges in terms of Canadians believing whether or not the Conservative Party is authentic in its beliefs.

Also, we just passed the fall economic statement. The third reading vote happened about an hour ago. It is important to recognize that not only is this government walking a key balance between making sure that vulnerable Canadians have the supports they need during this difficult time, but we are also maintaining a strong fiscal position. We are not being irresponsible with government spending.

Again, I want to go back to those comparative numbers. Canada has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. We also have the lowest actual deficit as a proportion of our debt in the G7 as well. When we look at other comparable countries, the Conservatives would paint a picture that somehow things are very poor in this country. Actually we are doing very well in an international context.

I want to talk a bit more around some of the hypocrisy of the Conservative Party as it relates to the things we talked about. There is a Parliamentary Budget Officer report that talks about some of the money the government has spent during the pandemic as we try to collect money from some individuals who might not have been eligible. The Conservatives voted on those measures in this House and supported them at the time. We have heard comments this week that somehow this is terrible and that the government should have had more accountability. We have been very clear that, had the program been tightly designed, so much so that it would have taken weeks or months on end to get that program money out to the individuals in question, they would have been in a much more dire situation. In fact, that same PBO report said that if the government had

not done what it had done, poverty would have doubled in this country.

I want to remind my Conservative colleagues, when they reference that report, that if their suggestion is that we should have been even more bureaucratic and put in even more program requirements at a time of incredible instability, and the fact there was a lot of uncertainty about what would move forward, we wanted to be able to act quickly. We knew there would still have to be an accounting on the other side, and that is something this government will be taking forward in the days ahead, but we did it to protect Canadians. We did it to make sure that the economic principles of the country were strong, and that Canadians knew we had their backs, and that is exactly why I am proud to stand on this side of the House.

The last thing is on carbon pricing, because that is the topic of the day. The member for Kingston and the Islands did a good job when one of my colleagues joked about just cutting that 10 minutes and playing it again. Maybe we would, but there have been a lot of questions about Atlantic Canada. I want to remind my constituents, indeed those in Atlantic Canada, that notwithstanding the Conservative Party making the pitch that it is going to apply this winter, the carbon price will not apply to home heating this winter in Atlantic Canada.

I want to really highlight the programs that we have put in place.

There is the \$500 million that we have put out. Today in question period, the Minister of Immigration talked about this program providing \$5,000 grants to help homes transition off home heating oil. First and foremost, that is about affordability. That is about saving thousands of dollars a year in energy bill costs. That matters to my constituents and people across the country, but particularly in Atlantic Canada. Of course, it also is beneficial for the environment.

I look forward to questions from my hon. colleagues. That is one of my favourite parts of this, so I will sit down and look forward to taking them.

• (1655)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's comments. I want to talk a bit about how we rank among our peers around the world in how our economy has performed.

In 2019 to 2021, Canada had the second-highest increase in gross debt-to-GDP ratio out of 33 countries, only behind Japan. One would have thought our economy would have improved, but despite leading our peers in debt accumulation, Canada did not outperform our peer group in economic growth during the pandemic. Canada had the 11th lowest real GDP growth.

The fact is we spent almost more money than any other country, but our GDP growth did not keep pace. Would my hon. colleague say that is a record the Liberals should be proud of?

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Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, we stand on our record on this side of the House that in a time of immense need, we were there to help support Canadians. I want to take this back and contrast this to the Conservative approach back in 2008-09 when the Harper government frankly did not get involved whatsoever. The economic scarring lasted years. In fact, issues lasted until 2015.

I also want to remind the member that while he can say the program and the way we rolled it out was somehow not beneficial for economic growth or otherwise, he voted for those measures. He was involved in helping to support them. At that time, all of us as parliamentarians were saying it was the right thing to do. I find it a little bit ironic and a little bit facetious that he is raising this now, that somehow that was not good spending at the time.

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech, and I especially thank him for giving the first part in French. We are happy to hear the language of Molière in the House.

The inflation crisis is impacting everyone, but it obviously impacts low-income individuals more, and low-income pensioners especially, because their income is rarely or not fully indexed.

The Bloc Québécois called on the government to increase old age security for all seniors at the age of 65. The government responded by increasing benefits for seniors aged 75 and over. This indirectly forces low-income seniors aged 65 to 74 to return to work.

According to my esteemed colleague, is that the answer his government is giving seniors under the age of 75?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. I will try to answer in French. The Bloc is calling for an increase in old age security for people across Canada. My problem with the Bloc Québécois proposal is that, if the government increases benefits by 10% for all seniors in Canada, this represents an additional expenditure of \$10 billion a year.

[*English*]

It is essentially built-in spending. I am happy to have that conversation. It is a massive expenditure, especially with baby boomers coming across at the same time.

In hindsight, the \$3 billion that the government is spending every year, I would perhaps have liked to see that be for 65 and up and targeted on lower income, but we are promising to increase the guaranteed income supplement for those who are 65 and up, which will help to address that gap.

It is fine to talk about spending for seniors, but we need an economic plan to make sure that as our baby boomers come through, we can actually afford it long term.

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I do want to ask the hon. member about carbon pricing on the largest emitters.

The Canadian Climate Institute, the institute that our federal government established, analyzed the federal carbon pricing bench-

mark. While it agreed that carbon pricing works and strong carbon pricing is essential to any credible climate plan, it highlighted how it does not do enough to curb industrial emissions. Output-based pricing creates loopholes for the largest emitters. Again, the Liberals were saying the right things on climate and doing something on carbon pricing, but are unwilling to match their actions to the scale of the crisis we are facing and are unwilling to make the biggest polluters pay their fair share.

Does my colleague agree the government needs to fix the output-based pricing system?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her kindness in letting me see our former premier, Darrell Dexter, yesterday. It was nice to have a chance to connect with him.

On an output-based pricing system, I think there is a conversation to be had about that in terms of trying to find that equilibrium. At the same time, we have to make sure our major emitters and our major corporations that are involved in economic trade or businesses that are particularly vulnerable are not necessarily priced out. That is an economic competitive question that I think needs to be analyzed before we go there.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would just like to take a few moments to rebut some of the things my colleague from Kings—Hants said.

In terms of my question, which was pretty direct, from 2019 to 2021 Canada had the second-highest increase in its gross debt-to-GDP ratio out of 33 countries covered by the IMF, behind only Japan. Our gross debt-to-GDP ratio increased from 87.2% to 112.1% in 2021, an increase of 24.9 percentage points. Given that the Canadian government has accumulated more debt as a share of our economy than nearly every other country in our peer group, the expectation would be that Canada's economy fared better than others during this period. This is incorrect.

Despite leading our peers in debt accumulation, Canada did not outperform our peer group in economic growth during the pandemic. Canada had the 11th-lowest real GDP growth, 5.2%, in 2020 and the 12th-lowest real GDP growth, 4.6%, in 2021. Canada also did not outperform its peer group by achieving lower unemployment during the pandemic. Canada had the third-highest unemployment rate, 9.58%, out of 33 industrialized countries and the eighth-highest unemployment rate, 7.43%, in 2021.

I get that these numbers are a lot of numbers that just came out at everyone, but I put these numbers on the record to debunk the myth that the Liberals keep on trying to portray, that they somehow went into the pandemic later than everyone else and came out sooner. That is simply not the fact.

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They spent more than every other country in the world but Japan, and our citizens are not better off. The proof is in the pudding, as 1.5 million Canadians in one month used a food bank to put food on the table for their families. That is a failure of leadership by the Liberals.

Students at universities across our country are staying in hostels or needing to use a food bank to eat or, like in my alma mater, the University of Regina, actually fundraising so students do not go to bed hungry, asking alumni for money to help feed students.

Another thing I am looking forward to is splitting my time with the member for Brandon—Souris and hearing what he has to say about a private member's bill he brought forward last Parliament, which still has not been implemented.

On the topic of not doing what Canadians need, I would like to talk a bit now about agriculture and the agriculture file.

My colleague from Kings—Hants left a bit of wiggle room on Bill C-234. I know he had some positive things to say about it, and I am very interested, because all the Liberal members voted against the bill in committee. As the chair, he did not have to vote, and I am really excited to see how he votes and if he is going to stand with the agriculture producers in Kings—Hants or with his party whip, whether he will be voting along the party line or voting for the people who sent him here.

I am very much looking forward to that vote, because I think that over the last couple of weeks a few members on the Liberal backbenches are starting to feel a bit of pressure when it comes to either supporting the carbon tax or supporting the amendments at the report stage of Bill C-21. I am looking forward to seeing if some of the rural members from the Maritimes or Newfoundland or some of the members from Alberta and Manitoba are going to support these gun amendments that criminalize law-abiding firearms owners, or if they are going to support their constituents and make sure their voices are heard in the chamber. There are a few votes on which I am really looking forward to seeing what some of the Liberal members in the back rows are going to do.

This motion is about making life easier and more affordable for Canadians. We hear in our offices across the country that one of the biggest strains now on families is going to the grocery store and trying to make sure they have enough food to put on the table.

Some of these increases are staggering. I get pictures sent into my office of what \$100 buys now at a grocery store. It does not go a long way for a lot of these families. Some of the reasons are that fish is up 10.4% to purchase; butter is 16.9%; eggs, 10.9%; margarine, 37.5%; bread, rolls, buns, 17.6%; dry or fresh pasta, 32.4%; fresh fruit, 13.2%; oranges, 18.5%; and the list goes on: lettuce, 12.4%; potatoes, 10.9%.

• (1705)

These are a lot of staple foods for families. Our household is no different from anyone else's. We have three growing children. They are five, seven and nine, and they are starting to eat more and more. Like a lot of other families, we are seeing our grocery bills continue to climb, and these are the things that we need to have solutions for.

As members of the House of Commons or as public servants, we have to look for how we can ease this inflationary pain. One of the things we can do is get together and take some taxes off the prices of these fruits and vegetables and everyday essentials.

We also had a motion brought forward a couple of weeks ago to take the carbon tax off home heating, which is quite reasonable. Some of the members across the way voted in favour of that motion, and I thank them, including the member for Avalon, for voting in favour. I appreciate that very much, because he was listening to his constituents. It is incumbent on us to remember who brought us here. Former premier Wall always said that these are not our seats, that these are the seats of the constituents and we are just caretakers for a while, because someone else will come and take them. I think a few members are remembering that, and we appreciate that support very much.

When it comes down to erasing the carbon tax on the price of groceries, it is pretty much unanimous in the House of Commons that the price of groceries is too high. We are just trying to figure out how to deal with that situation. Also, the price of groceries is high because that carbon tax hits our producers; it hits the farmers and it hits the trucking industry. At each link of a supply chain, the carbon tax continues to increase the price of goods. That is something we are trying to get through to the members across the aisle and get through to our Liberal, NDP and Bloc colleagues. It is not just a one-time hit; it continually makes things more expensive.

We saw from a recent report that a 5,000-acre farm, by 2030, will pay \$150,000 in carbon taxes per year. I grew up on a small family farm in southwest Saskatchewan. We had dairy and beef, and we made our own hay. We had 2,000 acres that we combined. They are not big farms. I do not know anyone who farms 5,000 acres who can take a \$150,000 hit year after year. Unless common sense prevails, the only outcome for these family farms is bankruptcy.

The Minister of Agriculture was at the agriculture committee, and I am proud to be a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. The minister was there for ministerial estimates, and I asked her to give me a definition of what a family farm is. She could not. Some Liberal members have not been on a farm and do not know agriculture. They see it as big corporate agriculture and big business, but 95% of the farms in Canada are still family farms.

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The minister was taking the family out of the family farm and said that families are still okay, but it is the farm that is getting taxed. That is not a thing. The family farm is one unit. It is a package deal. Those two cannot be separated. Some are incorporated and some are not. One thing we learned through CERB was that sometimes a family farm that is not incorporated missed out on some programming.

I will leave members with this, when it comes to the rising cost of inflation. Tiff Macklem, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, said himself that the increase in spending by the government has had an effect on inflation.

One more thing that is really going to hit us hard, now that the interest rate is 4.25%, is that people are going to start losing their homes. I have friends whose mortgages have gone up \$750 to \$800 per month. That is over a \$10,000 increase in what they will have to pay for their mortgages over a year. Families, farm families and everyone in between are squeezed hard enough. They cannot absorb that \$10,000 hit. They cannot absorb that \$1,000 hit on their grocery bill. We in the House of Commons are going to have to come to the realization that one cannot get blood from a stone. We have to give tax breaks to Canadians.

• (1710)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, every day that I sit in this seat, I think of the people who put me here, and I think most people in this House do the same thing.

I would like to understand how to apply the motion today to provinces that have themselves brought in their own climate action plans and pricing on pollution. How does this motion serve those provinces? The Government of Canada did not apply the pricing all across Canada.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, if I had had more time for my speech, I would have gone down that path.

The carbon tax hits at different points in the supply chain, so taking the carbon tax off food would also help lower the price of transportation and agriculture inputs, thus lowering the price of food across the country. It is not just at the grocery store that the carbon tax gets added onto the price of groceries; it is throughout the supply chain. That is why this motion would almost immediately help lower the price of groceries across the country, in the provinces that have the federal backstop and the ones that have their own.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. I would like to talk to him about how to make the economy more resilient by addressing the structural weaknesses that cause inflation.

This could include reducing our dependence on oil and gas, rebuilding critical links in the supply chain, addressing the labour shortages that are preventing businesses from offsetting supply problems, and launching a major housing construction project to address the imbalance in the housing market.

What are my colleague's thoughts on that?

[*English*]

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, yes, we have to launch many infrastructure projects. One of the big Liberal failures is that the Infrastructure Bank has hardly done any projects at all.

We also have to make our economy more resilient through innovation through the private sector, and we have been doing that. Agriculture is a perfect example. All the innovations done through technology and better seeding practices have all been done through the private sector. Whether it is precision agriculture, zero tillage, crop rotation or crop cover, it was all done by private entrepreneurial agriculture producers.

There was not one government program that said, “Thou shalt do zero tillage.” It was done through private innovation, technology and the sharing of best practices. That is how we get ahead and create a more resilient economy, not by continuous government intervention.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will start by recognizing, as the member said, that families and all people are suffering right now with the rising prices of food and inflation. It is true; it is happening, and unfortunately, as families and regular Canadians are suffering, large corporations are taking home outsized, massive profits that are not being fairly taxed.

Does the member agree with the NDP that large corporations should pay their fair share and that those outsized profits that grocery chains and the oil and gas sector have gained over this time should be redistributed to people to help pay their bills?

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, the NDP continually tries to have this class warfare, whereby it pits companies against employees, westerners against easterners and urban against rural. It continually tries to divide Canadians. It learned that from its Liberal counterparts.

Everyone should be working together in Canada to make our economy work better. I have never seen a company without employees, and I have never seen employees without a company. They should work hand in hand. We should stop trying to pit them against each other, because that is a recipe for failure. That is what the NDP did in Saskatchewan, and that is why it is relegated to having 10 seats in that province, because it did not understand the economy or that we need to work together to grow our economy.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, that was a most interesting exchange. Maybe we can get into it later in questions.

Business of Supply

Our Conservative Party motion we are debating today is an opportunity for all members of Parliament, even those in the Liberal backbenches, to stand up for their constituents. I know it would take courage, but I urge each and every one of them to do the right thing. If we can pass this motion, it would send a clear message and a strong signal to the Prime Minister that his government needs to get serious about the dramatic rise in the price of food. It would also send a signal to our entire agriculture and agri-food sector that the House of Commons will not sit idly by. We must do everything in our power to stop the Liberal government from making it more expensive for them to produce the food that Canadian consumers rely on.

There is a cost-of-living crisis for millions of Canadians. Our Conservative team gets up every single day in this House to fight for them, and sadly all we hear are empty Liberal talking points with no solutions. Just yesterday the Bank of Canada raised the interest rate another half a percentage point. First-time homebuyers are now paying \$500 more a month in monthly payments for the same mortgage they had a year ago, and it now takes 67% of their income to service a traditional mortgage.

With these relentless rate hikes, more and more already struggling Canadians will have to choose between paying their mortgage and putting food on the table. Canadians are out of money, and the Liberal government is out of touch. We can just look at the number of credit card applications this year over last year. A report the other day had it at a 31% increase.

Like all MPs in the House, I am getting emails and calls from moms and dads who are struggling to pay their bills and put food on their tables. I am hearing from seniors who worked decades to save for their retirements, only to see inflation eradicate their income and their financial security. Every time families and seniors go to the grocery store, they get sticker shock. It is expected the average family will pay an additional \$1,065 for groceries next year. It is no wonder that one in five Canadians is already skipping meals and a record one and a half million Canadians are visiting food banks every single month.

Our Conservative opposition day motion would not only help reduce the cost of food for families and seniors, it would pour water on the fire of government-induced inflation.

I farmed all my life. It is what I know best. I also represent countless farm families and hear from them every day. They find it reprehensible that the Liberal government is determined to make it more difficult for them to produce the food we eat. It is simply unconscionable that their own government is implementing policies that are making it more expensive for them to farm and stay competitive.

Farmers will never forgive the Liberals for calling them tax cheats, and they will never forget how the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture voted against my private member's bill, Bill C-208, which my colleague referred to earlier, that made it easier to transfer their farm to the next generation. The one little correction is that it is working. It is out there today and farmers are taking advantage of it, but they are only 3% of the small businesses in Canada. There are 97% of the small businesses in Canada that are not farms, and they are also getting the opportunity to level the

playing field, because nobody is getting an advantage here. It is just a levelling of the playing field under Bill C-208.

Returning to the farming industry, farmers are livid that the Liberals recently voted against the Conservative bill to completely exempt them from the carbon tax. We live in Canada, where it gets cold and wet. Farmers need to dry their grain and heat their livestock barns. Farmers are getting punished through no fault of their own.

As the recent "Canada's Food Price Report 2023" stated, a typical 5,000-acre farm, which has been alluded to today many times and of which there are many across the Prairies, will have to pay \$150,000 in carbon taxes per year, once the Liberals triple their carbon tax.

● (1720)

When I was a farm leader, I recognized that there is 100 million acres of arable farmland on the Prairies. If that was an average rate, it would require that \$3 billion be taken out of the farm pockets and added to the cost of food. I want to remind the Minister of Agriculture that every time the cost of growing food, processing food and transporting food goes up, we see those costs borne out in our grocery store receipts.

Our Conservative motion aims to resolve the long-standing issue of the Liberal carbon tax being one of the cost drivers that is making Canada less competitive and making food more expensive. On the first issue, farmers have seen their input costs soar, which includes energy and fertilizer. With the Liberal carbon tax being applied to many aspects of our agriculture and transportation sectors, it is making farmers less competitive on the world stage.

Lots of farmers in my region experienced a wet spring and had to rely on aerial application services. Those companies pay the Liberal carbon tax, which is passed down to the farmer.

Many farmers get custom haulers to take their grain, oil seeds and pulses to the elevator or their final destination. Those companies pay the Liberal carbon tax, and it is passed down to the farmer.

Most farmers use fertilizer to increase their yields. Those companies that produce and transport the fertilizer pay the Liberal carbon tax, which is passed on to the farmer.

I could go on and on, but it is clear that the Liberal government does not know how farmers operate. Almost every product that a farmer needs to purchase to plant a crop, maintain a crop and then harvest a crop gets transported in from somewhere, and the Liberal carbon tax is applied to all of it.

The beef and pork producers in my riding also feel the brunt of the Liberal carbon tax. The trucking companies that haul the supplies they need to run their farms and ship their livestock pay the Liberal carbon tax, and it is passed on to the farmer.

If members are starting to see a trend, it is that a significant portion of our agriculture sector is paying the carbon tax.

As our leader said, our Conservative team wants to repatriate food production by standing with our farmers here at home. The Liberal government's high energy taxes and proposed fertilizer emissions cuts will only drive food production abroad to higher-polluting foreign jurisdictions, which would have them then burn fuel to send that food by ship, train and truck back to us. Our Conservative team wants to repeal these taxes and fertilizer mandates to get out of the way and get off the backs of our farmers.

It is no wonder the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that families are seeing a net loss thanks to the Liberal approach. Families and seniors are getting crushed, and it is time for action. They are tired of the Liberals gaslighting about how much better off they are under the carbon tax rebate scheme.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:27 p.m., and today being the last allotted day for the supply period ending December 10, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

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

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow: Madam Speaker, we would like a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

• (1810)

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

(*Division No. 238*)

YEAS

Members

Aboulttaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold

Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Davidson
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Ferreri
Gallant
Genius
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Business of Supply

Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Doherty
Dreeshen
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kmic
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Martel
McCaughey (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Rayes
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shiple
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 108

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Angus
Arya
Bachrach
Bains
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bendayan
Bergeron
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr
Chabot
Chahal

Aldag
Ali
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Battiste
Beech
Bennett
Bérubé
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Blois
Boulerice
Brière
Cannings
Casey
Chagger

Business of Supply

Champagne
 Chatel
 Chiang
 Collins (Victoria)
 Coteau
 Damoff
 DeBellefeuille
 Desilets
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fillmore
 Fonseca
 Fortin
 Fraser
 Fry
 Garneau
 Garrison
 Gazan
 Gill
 Green
 Hajdu
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Idlout
 Jacek
 Joly
 Julian
 Kelloway
 Khera
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Larouche
 LeBlanc
 Lemire
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McGuinty
 McLeod
 Mendès
 Miao
 Morrice
 Murray
 Noormohamed
 Oliphant
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Qualtrough
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Saks
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Simard
 Singh
 Ste-Marie
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien

Champoux
 Chen
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Davies
 Desbiens
 Desjarlais
 Dhillon
 Dong
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Fergus
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Gaheer
 Garon
 Gaudreau
 Gerretsen
 Gould
 Guilbeault
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Ien
 Johns
 Jowhari
 Kayabaga
 Khalid
 Kusmierczyk
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 Leboutillier
 Lightbound
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 Maloney
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McPherson
 Mendicino
 Miller
 Morrissey
 Naqvi
 O'Connell
 Pauré
 Petitpas Taylor
 Powlowski
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Sahota
 Samson
 Scarpaleggia
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Sorbara
 St-Onge
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thompson

Trudeau
 Turnbull
 Van Bynen
 Vandal
 Vignola
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Zahid
 Zuberi— 203

Trudel
 Valdez
 van Koeverden
 Vandenbeld
 Villemure
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zarrillo

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
 Hoback
 Koutrakis
 Ng
 Redekopp
 Shields

Deltell
 Kitchen
 McKay
 O'Regan
 Sajjan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 2022-23

Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)
 moved:

That the supplementary estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023,
 be concurred in.

[*English*]

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

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded divi-
 sion.

● (1820)

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

(*Division No. 239*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
 Ali
 Anandasangaree
 Arseneault
 Ashton
 Bachrach
 Bains
 Barsalou-Duval
 Beaulieu
 Bendayan
 Bergeron
 Bibeau
 Blaikie
 Blanchet
 Blaney
 Boissonnault
 Bradford
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Carr
 Chabot
 Chahal
 Champoux

Alghabra
 Anand
 Angus
 Arya
 Atwin
 Badawey
 Baker
 Battiste
 Beech
 Bennett
 Bérubé
 Bittle
 Blair
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Blois
 Boulerice
 Brière
 Cannings
 Casey
 Chagger
 Champagne
 Chatel

Business of Supply

Chen
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Davies
 Desbiens
 Desjarlais
 Dhillon
 Dong
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Fergus
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Gaheer
 Garon
 Gaudreau
 Gerretsen
 Gould
 Guilbeault
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Ien
 Johns
 Jowhari
 Kayabaga
 Khalid
 Kusmierczyk
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 Lebouthillier
 Lightbound
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 Maloney
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McPherson
 Miao
 Morrice
 Murray
 Noormohamed
 Oliphant
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Qualtrough
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Sahota
 Samson
 Scarpaleggia
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Sorbara
 St-Onge
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thompson
 Trudel

Chiang
 Collins (Victoria)
 Coteau
 Damoff
 DeBellefeuille
 Desilets
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fillmore
 Fonseca
 Fortin
 Fraser
 Fry
 Garneau
 Garrison
 Gazan
 Gill
 Green
 Hajdu
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Idlout
 Jaczek
 Joly
 Julian
 Kelloway
 Khera
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Larouche
 LeBlanc
 Lemire
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saarnich—Gulf Islands)
 McGuinty
 McLcod
 Mendès
 Miller
 Morrissey
 Naqvi
 O'Connell
 Pauzé
 Petitpas Taylor
 Powlowski
 Rayes
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Saks
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Simard
 Singh
 Ste-Marie
 Suds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Trudeau
 Turnbull

Valdez
 van Koevorden
 Vandenbeld
 Villemure
 Vuong
 Wilkinson
 Zahid
 Zuberi— 205

Van Bynen
 Vandal
 Vignola
 Virani
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
 Albas
 Arnold
 Barlow
 Benzen
 Bezan
 Bragdon
 Brock
 Caputo
 Chambers
 Cooper
 Davidson
 Dowdall
 Ellis
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
 Ferreri
 Gallant
 Genuis
 Godin
 Gourde
 Hallan
 Kelly
 Kram
 Kurek
 Lake
 Lawrence
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Maguire
 Mazier
 McLean
 Moore
 Morrison
 Muys
 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Poilievre
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Ruff
 Schmale
 Shipley
 Soroka
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Tochor
 Uppal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vis
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Williamson

Aitchison
 Allison
 Baldinelli
 Barrett
 Berthold
 Block
 Brassard
 Calkins
 Carrie
 Chong
 Dalton
 Doherty
 Dreeshen
 Epp
 Falk (Provencher)
 Findlay
 Gagné
 Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gray
 Jeneroux
 Kmiec
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Lantsman
 Lehoux
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lloyd
 Martel
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Melillo
 Morantz
 Motz
 Nater
 Patzer
 Perkins
 Reid
 Richards
 Rood
 Scheer
 Seeback
 Small
 Steinley
 Strahl
 Thomas
 Tolmie
 Van Popta
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Williams
 Zimmer— 106

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
 Hoback
 Koutrakis
 Ng

Deltell
 Kitchen
 McKay
 O'Regan

Business of Supply

Redekopp
Shields

Sajjan
Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Mona Fortier moved that Bill C-36, An Act for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023, be now read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mona Fortier moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

[*English*]

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, with Conservative members voting against.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois members unanimously agree to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Bloc members voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, the Greens agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

Mr. Kevin Vuong: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote, voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote and I will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 240*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Ali

Alghabra
Anand

Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bendayan
Bergeron
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr
Chabot
Chahal
Champoux
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Davies
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fergus
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Gerretsen
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lebouthillier
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Miao

Angus
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Battiste
Beech
Bennett
Bérubé
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Blois
Boulerice
Brière
Cannings
Casey
Chagger
Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Victoria)
Coteau
Damoff
DeBellefeuille
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Gill
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Joly
Julian
Kelloway
Khera
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Larouche
LeBlanc
Lemire
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendès
Miller

Morrice
Murray
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Perron
Plamondon
Qualtrough
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Vuong
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi— 205

Morrissey
Naqvi
O'Connell
Pauzé
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Raves
Rodriguez
Romanado
Saks
Sarai
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Simard
Singh
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Ruff
Schmale
Shiple
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Business of Supply

Scheer
Seeback
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Vierson
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 106

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
Hoback
Koutrakis
Ng
Redekopp
Shields

Deltell
Kitchen
McKay
O'Regan
Sajjan
Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee of the whole.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mrs. Carol Hughes in the chair)

(On clause 2)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Chair, could the President of the Treasury Board please confirm that the supply bill is in its usual form?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Madam Chair, the presentation of this bill is identical to that used during the previous supply period.

[*English*]

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Davidson
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Ferrerri
Gallant
Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Rempel Garner
Roberts

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Doherty
Dreeshen
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kmiec
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Reid
Richards
Rood

Business of Supply

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

[*English*]

The Deputy Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill agreed to)

The Deputy Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Bill reported)

[*English*]

Hon. Mona Fortier moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

The hon. deputy House leader.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, with Conservative members voting against.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, the Greens agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

Mr. Kevin Vuong: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote, voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote and I will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 241*)

YEAS

Members

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

Business of Supply

Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fergus
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Gerretsen
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lebouthillier
Lighthound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Miao
Morrice
Murray
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Perron
Plamondon
Qualtrough
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Vuong

Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Gill
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Joly
Julian
Kelloway
Khera
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Larouche
LeBlanc
Lemire
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendès
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
O'Connell
Pauzé
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Rayes
Rodriguez
Romanado
Saks
Sarai
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Simard
Singh
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Weiler

Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi— 205

Yip
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Davidson
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Ferreri
Gallant
Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shipley
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Doherty
Dreeshen
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kmiec
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 106

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
Hoback
Koutrakis
Ng
Redekopp
Shields

Deltell
Kitchen
McKay
O'Regan
Sajjan
Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Business of Supply

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mona Fortier moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote, with good news to follow I am sure.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, it is with great enthusiasm that I encourage you to canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with the Liberals voting yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, with Conservatives voting against.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, it is with great enthusiasm that we agree to apply the results of the previous vote, and the members of the Bloc Québécois will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, the NDP certainly agrees to apply the vote and we will be voting in favour.

• (1835)

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, the Greens, too, agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

Mr. Kevin Vuong: Mr. Speaker, with great enthusiasm from Toronto, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote and am voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote, and I will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 242*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech

Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
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
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Miao	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	Pauzé
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado

Sahota
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Vuong
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Saks
Sarai
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Simard
Singh
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Vien
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Viersen
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
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PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
Hoback
Koutrakis
Ng
Redekopp
Shields
Deltell
Kitchen
McKay
O'Regan
Sajjan
Sidhu (Brampton South)— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House:

(a) the government should

(i) condemn anti-Asian hate and all forms of racism and racial discrimination,

(ii) ensure all anti-racism policies and programs address the historical and present-day racism, discrimination, stereotyping and injustices faced by people of Asian descent,

(iii) highlight the lived realities of racism and barriers to inclusion experienced by people of Asian descent in national consultations on issues of anti-Asian racism; and

(b) the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security should conduct a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents across the country. (Private Members' Business M-63)

He said: Mr. Speaker, today, I am privileged to rise in the House to introduce Motion No. 63 on anti-Asian racism, stemming from the alarming surge in hate and discrimination against people of Asian descent.

On May 8, 2020, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said, “the pandemic continues to unleash a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating and scare-mongering” and “We must act now to strengthen the immunity of our societies against the virus of hate.”

Over the past two and a half years, increasing violence against Asians has been reported around the world. Targeted, taunted and threatened, Asian peoples have experienced being punched in the face, beaten into a coma and, in the worst cases, murdered.

The spa shootings in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 16, 2021, took eight innocent lives, including six Asian American women. Two weeks later, on March 29, 2021, an anti-Asian attack at a café in Richmond, British Columbia, included racial slurs and coffee hurled at a shop manager. These instances of hate are underpinned by the arduous conditions that Asians have suffered, including experiences of exploitative labour conditions and overrepresentation in precarious low-paying jobs.

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Davidson
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Ferreri
Gallant
Genius
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shipley
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Doherty
Dreeshen
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kmicic
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal

Private Members' Business

Canada is not immune to the global virus that is anti-Asian racism. One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, a federal government-funded report, published by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, detailed a disturbing increase in anti-Asian hate across the country.

Among the 643 documented racist attacks from March 10 to December 31, 2020, are seniors being coughed or spat on and physical assaults against children, who were most likely to experience significant mental and emotional trauma. The report notes that those perceived to be the most vulnerable, namely adolescents and older adults, were subjected to greater instances of physical abuse, while women reported the majority of incidents overall. As for where these racist attacks took place, 49% were in public spaces such as parks and sidewalks, while 17% occurred in businesses, especially in the food sector like restaurants and grocery stores.

In 2021, the situation only worsened. A follow-up report showed that between January 1 and December 31, 2021, 943 instances of anti-Asian racism were logged, representing an increase of 47% over the previous year. While women continued to report the majority of cases, attacks against children increased by a staggering 286%, and cases reported by the South Asian community shot up by 318%.

Together, these two national reports paint an increasingly dire picture of the harsh realities of racism faced by Canadians of Asian descent today.

Allow me this opportunity to acknowledge the organizations that supported this research: Anakbayan Canada, Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice, Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, Eliminate Hate, Project 1907 and Viet Collective for Community Justice.

That being said, the lived experiences of differential treatment are not new for Asian Canadians. The stories unfolding today rest on the backdrop of a longer history of structural and institutional racism in Canada. Whether it was the Electoral Franchise Act of 1885, which barred Chinese Canadians from voting in federal elections, or the internment of 21,000 Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, Asian Canadians have endured harmful stereotypes and discriminatory laws throughout the centuries.

Chinese Canadian veterans who served in World War II returned home to Canada only to then have to fight for their right to vote. Their efforts paid off in 1948, when Canadians of Chinese and South Asian descent were finally granted the right to vote in Canadian federal elections, followed by Japanese Canadians in 1949.

Blatant or less overt, deliberate or subconscious, the treatment of Canadians of Asian descent has been that of the perpetual foreigner, despite their generational roots and immense contributions to building this country.

• (1840)

Starting in 1881, over 17,000 Chinese men were brought to Canada to help construct the transcontinental railroad. Immediately upon the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Chinese Immigration Act, 1885, was passed into law, imposing a head tax

of \$50 on all Chinese immigrants entering Canada. The new law represented the first piece of legislation in Canada to exclude immigration on the basis of race and ethnicity in order to preserve the dominant white settler colonial state. The Chinese head tax would increase, reaching its peak in 1903 of \$500, equivalent to two years of income for an immigrant worker at the time. In the 38 years that the tax was imposed, 82,000 Chinese immigrants paid nearly \$23 million, an amount estimated to be worth \$354 million in 2021.

It appears that from the government's point of view, the discriminatory head tax was not enough to halt Chinese immigration. As a result, an updated Chinese Immigration Act, 1923, came into effect on July 1, 1923. Now called Canada Day, July 1 was referred to by the Chinese community as "humiliation day" in the decades that ensued. The Chinese Exclusion Act, as it now commonly referred to, banned virtually all Chinese immigrants from entering the country. Until it was repealed 24 years later in 1947, people of Chinese descent were the sole demographic singled out for full exclusion.

This was just one of over 100 different policies that systematically denied equal rights to Chinese people, viewing them as inferior and reducing them to second-class citizens. They were barred from being able to vote, to hold public office or to own property. Additional laws were passed in provinces where Chinese immigrants lived that limited their employment and housing options, as well as imposed many other restrictions, including subjugation to random police checks for immigration documents.

Perhaps most difficult of all is that a generation of predominantly Chinese men were unable to reunite with their families, resulting in a gender imbalance of 28 Chinese men to every Chinese woman in Canada. While Europeans were enticed to immigrate to Canada with promises of free land, the Chinese head tax and Chinese Exclusion Act inhibited the reunification of Chinese families.

Collectively, these policies severely impacted the social and economic development of the Chinese community in Canada for decades to come, leaving a lasting impact and enduring generational trauma. The repeal of these xenophobic laws, the gaining of the right to vote and the passing of the Canadian Citizenship Act, 1947, were the first steps in righting the historical wrongs that Canadians of Asian descent endured. Restrictions based on race and national origin were not fully eliminated in Canada's immigration system until 1967. The liberalization of immigration policies marked a turning point for advocates of a more equitable vision for our country.

Private Members' Business

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act, a stain on our country's history that reminds us to reflect on the lived realities of anti-Asian hate that remain and thrive today. The motion I am introducing is a concerted call for action to condemn the rising prevalence of anti-Asian racism that has been commonplace throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the global health crisis began, Canadians of Asian descent have now, more than ever, been subjected to xenophobic harassment, racist stereotypes and hateful slogans, parroted even by public figures. In response, protests have taken place across the country, including the rally I attended in Nathan Phillips Square at Toronto City Hall last year, held in support of the movement against these odious forms of hate.

The diversity of attendees demonstrated the strong message that Asian Canadians do not stand alone against the rising tide of anti-Asian racism and that there is solidarity to enact lasting change through equity programs, initiatives and hate-crime prevention. Canadians are recognizing our joint responsibility to speak up and do something about the anti-Asian racism that is taking hold in Canada and around the world. That is why it is important to stand together with all Canadians against all forms of discrimination, hate and xenophobia.

• (1845)

Racist acts and terminology that flame distrust and division have no place in an inclusive society. For many in the Asian community, displays of solidarity like these recent gatherings are liberating moments to express the newest fears that they carry. There is comfort in allies joining the call for action to confront racism.

Through Motion No. 63, I am asking this Parliament to agree:

(a) the government should

(i) condemn anti-Asian hate and all forms of racism and racial discrimination,

(ii) ensure all anti-racism policies and programs address the historical and present-day racism, discrimination, stereotyping and injustices faced by people of Asian descent,

(iii) highlight the lived realities of racism and barriers to inclusion experienced by people of Asian descent in national consultations on issues of anti-Asian racism; and

(b) the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security should conduct a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents across the country.

In all of its ugly forms, anti-Asian racism is undoubtedly a part of Canada's history, but Canadians have a choice today as to whether hate will play a part in our collective future. I ask this Parliament to join me in supporting this bold but necessary motion at this critical moment for Canadians of Asian descent across the country.

• (1850)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate what my colleague has brought forward for the House of Commons. At the end of the day, there is a history that Canada has that needs to be talked about. This is an example of why it is so important that we look at Canada's diversity and how it has enriched our country, while at the same time recognizing that

we have made some horrific mistakes. For me, it is about education and tolerance.

Can my colleague just provide his thoughts on the importance and significance of what he is proposing in terms of just heightening public awareness through education? As I say, it is important that we not forget even the bad things that have occurred in our country's history.

Mr. Shaun Chen: Mr. Speaker, my colleague pointed out the importance of education in dismantling these systems of oppression, in addressing anti-Asian hate and promoting a multicultural, diverse society that is inclusive.

It is so important that we acknowledge the historical context of this country not only for the positive decisions that have been made throughout the decades, but also to realize the racism that we confront today. It is through education and through engaging people in this project of building inclusion that we can build a better country for decades to come.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member was absolutely correct to say that anti-Asian racism is on the rise. It began with COVID, but it has not abated since COVID.

In my own personal experience, four generations of my family have experienced overt racism as well as covert racism. Things got so bad that it is extremely hurtful.

With respect to this motion, the issue is this: Why did the member not include a report back mechanism so that the House would actually know what work is being done and how the government is, in fact, taking real action to tackle anti-Asian racism?

Mr. Shaun Chen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for sharing her experiences of racism. Like her, as a proud Canadian of Asian descent, I too have experienced hate and racism in my life.

As the member rightfully pointed out, it is important that incidents be reported back to the House. That is why, in this motion, I am asking for the committee on public safety and national security to conduct a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents across this country.

It is my hope that through that conversation and study we can bring out the hidden narratives of lived experiences of racism, ask for and seek accountability, and ultimately achieve justice for those who have been attacked, harassed and subjected to this unfathomable, unacceptable form of racism that has emerged today.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on the other side for putting this private member's motion together.

It sheds a light on the importance of awareness, and of analyzing and consulting on the move forward, because we are such a multicultural society. We have all kinds of ethnicities and languages in this country.

Private Members' Business

What does the member think is the secret recipe that would allow all of us to overcome some of the situations that might happen here?

• (1855)

Mr. Shaun Chen: Mr. Speaker, it is important for all of us as Canadians to not only stand up and acknowledge the history of racism in this country, but also look at how racism is affecting the lives of Canadians today.

I would say that we begin by acknowledging the truth, by acknowledging the lived realities faced by Asian Canadians in this era. That is why, in acknowledging that truth, we must take steps together as a collective society to move forward to address hate, to combat all forms of racism and to pave a path forward where we can build inclusion in this beautiful country we call home.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for his wonderful speech here tonight. Tonight I rise in the House in support of his motion. Its necessity became obvious over the past three years. The COVID pandemic divided Canadians in many ways, but one of the most despicable divisions that arose was the increase in anti-Asian racism. It shocked almost everyone I knew, but it clearly built. It was a gut reaction to blaming one of Canada's greatest-contributing communities for a worldwide pandemic. Such is the work of small minds.

Racism is the prejudice, discrimination or antagonism by an individual, community or institution against a person or a people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. To our shock, we watched the stupidity manifest itself. In case there was any doubt, we saw it on videos.

In March 2020 we watched an Asian man in his 90s, a man with dementia, pushed to the floor as he was pushed out the door of a store. Everybody I know saw their own grandfather in that assault.

In May 2020 we saw a video of an 84-year-old Asian woman being intentionally tripped while she was walking with a walker. A person went out of their way and snuck in behind her to trip her. It was devastating to watch.

I spoke up. My community came to me and said, "Greg, this is happening. Will you please speak up for us?" I joined with one of the local Asian leaders. We spoke about Calgarians, because things were happening in Calgary as well. We need to make sure that we are not confusing anything that is happening on the world stage with Canada's own ethnic communities. This was something that was a despicable response, but it got worse.

It got worse in July 2020. A Calgary man on a bike path drove by a woman who was on a skateboard, spit on her and uttered a racial slur. It is on video. It was one of the most despicable things we have seen on video in Calgary. We recognize the spot in Calgary, so we cannot say it is somebody else. It is in our communities, and it manifests itself very badly.

Police reported that anti-Asian hate crimes increased by 11% across the country between 2019 and 2020. However, in the Lower Mainland and in Vancouver, anti-Asian hate crimes increased by an outrageous 878%. In case we need to look deep into the mirror,

Canada's rate of anti-Asian hate crimes, per capita, is double that reported in the United States. We wear this.

There is no community more solidly ensconced in the Canadian mosaic than the East Asian community. My generation is one that grew up with the East Asian community. We shared hockey teams, baseball teams and music lessons. We ate at each other's homes. We celebrated each other's festivals.

Waves of immigrants who have arrived in Canada since the first East Asian community came here are equally part of our mosaic, so it is with dismay that we watched the racial antagonism emerge.

Let me say that Canada is still a warm country for immigrants, particularly those who are fleeing parts of East Asia, where they feel they have less freedom and opportunity than we offer here in Canada. We are a great country, and we are blessed to have these wonderful new Canadians.

Let us reflect on the 17,000 Chinese labourers who came to Canada to build the western section of the transcontinental railway. Due to unsafe working conditions, more than 4,000 of those men tragically lost their lives. That is almost a quarter of them.

Not only were the Chinese railway workers forced to complete the most dangerous tasks, but often their families were never notified of their deaths, nor did these families receive compensation for the death of their family member.

These stalwart railroad workers were compensated less than half what other railroad workers were paid. Chinese workers were paid \$1 a day and had to pay for all their food and gear. To add insult to this injustice, the Chinese community was degraded in newspapers, as it was blamed for taking jobs away from Canadians of European descent. It is ironic that Canada's first grand public enterprise in uniting a nation from the Atlantic to the Pacific was so divisive in the manner it treated those who came from Atlantic shores in preference to those who came from Pacific shores.

• (1900)

In Prime Minister Stephen Harper's national apology for this injustice, issued in 2006, he stated:

For over six decades, these malicious measures aimed solely at the Chinese were implemented with deliberation by the Canadian state. This was a grave injustice and one we are morally obligated to acknowledge.

An apology can never replace the pain and sorrow of the rail workers and their families. However, I am hopeful this apology lands and addresses some of our history.

This summer in June, I also went to speak about the railway workers monument in Calgary, the “Wall of Names”, honoured by the Calgary Kaiping Association, at Sien Lok Park. The monument had been vandalized, so this is not over. This did not end with COVID. It is extremely disappointing and reminds us all that we have to make sure that we continue. This monument was one where they erased the names of all the Chinese immigrants who had come to Canada in those years. We recognize that happened before 1923, because the act more or less excluded East Asian immigrants after that period.

It is a shame. It is something that needs to be righted. It continues to exhibit itself on the streets of my very open, dynamic, multicultural city and yet, somehow, there are still voices that say, “These people are different.” Well, they are not. These people are part of our mosaic. These people belong with us. These people are Canadians.

This motion is one we back 100%, and I am honoured to be able to speak to it in this House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to say that it is an honour to rise to speak to Motion No. 63, which seeks to condemn anti-Asian racism and address it. I know that this motion is very important to many members of the House, and rightly so.

I congratulate the member for Scarborough North for moving this motion. I know that a similar version of this motion was tabled last year at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage by our colleague from Don Valley North. This is also particularly important to our colleague from Vancouver East, who I believe also wanted to move this motion.

First, I think it is obvious that we cannot be against apple pie. I often say this. We naturally support a motion that seeks to condemn racism and also to prevent it and raise awareness about it. I can confirm that the Bloc Québécois supports Motion No. 63. We will condemn all forms of hate speech and hate crimes in the strongest possible terms, at every opportunity and as often as necessary.

I would also point out that Asian people in Canada were racially segregated from the 19th century until after the Second World War. It took us a long time to wake up. There were all sorts of discriminatory laws and policies. Some policies were aimed at exclusion. Asian people are still the target of hate crimes today. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the frequency of race-based harassment and attacks. This especially true since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Everyone applauds and everyone agrees when anti-racism policies are brought in. That makes perfect sense, but there is one pitfall to watch out for. It is important not to exclude any form of racism. Policies must be implemented in a way that does not exclude any group that might be discriminated against. I ask this question in all earnestness. We wholeheartedly support this motion, but should Canada not have a strong general policy that condemns

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all forms of racism and raises awareness of all forms of racism, regardless of the group targeted?

I do not mind doing this work bit by bit. Today we are condemning anti-Asian racism. If another member moves a motion to condemn another form of racism or racism that targets another group, we will surely support that too. However, sooner or later, we have to acknowledge our history and learn from it. We need to implement something comprehensive that covers all forms of discrimination.

I will read the motion:

That, in the opinion of the House: (a) the government should (i) condemn anti-Asian hate and all forms of racism and racial discrimination, (ii) ensure all anti-racism policies and programs address the historical and present-day racism, discrimination, stereotyping and injustices faced by people of Asian descent, (iii) highlight the lived realities of racism and barriers to inclusion experienced by people of Asian descent in national consultations on issues of anti-Asian racism; and (b) the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security should conduct a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents across the country.

Earlier I talked about this country's history of deliberately discriminatory and racist policies against people of Asian origin, including those who were Canadian citizens. In the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, particularly in British Columbia but, really, across Canada, there was opposition to Japanese and Asian immigration in general.

● (1905)

Thousands of people came from Asia to Canada to help build the railroad. It was an historic event, and we are extremely grateful to them.

How did Canada thank them for their contribution to building the Canadian Pacific Railway? It brought in laws against Chinese immigration. It denied them certain privileges, including the right to vote. It denied them certain basic rights, such as the right to housing. It allowed some landlords to refuse to rent to people of Asian descent.

In 1872, British Columbia passed an election law that prohibited Japanese Canadian citizens and indigenous people from voting in the province's elections. One would think the rest of the country would rise up against this, but no, that did not happen. In 1920, the Dominion Elections Act was passed, which meant that racial groups who were disenfranchised at the provincial level were now also disenfranchised at the federal level.

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When policies are put in place, they should be designed to last. They should be drafted with the future in mind; they must be strong and robust. We do not want to encounter a situation or climate at some point in the future where a desire to revive these horrible discriminatory policies comes back into the equation or is considered.

I will not dwell on the dark chapters of the Second World War, when the decision was made to intern Japanese-Canadian citizens. I will also not dwell on how they were expropriated and sent back to Japan when, quite often, those people were born here. History is rife with these types of examples.

As I said before, it is important to remember history and to learn from it. One such example was COVID-19. Before that, however, in 2003, there was the SARS outbreak and people of Asian origin were subject to a dramatic increase in racist comments and even hate crimes.

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2019-20, the Vancouver police reported a 700% increase in hate crimes against the Asian community. My colleague from Vancouver East is certainly aware of those statistics. That happened because of the misinformation and mistaken notions going around about the origin of the virus.

In closing, I would say that, in Quebec, we are fighting against hate and racism. We are working to break down stereotypes originating from old Canadian laws that are racist, restrictive and segregationist. We are doing it by stressing the equality of citizens of all origins and by focusing on the shared identity and the feeling of belonging to the Quebec nation of Quebeckers of all origins.

We will sincerely and enthusiastically support Motion No. 63. It is a big step. It is also important because it recognizes a phenomenon we must condemn and combat. I hope this snowballs. I hope we will see more motions like it.

Once again, I congratulate my colleague from Scarborough North on his initiative and on this motion.

• (1910)

[English]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we are debating Motion No. 63, a motion that focuses on anti-Asian racism and discrimination.

I would like to first acknowledge and thank some of the organizations that are doing incredible work to support the Asian communities in fighting against anti-Asian racism. They are groups like Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice, Hua Foundation, the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, Stand with Asians, the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice, #Elimin8Hate, project 1907, and so many others. Their work is so important and they have been leading the way.

As part of the process to prepare for this debate, my office contacted a number of the organizations for input regarding this motion. They were clear in saying that instead of symbolic gestures, they want the government to take meaningful action to address the rise in anti-Asian racism. The fight against racism and discrimination is re-emerging as one of the defining struggles of our genera-

tion. We are witnessing a surge in racism, white supremacy and fascism.

There is no question that COVID-19 is fielding anti-Asian racism and xenophobia worldwide. In May 2020, the UN secretary-general said, "the pandemic continues to unleash a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating and scare-mongering." He called on governments to "act now to strengthen the immunity of our societies against the virus of hate."

Vancouver saw a 717% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes and was dubbed "the anti-Asian hate crime capital of North America". In fact, data from Statistics Canada confirm the rise in racist hate crimes is a national trend. Between 2018 and 2021, police reported hate crimes based on race and ethnicity more than doubled, to over 1,700. An Angus Reid survey from June of last year reported that more than half of Asian Canadians experienced a situation related to anti-Asian discrimination in the last year and more than one in four reported this occurred all the time or frequently. These numbers are startling, even though we know that the true number of all incidents is much higher than those reported.

Advocacy groups warn that many of those experiencing hate crimes never report it to the police. Many who have tried to access police services experienced disappointment, felt invalidated or felt that no adequate support was provided. The government must work in partnership with NGOs to help bridge this gap. There has to be stable core funding for NGOs who are doing the heavy lifting in the community and supports must be in place that are culturally specific and language accessible.

Too many victims are suffering silently and in isolation. They should know that they are not alone, that they would be supported as they recover from this traumatic experience and that if the victims come forward, every effort will be made to ensure that there will be consequences for the perpetrators. Another measure to encourage victims to come forward is that the government must do its part by ensuring that there will be consequences for the offenders. Even among the small proportion that is reported to police, few cases result in charges being laid. Between 2013 and 2018, 82% of hate crimes did not result in a charge after being reported to police. This must change.

To send a clear message that Canada will not tolerate hate-motivated crimes means we have to put the full force of the law against the offenders. That would require a dedicated hate crime prosecution unit with adequate resources and teeth. To further this work, the government should facilitate a national community engagement process so that people of Asian descent with lived realities of anti-Asian racism and systemic barriers to inclusion can come together to share the experiences and discuss action that must be taken to address it.

If the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security is to conduct a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents across the country as suggested by the motion, it should be tasked with providing actionable recommendations and guidance to government bodies and law enforcement on reporting, addressing and preventing hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents.

● (1915)

It is time that we move beyond symbolic gestures. The House unanimously passed two NDP motions to tackle anti-Asian racism in March of 2021. These motions got passed, but there was never any follow-up action from the government. For example, it has not hosted a federal-provincial-territorial meeting to discuss the rise in hate crimes in Canada and to coordinate our collective efforts and identified best practices to countering this trend. There has been no action on the creation of properly funded dedicated hate crime units in every community in Canada.

There are also no national standards for identifying and recording all hate incidents and their dispensation in the justice system. The government has not worked in collaboration with non-profits to facilitate the reporting of hate crimes in Canada's anti-racism strategy 2019-22, and the government's anti-racism policies and programs do not specifically target anti-Asian racism. What is the point of passing these motions when follow-up action is not taken? There is simply no accountability.

I reached out to the member for Scarborough North with amendments to his motions that would ensure meaningful action and accountability measures. Sadly, he rejected all of them.

Words without action are meaningless. The government must do better, for every single attack is aimed at stripping us of our sense of safety and dignity. It is a clear message to say that we are not wanted, that we do not belong. For me, this is not just theoretical. It is personal.

Four generations of my family have suffered racist attacks. My grandfather suffered silently so many years ago by himself. He was told that he had to move to the back of the bus. He was told that he had to get off the bus. He was told repeatedly that he did not belong. My parents and I experienced racial slurs. We were called names. We were made fun of. We were just not wanted.

Growing up in this country, that is what it felt like for me. I have to say, to my dismay, my daughter just this year on her way to school was spat on, and somebody yelled racial slurs at her. When she told me this, my heart sank. History repeats itself over and over again, so to that end, this must stop.

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Therefore, I move that the motion be amended with the following: a) by replacing the word "hate" with "racism" in paragraph (a) (i) and adding after the words "racial discrimination" the following, "and take meaningful action to combat the ongoing increase in anti-Asian hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents, including the creation of and funding for a dedicated hate crime prosecution unit"; b) in paragraph (a)(ii) by adding "through concrete actions and a substantive commitment of resources including but not limited to support for victims of hate that are culturally specific and language-accessible"; c) in paragraph (a)(iii) by adding the word "unique" after the words "highlight the", adding the word "anti-Asian" before "racism", adding the word "systemic" before "barriers" and adding the words "through a national community engagement process" after the words "people of Asian descent"; d) in paragraph (b) by adding the words "and provide actionable recommendations and guidance to government bodies and law enforcement on reporting, addressing and preventing hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents" following the words "across the country"; e) by adding paragraph (c) "provide a progress update to the House on actions taken by the government on the following specific calls for action outlined in the two unanimous consent motions to tackle anti-Asian hate passed in the House on March 22 and 24, 2021 (i) host a federal-provincial-territorial meeting to discuss the rise in hate crimes in Canada and to coordinate our collective efforts and identified best practices to countering this trend, (ii) create and properly fund dedicated hate crime units in every community in Canada, (iii) establish national standards for identifying and recording all hate incidents and their dispensation in the justice system, (iv) work in collaboration with non-profits to facilitate the reporting of hate crimes, and (v) include "anti-Asian racism" in Canada's anti-racism strategy 2019-22 and all anti-racism policies and programs; and (f) by adding paragraph (d) "renew Canada's anti-racism strategy through engagement with stakeholders and those with lived experiences, and table the action plan that specifically addresses anti-Asian racism within 12 months."

● (1920)

It is critical that everyone stand firm against the forces that represent racism, white supremacy and fascism, whether they are being propagated by an individual or an organization. This has no place in public dialogue and no place on our streets.

Private Members' Business

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to inform hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 93(3), no amendment may be proposed to a private member's motion or to the motion for second reading of a private member's bill unless the sponsor of the item indicates his or her consent. Since the sponsor is not present to give his consent, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

The hon. member for Vancouver East is rising on a point of order.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I know we are not supposed to reference whether or not a member is in the House. However, I noticed you referenced that the member had left the chamber just now. Is that proper?

The Deputy Speaker: I can reference it when it comes to getting consent from a member.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, then it is okay to reference that the member for Scarborough North just left the chamber.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair can reference it for an amendment, but a member in the chamber cannot. The Chair reserves that right when it comes to getting consent for a motion.

On the same point of order, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that what she has done is not appropriate. Being inside the chamber or outside the chamber is up to a member.

The member opposite has no idea why the member is here or outside the chamber, and I find it disrespectful for her to make such a motion given that it is private members' hour and the member has brought forward a wonderful motion.

The Deputy Speaker: On that same point of order, the hon. member for Vancouver East has the floor.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the government member takes offence to the fact that I have a point of order to get clarity on the rules of the House. It is my right to do that. He says it is not my right to do so, so I demand that he retract that comment and apologize.

The Deputy Speaker: I think I was clear enough when I said that the Chair can reference whether somebody is here or not but members cannot. I apologize if I was not clear on that.

We should continue. I do not see any movement from the parliamentary secretary, nor would I expect any because of the clarification I tried to give as the Chair.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the government member is shouting things at me and is still calling "shame" as though I have no rights in the House. I was duly elected to the House, and just like anyone else, I can get up and ask for clarity from the Speaker, as I have done. There is—

• (1925)

The Deputy Speaker: We are descending way too far into debate on what we should or should not be doing on a private member's motion.

I will let the hon. parliamentary secretary have the last very short point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I do not want the record to reflect that I am the only one raising my voice inside the chamber. The member is doing the same thing.

The Deputy Speaker: All right. Maybe it has just been a long day.

Let us move on to the next speaker, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion.

Mr. Paul Chiang (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Diversity and Inclusion), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address Motion No. 63, which calls upon our government to condemn anti-Asian hate and all forms of racism and racial discrimination. The proposed motion seeks to address the troubling rise in anti-Asian racism and hate that this country has seen over the past several years.

I thank my hon. colleague, Mr. Shaun Chen, the member of Parliament for Scarborough North, for bringing forward this motion and for raising this issue—

Ms. Jenny Kwan: I have a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: The member cannot refer to the name of the member presenting the motion, which I think is probably what the member for Vancouver East is standing on.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, that is correct. It is about clarifying the rules of the House to see whether we are allowed to reference members by name.

The Deputy Speaker: Maybe we will have the parliamentary secretary start over without that reference.

Mr. Paul Chiang: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address Motion No. 63, which calls upon our government to condemn anti-Asian hate and all forms of racism and racial discrimination. The motion seeks to address the troubling rise in anti-Asian racism and hate that this country has seen over the last several years. I thank my hon. colleague, the member of Parliament for Scarborough North, for bringing forward this motion and for raising these issues.

Our government condemns all forms of racism and is committed to supporting all communities in Canada that experience the harmful effects of hate and racism, including people of Asian descent. Asian communities in Canada are a diverse group with varying histories, ethnicities, cultures and religions. According to the 2021 census, people of Asian descent make up 17% of Canada's population.

Asian Heritage Month has been celebrated in Canada since the 1990s. In December 2001, the Senate of Canada adopted a motion proposed by Senator Vivienne Poy to officially designate May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. In May 2002, the Government of Canada signed an official declaration to announce May as Asian Heritage Month. This spring we marked the 20th anniversary of Asian Heritage Month, and the theme this year was continuing a legacy of greatness. This theme emphasized the rich, diverse and historic paths that have laid the foundation for Asian communities in Canada to flourish.

During Asian Heritage Month and the rest of the year, we celebrate the diversity, history, culture and contribution of people of Asian ancestry in Canada. In a society governed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act, anti-Asian hatred and racism have absolutely no place in Canada. Hatred and racism pose a direct threat to the foundation of our democratic institutions, to the security of our communities and to our nationwide efforts to combat the pandemic and the myriad other challenges we are currently and collectively facing.

While most Canadians are committed to equality and justice, racism and discrimination remain a significant problem, as we saw both during and following the surge of the COVID-19 crisis. During this time, we saw a significant increase in anti-Asian sentiment and hate. When we talk about anti-Asian racism, we are referring to historical and ongoing discrimination, negative stereotyping and injustice experienced by people of Asian descent based on others' assumptions about their ethnicity and nationality.

Through the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, a head tax was imposed on every Chinese person seeking entry into Canada, marking a period of legislated anti-Chinese racism. On June 22, 2006, the Government of Canada apologized in the House of Commons to Canadians of Chinese heritage who paid the head tax, their families and the Chinese community across Canada.

Shortly after Japan's entry into the Second World War on December 7, 1941, Canadians of Japanese heritage were forcibly removed from Canada's west coast. In September 1988, the Government of Canada formally apologized in the House of Commons and offered compensation for the wrongful incarceration, seizure of property and disenfranchisement of Canadians of Japanese heritage during the Second World War.

On April 4, 1914, the *Komagata Maru* sailed from Hong Kong to Shanghai and the Japanese ports of Moji and Yokohama, finally arriving in Vancouver, British Columbia in May 1914. Its passengers, mostly Sikhs from Punjab, India, who were all British subjects, challenged the continuous regulation of Canada's Immigration Act, which had been put in place in part to limit immigration from non-European countries. In May 2016, the government made a formal apology in the House of Commons to the victims and their relatives for the Komagata Maru incident. The government recognizes this historical wrong and recognizes the need to continue to combat racism and discrimination in our country.

- (1930)

Unfortunately, issues of biases, stereotyping, racism and discrimination have only become more pronounced, with a surge of anti-

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Asian hate during the pandemic. For many Canadians, this is a daily lived reality. For example, according to the 2021 Canadian legal problems survey, the Chinese population was 10 times more likely to report being a victim of ethnic or racial discrimination than non-racialized people. Police-reported data supported this claim. In the first year of the pandemic, we saw a 37% rise in police-reported hate crimes, including an 80% increase of crimes motivated by hatred of race or ethnicity. There was also a disturbing 301% increase in hate crimes against the East Asian population.

We know that racism is a problem in Canada and we are taking action. In 2019, Canada launched its three-year anti-racism strategy. As part of that, we have invested close to \$100 million in a whole-of-government approach to address racism and discrimination.

Early in the pandemic, when it became clear that certain social groups were being unequally impacted, the federal anti-racism secretariat of Canadian Heritage and Women and Gender Equality Canada co-founded the equity-seeking communities COVID-19 task force. This brought together 25 federal departments and agencies to guide our government in addressing the inequities generated by the pandemic. In May 2021, the federal anti-racism secretariat worked with Asian community leaders from across the country to co-create an official definition of anti-Asian racism, which has been integrated into Canada's anti-racism strategy.

Our government is working with all of its partners collaboratively, with many federal departments; with provincial, territorial and municipal governments; and with communities across the country to address racism and hate against Asians. This includes funding for the digital citizen initiative designed to counter online disinformation, analyze the origin and spread of online disinformation, and build the capacity for communities to respond. In the past, funding went to projects designed to understand the origins and the spread of racist ideas or online disinformation targeting specific communities.

Budget 2021 also provided \$11 million over two years, starting in 2021-22, to expand the impact of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. This includes scaling up efforts to empower racialized Canadians and to help communities combat racism in all of its forms. This investment, in part, enables the foundation to facilitate initiatives like the establishment of a national coalition to support Asian Canadian communities and to create a fund to support all racialized communities directly impacted by increasing acts of racism during the pandemic.

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This work is far from finished. In budget 2022, our government announced an investment of \$85 million over four years for Canada's new anti-racism strategy. In addition, as announced in budget 2022, our government is also developing the first-ever Canada action plan on combatting hate, and this spring we carried out 21 engagement sessions with communities and partner organizations.

• (1935)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to my colleague's motion that he has presented to the House.

Earlier, I asked the member a question about something I believe we need to see a lot more of. At the end of the day, when we talk about issues of racism and the motion that the member has brought forward, two things come to mind.

First and foremost is recognizing Canada's history and our heritage and recognizing that we have done some things that have caused a great deal of harm. It is part of our history. We do need to remember that and we do need to reflect on it.

The second thing is in regard to education. Many years ago during the 1990s, for a portion of my days when I was an MLA, I was responsible for tourism. A cross-cultural awareness report was brought forward by the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The report said that one of the ways in which we are going to combat racism is through education.

When I think of education, I am not just talking about our school system, although that is important. I am talking about our work environment and other types of community facilities that are there. I say that because racism is there. It is very real and has an impact on some communities more than others. The Manitoba Intercultural Council was right in its recommendation that emphasized the importance of education.

We see motions of this nature and days of recognition and we talk about those wonderful attributes of Canada's diversity and what our many cultures have to bring. I suggest that we could all use some form of cross-cultural education.

Mr. Speaker, I will leave it at that until the next time the motion comes up for debate.

The Deputy Speaker: When we do come back to this, the member will have about eight minutes remaining.

The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business is now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are living the effects of climate change. There are real effects on people and real effects on our economy.

Last year, in British Columbia, we had a series of catastrophic wildfires, one of which burned down the town of Lytton. At the same time, a heat dome brought temperatures in the high 40s to southern B.C., killing over 600 people in metro Vancouver.

That fall, an atmospheric river destroyed every highway connecting the southern B.C. coast with the rest of Canada, and some of those highways have only now just been reopened. Floods devastated the towns of Princeton and Merritt, numerous first nations communities and some of the best agricultural lands in the province.

The true costs of those events have yet to be calculated, but the federal government has pledged \$5 billion in support to British Columbia to help communities rebuild. This year, B.C. has largely been spared, but this spring, it got a storm track, which is now called a derecho. We have had to learn a whole new taxonomy of climate disasters. It caused almost a billion dollars in insured damage losses to parts of Ontario and Quebec.

Then in the fall, hurricane Fiona became the strongest hurricane to make landfall ever in Atlantic Canada. Houses were washed out to sea and lives were lost. Again, the federal government has promised aid to the tune of over \$300 million.

The Canadian Climate Institute reported in September that the impacts of climate change will slow Canada's economic growth by \$25 billion annually by 2025. That is half of the projected GDP growth in 2025 and 12 times all insured weather-related losses in Canada in 2021. Those impacts will increase to almost \$100 billion annually by 2050.

My question to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the question that triggered this adjournment debate, was based on that report. The Canadian Climate Institute report also found that proactive measures that help communities and Canadians adapt to climate change could reduce the impact of climate disasters. In fact, the report notes that a combination of global emissions reductions and Canadian adaptation measures could reduce the negative impacts by 75%.

Shortly after I asked this question, the government tabled its national adaptation strategy. The strategy included \$1.6 billion in new funding to broadly address climate adaptation. About a third of that amount is to top up the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. That fund has been chronically underfunded and oversubscribed. Many communities trying to rebuild after fires and floods do not get the help they need.

Will the government stop subsidizing the fossil fuel industry and redirect those billions of dollars to help communities prepare for climate change?

We will save many times that investment by reducing the direct impacts of extreme weather on Canadian communities, and more importantly, reduce the tragic consequences of these climate disasters on the lives and livelihoods of Canadian families.

• (1940)

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through the G20, Canada has committed to rationalize or phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. This was reaffirmed in June of 2021 when G7 leaders committed to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025. Canada has since accelerated this commitment to 2023.

Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Department of Finance are working together to identify and assess relevant measures to fulfill this commitment. To date, important progress has been made. Nine tax preferences that supported fossil fuel exploration or production have been or are in the process of being phased out or rationalized.

In addition to phasing out or rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, at COP26, Canada signed the statement of international public support for the clean energy transition. This commits Canada to further prioritize and support clean technology and new direct public support for the international unabated fossil fuel sector by the end of 2022, and accept unlimited and clearly defined circumstances that are consistent with the 1.5°C warming limits and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Further, the December 2021 mandate letters committed the government to develop a plan to phase out public finances of the fossil fuel sector, including by federal Crown corporations. As climate impacts continue to grow in frequency and intensity, the government recognizes that a more ambitious strategic and collaborative approach is required to adapt and build resilience to changing climates. That is why the Government of Canada is developing Canada's first national adaptation strategy, working with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, indigenous people and other key partners. This strategy will establish a shared vision for climate resilience in Canada, identifying key priorities for increased collaboration, and establish a framework for measuring progress at the national level.

A national adaptation strategy offers the opportunity to unite actors across Canada through shared priorities, cohesive action and a whole-of-Canada approach to reducing climate change risk. The strategy will build on an existing foundation of four adaptation efforts that saw roughly \$4.8 billion invested in adaptation and specific programming since 2011. The program suite supports efforts to mainstream adaptation, build climate resiliency throughout communities in Canada, and strengthen and support capacity for action.

• (1945)

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, the minister, in his reply to my question in question period, did admit that there are still 4 billion dollars' worth of subsidies going to the oil and gas sector. The government is just lacking in boldness and ambition on climate

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adaptation when we need it most. It is like the tepid responses to climate mitigation and the lack of success in bringing down our carbon emissions.

The almost \$500-million top-up to DMAF is not enough. We need to make bold investments to minimize the impacts of the climate crisis. The NDP believes that we must provide at least \$2 billion in additional funds to the disaster mitigation and adaption fund every year. That is still well below the \$5 billion we are losing every year in ensured damages.

We need to make investments in adaptation, not just reactive funding to the disasters that are devastating communities across the country, leaving Canadians without homes and without livelihoods. We need to make these investments now. We need to make sure we are supporting Canadians and Canadian communities as they face an uncertain future.

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, since 2018, the federal government has invested over \$2 billion, with an additional \$1.3 billion in 2021, to further support actions, including nature-based solutions in indigenous communities. There is also a strong business case for proactive investments. According to the Climate Change Institute, one dollar in proactive adaptation measures can return anywhere from \$13 to \$15 in direct and indirect benefits.

Climate change has significant impacts on Canadians' health and on the economy. The earlier Canada takes action to address climate change, the more effectively the country can reduce its risk and protect the health and safety of Canadians.

I agree with the hon. member's solutions, and I agree with the government's solutions as well.

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise virtually in the House this evening. I am in the wonderful city of Montreal for the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

However, I am turning my attention this evening to a question I asked in question period on November 24. The question had a response from the hon. Minister of Transport. This is a complex issue and one that does not come up very often in the House, so forgive me if I step back and set some context before I dive into it.

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It is a question on the use of the waters of the Salish Sea from as far up as the tip of Vancouver Island to areas near Parksville, Nanaimo, Ladysmith and certainly in and around the five Gulf Islands within Saanich—Gulf Islands. Our waters are being used as free parking lots to handle bulk carriers and freighters that cannot be efficiently unloaded at the Port of Vancouver.

This costs everyone money. The grain farmers who want their products shipped in a timely way, the grain sellers who want the product delivered and those buying the product line up at the Port of Vancouver where freighters find that their holds cannot be filled. They are sent away, and they cool their jets and sit in the waters of the Salish Sea in places that Transport Canada has dubbed as anchorages. Under common law, the vessels at sea must be given refuge and safe anchorages at times of storms. This is not during storms. This is routine. It is daily and multiplying.

What does this mean? As I pointed out in my question on November 24, it is a loss of quality of life. The constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands and those throughout the region do not feel consulted. Right now, there is a consultation process taking place, or a public consultation was just disclosed, hosted by the Port of Vancouver. Constituents do not feel consulted; they feel ignored once again, their concerns dismissed.

The Port of Vancouver officials informed the public that the use of the Salish Sea for free parking was going to continue and that it was an essential part of the Port of Vancouver's operations. Of course, nobody pays for it, except, again, the grain farmers, the people buying grain, the people selling grain and the residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands, Cowichan—Malahat—Langford and other regions throughout our marine coastal zones.

The indigenous nations of this area were never consulted either, and they are angry at the idea that their treaty rights under the Douglas treaties mean so little that the Port of Vancouver and the federal government have never engaged with them about this use of our waters.

What else does it mean? It means damage to the southern resident killer whales from the noise of these massive vessels moving and parking in our waters. It means damage to the benthic organisms on the ocean floor, of course, because these being anchorages and not ports, the anchor drops and drags.

This is the point I really wanted to raise in the late show tonight: Days after my question in late November, there was yet another incident in Plumper Sound, where a large bulk carrier dragged its anchor and drifted right into a spot where, had there been another freighter parked, they would have collided. We have had 102 incidents in the period from 2015 to 2020. There were 102 times that these large vessels drifted on their anchors and sometimes collided or nearly collided. In other words, it is a large accident waiting to happen.

The residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands and the people of this area are absolutely fed up to our teeth with this ignoring of our rights and abuse of our ecosystem.

• (1950)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr.

Speaker, I appreciate the manner in which the leader of the Green Party is bringing what is a very important issue for her constituents to the floor of the House of Commons, first in the form of a question and now during the late show as a follow-up. I think most people would see the issue for what it is worth, and obviously, we are very much concerned about our coastlines.

As a government, we are committed to working with other stakeholders. The member said that there has been no consultation that has been completed. I would be somewhat surprised if over the years there has not been representation on the Port of Vancouver, whether it was directly through the Port of Vancouver, or indeed members of Parliament such as herself, or directly with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans or Transport Canada in making sure that the government and other authorities are kept up to date on it.

The member talked about the 100-plus incidents. I think she said 102 incidents. Of course, that would raise issues of safety. We want to ensure that the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority is, in fact, closely monitoring what is taking place.

I would ask, and the member will have a minute to follow up, what it is the member is suggesting. Are there alternative locations? Maybe she could fill in more in that area, what she is aware of, or possible solutions outside of an outright ban. Has she done some work with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority? These are questions that I personally would be interested in getting her thoughts on. It is a discussion that I will carry forward to the best of my ability.

She talked about killer whales, which I am very much concerned about too. I know the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans would also carry that same concern as would the people of Canada. One does not have to live on the coast to appreciate its majestic beauty and the need for us to protect our ocean environment.

The government has invested both financially and through regulations and laws to protect our ocean ways, and has invested a great deal of money. I suspect that the interest is there, which I am sure the member can appreciate, as I do.

I remember being in the third party when the prairie wheat was being rained on and the prairie wheat farmers wanted to get it out. I recall raising the issue of these large ships being anchored just outside of Vancouver. I asked why we could not get the grain out.

It does seem to me that we do need to work more collaboratively with the port authority to see what viable options could be there going forward.

Suffice it to say that I am not surprised that the member is in Montreal doing the work that she is doing there. I am pleased that she has taken this issue to the late show to raise awareness on it. I will be sure to pass on her concerns to the appropriate minister.

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• (1955)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary. I could not have asked for a better opportunity for dialogue, because believe it or not, in some ways this is supply chain hell, and it links our ridings. There are very few issues that will link directly, and it is the rail lines that link us from Winnipeg to Saanich—Gulf Islands, and it is the inefficiency of the delivery of grain primarily. Here are two solutions.

One, the Liberals promised to ban the export of coal to other countries. We are getting coal shipped up from the United States, because U.S. coal ports no longer ship it due to climate concerns. Let us ban coal exports. That will help, and the Liberals already promised to do it.

We also want to improve the facilitation of grain exports. The hon. member will remember when we had the wheat board, and the export of grain and the shipment was better coordinated. This is driving the unions. The longshoremen do not like this. CN and CP are behind inefficiencies along with the Port of Vancouver. We need to fix this system for shipping grain, and then we will not have anchorages.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have always enjoyed the one-on-one discussions the leader of the Green Party has had with me, and I would invite her, the next time we can get together, to have some dialogue. It is an area of concern and interest on my part. I would welcome that dialogue, because I have found her to be very informative on a wide spectrum of issues, and especially because, as she so eloquently pointed out, there is a connection even for the city of Winnipeg and our trains. Winnipeg is a hub of train activities, and I do appreciate the manner in which she raised that.

I look forward to being able to have a further dialogue with her on this in the coming days ahead.

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

(The House adjourned at 7:58 p.m.)

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