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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 19, 2023

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions amongst the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion: That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on Friday, June 23, 2023 shall be 2:30 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24.

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.

An hon. member: Nay.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed from May 15 consideration of the motion that Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-282.

Seven years ago, U.S. President Barack Obama visited Ottawa and addressed parliamentarians in the House of Commons. There was one line from his speech that received a standing ovation and was in all the news stories that night. He said, “the world needs more Canada.”

The reason President Obama words received a standing ovation was because he was right; the world does need more Canada. The world needs more softwood lumber from B.C., more cod from Newfoundland and Labrador and more of everything from everywhere in between.

Unfortunately, Bill C-282 marks a significant departure from President Obama's positive outlook for Canada and instead represents a much more inward-looking and isolationist future.

Canada has always been a trading nation. Over the past 40 years, Canadian governments had negotiated 15 free trade agreements with 51 different countries. It is important to note that these free trade negotiations were signed, ratified and implemented under both Liberal and Conservative governments. This team Canada approach has served Canadians well by giving our free trade negotiators the flexibility they need to negotiate a deal that is in the best interest of Canada.

Unfortunately, Bill C-282 proposes to take supply management off the table in future free trade negotiations. It will handcuff our free trade negotiators and limit their ability to negotiate a deal that is in the best interest of all Canadians.

This is exactly the warning that was made to parliamentarians at the international trade committee when its members heard from our lead trade negotiators, both when the bill was being studied at committee as well as an identical bill in the previous Parliament.

Doug Forsyth, director general at Global Affairs Canada in charge of market access and trade development, said the following:

If we were to start from the position that we would not be dealing with 100% of the items that we would negotiate on, it does risk having an agreement that's not necessarily completely beneficial to Canadian exporters and producers and it does risk being an agreement that does not necessarily provide the full economic benefits to Canada that one might have expected.

Mr. Forsyth's concerns were echoed by his colleague, Mr. Aaron Fowler, the chief agriculture negotiator. Mr. Fowler actually went a step further and added, “In some cases, the country may determine that they do not want to go forward with an FTA with Canada in the absence of Canada's being able to make commitments in this sector.”

Given that these warnings are coming from Canada's actual free trade negotiators, it is incumbent upon parliamentarians to take them seriously and to not go down the path of handcuffing our negotiators in future negotiations.

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Take, for example, the government's Indo-Pacific strategy, which it announced last fall. In this document, the government outlines its plans to negotiate free trade agreements with both India and the ASEAN nations of South-East Asia. India has a population of 1.4 billion people, and the ASEAN nations have a combined population of over 600 million people. That represents a combined total of over two billion potential customers for Canadian exporters. That sounds like a great opportunity for Canada. However, I cannot help but wonder if Canada's negotiators have to take supply management off the table, then what sectors will India and the ASEAN countries take off the table as well? What opportunities in these markets of two billion people will be lost to Canadian exporters?

One also has to consider our trade relationship with our two closest neighbours in North America, the United States and Mexico. One may be tempted to say that because Bill C-282 would apply to new free trade agreements only, and since Canada already has a free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico, then there is nothing to worry about. However, it is important to remember that the current NAFTA agreement has a sunset clause, which any of the three countries could invoke if they were unhappy with the current deal and would like to renegotiate it from scratch. If this sunset clause were invoked, Canada could be left without a free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico as early as the year 2036.

• (1105)

Again, that raises the question. If we sit down with the Americans and the Mexicans 13 years from now to renegotiate NAFTA, and if Canada's supply managed sectors are off the table from the outset, then what sectors will the U.S. and Mexico take off the table as well? Which Canadians will no longer be able to export to the United States and Mexico because of Bill C-282? Will it be New Brunswick lobster fishermen? Will it be assembly line workers in Ontario's electric car factories? Who?

I know that I would not want to go home to Saskatchewan and tell farmers and ranchers, potash and uranium miners that their jobs no longer exist because they can no longer export to the United States. I am sure there is not a single parliamentarian in this chamber who would like to have that sort of conversation with exporters in their ridings either.

Therefore, what do we do about supply management when it comes to future free trade negotiations? If a farmer works in one of the supply-managed sectors, and owns quota, and has played by the rules, and if a future free trade agreement reduces the value of that asset, then that farmer should be compensated for his or her loss. That compensation should be clear, complete, spelled out in black and white, and it should be paid out in a timely manner.

While every country has sectors that it seeks to protect in free trade negotiations, no country has enshrined into law what its negotiators can and cannot talk about with other countries. With an open economy that is largely based on exports, we should not be making Canada an outlier on the world stage.

Just about all of the speakers to the bill have extolled the virtues of supply management and the people who work in those sectors. I have no doubt that workers in these sectors are good people who deserve a fair shake in free trade agreements. However, sooner or

later someone has to ask about the 99% of Canadians who do not work in a supply-managed sector.

What about other farmers and ranchers whose livelihoods depend on exports? What about Canadian workers who work in export-based industries other than agriculture? What about all the Canadian consumers who drive a car that was built in Germany, or use a smart phone that was built in South Korea or who just enjoy a bottle of French wine with their dinner? All of these Canadians benefit from free trade agreements that are the result of countless hours of work by our free trade negotiators, without having their efforts hindered by Bill C-282.

I would like to conclude with another quote from President Obama's 2016 address to Parliament. He said, "the benefits of trade and economic integration are sometimes hard to see or easy to take for granted, and the very specific dislocations are obvious and real. There's just one problem: Restricting trade or giving in to protectionism in this 21st century economy will not work." That statement also received a standing ovation.

The world does need more Canada, not less. Bill C-282 is a step in the wrong direction and I encourage all parliamentarians to vote against it.

* * *

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions amongst the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on Friday, June 23, 2023 shall be 2:30 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-282, which is fairly simple and fairly short. It provides an obligation to fully respect the supply management model. Every time that free trade agreements are negotiated, supply-managed producers lose market share and other sectors do not benefit.

I come from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, a region of Quebec that is a pillar of the agricultural industry because of its location and climate. The region combines all the factors suitable for supporting a substantial agricultural industry. Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean features a wide range of agri-food products, ranging from blueberries to dairy. I will focus on the dairy industry.

Milk production is a vital economic driver for the region. The region currently has 244 farms and 2,151 jobs, making our dairy farmers proud. It is actually on their behalf that I am speaking today, as well as on behalf of the entire dairy industry, which has urged me to support Bill C-282 because it affects them directly.

Only the markets for dairy, table eggs, hatching eggs, and poultry fall under supply management. This system is based on three main pillars.

The first pillar is supply management through quotas. That word comes up a lot when we talk about supply management. The Canadian Dairy Commission distributes quotas to every province in Canada, which ensures price stability. I do not see a problem with that type of practice because it prevents waste and huge price differences.

The second pillar is price controls. A floor price and a ceiling price are set to ensure that consumers can buy local without paying astronomical amounts. In the worst case scenario, a consumer will have to spend a few cents more for a local product made here under conditions we are familiar with. Since the standards vary widely from country to country, we are making sure that consumers can buy ethically and contribute to the regional economy without having to spend a lot.

Third, there is border control. This part makes it possible for the supply management model to prevent the local market from being overrun. This model allows producers to be competitive by supplying real milk. Take for example local milk that is full of vitamins and protein. Another milk might be diluted with water, which would mean that the same volume of milk would fill more cartons. That milk would be less expensive than the 100% milk that is sold here at home. A person on a tight budget, especially in an inflationary environment like the one we are in right now, would probably choose the second option; however, that milk would not come from Quebec, would not be local and would not contain all the proteins that it should.

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Supply management helps to keep the three previously mentioned pillars in balance. It controls production, price and the border.

This model has been used in Quebec since it was first created in 1972. Every country in the world protects their products. That is not new. In Quebec, our supply-managed producers are the ones who need to be protected. The producers are unanimous on this and are calling for this bill to be passed.

• (1115)

This is a Bloc Québécois bill, which I recognize, but it is also the bill of milk, egg and poultry producers across Canada.

As I mentioned earlier, there are many family dairy farms in my riding. I am thinking in particular of Laiterie de La Baie, which was established in 1919 and since then has been handed down from one generation to the next. The values of support, solidarity and quality are part of the company's identity. Animal welfare is a consideration. The cows graze on grass in the summer and eat real hay during the winter. That is the type of farm that we want to encourage. I buy their milk all the time because it is the best and also because, as consumers, we must encourage our local producers.

Supply-managed agricultural sectors are key to the economic and social development of the regions. Let us not forget that. Supply management protects our workers' livelihoods. It ensures that our dairy, egg and poultry farms are not left to fend for themselves. Above all, it protects the integrity of the system. It is natural to have concerns about future agreements. Some even speak about having their hands tied or use the expression "showing their cards ahead of time". However, some experts reassured the committee that it would not hobble the government, rather, it would strengthen it.

I am a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade, which studied Bill C-282. The committee even asked for additional meetings so that experts, as well as farmers from all walks of life, could share their concerns. The upshot is that farmers in Quebec are urging us to pass this bill. They need it. My job as a parliamentarian is to listen to what my constituents and what the entrepreneurs in my riding are telling me on the ground. The latest free trade agreements signed between Canada and other countries have made supply management a focal point.

The compensation offered by the government following agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA, and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP, is never paid out fast enough. Investment programs take too long, and farmers end up getting their cheques too late. Farmers and processors no longer want compensation. They want things to be done more efficiently to begin with.

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We know that nothing happens fast enough under these Liberals. Timelines are extremely long. The Conservatives are supporting farmers and producers so that families can eat high-quality local products. This bill is necessary because governments have chipped away at the system over the years. The compensation provided by the government is no longer enough. Supply management must be protected, which is exactly what Bill C-282 does. The vitality of our rural regions depends on supply management. As the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, I wholeheartedly support Bill C-282.

• (1120)

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to start the week this morning by discussing a bill that protects supply management. This system is vitally important for all the farmers under its management, including dairy, poultry and egg farmers. When a bill like this gets debated and makes it this far along the legislative process, it is precisely because very active and deeply engaged members, firmly connected to their communities, have fought for it.

In Quebec, the supply management system is extremely important, and it makes great things possible. I will explain that a little later in my speech, but right now, I really want to thank the Bloc Québécois members who have worked hard since being elected, especially over the past two years, because today's bill is not the first supply management bill or motion that we have debated.

First of all, I would like to thank the member for Montcalm, who is the bill's sponsor. He introduced this very important bill in the House of Commons and ably defended it in committee and in all forums, as well as throughout his constituency. I think he is lucky. I would have liked to introduce this bill because my riding has many dairy farmers, in particular, who play a major role in our area's development.

I must also thank the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, because it was at the Standing Committee on International Trade that the bill was defended. Committee members heard from various witnesses who, in general, were clear about their support and backing for this bill as a fair and equitable marketing system for farmers, communities and consumers alike.

The gold medal goes to the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé, our agriculture and agri-food critic, who stands up for all farmers, regardless of their specific field, and who has passionately, wholeheartedly and authentically defended this bill that is so important to Quebec's supply-managed farmers. Where I come from, we would say that the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé is like an agricultural star. There is nobody who grows anything in Quebec who does not know our passionate critic, the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé. He understands, and I think he is trying to impress upon everyone the fact that if Quebec ever becomes a country, we will need farmers. We will need food sovereignty as well.

We believe that defending the supply management system and all of Quebec's farmers is a real priority. Over the past year, constituents have told me about the Bloc Québécois's work on the ground to make use of every political mobilization strategy possible and to give all the necessary support today so that this bill can be passed tonight and make its way to the Senate, which, hopefully,

will not take too long to consider it, because it has gathered very strong consensus or, in any case, is supported by the vast majority of members in the House.

Now that I have said my thanks, I would like to talk about my riding of Salaberry—Suroît. I would say that it is a fairly rural riding. There are 358 dairy farms in my riding. Think about it: There are 358 farms in Montérégie-Ouest, farms that I also like to call businesses. These are dynamic companies always on the lookout for creativity and innovation. These farms are made up of people who work hard in their communities. In Montérégie-Ouest alone, they account for \$260 million in economic activity and 3,156 jobs.

• (1125)

That is no small thing. It is a very healthy sector that is extremely vital to our communities. Members often hear me say that, since farms are businesses, they are often at the heart of our small towns. Without them, many businesses would not survive.

I will give the wonderful example of Montcalm Farm, which just celebrated its 100th anniversary of dairy production in Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague, a very dynamic little municipality. I had the opportunity to give a member's statement honouring the Montcalm family and welcoming them here in the House.

The Montcalm family is the perfect example. They developed a family dairy farm. We are not talking about industrial production that is only concerned with production. This is a farming business that is involved in the community.

Let us talk about Maurice Montcalm, who was one of the many generations of owners of the Montcalm Farm. In addition to serving as an active member of the Union des producteurs agricoles to stand up for the rights of dairy farmers and as the president of his central union, he also served as a municipal councillor for Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague and was a member of the community co-op. That is a classic example of how a supply-managed dairy farm contributes to the economic and community development of a village or small municipality. Maurice is now retired, not from his job as a dairy farmer, but from his jobs in the community. He left the union and his job as a municipal councillor, but others have taken up the torch. Mélanie Genesse, Éric Montcalm's wife, has now taken over his role and is involved in the municipal council.

All that to say that dairy farms in Quebec are very important and not just because they produce the best milk in the world. I have no qualms about saying so. We have a traceability system that is the envy of the world. We have family farms that support a lot of people in our villages and municipalities. We have businesspeople who run agricultural businesses and stay up to date. They modernize and automate their farms. That means that a dairy farm might have robots in its milking room, which makes the work more effective and efficient. This means a young, next-generation farmer can attend their child's show on occasion because they can use their cell-phone to monitor whether their cows were able to be milked or whether there was a problem. It is magnificent. It is wonderful.

It is not at all, as we often hear it described, an unfair system that puts other producers at a disadvantage. Formerly, I was deputy agriculture critic for my party. That was when I was first elected in 2006. There were vegetable growers, for instance, and supply-managed producers. These are two different agricultural models that are compatible. Everything goes smoothly. The two systems can co-exist. Everyone, producers, the community and consumers are doing well.

I could also have cited the example of David Cécylre's extraordinary farm in Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka. It just modernized and automated its farm, which produces excellent milk. It managed to breed a cow that performs so well that the farm produced one of the best milk in Quebec.

Members will understand my passion for dairy producers. I have no doubt that this bill will be adopted by a majority in the House, and that it will be sent to the Senate. This bill really makes sense; it is constructive for agriculture in Quebec and the province itself.

● (1130)

I urge senators to do their job quickly so we can pass this very important bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour, as always, to speak on behalf of the people of Timmins—James Bay.

I have lost count of the number of times I have risen in this House to defend the principle of the supply management system we have for farming, because in debate after debate, we hear positive messages but we see it undermined continually in trade agreements. Supply management only works if the fundamental pillars are in place and intact.

There is a reason I think it is such an important system to preserve. We are not talking about subsidies. Our farmers do not need subsidies. They control a market that supplies milk to Canadians, and it is a system that works. In my region of Timmins—James Bay, particularly in the Témiscamingue and neighbouring Abitibi-Témiscamingue farming regions, dairy farmers are the backbone of our rural economy. We have lost pork producers to the boom and bust cycles of the pork market. Our cattle farmers always have to struggle. They have good years, but there are years when they are really impacted by what is being given out as payment for cattle being brought to the large slaughterhouses. The ability of dairy farm-

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ers to maintain their marketing control has been stable through the good times and bad times.

We have many cash crops in our region. When I was first elected, we had many smaller farms. In the northern Témiscamingue region, there are still family farms in smaller units, but it is getting harder and harder for them to maintain cash crops and compete with the larger corporate farms coming in. To maintain the finances of cash crop farms is more difficult.

Let us look at dairy farms. In our region, young families are able to farm. We have many young dairy farmers building barns and investing. These are major investments in the region, with new dairy farms up in Matheson, in the Timmins region. There is the Earlton and Englehart region, where dairy continues, in good times and in bad, to maintain the balance of the economy in rural northern Ontario.

This is a system that works. It is a system that does not hit the taxpayer up for subsidies. It is an efficient system. If we look at our neighbours in Wisconsin, the dairy farmers there really do not like the supply management system, yet we see massive problems with dumping because of overproduction. We do not have overproduction in Canada's dairy market, so this is an efficient use of farming.

It is really important that we maintain the defence of the dairy sector, because we always hear, as I just heard from my Conservative colleagues, about the false promises of globalization: that if we strip away any ability of a country to maintain regional and local economic vitality, we are somehow betraying the larger principle of globalization. Well, I would say to my Conservative colleagues to look around, because globalization has failed us, and every other country involved in it right now is making sure that their backyards and regions are protected. We are not asking for anything that is unfair in terms of protection. We are asking to maintain a system that works, a system that allows young family farms to maintain, grow and invest. It is a big principle for the New Democrats. We have always been supporters of the supply management system.

I will point out that what we have seen over the years with the corporatization of agriculture is that many local value-added operations have been threatened. Some of that is starting to change. Certainly in the Timmins region, which of course is more known for gold and copper mining than agriculture, we are seeing some really fascinating smaller specialty farms bringing food to markets in urban areas. The potential for young farmers to do that is exciting and something we did not think was possible 15 years ago. We thought we would have to get bigger and bigger, yet we see that niche farming is making inroads. I would encourage the government to support these niche markets through investments. We even see them in urban areas. People want to know where their food is coming from.

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As global supply chains are becoming more challenged, we need the ability to have community gardens and community food. Having backyard chickens in Toronto is a great idea. We need to make our cities livable places that have animals and the ability to grow, not just monocrops, grass and concrete.

• (1135)

Going back to the role of dairy in our region, for many years we had the Thornloe Cheese plant, a very small local producer. It was owned by Parmalat, one of the biggest milk companies in the world. Parmalat had no interest in our region. It had no interest in the future of Thornloe. Then one day someone called me and said they were going to shut down Thornloe Cheese. What they wanted, what was valuable to Parmalat, was not the jobs in the region or the product. It was the quota. Parmalat wanted to take the quota away from our region and consolidate it into a much larger Parmalat plant elsewhere.

We met with dairy farmers in our region and asked if they were willing to give up the quota and give up the potential to maintain production. The dairy farmers, certainly in Timiskaming, who have shown a willingness to stand up many times to defend their interests, said they were not going to go along with it. We went back to Parmalat and said the deal was that it could leave but the quota would stay. Parmalat laughed at us, but we were intent and the quota stayed.

I encourage anyone who drives up Highway 11 to stop in at Thornloe Cheese. They will see the best selection of cheese anywhere, because what they did with the quota was diversify. People can go into restaurants in Toronto and get Thornloe Cheese. To build quota and get more access to quota in cheese, one has to do speciality cheeses, so Thornloe has specialized in all manner of cheeses. We have a great brand now of grass-fed butter, which is very popular with people who like to cook and people in urban areas.

It is essential that we maintain value-added production in Canada to supply markets that are emerging so that we are not relying on large container ships bringing cheap product from elsewhere and are empowering communities, empowering farming and empowering rural regions to be part of a sustained, long-term vision for the 21st-century economy. That is why supply management is so crucial. It is one of the foundational pillars of a sustainable rural economy. It does not have the booms and busts that we have seen in other sectors, and it gives opportunities to young farming families.

I do not know how many times I have spoken on supply management, but I will continue to speak for supply management. I will continue to speak for the farmers in our region, because they are fundamental to the fabric of our region and to our country.

The New Democrats will support this bill. We will support and continue to fight for supply management, and we will argue its importance with the ideologues who believe that globalization and free trade should be allowed to erase our local farms and replace them with whatever is coming in from wherever else. We can compete. We can hold our own. We are not asking for any handouts. We are asking to maintain the rural, regional and national right to make sure that our farming is sustainable.

• (1140)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by recognizing the work done by the members for Montcalm, Berthier—Maskinongé and Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. They did an extraordinary job on this bill, which is crucial for Quebec.

This legislation affects one of Quebec's largest and most historically significant industries, specifically dairy production. Simply put, it seeks to protect the management of milk and other quotas to ensure that our producers are not negatively affected by political decisions that could threaten their future.

Of course, other countries will want to undermine supply management in order to get their products into our country. It is important to understand that the most protected sector in the world is agriculture. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or GATT, was signed in 1947. That agreement disappeared in 1994 to make way for the World Trade Organization, or WTO, precisely because it was getting harder to convince some countries to listen to reason when it came to protecting agriculture. There are reasons for that. The creation of the WTO did nothing to change the fact that virtually all countries want to protect their farmers.

For starters, we have to protect the industry that feeds us. It is vital to the national community that we protect the people who work hard to feed people. The job is not easy, we know. My father-in-law is a farmer. He is an amazing guy who is always working. Farming is his career and his job. This man, for whom I have a great deal of respect, puts food on people's plates. I often tell him that, when he looks out at everything growing in his fields, he can say that he is playing a part in fighting hunger. He is doing something phenomenal, not to mention tangible. The main reason is that we have to protect the people who feed us. It is a no-brainer. I am sure that people who are listening to me agree that these words make sense and that I speak the truth.

Second, farmers have to spend a lot of money to invest in their business. Costs are high. First, they need to buy the land, but then they also need to acquire livestock and the necessary tools. That takes a considerable investment. Investment means profitability. If producers invest in an area like milk production, for example, they have to make sure they get a return on that investment. They have to protect their return. If there is one sector on the planet where there are economic ups and downs, it is in agriculture, in farming livestock and its product, like milk. We need to ensure that the farmers who go to bat to buy equipment and invest in their businesses get a return on that investment.

The best way to ensure a return, and therefore ensure that they can continue their work, is to support supply management. It affords them predictability, which ensures a return on their investment. That is the basis of agricultural investment. That is how we protect farmers. That is how we assure those who invest millions of dollars that they, too, will have enough to eat, that there will be bread on the table. That is how we thank them for what they do. That is the second reason why supply management is important.

Third, we often talk about the regional economy, about how we need to find a way to stimulate the economy in the regions to encourage people to stay there. We want them to stay because they love their region, because they are locals and they want to stay. These people need to be able to stay where they are and where they want to be. If they want to stay in the regions, then we need to make sure that they can work and prosper there.

● (1145)

In a previous life, when I was in Quebec City and I was critic for economic matters, we used to talk about Investissement Québec. People would rack their brains trying to figure out what Investissement Québec's core mission was. It was thought that Investissement Québec's mission was to support the regional economy. That is what came up all the time. We were trying all kinds of ways to make that happen.

We see that supply management is a damned good way to stimulate the regional economy. After all, farms are very often located in the regions. This is an extraordinarily important reason for Quebec, given its vast territory. Gilles Vigneault said that villages were thrown into the regions. This is what was considered a feat for Quebecers: Even in the toughest areas to succeed, there are people who hang on to their land and want to stay there because they love where they are. Supply management is a way of giving them a pat on the back and telling them to stay there, because they can work and make money right where they are. It is also worth remembering that these people hire workers and that these businesses create jobs.

Quebec is known as a nation of small and medium-sized businesses, or SMEs. We often boast about Quebecers' innovative spirit and creativity, Quebecers like Armand Bombardier, who is the perfect example of a tinkerer or a guy who messes around in his garage to come up with new ways of dealing with life on this land and making it easier. Quebecers are very good at that. They are very good at being resourceful and creating SMEs.

Farms, especially dairy farms, are SMEs. I do not know the exact number, but Quebec has thousands of dairy farms. The advantage of these farms in Quebec compared to what is happening elsewhere in the world is that these dairy farms carry family names. Families own them. What does that mean? That means that they are handed down from father to son, that they are a legacy, that knowledge is passed down from generation to generation. We need to be extremely careful about preserving that, and that is what my colleagues have done. I am very proud of that.

When I go around my riding or elsewhere in Quebec, people ask me if the Bloc Québécois is working on anything special. We immediately tell them that we are working on protecting supply management, among other things. Everyone thanks us for that. They tell us to keep up the good work and not to give up.

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I have to commend the other parties for doing their part. I have to say, there is no need to be any more partisan than necessary. If this bill ends up getting passed, it will be thanks to the other parties too, and I thank them for that. I hear them. They seem to be on the same page. That is not always the case, but it needs to be acknowledged when it happens. In closing, I would say this: Long live farmers, long live the producers who feed us. Without them, we would not get far.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments that have been put on the record this morning. I want to give a different perspective.

For many years, supply management has played such an important and critical role, not only in our farming communities, but also, I would argue, for true urbanites. We understand and appreciate the value of the product coming to our kitchen tables as a result of supply management and the important role it plays on the issue of quality. It is not just about protecting an industry; I would like to think it is also about the quality food product that ultimately shows up on our kitchen tables. It was a Liberal government that, in essence, brought forward supply management and created the supply management regime. We have seen ongoing governments, including the current government, reinforce their support for supply management in the agreements they have achieved.

One of the things we need to recognize is that Canada, for all intents and purposes, is a trading nation. We are very dependent on world trade, and we see that in terms of the number of agreements Canada has been able to achieve. As a country of 40 million, we very much depend on that two-way trade system. We have a lot to offer the world and we are very successful at doing so. One of the ways we can secure markets is by ensuring that we have formal agreements put in place. When the Prime Minister talks about Canada's middle class, working for Canada's middle class and being there and trying to expand it for those who are trying to be a part of the middle class, we have to look at the issue of trade.

It is easy, from the outside looking in, to say it is 100 per cent supply management, and in the trade agreements we are concerned about giving away quotas and so forth. From the inside, one has to recognize a couple of things. First and foremost, supply management is a good thing, and we continue to support supply management. The second thing is to recognize that we also value having these international trade agreements. There are many industries, including agricultural industries, that have greatly benefited from trade agreements. In the past, I have cited Canada's pork industry, for example. In the province of Manitoba, our pork industry is doing exceptionally well. It could not do anywhere near as well as it is doing today if it were not for international trade. It is very dependent on it.

Private Members' Business

All one needs to do is go to my colleague from Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa's riding to see HyLife, in the community of Neepawa. HyLife is a major producer of pork products. When I took a tour of the plant, someone said that over 95% of that pork is going to Asia. It is an area of ongoing growth. That export provides good-quality jobs. Therefore, I do not think it does us any service to say that trade agreements are a bad thing, when, in fact, they are a very good thing, especially from the perspective of where Canada is at and the need for Canada to enhance its trade opportunities. It does not have to be a win-lose situation. We trade with the best interests of Canada in mind. To try to give any sort of false impression that this is a government that does not understand or does not support supply management is wrong.

Our first minister of agriculture was from the Atlantic province of Prince Edward Island, and our current Minister of Agriculture is from the province of Quebec. Both, along with other members, including myself, have been long-time advocates of the importance of our supply management system. It has had a very positive impact for consumers and for product quality, but it has also had a very positive impact on our farmers.

• (1150)

Dairy farms are a good example of that. Not only are they able to plan for the future, but also we are seeing younger generations committed to continuing the farm, so we know there are career opportunities there.

Supply management has provided quality entrepreneur opportunities, quality jobs and quality products, and the industry as a whole continues to do well in Canada, whether it is in Quebec, the Prairies, Ontario or other regions of the country. Some have higher numbers of supply-managed communities than others, so it is important to the Canadian economy. We have recognized that, historically by creating it and presently by continuing to support it, even though, when it comes to trade, there has been no government in the history of Canada that has signed off on more trade agreements, securing more opportunities for Canadian entrepreneurs, exporters and those who import into the country, so we can continue to support our middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it.

We want to see an economy that works for all Canadians, and there is absolutely no doubt that supply management plays a very critical role in that. I thank the member for introducing the bill so we can have this particular debate.

• (1155)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Montcalm for his right of reply.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to close the debate at third reading of the bill.

I have five short minutes to hopefully try to convince the very few who are still uncertain about this bill. Here we are at the last step of a parliamentary process to pass my bill, Bill C-282. Today, during these five short minutes, I would like to speak from the heart and set aside the technical aspects of my previous speeches. I believe that everything has been said, and I see that the technical elements have been understood by many parliamentarians.

I rise with my heart filled with pride because my colleagues and I took a collaborative approach. We met with producers, consumers and processors. We got everyone from the agricultural sector involved. We took a non-partisan approach in the House. We really hope that the results will be almost unanimous. We hope to achieve as good a result as last time. There were 293 members who voted for the bill and 23 who were not convinced of the merits of the bill.

First of all, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the dedication, determination and expertise of my colleagues, the member for Berthier—Maskinongé and the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. They made vital contributions. I really think so. Their contributions were essential in getting the bill to this final vote stage, which is scheduled for Wednesday. I would also like to recognize the support shown by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, who has spoken in favour of Bill C-282 from the beginning and at every stage of the legislative process. It is quite rare to see a minister so openly involved from the outset in favour of a bill that is not a government bill.

Today the message is clear and unequivocal. Producers under the supply management system who help feed us must never again be tormented from being left wondering how badly they will be sacrificed on the altar of a free trade agreement. They have given enough. No amount of compensation, no temporary one-off cheques, will make up for the permanent structural damage caused by the breaches contained in previous agreements. All countries exclude certain sectors of their production or products from all of their free trade agreements. When the Americans come to the negotiating table, there is no question of discussing sugar or cotton. The same goes for Japan and rice. Why, then, should we not do the same?

It is high time for us to not only protect the agricultural model, but to promote a balanced agricultural model that ensures the stability of our food autonomy and food security. That model must also guarantee product quality while reducing our ecological footprint. Supply management is logical. I would even go so far as to say it is “eco-logical”. The Bloc Québécois believes that there is room under the sun for everyone. We promote all agricultural models. They are not incompatible, they are complementary. All they need is effective marketing strategies.

• (1200)

It has been said before, but I will say it again: Supply management plays a crucial role in Quebec's regional economies and in the dynamic use of the land. In Montcalm, 87 farms are under supply management. When I travel around my constituency, I see well-structured rural communities practising farming on a human scale and anxious to keep it that way. Breathtaking landscapes emerge along the way.

I know that the die is cast. I urge the Senate to join all of us in the House who have come together on this bill and vote in favour of Bill C-282.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion.

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.

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 21, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

* * *

[English]

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED INTIMIDATION OF MEMBER—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now ready to rule on the question of privilege raised on June 12 by the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo concerning an allegation of intimidation by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

The member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo explained that, during question period on Thursday, June 8, the minister sent him an email, the contents of which the member interpreted as a threat to tarnish his professional reputation and his standing in the legal community. The email referred to the member reacting to a question by the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, which referenced a former Supreme Court justice. It also included the sentence, and I quote, “I will let the community know.” He felt that this constituted a form of intimidation, impeding him in the performance of his duties as parliamentarian.

[Translation]

For his part, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons asserted that the member misinterpreted the minister's words. According to the parliamentary secretary, the motives imputed to the minister by the member were not based in fact and were pure speculation. He indicated that the minister had refuted the allegations, which he described as unsubstantiated.

The Chair takes allegations of threats or intimidation against a member seriously. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, page 111, states the following concerning cases where members are obstructed, interfered with or intimidated by non-physical means:

In ruling on such matters, the Speaker examines the effect the incident or event had on the Member's ability to fulfill his or her parliamentary responsibilities. If, in the Speaker's view, the Member was not obstructed in the performance of his or her parliamentary duties and functions, then a prima facie breach of privilege cannot be found.

● (1205)

[English]

The Chair has reviewed the arguments presented and the relevant precedents. The member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo referred to the ruling by Speaker Bosley from May 1, 1986, on a similar matter. In that ruling, the Speaker did not conclude that the matter at hand was prima facie. As pointed out by Speaker Bosley, at page 12847 of the Debates:

Speaker's Ruling

Should an Hon. Member be able to say that something has happened which prevented him or her from performing functions, that he or she has been threatened, intimidated, or in any way unduly influenced, there would be a case for the Chair to consider. I cannot see that the Hon. Member's ability to perform her parliamentary functions have been impaired in any way.

[Translation]

As the member knows, to find a prima facie question, the Speaker must be satisfied that the member was in some way hampered, deterred, or otherwise prevented in carrying out their parliamentary duties. In the present case, the Chair is not convinced that this email exchange has impeded the member in such a way.

[English]

Accordingly, I cannot find there is a prima facie breach of privilege.

That being said, and while not wanting to speculate about the intention behind the minister's email, the Chair would invite him to reflect on his actions. I also encourage members to be courteous in their interactions with one another, as they all have a role to play in setting the appropriate tone for our proceedings.

I thank members for their attention.

ALLEGED OBSTRUCTION OF MEMBER FOR SOUTH SURREY—WHITE ROCK—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now ready to rule on another question of privilege, raised on June 14 by the chief opposition whip concerning the behaviour of the member for Kingston and the Islands.

In her intervention, the chief opposition whip alleged that the member for Kingston and the Islands obstructed her in the performance of her parliamentary duties because of his unparliamentary behaviour and an offensive gesture. The chief opposition whip qualified the behaviour as an “ordeal”, as well as distracting and disruptive to her efforts to complete her speech. While she acknowledged the apology provided by the member, she indicated that she did not feel it was sufficient. Citing procedural authorities and previous rulings, the member felt the matter met the threshold for a prima facie question of privilege.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons countered that the matter had been resolved when the member for Kingston and the Islands unreservedly apologized for the gesture he made. He also noted that the apology was delivered shortly after the incident occurred and that the Deputy Speaker accepted the apology; therefore, he considered the matter closed.

[Translation]

The Chair reviewed the incident that occurred on the evening of June 13, 2023, and accepts the word of the chief opposition whip as to how upsetting she found the offensive behaviour directed to her. Frequently, the House debates contentious subjects where emotions run high on both sides of the issue. This should never be used as a justification for inappropriate behaviour.

Privilege

● (1210)

[English]

When the incident occurred, the Deputy Speaker ably addressed the behaviour by instructing the member for Kingston and the Islands to apologize unreservedly for his behaviour and offensive gesture. The member complied with that direction, and the Chair, who was tasked with making this determination, considered the matter closed.

[Translation]

I would remind members that decisions from the Chair are final. They are not to be debated after the fact, nor are they to be revisited once they have already been settled. That is our practice. In fact, on October 9, 1991, Speaker Fraser, at page 3516 of the Debates, made this observation, and I quote:

The member in this case, as has been the practice, has apologized. Hon. members clearly feel very strongly about the matter as perhaps so does the Speaker. I cannot allow... that a practice build up of continuing the debate.

[English]

The Chair also observes that the participation of the chief opposition whip in proceedings remains undiminished. As such, I cannot find a prima facie question of privilege.

The Chair will finish by echoing a very simple and straightforward request often made in the past: Please observe the same common courtesy that should regulate interactions in any professional setting. Vigorous exchanges of ideas, which are the hallmark in any democratic assembly, can and must be exercised in conjunction with some self-restraint.

I thank all members for their attention.

ALLEGED BREACH OF MEMBER'S RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have reserved the right to respond to the government's response to my question of privilege.

I believe it was on Friday that the member for Brampton North added some government response to the question of privilege I raised last week with regard to the government withholding information on an Order Paper question and proof of this.

The member for Brampton North said the following:

The government met the requirements of the Standing Orders in tabling its response to the Order Paper question. The response to the access to information request provides a legitimate rationale as to the reasons it was not in a position to include certain information in its response.

The problem with that is twofold. First of all, my question, Order Paper Question No. 974, had many aspects of information requested. The member for Brampton North said that the government was "not in a position to include certain information in its response", but the government should have endeavoured to answer all parts of the question.

I will read an email from the ATIP that brought this question of privilege to light for your consideration in making your ruling, Mr. Speaker. It is from Eleni Deroukakis in the Department of Natural Resources. This person is a deputy director-level staffer member. The email reads:

Hi Dan,

See the official tasking for this request. As we discussed last week, it might be a good approach to leverage on the "generic" email you prepared on this issue. I sent you Kim's feedback on that response that I just received this morning.

Also as discussed, the response needs to be as high level as possible (instead of addressing every single question)....

Therefore, the staffers met and decided to deliberately withhold information from the answer to my Order Paper question. Again, I just want to re-emphasize this; it is on pages 2 and 3 of the ATIP, and it was to specifically not answer certain parts of the question.

Mr. Speaker, I will give you an example of the information they chose to withhold. One part of my question was to ask which government official gave an interview to the CBC on the story that had originated my OPQ request. The paragraph in question in this article reads, "The Canadian government has been active, too. Canadian officials say they've already provided the U.S. with a list of 70 projects that could warrant U.S. funding."

I wanted to know who told the CBC that, so that I could follow up and perhaps get more information or a briefing. However, the staffer at Natural Resources said that they did not want to answer; they made an active effort not to answer any part of my question, and they conspired on that. As per the Speaker's ruling that I referenced from 1980 in my original submission on this question of privilege, there is a deliberate effort to withhold information.

The other point of rebuttal that I would like to make, on the assertion of the member for Brampton North that the government was in a position to withhold this, is that it is not just my Order Paper question that the Department of Natural Resources has decided to use this method of what they call "high-level limitation language". There is a table that I would draw your attention to, Mr. Speaker, when you are making your ruling. It outlines at least, I believe, 15 other members who had an Order Paper question. It is all strategy in the comments part of that table on whether "high-level limitation language" would provide a risk. I will read one particular answer, which is in regards to a colleague asking for some basic details on government contracts, which was a generic question to all government departments. This is what the Department of Natural Resources said: "NRCan answer uses limitation language and does not disclose specific cancelled contracts from the time period requested. Communications risk appears low and depends on whether NR-Can stands out among all departments answering. Inherent risk of limitation language is accepted."

Mr. Speaker, when you are making your ruling, I would ask you to consider what the department is referring to when it says that "inherent risk" is acceptable. I interpret this as saying that the risk of me complaining to you, Mr. Speaker, or pointing out that they have deliberately withheld information is acceptable, based on whether other departments actually provide information.

Privilege

• (1215)

NRCan has actually strategized on the opportunity cost of not pulling that information, which I am entitled to under the Standing Orders, on the gamble that you are going to rule that this is okay. Just to re-emphasize, this is what I pointed out in my original question of privilege when NRCan's deputy chief of staff, Kyle Harrietha, said that the Speaker will just tut-tut this and let it go.

The Speaker, in December 1980, pointed out that if there was a deliberate attempt to deny answers to an hon. member, this would constitute a breach of privilege in terms of how Order Paper questions are responded to. This ATIP clearly shows that the Department of Natural Resources has a pervasive culture of trying to withhold information from members through communication strategies, as opposed to trying to provide that information and then figuring out the communication process afterward. The department has it backwards. It is diminishing my ability as a member to find this information and do my job as per the Standing Orders, and it is also diminishing your role as Chair.

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider that. This is very serious. I encourage you to read through the ATIP. It is troubling. I would argue against what the member for Brampton North said; it was a deliberate attempt to withhold information.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for her intervention, and it will be taken into consideration in the ruling.

The hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not in my nature to stand and argue that I have been wronged. I believe that a privilege motion is a very serious event, so, hopefully, my standing alongside the member of Parliament for Calgary Nose Hill underscores the seriousness that I take with this breach.

Just a few comments with regard to my specific situation stemming from the arguments of the breach that was noted by the earlier speaker.

I think we all can probably agree that, in Canada, democracy is not as healthy as it could be and as it needs to be. We also know that the Prime Minister and his office, and some of his ministers, do not take the health of Canadian democracy all that seriously.

However, we are incredibly fortunate that in Parliament we have the Westminster parliamentary system that can and needs to stand up for democracy. How does that work? Because the one thing that the Prime Minister does not have the power to do is to elect you, our Speaker. The fact that for many years parliamentarians must vote in the Speaker should never be forgotten or taken for granted, because the Speaker does not represent the government. Rather, the Speaker represents all democratically elected officials in this place to protect our ability to carry out the discharge of our duties; the benefit of a free and democratic society. In other words, you, Mr. Speaker, represent all of us in this work.

I mention these things because we have a situation where a government department, in this case NRCan, with my Order Paper Question No. 1113, decided that it did not want to be accountable to Canadians. This department deliberately withheld information in

order to mislead us as democratically elected officials. In an access to information request by the member for Calgary Nose Hill, there included a short reference to my Order Paper question. It specifically related to cancelled government contracts and any other related costs.

Spending of the government and its scrutiny is core to every member of Parliament, who is not a part of the executive, to our parliamentary functions. The department and its communication assessment, for those who are watching at home, means to identify any issues and associated communications approach. It said, "NRCan answer uses limitation language and does not disclose specific cancelled contracts from the time period requested. Communication risk appears low and depends on whether NRCan stands out among all departments answering. Inherent risk of limitation language is accepted."

We know that this department did not want to disclose specific cancelled contracts. Were department officials embarrassed? Were they sensitive? Did they just not want to be accountable to the public? We do not know, but we do know that they identified there would be other departments that would answer honestly and forthrightly, as is their duty, being the stewards of public money. That was the risk that NRCan weighed.

Imagine for a moment if every department started to do this, especially with something like an Order Paper question, where we ask for factual information with the expectation that we will get factual information. That is why this privilege motion is so critically important for Canadian democracy. We know that this department did not want to disclose specific contracts. Why that is we do not know.

This, Mr. Speaker, will be your moment to stand up for the House, and for all members, to send a powerful message to NRCan that democracy will always prevail in Canada. That is the Speaker for whom I voted. I believe that we must send this message strongly, that no government department can be allowed to withhold information or taint our Order Paper process. If we allow this to happen once, it will inevitably happen again; if not the same kind of level, it could be worse.

I ask that you investigate this, Mr. Speaker, to ensure we can carry out our parliamentary duties. There is no way that the decision to limit the language, to purposefully hide contracts from public disclosure would not happen without the approval of the minister responsible and his staff.

All of this falls on your shoulders, Mr. Speaker, who must stand in this place to represent us and send a powerful message that this is wrong and needs to be turned around. If the Speaker fails to do this, it will only enable more government departments to engage in this kind of garbage, and, frankly, I think we all can agree that it is not acceptable.

Points of Order

• (1220)

This department thought it was above this place. Let us remind the government and its departments that they are there to serve Canadians and that Order Paper questions should be sacrosanct and factual.

• (1225)

The Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for his input. I do want to assure him that any decision made by the Speaker and by the office is made following the rules that are set forward by the members of the House, and followed so that it will be fair to all members: not one side or the other but all members.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill is rising with a short reply.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, when you are making your ruling on this, I would ask that you look to the response to Question No. 1113, which is the question on which my colleague from Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola is raising his additional information. I would ask you to look specifically at the language under the NRCan response, which is different from other departments. Other departments actually undertook a search of these contracts, but NRCan used what it referred to in the ATIP as “high-level limitation language”.

I would also ask you, Speaker, when you do that, to look at how there is similar language now from departments across all other Order Paper questions. I suspect that if there are further ATIPs, we will find the government has adopted an approach of “high-level limitation language”. It is a copy-and-paste across departments, which is a purposeful attempt to deny members of information, and goes against the spirit of the Standing Orders.

Thank you for your consideration, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

UPCOMING OPPOSITION DAY

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order with respect to the upcoming opposition day, which is also the final allotted day in the current supply period, the day when we consider the estimates and appropriation bills.

Multiple notices of opposition to votes in the main estimates and the supplementary estimates appear on today's Notice Paper, meaning that subparagraph (c)(i) of the special order adopted on November 15, 2022, sometimes referred to as the midnight sitting orders, will need to be applied. It states:

(i) during consideration of the estimates on the last allotted day of each supply period, pursuant to Standing Orders 81(17) and 81(18), when the Speaker interrupts the proceedings for the purpose of putting forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the estimates,

(A) all remaining motions to concur in the votes for which a notice of opposition was filed shall be deemed to have been moved and seconded, the questions deemed put and recorded divisions deemed requested,

(B) the Speaker shall have the power to combine the said motions for voting purposes, provided that, in exercising this power, the Speaker be guided by the same principles and practices used at report stage.

While the House has, in recent years, adopted special orders with provisions to this effect, it appears that this week's opposition day would be the first time the Chair might be called upon to interpret and apply the unprecedented provisions found in clause (c)(i)(B).

I am rising today to make representations in advance of your likely ruling, bearing in mind the words of Mr. Speaker Milliken from March 21, 2001, at page 1991 of the Debates, following an amendment in Standing Order 76.1(5), which state:

...from time to time when the House adopts new procedures, Speakers have seen fit to address the manner in which they will be implemented. Often this occurs when a certain amount of latitude or discretion is given to the Chair. In enforcing new procedures, the Speaker acts as a servant of the House, not as its master.

Therefore, in order that these new procedures function properly, I see it as my duty to make a statement on their operation now, before the House is seized with a bill at report stage.

In short, I do not believe the principles and practices of the report stage on legislation lend themselves well to the principles and practices necessary for the appropriations process, but allow me to explain.

First, I think we ought to put the estimates and opposed items into some context so that the House understands the situation at hand. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition explains, at page 864:

The main estimates provide a breakdown by department and program of planned government spending for the upcoming fiscal year. The estimates are expressed as a series of votes, or resolutions, which summarize the estimated financial requirements in a particular expenditure category, such as operations, capital or grants. The votes are expressed in dollar amounts, the total of which, once agreed to, should satisfy all the budgetary requirements of a department or agency in that category, with the exception of any expenditures provided for under other statutory authority. Each budgetary item, or vote, has two essential components: an amount of money and a destination (a description of what the money will be used for).

Then, continuing at page 881, Bosc and Gagnon explain opposed items:

...any Member may give notice to oppose any item in the estimates before the House; such items are then referred to as opposed items in the estimates....Members give notice of opposed items to express opposition to the total amount of a vote or to a specified portion of that amount. A notice to oppose an item in the estimates is not a motion. Because the government may propose in one motion the concurrence in all the votes in the estimates, the notice to oppose an item is rather a mechanism by which Members force the government to propose a separate motion for the concurrence in each vote that is the subject of total or partial opposition. The wording of the general concurrence motion is then changed to exclude those votes.

Points of Order

● (1230)

It is essential for us not to lose sight of the supply process, which is not just some dusty, boring accounting exercise. The control of the purse is rooted in centuries of constitutional evolution dating back to the earliest parliaments and assemblies in England over 800 years ago. These historic origins are best summed up by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. In its sixth report, tabled in June 2012, at page 3, it states:

The principles underlying Canadian parliamentary financial procedures go back to the *Magna Carta*, signed by King John of England in 1215. When the King was not able to finance most public expenses out of his own revenues, he was obliged to seek funds by summoning the common council of the realm, or Parliament, to consider what taxes and tariffs should be supplied to support the Crown. It was generally recognized that, when “aids” or “supplies” were required, the King should seek consent not only to impose a tax, but also for the manner in which the revenues from that tax might be spent. In 1295, the writ of summons for one of these councils proclaimed: “What touches all should be approved by all.”

Bosc and Gagnon, at page 824, explain that:

The direct control of national finance has been referred to as the “great task of modern parliamentary government”. That control is exercised at two levels. First, Parliament must assent to all legislative measures which implement public policy and the House of Commons authorizes both the amounts and objects or destination of all public expenditures.

Josef Redlich offers some further historical context, at page 114 of volume 3 of *The Procedure of the House of Commons: A Study of Its History and Present Form*, which states:

The whole law of finance, and consequently the whole British constitution, is grounded upon one fundamental principle, laid down at the very outset of English parliamentary history and secured by three hundred years of mingled conflict with the Crown and peaceful growth. All taxes and public burdens imposed upon the nation for purposes of state, whatsoever their nature, must be granted by the representatives of the citizens and taxpayers, i.e., by Parliament.

That struggle was not isolated to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Bosc and Gagnon, at pages 11 and 12, remind us:

There was, however, endless conflict between the appointed governors and the elected representatives over who should control public spending (supply) and who should appoint public officials (the Civil List)...

Ultimately, discontent led to rebellions in both Upper and Lower Canada during the period 1837–38.

With the adoption of responsible government in Canada, the most acute conflicts simmered down, and established practices took root. Bosc and Gagnon note, at pages 826 and 827:

The manner in which Canada deals with public finance derives from British parliamentary procedure as practised at the time of Confederation. The financial procedures adopted by the Canadian House of Commons in 1867 were formed by the following principles, [including]...

that all legislation sanctioning expenditure or initiating taxation is to be given the fullest possible discussion, both in the House and in committee.

Bosc and Gagnon elaborate on this at page 834:

The cardinal principle governing Parliament’s treatment of financial measures was that they be given the fullest possible consideration in committee and in the House. This was to ensure that “parliament may not, by sudden and hasty votes, incur any expenses, or be induced to approve of measures, which may entail heavy and lasting burthens upon the country.”

They also refer, at page 845, to “the ancient tenet of parliamentary government which held that the Crown should respond to the grievances of the people before the people granted supply.”

Turning to an understanding of the report stage for legislation, its essence is explained by Bosc and Gagnon at page 781:

In recommending that report stage be restored, the 1968 Special Committee on Procedure believed that stage to be essential in order to provide all Members of the House, and not merely members of the committee, with an opportunity to express their views on bills under consideration and to propose amendments, where appropriate.

● (1235)

This point was emphasized by the Special Committee on the Reform of the House of Commons, better known as the McGrath committee, in its third report, tabled June 1985, at pages 38 and 39:

The report stage was designed to provide opportunities to members not involved in the committee stage of a bill to propose amendments when the committee reported the bill back to the House. Thus, an MP that was not a member of the committee dealing with a bill would not be deprived of the right to propose amendments....

According to Bosc and Gagnon, at page 784, “At report stage, a bill is examined as a whole and not clause by clause as is the case at committee stage.” Reconciling the principles and practices at report stage with those of the ancient process of the business of supply is a greatly unfair task that I think the Liberal-NDP coalition voted, through the November 15, 2022 special order, to give to the Chair. Compounding that difficulty is the matter that much of our jurisprudence on report stage concerns the admissibility and grouping of motions for debate at report stage. This is less so for the establishment of voting patterns.

Bosc and Gagnon explain, at page 784, the Chair’s role in the selection process, stating, “The Speaker rules not on whether the purpose of the amendment or its substance is worthy of debate, but rather on whether the amendment is procedurally acceptable within the framework of the rules established for the admissibility of amendments presented at report stage.” Nonetheless, for the purposes of the November 15 special order, all motions are selected. There is no discretion involved or permitted. All questions on the estimates must be put to the House. Bosc and Gagnon, at page 788, describe the grouping process:

The Speaker’s decision on the grouping of motions in amendment at report stage addresses two matters: the grouping for debate; and the voting arrangements.

Motions in amendment are grouped for debate according to two criteria: their content; and their position in the bill. Motions which could form the subject of a single debate are grouped according to content if, once adopted, they would have the same effect in different parts of the bill or if they relate to the same provision or similar provisions of the bill. Motions in amendment are combined according to the location at which they are to be inserted in the bill when they relate to the same line or lines. These motions in amendment will then be part of a single scheme for voting purposes.

When the Speaker selects and groups motions in amendment, he or she also decides on how they will be grouped for voting, that is, the Speaker determines the order in which the motions in amendment will be called and the effect of one vote on the others. The purpose of the voting scheme is to obviate any requirement for two or more votes on the same issue.

Many of these concepts articulated in the approach of the Chair to decisions taken at report stage are hardly applicable to the business of supply. Where does this leave us? I think the words of Bosc and Gagnon at page 317 must be borne in mind. They say, “Despite the considerable authority of the office, the Speaker may exercise only those powers conferred upon him or her by the House, within the limits established by the House itself.”

Points of Order

Mr. Speaker, as explained by your predecessor in his November 29, 2012, report stage ruling, at page 12611 of the Debates, “In the absence of any specific guidance from the House with regard to motions to delete and other matters raised in the points of order, the Speaker cannot unilaterally modify the well-established current practice.” In other words, in the absence of any expressed, specific direction from the House about how to interpret the November 15 special order, the Chair should adhere as closely as possible to the established procedures on the business of supply.

With that said, I have a few thoughts on how we can reconcile these concepts. If we are to take the premise that the report stage is not meant to be a repetition of the committee stage of a bill, and then import that concept to the consideration of motions to concur in the estimates, I think we should also reflect upon how the report stage practices for private members' bills that are deemed reported back to the House would relate to the estimates that have been deemed reported back to the House. In particular, each of the items in the main estimates that were referred to and deemed reported back from the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, the Standing Committee on Finance, the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, and the Standing Committee on the Status of Women must be taken up, considered and voted upon separately, reflecting the fact that there was no committee vote on these estimates reported in the House.

● (1240)

Additionally, vote 1, under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation was also, by virtue of Standing Order 81(4)(a), deemed reported, and therefore should be similarly treated. Furthermore, as of Friday, only one committee, the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, has presented a report on the spring—

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt and ask how much more there is remaining. I think the hon. member has made her point. We are talking about history and what goes on in England and other places, and points of order are usually very concise and to the point. We will look into history and everything else, but I am sure she is able to wrap it up, or at least give us the salient points.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, I did go into some history, but right now I am talking about the current state of the committees. I am talking about right now, including Friday, so I will continue for a bit.

While the deadline for the other committees to report would be today, the third sitting day prior to the final allotted day, or else they shall be deemed to have reported, I would urge the Chair to adopt the same approach as I laid out for the main estimates, which have been deemed reported back to the House.

Third, that leaves us with the estimates that were reported back from committee. When it comes to the report stage of legislation, Bosc and Gagnon observe, at page 787:

For the purpose of debate, the Speaker will also group motions that have the same intent and are interrelated. In so doing, the Speaker will consider whether individual Members will be able to express their concerns during the debate on another motion.

The concerns of Parks Canada are wildly different from those of the Communications Security Establishment, which in turn are quite different from the concerns of the Invest in Canada hub. To lump these disparate organizations together for a single vote would, I believe, do a great disservice to parliamentary scrutiny and control over appropriations. However, since I know you would not wish to see the House speak in vain, clause (c)(i)(B) of the November 15 special order must be interpreted to mean something. In this case, it would be appropriate to group, for voting purposes, the items in the estimates that have actually been reported back from a committee on the basis of each institution that is proposed to receive an appropriation.

I believe this balances the need to group only interrelated items, while keeping in line with the principles and practices enunciated by the Speaker's predecessor in a November 29, 2012 ruling, at page 12611 of the Debates. I will spare the House the quotation on that one. I have referred to the place to find it. Moreover, it would track with the approach customarily taken with clause deletion motions at the report stage of budget implementation bills, whereby they would typically be grouped according to the divisions of the bill; for example, clauses pertaining to the Excise Tax Act would be treated separately from those that might amend the Employment Insurance Act, or another provision.

Before the government might urge you to group these confidence motions based on the fact that the Liberals are being propped up in a parliamentary coalition by the New Democrats, through what they are calling a supply and confidence agreement, I would call to your attention the ruling of your predecessor on December 12, 2012, at page 13223 of the Debates, which reads, “Let me be clear: the Speaker does not make decisions based on who is in control of the House. Report stage motions are not, and never have been, selected for debate—”

● (1245)

The Speaker: I feel like I am being lectured by different members today on how to do my job. I would just appreciate if the hon. member got to the point, and maybe just let me know what she is getting at, and then we will go on from there. I do not think that lecturing the Speaker on how they should do their job is appropriate, but please continue.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I apologize, Mr. Speaker, if you felt that that is what I was doing. I—

The Speaker: There is another point of order.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would never lecture the Speaker on how to do the excellent job he is doing, but I do believe all these references to the supply and confidence agreement have nothing to do with whatever it is she has been talking about. She is dragging this out needlessly. I would never tell the Speaker to ask her to get to the point, but I—

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The Speaker: I believe I have already done that, in a nice way.

The hon. opposition whip has the floor.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would observe that clause (c)(i)(B) of the November 15 special order does not require you to group votes, but rather simply authorizes you to have the discretion to do so. I am not trying to lecture you; I am sorry if it is coming across that way. I am simply trying to point out the authorities for what needs to happen here. Accordingly, I urge you to exercise the discretion the House vested in you, in a way that encroaches the least on the House's right to express itself over the government expenditures that taxpayers, current and future, must make good on.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for her very thorough presentation.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT

BILL C-42—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.) moved:

That in relation to Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage and five hours shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill; and

That, at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at report stage and the five hours provided for the consideration at third reading stage of the said Bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the Bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period.

• (1250)

[*English*]

I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places or use the “raise hand” function so that the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this opportunity to speak to this closure motion. It is very disappointing, yet nothing new, that we are seeing this from government, since it has consistently used every opportunity it can, in coordination with its coalition partners, to silence not only members of the House but also the Canadians they represent.

[*Translation*]

We do not have enough time to present our opinions. I want to say that again for both English- and French-speaking Canadians be-

cause our debates are held in both official languages. Unfortunately, this process is not new to this House.

[*English*]

It is not surprising, unfortunately. We have seen this with a number of other bills. In addition to limiting speech, and we certainly know that we are going to have an opportunity to talk about the limitation of speech with Bill C-18 also coming forward in the House, we also see the limitation of democracy across the country, not only with foreign interference but also with Bill C-11.

The silencing of members of the House, as well as of Canadians, is nothing new, so I would like to say that it is very disappointing, especially as we go into the summer holidays. We are very limited in the amount of time that we have to have these important conversations for Canadians.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Mr. Speaker, I see the deputy House leader is telling me to get to the point. This is another individual trying to silence me in this moment. I do not think I have to say any more. I see that their NDP coalition partner is chiming in as well. The member for Timmins—James Bay is also chiming in about how they need to silence not only people in the House but also Canadians.

With that, I guess my question would be this: When will they allow members of the chamber to have the opportunity to speak their minds freely on behalf of Canadians?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are not trying to silence anybody. We are trying to get the affairs of Parliament through a series of blockages and techniques. We have just heard a point of order with no point of order—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We ask questions, and then we allow the member to answer.

The hon. Minister of Justice has the floor.

Hon. David Lametti: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, we just heard a point of order with no point. The point of it was simply to delay time. This happens time and time again. We, as a government, need to do this because the majority of people in the House of Commons would like things to go forward.

We saw last week an important second debate on Bill C-40, which would establish a commission to correct wrongful convictions in Canada. It is something long overdue. We saw that delayed by a number of dilatory motions and procedures on the part of the other side. It is sad and it is tragic.

The Deputy Speaker will know, because he is from Nova Scotia, that Glen Assoun of Nova Scotia died without seeing this bill get to second reading. This is precisely why we need to use these kinds of motions. It is to combat the dilatory tactics being used by the other side.

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[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are debating yet another closure motion, the latest in a long line. I do not really have a question for the minister, but I will make a comment on the mood in the House over the past few months. It is almost shameful to see how everyone in the House is behaving during this very intense period leading up to the summer adjournment.

There is retaliation going on. Maybe the minister will address that in his comments, but I get the impression that the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is not reaching out to all the opposition parties. He is behaving as though the government has a majority, and he is getting on the nerves of several members in the House. Once again we are dealing with an eleventh-hour time allocation motion because no one is reaching out on either side.

• (1255)

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, as I just said in English, what we are seeing are tactics being used to slow down the work of the House. We are reaching out to the opposition parties in Parliament. For this bill, I am sure that we have the support of not just the NDP, but also of the Bloc Québécois and several Conservatives, because it is good public policy. That is exactly what we are doing.

I would point out to the hon. member that we also worked with the provinces and with Quebec, which passed a similar bill in late March of this year. We are harmonizing our efforts with those of Quebec. That is a good thing. It will be a good thing for all of Canada because the provinces will be able to work with the federal government to tackle certain practices, such as money laundering.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, having spent my life in opposition, I do know that the one tool the opposition has is time. We have the time to speed things up and the time to slow things down. However, at the end of the day, time is about serving the Canadian people.

I see Bill C-42, which has the beneficial ownership registry. It is legislation to deal with Russian oligarchs. We could be debating that. Instead, we have been having to witness Conservatives with their long litany of whining, perceived slights and imagined microaggressions. It is always about them and their feelings. I get a feeling that European soccer teams might hire them over the summer to give them lessons on how to do the theatrics of lying on the grass and holding a knee.

Meanwhile, we have legislation to get done. We are staying until midnight, night after night. Instead of the Conservatives standing up for their constituents and talking about legislation that needs to get passed, they are talking about themselves, how bad they feel and how their feelings have been hurt.

I would ask the hon. member to give us a basic sense of the level of importance of getting this legislation through.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the frustration that many Canadians and many parliamentarians on both sides of the aisle share for the horrible delay tactics being used on the other side and the inflation of every single point becoming the end of the world.

This is a critical bill. It would help us in the fight against money laundering. It would help us in the fight against corruption. As the hon. member mentioned, it even helps us in the fight against Russian oligarchs. It would create a register that shows beneficial ownership, which is who is really behind the ownership structure of a company, such that we can then move forward, if necessary, to use that data, whether it is for the fight against money laundering, terrorism or anything else when the corporate structure is being used as a sham.

It would also allow us to protect whistle-blowers, who expose these kinds of measures. The legislation would basically create a best-in-class structure to mimic the best practices in other countries. It aligns with the best practices at the international level and with emerging best practices at the Canadian level, such as that in Quebec I mentioned a moment ago. We would be able to co-operate more easily with the provinces by creating this register, which would give access to law enforcement agencies and other agencies while still protecting the privacy of Canadians.

It is a good thing moving forward. There is widespread agreement and critical acclaim for this bill. We should just be getting it done.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the tactics Conservatives are using and ask the minister to comment.

A good place to start is that it comes straight from their leader's office. The minister will recall not that long ago, a week or so ago, when the leader of the Conservative Party said, reflecting on the budget debate, that he was going to talk for hours until the Prime Minister changed the budget implementation bill. It took a few hours, but we were ultimately able to get it passed. The Conservatives will move a motion to have another member speak, which then causes the bells to ring. They will bring in concurrence motions. They have even attempted to adjourn debate in the House.

Does the member believe that the Conservative Party is using time wisely in the House?

• (1300)

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his wise leadership in the House.

I agree with the member's comment. It is not just the dilatory tactics and the wasting of time. It is that the Leader of the Opposition is relishing in that in front of the media, being proud of the fact he is trying to grind Parliament down to a stop to prevent good pieces of legislation from moving forward. These are bills such as this one, Bill C-42, and Bill C-40, which I mentioned an hour ago. Over the last month, we have witnessed, time and time again, the misuse of time, the use of delay tactics and the real negativity these bring to the House of Commons.

We want to move forward with this bill because it is a positive bill for Canadians. We want to move forward with this bill because it would help us fight organized crime, money laundering and terrorist financing, and would give us better principles of corporate governance. We rely on the market to do many things in our country and in our economy. For that market to function properly, we need corporate governance structures that are transparent and that allow proper corporate decisions to be made, for the purposes of not only shareholders but also the Canadian public, to the extent that we allow the market to regulate these kinds of issues.

It is an important bill, and we need to pass it.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge, I am the only member in this chamber who participated in the amendment stage of Bill C-42. I will point out that we worked in good faith with all members of this House of Commons to put forward common-sense amendments to the legislation.

The hour before we had clause-by-clause, we had some of the most critical witnesses appear on this bill. They were from Transparency International. One of their key recommendations, in the hour before we had the amendment stage, was to adopt language from Bill 20, the Business Corporations Amendment Act, 2023, of British Columbia, which would have strengthened the provisions in the legislation regarding identity, specifically noting, “The records, information or proof must be provided under subsection (1) in the prescribed form and manner.” It also would have required that the bill strengthen the ability of the director of Corporations Canada to receive information on identity and citizenship so the bill could work clearly.

What is problematic in this case is that we wanted to bring forward good amendments. The NDP even brought good amendments forward, but the government voted against them simply because it had witnesses appear the hour preceding clause-by-clause. If we are going to have good legislation, we cannot have a parliamentary practice where witnesses appear the hour before. We limited ourselves from making the bill as good as it could have been simply because of that tactic by the government.

No, we have not stalled on the bill. We have worked in good faith to get the best legislation possible for Canadians, even to achieve the government's objectives of better interoperability, better standards and better threshold requirements. However, unfortunately, the government voted against all that and is now bringing in closure at the last minute instead of getting the bill right.

Whatever has been said by the minister and the parliamentary secretary so far has been false. We have been there to move the legislation along, and the government has used tactics to delay work to get the best clauses possible and to improve it in good faith for all Canadians.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon for his passion on this bill.

I know the committee worked very hard on this bill. I know there was a lot of back-and-forth on this bill. I know there were a lot of amendments on this bill, including amendments, as he mentioned, on which the Conservatives and the NDP agreed. A number of

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those amendments were accepted and a number of them were not after robust debate. It was a healthy process. I thank the hon. member for having participated in it.

What we have as a result is a balanced bill. It is the first bill that balances the need to get certain things on the record and on the register, like identity, citizenship and other elements, against privacy, working with other jurisdictions and with other mechanisms of inquiry within the Canadian government, which will have access to that information. Then there is the public facing part of the register for anyone to have access to some of the information on that register.

It is a series of balances, and I am sorry the hon. member does not agree with all of the balances that were finally agreed to before we reached this stage. However, I thank him for the work he has done, and I thank all members of this House for the work they have done, because the bill was amended in order to get here and was amended through the hard work of hon. members at committee.

● (1305)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my party's whip made what I felt was a mature comment. In my opinion, her comment did not receive a fitting response. I will therefore pick up where she left off.

We said that the Bloc Québécois supported the bill. The answer is yes, of course. That is not the issue. The issue is the repeated gag orders and backroom deals, as I will call them. It is high time that the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons started talking with the opposition House leaders. We need to have a constructive discussion, gather all these fine people together in an office and talk about ways to manage the House in the lead-up to the summer break, so that the game-playing stops.

I have denounced the Conservative filibustering many times, but it comes from somewhere. It comes from the repeated use of closure motions, the lack of communication, even the choice of dates for opposition days. I think we can and should work like adults. I urge the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons to meet with the other House leaders to talk things out so that we can get some constructive work done and rise for the summer on a high note, because this is hurting everyone. It is hurting our constituents most of all, because bills are not getting passed.

Does the minister think this is a good idea, and will he talk to his House leader?

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

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The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and the House leaders of the other parties meet at least once a week, if not every day, to discuss House procedure and practice. I can assure my colleague that we are not the ones blocking the business of the House. It is the Conservatives.

The Conservatives change their minds at every turn. They are moving dilatory motions every day, as we saw again today. We cannot have agreements that keep getting broken by an opposition party. We have no choice but to invoke closure so that we can serve the Canadian public by enacting legislation, which is our job.

We are not afraid of debate. We want debate, and we want the other parties to be able to propose amendments. What we do not want, however, are pointless tactics whose sole purpose is to slow down or block legislation. This is unacceptable.

[*English*]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to share some things that happened in my riding this weekend and why it is so important that in this chamber, we understand how our decisions impact people on the ground.

On Friday, a caller from outside of my riding, from Victoria, phoned in and said they considered taking their life on Wednesday of last week. It was only because the House passed Bill C-22 that they felt hope. That kept them going.

On Sunday, I was at a community event and a similar situation happened. A woman approached me and said that if it was not for the support of her family and her parents around her as she managed the system of income supports for the disability she is dealing with right now, she would have taken her life by now.

Today, the newspaper in British Columbia talked about 100,000 renting families being at risk of losing their home in our community. Some of that is due to corporate ownership of housing.

I wonder if the member opposite would share some of the impacts of being able to get work done in this House. That matters to people on the ground. As we talk about our privilege, we are not at risk of losing our housing and we are not at risk of not having coverage when we get a disability. People in Canada are. It actually turns my stomach and makes me feel a little ill to think that we would sit here while people consider taking their life because we do not want to advance legislation.

• (1310)

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for sharing the stories and narratives from people in her riding. It is very important that we remind ourselves exactly what the impact of obstructionism does in this place.

I have a constituent who constantly texts me about the progress of Bill C-22. It is a bill that I have supported from the beginning. She is living with a disability. She too is waiting for us to get the job done. I have supported the minister proposing that bill in every way I possibly can, formally and informally. It would wipe out a swath of poverty. I am hoping the letter that goes to the Senate will be accepted by the other place so we can put that in place.

I mentioned the example of Glen Assoun a moment ago and Bill C-40, another important bill that I have put forward to correct miscarriages of justice in the Canadian system. They exist; mistakes happen. However, this is a way to correct them more efficiently, more effectively and with greater access. I am sad that Glen Assoun, who worked for this result, did not live to see this bill get through Parliament.

I am hoping that we can eliminate all of these various delays so we can debate, as the member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon wants us to do, the substance without all the other tactics that just grind this place to a halt.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by recognizing that there are plenty of partisan games being played in our Parliament right now and that the governing party has every right to advance its legislative agenda.

When it comes to limiting debate on Bill C-42, though, we just began it last sitting day. I believe there have been four speeches so far. That is fewer than the number of parties represented in this House. If we take a further step back, this is the eighth time that debate will be limited since May 1. In fact, I could only find four instances where we have not had debate limited.

Is it not a concern to the minister and others in the governing party that by moving forward in this way and by mismanaging the agenda to this extent, it is enshrining an approach that allows others to do the exact same thing when are be power?

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I share that frustration, but this bill has been in gestation for a number years with respect to the background work, the research work and the consultation work that have been done on it. There has been a robust committee study of the bill, and there is a widespread degree of support, in substantive terms, for the major provisions in this bill. They cut across party lines. They also cut across governments and levels of government across Canada. Everyone is moving in sync in the same direction.

We need to pass this bill. It will help us in the fight against money laundering, which Canada is sadly becoming a host to. They call it “snow washing”. The bill would help us in that area and in many other areas. As I mentioned before, it would also give us better corporate governance. It is worth the effort to get it through right now.

To be honest, the other side will put up speaker after speaker with the same speaking notes saying the same thing over and over again. That is not debate. Debate is about cut and thrust and actually responding to things that have been said. Repeating the same speech over and over again does not amount to that.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a few things come to mind as the government once again drops the hammer on closure. There are three things in particular.

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We are starting to see a decline in our democracy and the relevance of its institutions, and I take offence to what the Minister of Justice said with respect to debate. It is from debate, from the diverse ideas that come from right across the country, that we are able to produce good legislation. The challenge that we have now is that the government wants an audience, not an opposition.

I will remind the minister that in September 2021, the Liberal government was voted in with a minority, and if not for the coalition agreement the Liberals have with the NDP, this legislation would be further debated. However, instead, the government House leader does not speak to the leader of the official opposition and does not speak to the Bloc. It just does an end-around to the NDP House leader and says, “Look, I want to invoke closure and this is what we are going to do.” They are ramming this legislation through.

This is Parliament, which is from *parler*, or to talk. We debate diverse ideas from right across the country, and anything but that is happening in this place.

Canadians are taking notice. I get a lot of eastern Europeans come to me in my office and say that they saw the same thing happen in their countries, this decline in democracy, this rise of authoritarianism, the government wanting an audience, not an opposition. Canadians are taking notice. Those people who come into my office say this: “Don't let what happened in my country happen to Canada, because it is.”

• (1315)

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I would say that the rise in populism is something the Leader of the Opposition, for example, constantly promotes by either handing out coffee to convoy protesters or using misogynistic hashtags in his publications online. That kind of thing is exactly what people in eastern Europe and others are complaining about.

I am open to debate. I believe debate has to be wide, varied and diverse. However, repeating the same topic and the same dilatory tactics over and over again is not debate by any stretch of the imagination.

What we would like is a focus on the issues, and when the official opposition is ready to do that, we will do that too. However, for the time being, we are going to debate with the NDP and the Bloc moving forward in good faith, as well as members from the Conservative Party moving forward in good faith. That is what we have to do while others in that party try to slow everything down.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on my concern earlier that instead of debate, we are seeing one long whinefest from the Conservatives about how their feelings have been hurt.

I will follow up on what the previous Conservative said, which I thought was very interesting. He did not want authoritarianism to come to Canada, yet the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan invited to our Parliament one of the legislators who voted to bring the death penalty to LGBTQ people. Think about that for a moment. The Conservative Party is supporting those in authoritarian jurisdictions who would put to death people because of their sexual orientation. We learned about that at the same time

that the Conservatives are putting out anti-gay hate mailings in an election. This is their election strategy.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague this. How important is it that Canada send a message to the world that, despite the efforts of the Conservative backbench, we will not go down the road of Uganda or any of the other authoritarian countries, like Russia, that are attacking LGBTQ rights, and that everybody's right to be who they are will be protected? That is actually the fundamental principle of freedom. We as New Democrats will fight for that any day of the week, regardless of what the Conservative backbench will do with their authoritarian friends.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I share with the hon. member the deep desire to protect all of our citizens and to work around the world so that we protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people in Canada and around the world, allow them to live in peace and dignity and allow them to flourish as human beings. That is part of the responsibility that we all have.

I was particularly proud to have introduced a bill in this country banning the torture-like practice of conversion therapy and I was proud to have gotten, in a shining moment, unanimous consent in this House. I really want to thank Erin O'Toole for the support that he gave with respect to that bill. That was critically important.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Brad Vis: Mr. Speaker, we all know very well that we cannot refer to sitting members of this House of Commons by their name. It is the member for Durham.

An hon. member: He resigned.

• (1320)

The Deputy Speaker: I do not think the paperwork has been sent in. It is apparently at the end of this session.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

Hon. David Lametti: I thank the hon. member for having corrected me.

Just to complete that point, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Durham for the leadership that he showed. However, after that, we have seen not just across Canada but around the world a serious rise in anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, laws and measures. It is something, therefore, of increased importance and increased relevance. We need to stand up and show our very colourful colours in standing up for the LGBTQ+ community and standing with them in order that their rights are protected.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order. A member of the NDP just made some verifiably false claims about me. In the interest of preserving reality in this House, it is important to note that I think he refers to a case in which a female opposition legislator was invited by the foreign affairs committee, not by me, to appear and provide testimony on a different study, and during the course of the discussion, I specifically said on the record at that time that I oppose the new law proposed in Uganda by the government, not by the opposition.

Government Orders

The member clearly does not know the basic facts of this situation, since he referred to the individual in question as a “he”. He said the person was invited by me, when in fact that was not the case, and he is unaware of the testimony that was provided, in which multiple members of the committee at the time, even though it was not the subject of the study, expressed their opposition to Uganda's new law.

Therefore, I would encourage the member to take seriously his own reputation and to not say obviously verifiably false things in the House. I know he says a lot of nonsense here, but I think he can do a little better.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I will concede that I got the pronoun wrong, and certainly the Conservatives noted that, but we will also note that the Conservative member did invite that person and that this person did vote for the death penalty. Anyone who plays with that kind of politics should be ashamed of themselves, and the rest of the record stands.

The Deputy Speaker: I would say that is a good point of clarification and not a point of order, and I want to thank the members for their interventions.

[*Translation*]

It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

[*English*]

The question is on the motion. If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes 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.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote, please.

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 384*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)

Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
Sousa	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koevorden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
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Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Brassard	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Maguire
Martel	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCaughey (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber

Statements by Members

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PAIRED

Members

Bibeau

Champagne

Garon

Hoback

Joly

Savard-Tremblay— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I hope that you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Orders, special order or usual practice, the House now proceed to Statements by Members followed by Oral Questions and that the usual allotment of time be accorded for each rubric.

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

[Translation]

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

(Motion agreed to)

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship made it clear that international students who are not found to be involved in fraud will not face deportation. I commend the minister for using his discretionary authority to suspend deportation proceedings and for doing so in such a timely fashion.

I would like to recognize the teamwork of my colleagues, the Minister of Seniors, the member for Brampton South, the member for Surrey Centre, the member for Calgary Skyview, the member for Brampton North and the member for Brampton East for their advocacy in the situation facing this group of international students.

This path to resolution would not have been possible without the work of everyone involved in ensuring that we focus on identifying those who are responsible for the fraudulent activity and not penalize those who have been victimized by it.

● (1410)

The Speaker: I want to remind the hon. members that Statements by Members are taking place and I am sure that everybody wants to hear what they have to say.

The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon.

*Statements by Members***LYTTON BUSINESSES**

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, June 30 marks the second anniversary of the deadly fire in my riding that decimated Lytton, two years of residents without a home, two years of students unable to reunite with their classmates, two years of entrepreneurs unable to restart their businesses.

Lytton entrepreneurs and small businesses are doing everything they can to recover. First hit hard by the pandemic, business owners applied for CEBA to keep operating. Then, destroyed by fire, Lytton small businesses lost their storefronts and inventory and were forced to lay off staff. They have no means of repaying their debt.

Due to the sheer magnitude of disaster and consequential bureaucratic delays, for two years, Lytton businesses have been unable to rebuild and generate revenue, even access their own property. Millions of dollars have been announced to assist Lytton but properties are literally in dust.

Announcements now fall on deaf ears. Where is the action?

Will the government finally deliver tangible support to Lytton business owners?

* * *

[*Translation*]

SYLVAIN RABY

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to mark the retirement of someone very dear to me. Sylvain Raby worked as a printer at École Mitchell-Montcalm in Sherbrooke for 38 years, but he was much more than a printer.

A very active volunteer, he took part in multiple projects for his school. Whether it was for the graduation dance, the annual play, creative projects or building the student hall, Sylvain never missed an opportunity to help out and make his school shine. In fact, he is still involved as president of the Fondation école Montcalm.

His strong, charismatic personality helped him build bonds with students and staff members. Schools are not just a place to learn; they are also a place to live. Sylvain has improved the quality of life for both the school's students and staff.

I thank Sylvain for his curiosity, involvement and humanity. Above all, I would like to thank him for having helped hundreds of young people to grow and become better people. I am sure we will meet again, because I know that he will continue to contribute to many projects and events in our community of Sherbrooke.

* * *

MICHEL DÉSAUTELS

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there should be a Radio-Canada voice hall of fame. It would be a sound hall of fame, of course. It would feature the voices of Bernard Derome, René Lecavalier, Richard Garneau, Pierre Nadeau, as well as Myra Cree, Judith Jasmin and countless others. If there were a hall of fame, the newest inductees would be Joël Le Bigot and Michel Désautels. For decades, we have listened to the comforting voice of Mr. Désautels, who retired yesterday, after a career spanning half a century.

When I was studying to join the exciting world of radio, one of my instructors, Pierre Dufault, who also deserves a place in the hall of fame, used to tell us to look to Mr. Désautels for inspiration. Mr. Désautels was professional and reassuring, able to keep a straight face during lighter moments and to take a more serious tone when the situation called for it. He was really in tune with his audience, and his audience knew that they were appreciated and respected. Michel Désautels helped make us a little more informed, a little more enlightened, a little smarter, and a little more human.

I want to thank Michel Désautels.

* * *

MEDAL AWARDED BY MP FOR BOURASSA

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on Father's Day, at the fifth edition of the "eminent men in Bourassa" ceremony, I had the honour of presenting five men with the Bourassa MP's medal. Day after day, these men carry out meaningful and inspiring initiatives, whose positive impacts are felt in the riding of Bourassa and beyond.

I am pleased to introduce them to the House of Commons of Canada. They are Ghassan Assio, Calogero Caruso, Jonas Lowa Kouassi, Michel Lorange, and the late Félix Saint-Élien, who unfortunately passed away three days before the ceremony.

I paid tribute to each of the recipients in the presence of their families, dignitaries and guests. I invite all members to join me in congratulating these agents of change.

* * *

● (1415)

LA FROMAGERIE ALLEN IN SAINT-ANSELME

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the courage and determination of two entrepreneurs, the owners of the new business Fromagerie Allen in Saint-Anselme, Bellechasse.

I want to point out that Caroline and Joseph Allen already operate an organic dairy farm. To start up the cheese factory, Joseph had to hit the books again while Caroline is working towards obtaining recognition for their milk quality. These two young entrepreneurs obviously do not keep track of their time. They are determined to make their cheese factory one of the best. Their cheddar cheese is excellent, and they are already dreaming of increasing the range of products.

Their determination and professionalism have been recognized. Their efforts were recently rewarded after only one year of operation. Fromagerie Allen were awarded second prize in the business creation section, commerce category at the Défi OSEntreprendre gala.

I congratulate Caroline and Joseph Allen for their work and I wish them continued success.

Statements by Members

[English]

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Ms. Jenna Suds (Kanata—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and celebrate the hundreds of high school students graduating in my riding of Kanata—Carleton. To the students of AY Jackson, Earl of March, Holy Trinity, Maurice-Lapointe and West Carleton, I say congratulations. I hope they look back on their high school years as wonderful memories, with amazing teachers and fabulous friendships that will last a lifetime. As they look forward to the next chapter in their lives, they should dream big. They have made it this far. They have proven they can do it. We can all imagine what they can do next.

I thank the teachers who got them here. I thank them for their devotion to teaching and helping to shape this next generation. To the parents who have gotten them this far, I say that it is now time for these graduates to spread their wings.

Graduates should take selfies, take some time to celebrate and take it easy for a while, then get ready to take on the world.

* * *

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today it is my honour to highlight the work of 25 young individuals who have dedicated their lives to progressing Canada through their volunteer work. The Surrey Board of Trade's 25 under 25 have worked tirelessly to grow their communities and provide service to the world around them. Furthermore, these individuals go above and beyond to serve the citizens of Canada, especially within Surrey and in communities throughout the Lower Mainland. They have exceeded expectations by displaying their outstanding commitment and strengthening our neighbourhoods. These truly are our brightest members.

One young man in particular I would like to give a shout-out to is Zora Heer. Zora is an exceptional youth member, and he has demonstrated his perseverance and goodwill through his work with the Surrey youth council. He is a talented leader in Surrey, and he continues to provide his service out of passion. Zora and the 24 other brilliant young minds are determined to uplift Canadians in their respective communities.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at a time when Canadians are struggling, the Liberal government continues to pour fuel on the inflationary fire by recklessly adding \$4,200 in new spending and debt for every household in Canada. To make matters worse, the Bank of Canada's most recent interest rate hike will be a disaster for families with variable rate mortgages and with mortgages that are up for renewal. Families who bought a home five years ago, with a typical mortgage that is up for renewal, will now, on average, pay \$7,000 more a year in interest alone.

In Barrie, this situation has become critical. I recently spoke to a local bank manager, and he indicated that their branch is currently

working with 40 struggling families trying to keep their homes. Considering that there are over 35 financial institutions in Barrie, this could mean that approximately 1,500 families in my riding are in a similarly dire predicament.

Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that can bring home powerful paycheques, lower their taxes and build more homes. Only a Conservative government can provide the relief that Canadians so desperately need.

* * *

CANADA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to share some exciting news that will undoubtedly strengthen international trade and foster closer ties between Canada and Taiwan. Last week, Taiwan took a significant step by fully opening its market to imports of Canadian beef. This decision marks a momentous occasion, not only for the Canadian beef industry but also for the bilateral relations between Canada and Taiwan.

This development will undoubtedly benefit both our countries. Taiwanese consumers will now have access to a wider range of safe, high-quality Canadian beef products, while Canadian farmers will gain access to an expanding market, boosting their export opportunities. Moreover, this milestone strengthens the foundation of co-operation and friendship between Canada and Taiwan. It paves the way for further collaboration in various sectors and enhances our economic partnership.

Let us celebrate this positive development and embrace the opportunities it brings to foster greater trade, prosperity and friendship between Canada and Taiwan.

* * *

● (1420)

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has a plan to increase prices even more.

Higher prices are official Liberal policy. Their out-of-control spending is fuelling inflation. Their taxes and regulations drive up the price of energy. Higher energy prices mean that it is more expensive to purchase fertilizer to grow, harvest and transport food. The Liberals' Soviet-style sales quotas will make cars more expensive. Their streaming censorship law will make entertainment more expensive. Their annual alcohol tax increase makes having a beer more expensive. They even want to make it more expensive to go fishing.

Higher prices are the Liberals' policy. They will never rein in spending, because higher inflation is what the Prime Minister wants. With every move we make and every breath we take, he will be taxing us.

*Statements by Members***THE ECONOMY**

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the last 10 years, Canada has experienced the worst economic growth rate since the Great Depression, and the root cause of this problem is no great mystery. Liberal deficits have led to Liberal inflation, which is driving a cost of living crisis, and Canadians are noticing it every time they go to the grocery store.

Liberal inflation has also caused the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates nine consecutive times. These interest rate hikes have turned the housing market into a ticking time bomb. As more and more Canadians are going to the bank to renew their mortgages at higher interest rates, many are finding that they can no longer afford to stay in their homes. However, a new Conservative government would fix these problems so Canadians can stay in their homes.

For their homes, my home and our homes, let us bring it home.

* * *

[*Translation*]

YAN PICHÉ

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight an act of bravery that occurred in my beautiful riding of Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation.

On May 11, when Yan Piché was out fishing with his friends, he did not hesitate to dive into the Grenville Canal to save a 9-year-old girl who had been swept away by the current. Despite the freezing cold water, he was able to bring her safely to shore. The values that Mr. Piché embodied that day are those that we all strive to foster and live by every day. May his example inspire each and every one of us to act with determination and humanity in the face of our challenges. The courage and bravery shown by Yan Piché deserve our utmost admiration.

For his heroic act, in addition to the certificate of meritorious act awarded by Grenville's mayor, Pierre Thauvette, I am proud to present him with an honorary certificate and a medal bearing the image of the Canadian Parliament.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

I honour all the survivors and victims who have experienced sexual violence in conflict zones. It is critically important that they receive all the health and social supports that they need to recover. I also want to acknowledge UN Security Council Resolution 2122, which upholds abortion rights for women and girls who experience sexual violence in conflict zones.

Rape as a weapon of war is used to spread fear and exert control over people. We have seen it used in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by armed factions, during the Tigray war, by Russian soldiers in Ukraine and in many other places. This is a crime

against humanity. Those who perpetrate these acts of sexual violence, and leaders who allow them to take place, need to be held accountable.

On this day and every day, let us lift up survivors, demand justice for victims and work to ensure that we end rape as a weapon of war once and for all.

* * *

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

JACQUES PLANTE

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable resident of my riding, Jacques Plante, who passed away on June 3 at the age of 93.

Mr. Plante first started helping young people as a teacher and school principal. He made a life-changing impression on many of them. Not only did the tireless Mr. Plante work with youth, but he was also involved in helping seniors. He will be remembered for his contributions as president of the La Prairie seniors' club or as the chair of the board of directors at the Kateri CLSC. Nothing stopped this history buff, who became a separatist in the 1970s. At that time, he became actively involved in the Parti Québécois. As a result of his extraordinary political and social engagement, he was named patriot of the year in 2012. Mr. Plante was a kind, generous and charming man. He always had a smile on his face and he was so proud to be a Quebecker. Mr. Plante was an exceptional man who will never be forgotten.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to express my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

* * *

[*English*]

OPIOID CRISIS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's horrific and devastating opioid crisis is not an accident.

The opioid crisis is happening because Purdue Pharma, Liberal-friendly McKinsey and other bad corporate actors aggressively marketed prescription opioids to those suffering from pain or addiction. These companies did everything possible to increase sales and left a trail of human misery in their wake.

Today we learned from The Globe and Mail, specifically, that McKinsey pitched Purdue on turbocharging opioid sales in Canada. McKinsey has paid half a billion dollars in compensation in the United States, but it has still not admitted any wrongdoing or paid any compensation in Canada. Shamefully, the Liberals have continued to pour money into this company.

On May 29, this House held a vote on my amendment, which called on the government to sue the companies responsible for causing and fuelling the opioid crisis for all damages associated with the crisis, as well as to direct all funds recovered through such litigation to prevention, treatment and recovery programs. The Liberals and New Democrats voted against that amendment.

The opioid crisis was a result of corporate marketing, and it made some close friends of the Liberal government very rich. Those who got rich through the opioid crisis should pay for the recovery.

* * *

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, June 21 is the summer solstice, the day of the year with the longest light and the promise of warmer days ahead. It is also a day for all Canadians to find ways to honour and celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of first nations, Métis and Inuit peoples through National Indigenous Peoples Day.

To the First Nations communities in my riding, Sitsansisk and Welamukotuk, I say *woliwon* for being leaders and land guardians of our beautiful region; for being driving economic forces; for celebrating and sharing their culture, heritage and identity; and for their strength and triumph in the face of centuries of colonialism.

Activities and events are organized across Wabanaki Territory, including in Eqpahak, where Wotastoqey Tribal Council, JEDI and MAWIW Council, in partnership with the City of Fredericton, host a special gathering on the lawn of the provincial legislature, with drumming, dancing, games, food and more. There will also be a celebration in Carleton Park throughout the day, with live music and art that honours the rich heritage of the Welastekwewiyik.

We are at a time in our history when we are collectively engaging on the path of reconciliation, of healing and reclaiming and of transforming who we are and who we want to be; indigenous peoples are leading the way. Happy National Indigenous Peoples Day.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, the cost of housing has doubled. The cost of a down payment for the average house has doubled. Monthly mortgage payments have doubled. The average cost of rent has doubled.

Now the Minister of Finance is introducing another \$60 billion in inflationary deficits. That is \$4,200 per Canadian family.

When will the minister balance the budget to reduce inflation and lower interest rates?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our economic plan struck a balance between fiscal responsibility and compassion.

Oral Questions

That is why, in July, we will be providing a grocery rebate to 11 million Canadian families in need. That is why we are also providing dental care to Canadian families in need. That is why we are going to invest more than \$100 billion in our green transition.

We are doing all that while maintaining the lowest deficit in the G7.

* * *

● (1430)

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the only thing the minister and the Prime Minister are doing for the cost of groceries is raising taxes on food. They are promising a new, second carbon tax that will apply in Quebec, despite the fact that Quebec is the greenest province and perhaps even the greenest place in the world.

Now the Liberals, with the support of the Bloc Québécois, want to impose a tax of 20¢ per litre on farmers and consumers, which will increase the cost of food.

Will they axe the tax so Quebeckers can afford to eat?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think a lot of people watching at home might be thinking about the record floods in recent months, the record tropical storms and now the record forest fires we have been having, and they might be wondering why the Conservative Party of Canada continues to be so stubbornly silent on climate change. The Conservatives have not said a word in the House about climate change and the tens of thousands of people who have been displaced.

Where is the Conservative plan to fight climate change? Where is the Conservative plan to help Canadians adapt to the impacts of climate change? It is nowhere to be found.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is nowhere is the Liberals' environmental plan. They do not have an environmental plan. After eight years of raising taxes on consumers, they still cannot hit their targets. They seem to suggest that if Canadians were just forced to pay more for gas, groceries and heat that forest fires would stop. That is ridiculous. All that has happened is a 40-year high in food price inflation, one in five Canadians skipping meals because they cannot afford food and 1.5 million going to food banks.

Oral Questions

Now the Liberals want a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax. Will they axe the tax so Canadians can afford to eat?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party of Canada say that if they were in power, they would work, through technology, to reduce pollution—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. minister has about 20 seconds left.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault: Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives had 10 years to do that when they were in power. My friend and colleague, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, does more for clean technologies on an average day before his first coffee than they did in 10 years.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we did in 10 years was reduce emissions while the economy grew, which proves the following quote, “I take great exception to the federal minister always forcing this into a dichotomous issue ‘either you believe in exactly what we say or you don’t believe in climate change.’ That’s completely illogical, it’s a false dichotomy, it’s a false dilemma, and it’s as insulting... as it is simplistic.” Who said that? The Liberal premier of Newfoundland. He says that the carbon tax will bring inflationary pressures to his people.

Why will the Liberals not listen to the Liberal premier and axe the tax?

Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we sit in the House and we listen every day, but I would like to give another history lesson, if you would let me.

The previous government had a secretariat for rural economic development, which it axed, by the way. It was this government that put in place the stand-alone department of rural economic development, whose number one issue and mandate is to connect the country from coast to coast to coast with high-speed, affordable Internet, because that is the equalizer.

By the way, I was in the member opposite's riding last week and made a \$71-million announcement of partnership with the Government of Ontario to connect the riding of Carleton.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it shows how out of touch the Liberals are. They think that what rural Canadians want is another big government bureaucracy in Ottawa. What they actually want is more money in their own pockets.

However, the plan of that member is to raise taxes on Newfoundland customers, to bring in a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax on Newfoundlanders, Labradorians and all Canadians that will drive up the cost of heat, gas and groceries. Even the Liberal premier of Newfoundland says that it will not help the environment, that it will cause inflation.

Why will the Liberals not axe the tax?

• (1435)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two years ago, Atlantic premiers

asked us to delay by two years the implementation of our clean fuel regulations, which was something the Conservative Party campaigned on during the last campaign. We did exactly that. We listened to the Atlantic premiers. We delayed the implementation of that important piece of regulation to ensure that Canadians would have access to cleaner fuels all across the country. It is already generating billions of dollars of investment throughout the country.

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[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the House will be wrapping up for the summer on Friday. There are four sleeps left for the government to announce a commission of inquiry into Chinese interference.

I say this because, with all due respect, the government is sleeping on the job. It needs to wake up and establish an official commission of inquiry. The name of the person who will lead it needs to be submitted to the House for approval. This needs to be announced by Friday if we want this commission to be able to publish its findings before the next election.

The government needs to get to work. Will it immediately announce a public and independent commission of inquiry?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleague and all members of the House that the work is already under way with new powers for CSIS, with new transparency mechanisms and, now, with constructive discussions led by my colleague, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, to find the best way to get Canadians involved in protecting our democratic institutions in a strong and transparent manner.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what has the government achieved so far this session? It wasted four months fighting against a commission of inquiry into Chinese interference. That is what people will remember unless the government takes action by Friday.

People are anxious for a commission to finally get to work, and so is the opposition, as I can confirm on good authority. I am also certain that no one is as anxious as this government to move on to the next step.

Why not do so immediately by announcing a public inquiry?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what my colleague, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, is discussing with the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and, I hope, the Conservative Party.

I want to reassure everyone. We have already taken many steps, with new powers, to protect not only democratic institutions, but also Canadians. Budget 2023 will invest in new resources for the RCMP. That is what we have achieved so far. We will keep going.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, wildfires are ravaging our regions. People are fleeing their homes. Children are breathing in smoke when they go to school in the morning. What has this government done? Nothing.

This Prime Minister promised billions of dollars to fight climate change, but we have learned that that money is still sitting in the government coffers while our forests are burning.

What will it take for the government to release those funds so that we have a chance, just a slim chance, of fighting climate change?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our thoughts are certainly with the tens of thousands of people who have been displaced as a result of the wildfires. We are deeply grateful to all of the workers and other individuals who are on the ground to assist them.

I would like to remind my hon. colleague that Canada's last greenhouse gas inventory showed that our country's greenhouse gas emissions dropped by over 50 million tonnes. We had the best record of all the G7 countries from 2019 to 2021. I would remind my hon. colleague that COVID-19 was a worldwide pandemic. In spite of that, we still managed to have the best record in the G7.

[English]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the interpretation, but I did not detect even a hint of an answer to my colleague's excellent question. Simply promising to invest in the fight against climate change means nothing if those dollars do not make it out the door, and time is of the essence. Our country is burning, and the next generation is looking on in horror. How—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt. I am having a hard time hearing the question, and it is just people talking to each other more than anything else. I am going to ask everyone to take a deep breath and if members are going to have a conversation, please take it into the lobby.

The hon. member can start from the top so we can hear the question, please.

• (1440)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the interpretation, but I did not detect even a hint of an answer to my colleague's excellent question. Simply promising to invest in the fight against climate change means nothing if those dollars do not make it out the door, and time is of the essence. Our country is burning, and the next generation is looking on in horror.

How can the minister justify dragging his feet on the most important issue of our time?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree that this is the most important issue of our time, which is why we have invested billions of dollars, which is why we are deploying regulations.

When we talk about the national adaptation strategy, this is what Climate Proof Canada had to say about it, "Climate Proof Canada applauds the Government of Canada on world-leading national adaptation strategy."

Let us talk about the Insurance Bureau of Canada. It said, "Canada's first National Adaptation Strategy is brave and ambitious. No other country has proposed such a comprehensive suite of adaptation targets."

We are working to help Canadians prepare for the impacts of climate change.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the unacceptable transfer of Paul Bernardo from a maximum-security prison to a medium-security prison was possible because of the changes this government made in connection with Bill C-83. The government has all the powers it needs to reverse that decision.

The Minister of Public Safety has proven his incompetence time and again. Will the Prime Minister finally take responsibility, clean up his own mess and fire the minister?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the definition of competence is to be a champion for victims' rights. That is exactly how I responded when I was informed, on May 30, of the decision to transfer Paul Bernardo to a medium-security facility.

I will continue to work with the representatives of the families of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy. We have since issued new instructions to ensure that victims' families are informed in advance of any upcoming decisions that will affect them.

[English]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety either knew or ought to have known that Paul Bernardo was being transferred to medium security. To say otherwise is not credible.

The minister is at the top of the organizational chart in his department. He has dozens of political staff and high-level officials. They all report to him.

If it is true that he did not know, then he is grossly incompetent. The minister must take responsibility, be accountable and resign.

Oral Questions

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have made clear now on a number of occasions, I have taken corrective steps to ensure that briefing protocols are provided in a timely manner, especially when it comes to sensitive decisions involving the transferring of dangerous offenders like Paul Bernardo.

As soon as I found out, I contacted the commissioner to express the concerns of the Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French families. That is precisely what the responsibility of this position is, as well as issuing new instructions to ensure that this kind of things does not happen again.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as long as that monster is in medium security, the minister's weak directive means nothing.

Under the last Conservative government, we provided for necessary restrictions. Those Liberals and that minister scrapped that threshold to provide that all prison inmates be placed in the least restrictive environment possible. He allowed this to happen.

The minister is responsible for this outrageous transfer. He is not a passive observer in this travesty. He should resign.

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, far from being merely an observer, I have been active in advocating for victims' rights, including those of the families of Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French, because, I hope like all members, I share a great and sympathy compassion for them, given the retraumatization that they have no doubt had to endure.

Contrary to what Conservatives have said, this new instruction is stronger than anything the Conservatives ever did when it came to victims' rights, and if they were so worried about it, then why did they cut \$300 million to the Correctional Service of Canada in their last year of government?

We know why. They are all talk and no action.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another Liberal insider, Dominic Barton, a close friend to the Prime Minister, has harmed Canadians. Today we learned the Prime Minister's favourite consulting company, McKinsey Canada, which was run by Barton, laid out plans to supercharge the sales and marketing of OxyContin to Canadians. Almost 36,000 Canadians have died during this epidemic created by McKinsey and Barton, and it is only getting worse.

Why does the Liberal government continue to reward McKinsey, which has profited from the suffering of Canadians, with hundreds of millions of dollars in government contracts?

• (1445)

Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I as a physician, with my colleague, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, know first-hand the harm caused by opioid addiction. While the leader of the official opposition continues to oppose safe supply, our government is fo-

cused on saving lives and improving our policies to better serve Canadians.

For Public Services and Procurement Canada, that means working to improve Canada's integrity regime brought in by the previous government so that we can better safeguard procurement policies and practices.

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JUSTICE

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recent media reports confirm that there is an active, ongoing RCMP investigation in relation to prosecutorial interference on the 2019 SNC-Lavalin scandal.

My question to the government is a simple yes-or-no question. Is the Prime Minister, any member of cabinet or any member of their staff currently under investigation by the RCMP, yes or no?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): No, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, four years after the appalling SNC-Lavalin scandal, when the Prime Minister of Canada fired minister Jody Wilson-Raybould because she refused to politically meddle in a legal matter, this dreadful business is now back in the news.

Will the Prime Minister rise in the House today and confirm whether he or any member of his cabinet has met with or is currently under investigation by the RCMP?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered these questions. The Conservative Party is obviously bringing up a situation that happened years ago for partisan reasons. I have already answered the question.

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GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, ministers do not know anything about anything. That may seem like an odd statement, but it is nevertheless a major part of this government's record.

The Minister for Public Safety was out of the loop on Paul Bernardo's transfer, even though his employees knew about it. The Prime Minister was also out of the loop, just as he was out of the loop on China's threats against the MP for Wellington—Halton Hills. The Minister of Public Safety was unaware of that, too. None of the ministers knew anything about anything. The public no longer accepts this response.

When will the government stop pleading ignorance?

Oral Questions

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I did as Minister of Public Safety. I have strengthened the briefing protocol to ensure that I and the entire government team have all the information we need to protect our communities.

In addition, we have a very strong track record with new powers and new transparency mechanisms. We are always ready to work together, not only with the Bloc Québécois, but with all members in the House.

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government's response may be worse than the situation itself.

It says that it has given instructions to inform ministers from now on about hot issues that concern them, such as the transfer of prisoners of interest or threats against elected members. This government has been in power since 2015 and it is telling us it is now requiring its ministers to be made aware of their portfolios. That raises an ethical question.

Which is worse: Ministers who do not know anything about anything or ministers who wait until the eighth year of government to require being informed of their portfolios?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that everyone is in a good mood this afternoon. I am always ready to work with members from the Bloc Québécois despite their jokes.

This is very important work. We have a lot of files to focus on and we want to continue working with the Bloc Québécois.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government has abandoned any notion of ministerial responsibility during this session. The Liberals are happy to be accountable when things are going well and are always there for good news. However, when things go sideways, they do not know anything about anything. They avoid hot topics. In the case of Chinese interference, they even blamed the media for publishing fake news. That is completely irresponsible.

To govern is to be accountable when things go well and when they do not, and to be responsible at all times. They are going to have to prove that they are ready to govern over the next few months. Is that still something they want to do?

● (1450)

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to take responsibility means to implement measures where there are issues and challenges. That is exactly what I did when there were challenges with information sharing. I strengthened the protocol for foreign interference and for transfers of offenders in federal institutions.

Yes, we must always work with all members, including Bloc Québécois members. It is very important work.

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[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, massive Liberal deficits cause inflation, which cause interest rate

hikes, which lead to mortgage defaults. The IMF warns that Canada is at the greatest risk for mortgage defaults of any country that it tracks. The solution is to stop the deficits, which stops inflation, which stops interest rate hikes, which will stop defaults.

The finance minister knows this, and she said as much last fall, so when will she table her plan to rein in her deficits?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in our Article IV consultation with IMF, the IMF actually said that Canada has the strongest fiscal position in the G7. It said we have the lowest deficit in the G7 and the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio. The IMF commended our investments in the green economy and our early learning and child care plan. Canada is doing very well relative to its peers in a complicated global economy.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is cold comfort to families who do not know what they are going to do when their mortgage comes up for renewal. Inflation caused by Liberal deficits means that Canadians cannot afford groceries. Canadians are increasingly buying food on credit and struggling to pay their bills. Equifax Canada reports that Canadians are going deeper into debt, and defaults are rising.

When will the Liberal government get control of its spending so Canadians can take back control of theirs?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not just the IMF that confirms the strength of Canada's fiscal position. After we tabled the budget, S&P reiterated our AAA rating.

Let us talk about what the Conservatives would do. The Conservatives would eviscerate pensions for Canadian seniors. The Conservatives would destroy and impoverish the EI system that so many Canadians depend on. The Conservatives would starve our health care system of essential investment. Of course, the Conservatives would make pollution free again. That would be devastating for Canadians and Canadian families.

Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, rate hikes are on the rise again. The Liberals' record debt level has led to 40-year-high inflation and the highest interest rate in 22 years.

Oral Questions

Higher Liberal taxes were already making Canadians poor. Interest rates will now make owning and renting more expensive. Conservatives have been asking for a plan to balance the budget, but the NDP-Liberal coalition just laughs and spends more. The IMF now warns that Canada is at the highest risk of mortgage defaults among advanced economies.

How many Canadians need to lose their homes before the government presents a plan to balance the budget?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a very timely question. In fact, timing is important here because part of the budget is to support dental care for children in this country. It has been 19 days since we wrote to the Leader of the Opposition, the Conservative leader, and asked him what he thought about the over 1,000 children in his riding and the 1,000 children in the MP's riding. We asked why these children do not deserve the dental care that members of this House have enjoyed for many months and in some cases for two decades. We are curious to hear the answer.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Attawapiskat is in a humanitarian crisis that has become worse year by year under the Liberal government. With overcrowded homes and unsafe drinking water, no matter what Attawapiskat does to try to get ahead, it cannot, because it does not even have a proper land base to build houses.

The government calls the land of the Mushkegowuk Cree Crown land. It is treaty land, and the people of Attawapiskat have a right to develop the land for their people.

What steps will the indigenous affairs minister take to work with Attawapiskat on building a livable community that offers hope to the young?

• (1455)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was a privilege to meet with the community members and the chief of Attawapiskat this morning, where the member was also present. Together we talked about a road map to make sure that Attawapiskat has the tools it needs and the financial support of the federal government to move forward.

I agree with the member. Every person in this country must feel that they can reach their full potential and that there is hope for their children. Together with the leadership of Attawapiskat, we are going to do exactly that.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, last week, the Indigenous Police Chiefs of Ontario came to Ottawa to demand that the government reinstate its core funding to help keep its communities safe. The minister promised to provide three months of funding

as quickly as possible. People are dying as they wait for him to fulfill that promise.

The minister needs to stop playing games with the safety of 45 first nations. When will the funding be reinstated with the terms and conditions that respect the rights of indigenous peoples?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said when I updated the House last week, I want to assure my colleague that we are working very closely with the community, including leadership representatives like Chief Kai Liu, to ensure we can get funding flowing back to the community to ensure there is public safety on the ground. We want to have these discussions in a way that is constructive. We obviously want to solve the longer-term challenges around first nations policing, which at its core must involve the empowerment of first nations communities.

That is precisely what I am dedicated to doing and I will work closely with my colleague across the way to achieve that goal.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, advancing reconciliation means investing in indigenous-led businesses and ensuring we build a resilient economy that is inclusive and looks forward toward the future.

Can the Minister of Indigenous Services update the House on what this government has done recently to strengthen and advance the economic development of first nations in northern Ontario?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Sudbury for understanding and advocating an inclusive economy in which indigenous entrepreneurs and indigenous communities have all the tools of economic success. Indeed, that is exactly how FedNor has been transitioning to support indigenous economies and support economic reconciliation.

Today, FedNor is investing over \$8.2 million in new, targeted investments to indigenous-led initiatives across northern Ontario. It is going to support indigenous business leaders, communities, and organizations, and foster the incredible talent of our communities all across northern Ontario.

*Oral Questions***FINANCE**

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, experts across Canada and the world are sounding the alarm bells. The Liberal government deficits are causing mortgage defaults because of inflation driving interest rate hikes. One mortgage broker in Ontario said that it may be the last straw. Washington and Paris are taking note as well. The IMF and the OECD have singled out Canada as the nation with the highest risk of mortgage defaults.

Will the Prime Minister listen to domestic and international experts and end his inflationary deficit spending?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact both the IMF and the OECD have forecast that Canada will have the strongest economic growth in the G7 this year and next year.

The IMF has further commended Canada for our very strong fiscal position and has pointed out that Canada continues to have not only the lowest deficit in the G7 but also the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio.

Let me remind the members opposite that notwithstanding their efforts to talk Canada down, we enjoy an AAA credit rating, reaffirmed after we—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington.

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the long-term consequences of the current government's inflationary deficit spending on Canadian mortgage-holders is already at a head, driving up interest rates to the highest in 22 years. Senior economists across the Canadian banking sector have all indicated that another hike is likely in July, another cost of living hike on top of the carbon tax hike.

At what point will the government stop footing middle-class Canadians with the bill for its poor economic and fiscal stewardship?

• (1500)

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at what point will the Conservative Party actually have a real housing policy that emphasizes the importance of investing in affordable housing? At what point will it stop gatekeeping real help for Canadian renters?

At what point will it stop gatekeeping rapid housing initiative investments? At what point will it include homelessness in its half-baked housing plan?

Let it get serious about housing before it lectures us about anything.

[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Liberal Prime Minister in power, Canadians have never been in worse financial shape. After eight years of this Liberal government, nearly half of Canadian families say they

could not afford an unexpected \$500 expense. What great solution did the Liberals come up with? They are charging an extra 20¢ tax on every litre of gasoline that Quebecers buy. This will cost Quebec families \$400 or more on average. That is outrageous.

Will the Liberals get out of the way instead of making things worse for Quebec families?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives when it comes to supporting the most vulnerable Canadians with the cost of living.

We introduced the Canada child benefit, which is indexed to inflation and has lifted almost 435,000 children out of poverty. Our government increased the guaranteed income supplement, or GIS, which is also indexed to inflation and has helped over 900,000 seniors.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, opioids have killed 36,000 Canadians since January 2016. The Government of British Columbia revealed that McKinsey allegedly worked with opioid manufacturers that targeted doctors and pharmacists to increase opioid sales in Canada. That is unbelievable.

Former director of McKinsey Dominic Barton gave the Liberal government some free advice. In return, the Liberal government gave McKinsey \$116 million in contracts, many of which were untendered. Rather than rewarding McKinsey, could the Prime Minister commit to putting an end to all of the firm's contracts, given its involvement in the opioid crisis?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since 2018, our government has been working with British Columbia on the litigation against big pharma and those that enabled it, including a specific class action lawsuit against McKinsey. If it is certified, we intend to officially become part of that lawsuit. Canada has also addressed big pharma's predatory practices by further restricting the marketing of opioids.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois continues to monitor the forest fires near Lebel-sur-Quévillon and elsewhere in Quebec. We stand with everyone affected.

Oral Questions

The fire in my region is growing. The forecast is for 30 degrees Celsius and higher this week, without any rain until Sunday. People are worried. Our businesses are also worried. They are worried that nothing has been put in place to cover their losses. On Monday, the government committed to doing more to support the communities affected. What does the government plan to do for the regions affected in Quebec, including Abitibi—Témiscamingue and Nord-du-Québec?

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Of course, our hearts go out to all the first responders who are helping in the affected region, as well as elsewhere in Quebec and Canada. We are keeping a very close eye on the forest fires. We are working directly with the province. We are in constant contact to make sure they have everything they need. At the province's request, we approved the deployment of the Canadian Armed Forces to assist in the efforts. We also have firefighters who came from all over the world. We are all working together to fight the forest fires.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government committed to doing more for people in our communities and our regions, and it has my thanks for that. However, it also committed to doing more to prevent climate-change-related disasters. From now on the two must go hand in hand, because we cannot allow natural disasters to keep happening time and time again.

Everyone knows that the combination of forest fires and climate change increases the risk of fire. Then the fires turn the forest into a greenhouse gas emitter. In other words, the more fires there are, the more fires there will be. That scares me. What concrete action is the government taking to stop this cycle and reduce those risks?

• (1505)

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for offering a different perspective on forest fires. We have to realize that climate change has a direct impact not only on forest fires, but also on floods and tornadoes. We have brought in the Canadian army to help. We have formed a coalition with foreign countries. We also have a consultation and working group with the province of Quebec that meets every day. I had the opportunity to meet my counterparts in Quebec City as recently as this month. I can assure members that we are working together and that Quebec is doing a very good job on the ground.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, big spending and big deficits by the Liberals have accomplished one thing; big inflation. Actually, they have accomplished two things as Canadian food bank use has never been higher because Canadians cannot afford to put food on the table.

Here are the consequences of the accomplishments of Liberal inflation and carbon taxes: In 2021, about two million Canadians accessed a food bank every single month. That more than doubled to five million last year. This year, a staggering eight million Canadians are accessing a food bank every single month.

How much more will Canadians have to pay to put food on the table when the Liberals implement a second carbon tax?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I seem to have to remind the members across the way that since this government came into power, we have lifted over 450,000 children in this country out of poverty since 2016, with the CCB. Since implementing the dental care benefit, we have lifted 11 million Canadians to new levels to have safety and security in their homes.

The real question Canadians want to know is what will the Conservatives cut? What will they take away from Canadian families? Will they take away dental care? Will they take away rental assistance? Will they take away grocery rebates?

We are here for Canadians.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parents of those children are now facing an impossible choice: pay their mortgage or put food on the table. The Liberals' answer to this crisis is higher spending, higher inflation and another carbon tax. The consequence of that is an average Alberta family will be paying \$4,000 a year in additional taxes and Alberta farmers will be paying as much as \$150,000 a year on carbon tax 1. When we add taxes and cost to food production and transportation, it adds to the cost of the grocery store shelf.

Will the Liberals cancel both carbon taxes so that farmers can afford to produce the food and Canadians can afford to buy it?

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, on-farm fuels are exempted from farms. They do not pay taxes on them. As the Parliamentary Budget Officer has already admitted in his report last week, there is \$600 million of carbon taxes that has not been collected. In 2030, it will be \$1.5 billion that has not been charged to farmers.

As to the other point, he knows full well that this is good policy for canola farmers everywhere in Canada.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are facing a cost of living crisis. In my riding, the number of people using food banks has never been so high. The price of gas is through the roof and families in Beauce are hurting.

On July 1, things will only get worse. In Quebec, the second carbon tax will add \$436 to every family's burden, on top of the goods and services tax. This measure will hinder everyone's ability to get to work and, more importantly, to put food on the table. Will the government finally see the light and cancel the second carbon tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a recent poll, we can see that 83% of Canadians think that the forest fires we are seeing right now are linked to climate change and that the situation is only going to get worse. The Conservative Party has nothing to say about climate change.

I would like to hear my opposition colleague's outrage over the fact that between 2019 and 2021, the profit margins at the refineries increased by nearly 30¢. Will the member rise in the House to oppose these incredibly high prices?

* * *

[English]

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, sadly, we are seeing the rise of anti-2SLGBTQI+ hate in Canada, which is having a devastating impact on the community. It was this Liberal government that banned the terrible, harmful practice of conversion therapy, so it is sad to see an aspiring member of this House, hand-picked by the opposition leader, defending the destructive practice of spiritually counselling someone out of who they love.

Can the minister reiterate, for all Canadians, our government's unwavering support for the 2SLGBTQI+ community?

• (1510)

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are celebrating pride in the midst of rising anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate. I am so proud our government banned the dangerous practice of so-called conversion therapy. Survivors I speak to tell me this law saves lives. There is a lot more to do, but we are on the right track.

While Conservatives try to take us backward by promoting this dangerous practice, we will always stand on the side of the queer community.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's ever-increasing fixation on carbon taxes is damaging Canada's global agricultural advantage. It hurts farmers' profit margins. At the same time, the cumulative costs are pushed on to Canadian consumers.

Will the government scrap carbon tax 1 and at least, for the sake of Canadian consumers, stop the implementation of carbon tax 2 planned for July 1?

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I will repeat that climate change costs money to farmers by not acting. In 2021, 30% of the grains out west did not make it to market. That is money that is supposed to go into farmers' pockets, and because of climate change it has not made it into farmers' pockets. Here is one thing we are working on. As of July 1, farmers will have a new opportunity, and I ask him to talk to canola farmers in his riding because they are all on side. They will be able to participate in a new economy, and this is great for farmers.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the carbon tax has not stopped any floods or fires or met any targets. It has done absolutely nothing to help the environment. The Liberals seem to like paying the carbon tax to assuage their conscience for their jet-setting lifestyle. Meanwhile, working families in Alberta are struggling to make ends meet. With carbon tax 2 coming into effect on July 1, the average Alberta family will pay \$4,000 in carbon tax.

When will the minister admit that his carbon tax is a tax plan and does nothing to help the environment?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the record. Our pollution levels have gone down by 50 million tonnes between 2019 and 2021. That is the equivalent of removing from our roads 11 million vehicles. Despite what they are saying, we have the best performance in terms of cutting pollution among all G7 countries now.

If the Conservative Party members believed in climate change, they would have something to say about it. There is no light switch to fight climate change. There is no fairy dust that will make climate change go away. There is no magic wand. Only hard work will make this possible. That is what we are doing on this side of the House. Unfortunately, they have nothing to say on that on the Conservatives' side.

Oral Questions

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality of the environment minister's numbers is that he shut the economy down for two years. It is the only way he met his targets. Next week, kids across Canada are going to be looking forward to their summer break. Dreams of baseball and soccer tournaments, maybe a modest camping trip or maybe even going to Toronto watch the Blue Jays is what they are looking forward to. Unfortunately, the Liberals, on July 1, are bringing in another carbon tax: \$2,300 a year to Ontario households. Their dreams of a summer holiday are vanishing.

When are Liberals going to get off Canadians' backs, go to their—

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader has the floor.

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I would say to those kids who are ready to go on vacation or watch a ball game is that we need to make sure we do everything so they have a planet, so that they inherit an environment that they can live in. If we do not take action on climate change, not only will they not be able to afford things in the future because the costs of climate change will be enormous, but they will inherit a planet that is not sustainable. That is a legacy we cannot allow. We will do everything on this side to make sure they inherit a planet that is there for them and generations going forward.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, southern Ontario is home to close to 90% of Canada's automotive manufacturing sector. Last week, we had Project Arrow on the Hill, the first all Canadian-made electric vehicle, led by APMA, the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association. I was happy to be with Flavio Volpe of APMA to announce this incredible vehicle in Vaughan in 2021.

Can the minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario please inform the House of the investments our government has made and will continue to make in electric vehicles in Ontario?

• (1515)

Hon. Filomena Tassi (Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to establishing a made-in-Canada plan for electric vehicles, and I would like to thank APMA for its innovation and its leadership.

In Canada, we have strong advantages. They are the power of people, the enormous potential and the ability to turn ideas into reality. That is why our government provided over \$5 million to APMA for this incredible project. We have invested and will continue to invest in industry leaders to create a strong economy.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister gave \$560 million to a company owned by Loblaw's to deliver services to veterans, but the rollout was a disas-

ter. There was poor communication to service providers and veterans, as well as a lack of training for workers.

Veterans and their families are the ones paying the price. The Liberals' outsourcing to private companies is not working, and the government is not listening. Will the minister continue to ignore veterans, or will he cancel this botched contract?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her help with veterans, but I can tell her we will not cut vital services to veterans or slash funding to Veterans Affairs like the previous Conservative government did.

The rehab contract will provide over 14,000 veterans access to nearly 12,000 professionals in 800 locations right across the country. As Minister of Veterans Affairs, it is my responsibility to provide for veterans where they need it and when they need it, and we will continue to do that.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, while indigenous people make up only 5% of the population, at women's prisons across the country, such as Grand Valley Institution in my community, over half the prisoners are indigenous. Worse still, 96% of those in isolation, almost every person, is indigenous.

I am embarrassed to live in a country where this is the case. This is what modern-day colonialism looks like. When will the government address this ongoing injustice?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to begin by sharing the outrage of my hon. colleague. I am committed to working with him on this important issue. I will say that we have put in place the initial steps to strengthen the independent panels that review the use of structured intervention units vis-à-vis indigenous peoples in representation and the ability to oversee this work.

I also want to assure him that, by putting in place a new deputy commissioner of Correctional Service Canada who is focused on indigenous priorities and affairs, so we can channel our efforts to address the long-lasting effects of colonialism. This is the way we take the concrete steps towards reconciliation.

WILDFIRES IN CANADA

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion. I move:

That, given that,

- (i) Canada has already experienced a record amount of land burned this wild-fire season,
- (ii) tens of thousands of Canadians have had to evacuate their communities at some point over these past few months,
- (iii) wildfire risk is expected to remain high as we head into the summer,

The House:

- (a) express its deepest gratitude to the firefighters and first responders across Canada for their tireless efforts to date and to come;
- (b) thank the many international allies who have stepped forward to help; and
- (c) express its strong support to everyone on the ground as they continue to protect our communities.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's 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)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent on a point of order.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, climate change is real and we need to take action. As we know, there were nearly 15 questions today about Canada's performance on climate change.

I ask for the consent of the House to table the 2023 UN report released at COP27, which finds that after eight years of this government, Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries in the fight against climate change.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

• (1520)

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order arising out of question period. There were a number of important questions about McKinsey's offering a proposal to Purdue Pharma to help boost opioid sales here in Canada. I do wonder if there would be unanimous consent to table the important story from The Globe and Mail, which highlights these issues from the 2014-15 period.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT

The House resumed from June 15 consideration of the motion that Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, be read the third time and passed.

Government Orders

The Speaker: It being 3:20 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-35.

[*Translation*]

Call in the members.

• (1545)

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

(*Division No. 385*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaf	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry

Government Orders

Gaheer
 Garrison
 Gazan
 Gerretsen
 Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gourde
 Green
 Hajdu
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hussen
 Iacono
 Ien
 Jeneroux
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Kayabaga
 Kelly
 Khera
 Kmiec
 Kram
 Kurek
 Kusmierczyk
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lantsman
 Lattanzio
 Lawrence
 Lebouthillier
 Lemire
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lightbound
 Lobb
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 Maguire
 Martel
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 Mazier
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKay
 McLean
 McPherson
 Mendès
 Miao
 Miller
 Morantz
 Morrison
 Murray
 Naqvi
 Ng
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Petitpas Taylor
 Poilievre
 Qualtrough
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Ruff
 Sajjan
 Samson
 Scarpaleggia
 Schiefke

Gallant
 Gaudreau
 Généreux
 Gill
 Godin
 Gould
 Gray
 Guilbeault
 Hallan
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Idlout
 Jaczek
 Johns
 Jones
 Julian
 Kelloway
 Khalid
 Kitchen
 Koutrakis
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Lapointe
 Lauzon
 LeBlanc
 Lehoux
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lloyd
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McGuinity
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLeod
 Melillo
 Mendicino
 Michaud
 Moore
 Morrice
 Motz
 Muys
 Nater
 Noormohamed
 O'Connell
 O'Regan
 Patzer
 Pausé
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Powlowski
 Rayes
 Reid
 Richards
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Rood
 Sahota
 Saks
 Sarai
 Scheer
 Schmale

Seeback
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Shipley
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Small
 Soroka
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Strahl
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Thompson
 Tolmie
 Trudel
 Uppal
 Van Bynen
 Van Popta
 Vandenbeld
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Virani
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Wilkinson
 Yip
 Zarrillo
 Zuberi— 315

Serré
 Shanahan
 Shields
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Simard
 Singh
 Sorbara
 Sousa
 Ste-Marie
 St-Onge
 Stubbs
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thomas
 Tochor
 Trudeau
 Turnbull
 Valdez
 van Koeverden
 Vandal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Weiler
 Williams
 Zahid
 Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Bibeau
 Garon
 Joly
 Champagne
 Hoback
 Savard-Tremblay— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

● (1550)

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION ACT

The House resumed from June 16 consideration of Bill S-8, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, to make consequential amendments to other Acts and to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Bill S-8.

[English]

The question is on Motion No. 1.

● (1600)

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 386)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferri	Findlay
Gallant	Généreux
Genius	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gray	Hallan
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmicic
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seebach	Shields
Shiple	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Zimmer— 112

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval

Government Orders

Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bérubé
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Pauzé
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan

Government Orders

Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vignola	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 202

PAIRED

Members

Bibeau	Champagne
Garon	Hoback
Joly	Savard-Tremblay — 6

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

Hon. Mark Holland (for the Minister of Public Safety) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The question is on the motion.

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. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote, please.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 387*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultouf	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan

Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Fergus
Ferreri	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gallant	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Kmieciak	Koutrakis
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lawrence
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lightbound

Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Melillo
Mendicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrice
Motz
Muys
Nater
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Plamondon
Powlowski
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Scheer
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Small
Soroka
Steinley
Stewart
Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Yip
Zarrillo
Zuberi— 317

Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maguire
Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
McPherson
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morantz
Morrison
Murray
Naqvi
Ng
Normandin
Oliphant
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Ruff
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Schieffe
Seeback
Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
Sousa
Ste-Marie
St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Thériault
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Weiler
Williams
Zahid
Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

Routine Proceedings

PAIRED

Members

Bibeau	Champagne
Garon	Hoback
Joly	Savard-Tremblay— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[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 two petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to table, in both official languages, a report shared in advance with all parties last week, entitled “White Paper on the Status of Trans and Gender Diverse People”.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

• (1615)

[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, a report of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas respecting its participation in the 19th ParlAmericas Plenary Assembly and the 14th Gathering of ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Gender Equality, held in Bogota, Colombia, from November 29 to December 2, 2022.

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, entitled “Creating a Fair and Equitable Canadian Energy Transformation”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Routine Proceedings

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, the NDP-Liberal just transition plan, brought in as a bill last week even before the final committee report was out, is a dangerous government-mandated threat to outright kill 170,000 jobs and risk the jobs of 2.7 million Canadians overall. It will negatively impact all sectors of Canada's economy and disproportionately harm certain provinces and regions, namely rural, resource-based and indigenous communities. It will hike energy costs, undermine Canada's energy supply and security, prevent self-sufficiency and gatekeep Canada's ability to fuel, feed, secure and help innovate allies in developing countries to help lower global emissions.

The final report attacks Canada's energy sector and fails to recognize its world-class standards and unmatched contributions to clean-tech investment in Canada. It encourages an accelerated transition away from the livelihoods on which millions of Canadians depend, instead of examining practical ways and timelines for increased technological development and grid decarbonization, without jeopardizing Canada's economy and standard of living. It is designed to prop up the Liberals' legislation and excludes witnesses who disagree.

It is notable, as a final comment, that the recommendations use the term "sustainable jobs", despite the fact that it was used only once by a single, non-government witness in the entire 64-witness, 23-brief, year-plus-long study of a motion that called this the just transition, an obviously cynical, last-minute name change to obscure the real aims and consequences of the plan.

The Conservatives believe in transformation, not transition; technology, not taxes; and that the energy evolution must be led by the private sector, not forced by government. The Conservatives will make both traditional and alternative energy affordable and accessible, accelerate approvals of energy infrastructure and export projects, and green-light green projects to put Canadian resources, innovation and workers first to ensure Canadian energy affordability, security and self-sufficiency.

The conclusions of the committee's final report will not do that. For these reasons, I am tabling a dissenting report on behalf of the Conservatives.

JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS, PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in relation to Bill C-295, an act to amend the Criminal Code, neglect of vulnerable adults.

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

[*Translation*]

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the two following reports of the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament, entitled "Quorum and Mandate of the Committee" and "Certificate of Nomination of Heather P. Lank to the Position of Parliamentary Librarian".

• (1620)

[*English*]

AN ACT TO PROTECT FIREFIGHTERS, PARAMEDICS AND OTHER FIRST RESPONDERS

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-345, An Act to protect firefighters, paramedics and other first responders.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce an act to protect firefighters, paramedics and other first responders. I want to thank my dynamic, hard-working seconder, the member of Parliament for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

We have seen through COVID the courage of the paramedics and firefighters across our country. In British Columbia, with the heat dome, during which hundreds of people died, we saw the courage and determination of firefighters and paramedics. I want to shout out to the New Westminster firefighters and the Burnaby firefighters, who show their dedication every day and do so much for the community. I also want to shout out to the B.C. paramedics. My seconder, of course, would want to see me shout out to the Nanaimo firefighters and volunteer firefighters in Ladysmith, Lantzville, North Cedar, North Oyster, Gabriola Island and Protection Island.

The reality is that assaults are increasing against first responders. That is why the IAFF and paramedics have called for this legislation. We need to fight rising levels of violence that target first responders, firefighters and paramedics.

This bill is designed to counter just that by putting in place protections for our firefighters, paramedics and other first responders. I hope the bill will receive support from all members of the House.

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

* * *

NATIONAL ARTS DAY ACT

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce an act to establish national arts day.

She said: Madam Speaker, whereas every year across Canada provinces celebrate arts and culture during the months of September and October, and whereas Parliament wishes to recognize and celebrate Canadians' achievements in and contributions to the arts, that throughout Canada and each year, the 23rd day of September is to be known as "National Arts Day".

While I am on my feet, I move:

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion. 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.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

• (1705)

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

(Division No. 388)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien

Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrice	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
Sousa	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 174

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeschen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast

Government Orders

Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Gaudreau	Généreux
Genus	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Martel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shipley
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Zimmer— 142

PAIRED

Members

Bibeau	Champagne
Garon	Hoback
Joly	Savard-Tremblay— 6

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

[*Translation*]

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 Edmonton Strathcona, Natural Resources; the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona, Canada Revenue Agency; the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, National Defence.

[*English*]

Hon. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am tabling the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1484 to 1499.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am requesting unanimous consent of the House to table one petition that is time sensitive.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table her petition?

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask the hon. member to check with the whips' offices to see if she could get unanimous consent.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1710)

[*Translation*]

ONLINE NEWS ACT

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.) moved:

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint Their Honours that, in relation to Bill C-18, An Act respecting online communications platforms that make news content available to persons in Canada, the House:

agrees with amendments 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 made by the Senate; and

respectfully disagrees with amendments 4 and 5 because they undermine the objectives of the bill, which focus on encouraging fair deals that reflect what each party contributes to, and how each party benefits from, the making available of news online, and narrow the scope of the bargaining process and the key factors guiding final offer arbitration decisions;

He said: Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank all parliamentarians for their important work on this bill, starting with the members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage and also the senators who sit on the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications. In particular, I would like to thank Senator Harder, who did a truly remarkable job as the sponsor of the bill in the Senate.

[*English*]

Last, but certainly not least, there is my incredible, formidable parliamentary secretary, the member for St. Catharines. I thank all of them so much.

[*Translation*]

I have said it in the past and it bears repeating today: Since 2008, more than 500 media and newsrooms have closed their doors in 335 different communities all across the country. There are very few members who have not had a newsroom in their riding close. It affects us all. We are talking about local newspapers, television stations, local radio stations and news sites.

We discussed this here last week when Bell announced the closure of radio stations and the elimination of 1,300 jobs. Furthermore, we will recall, especially my Quebec friends and colleagues, that not so long ago Québecor announced 240 job cuts, including 140 at TVA. We are talking about real people who lost their jobs.

[English]

This bill is about them. It is also about the future of the news industry in our country. It is about upholding our democracy, because our democracy, or any democracy, needs a free, independent and thriving press. We all rely on fact-based and timely news to make rational decisions to counter misinformation and to participate in our democracy. Today, I would say, it is more important than ever.

We all know that the Internet has dramatically changed the way we create, search and consume content, especially when it comes to news. We see that more and more Canadians are using digital platforms to stay informed, and 77% of Canadians consume their news online, including 55% of them doing so on social media. We can see the impact right here. Meanwhile, our traditional news sector is in crisis; we all know that. It is very clear to all of us that there is a big power imbalance in our news marketplace, and the actions of the big platforms, as we have seen very recently, are a clear demonstration of this. Right now, there is absolutely no incentive for digital platforms to pay our news businesses and our journalists fairly for their content. Everything I have just mentioned here has a direct impact on our ability as Canadians to access reliable news.

[Translation]

The bill proposes practical measures to respond to everything I just said. It proposes to put an end to the status quo because it is not working, as we have clearly seen. When we are talking about nearly 500 newsrooms or news media outlets, whether big or small, in cities or in the regions, that have closed their doors, we clearly see that the status quo is not working at all. We therefore need to take strong, definitive action.

Bill C-18 sets out clear criteria that the platforms must meet in their negotiations with news organizations. I hope it will be passed in the coming days with the help of my colleagues here and the administrators.

As soon as the law is passed, we will consult with Canadians, who will get to have their say. It is essential that Canadians have a say because this bill is partly about them. Basically, we are talking here about access to good quality, reliable, neutral, independent and non-partisan news. We are talking about local journalism, one of the pillars of our democracy. Because of that, we obviously want Canadians to express their opinions and have their say. It will therefore be a completely transparent process.

• (1715)

[English]

During their study of the bill, senators made 12 amendments to Bill C-18.

[Translation]

There is a provision to have the entire act come into force within six months of royal assent. There is also a guarantee that no media will be required to take part in this if it does not want to. Then there

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is the addition of provisions on official language minority communities, as well as Black, indigenous and other communities.

There are some important and interesting amendments that are in the spirit of the legislation that I would say improve the legislation. We propose supporting 10 of these 12 amendments, which is a lot. I want to take this opportunity to thank the senators for their work, in particular Senator Harder who, as sponsor, did extraordinary work. I thank him and the members of the committee and all senators. We are support 10 out of the 12 amendments.

[English]

The only one we cannot support is an amendment that would force negotiators to set boundaries on bargaining by setting a simple value for news content and limiting negotiation over other items of value. Currently, the legislation intentionally would not set boundaries on what parties can negotiate on. This would allow them to bargain over the elements outside the scope of news content if they want.

If you do not want to take my word for it, Madam Speaker, which I am sure you and everyone in this room would want to, but just in case—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There seem to be conversations going back and forth, as opposed to members' waiting until it is time for questions and comments. I would just ask members to please hold off.

[Translation]

The hon. minister.

[English]

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, let me quote some other people, for example, Paul Deegan, CEO of News Media Canada. Let us hear what he had to say about this bill. I am sure members will find it very interesting. Paul Deegan said, “The amendment would limit the ability of news publishers to negotiate fair compensation with dominant platforms. [Fair] value will be determined during negotiations.”

That is not all; I have another quote.

[Translation]

Pierre-Elliott Leveseur, president of La Presse, said, and I quote, “This amendment would tie one hand behind our back and hamstring us in negotiations with the platforms that enjoy a massive power imbalance over news publishers.” He went on to say, and I quote, “This amendment benefits the platforms at the expense of publishers.”

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• (1720)

[*English*]

Because we are rejecting that amendment, we also have to reject a second amendment, which is a technical amendment tied to the first one. We are accepting 10 amendments out of 12. Again, I want to thank the senators for their amazing work.

[*Translation*]

Canada is currently leading the way with Bill C-18. We are leading the charge.

I also want to thank my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois, especially the member for Drummond, who did an outstanding job, as well as the NDP heritage critic, who did great work. I thank them for their interest in this bill and for the valuable and productive work that they did.

Thanks to this collaborative effort, Canada is leading the way. Even Australia, which served as a model for us in the beginning, is now looking to us to be guided by the transparency measures we included in the bill. In the beginning, we followed the Australian model, but then we improved it. We added a lot of transparency, and now Australia is looking to us to see what we are doing and it may even copy some aspects of the Canadian model.

Transparency is fundamental. Transparency is always central to every decision we make and every action we take. It is important. Canadians also expect transparency. They want things to be done in a transparent way.

As a government team, we want everything to be transparent. That is why, every year, an independent auditor is going to assess how well the act is meeting its objective of ensuring a fairer news ecosystem. Having an auditor will also enable us to adjust course as needed.

[*English*]

We have studied this bill. We have examined it and made it better. We have listened to what everyone had to say. We addressed many of the concerns that stakeholders raised in Parliament, and I would say that the bill is much stronger because of this.

The online news act would not be a silver bullet for all the challenges facing the news sector. We are very realistic and we understand. There are different programs that we have put in place. We did this collectively as a team to improve the situation, and there are many other things. However, this is an extremely important part. Through this bill, we would address many of the concerns we have heard in the House and in the other place, in discussions with experts, with people from platforms and with people from the media, including journalists. It is not a silver bullet, but it would definitely give the Canadian news media a chance to rebuild and thrive in a more sustainable, fairer news ecosystem.

As I have said before, the world is watching Canada, and we have to take clear leadership. I would say that this is a call to all parliamentarians in this place and in the other place. The world is watching, and we are all taking clear leadership on this. I want to thank all parliamentarians for this.

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, the new digital platform companies have come out opposed to the bill. We are wondering why the Liberals are choosing to support legacy media, such as CBC, Global and Bell, as opposed to these new, emerging, cutting-edge commentators and news broadcasters. This is the future for Canadian news, and we feel that this would be a blocking of emerging news media.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, the question is why the Conservatives are supporting tech giants all the time, every time, using their speaking points on this point.

We are standing up for our democracy. We are standing up for traditional media, and new media of course; they all have a role to play. However, 500 of them have closed their doors, which is hurting our democracy. The Conservatives do not care. They have fought against this bill, and by fighting against this bill, they are fighting their own democracy. That is a shame.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, my Conservative colleague's question gives us some idea of the mood and the positions taken in the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage during its work on Bill C-18. It was pretty specific and pretty clear.

Throughout this study, the web giants went to great lengths to tell us that news was not that valuable to their businesses. Sabrina Geremia, a vice-president at Google Canada, somehow managed to tell us, during a memorable, pathetic and pitiful committee appearance, that last year, Google linked to Canadian news publishers over 3.6 billion times and that this traffic drove \$250 million in value. When the web giants tell us that news has no value, well, if 3.6 billion clicks have no value for Google, they should shut down, because that does not make any sense.

With the urgently needed passage of Bill C-18, however, we know that the media will be able to negotiate and be compensated for the content that they and newsrooms create in Quebec and Canada. We have seen the closures, however. In his speech, the minister spoke about newsroom closures and the elimination of journalism jobs.

If Bill C-18 is not enough to keep newsrooms open and journalists employed, is the Minister of Canadian Heritage prepared to accept the Bloc Québécois proposal to create a fund to support journalism in Quebec and Canada?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my warmest and most sincere thanks to my colleague, who just spoke about his work on this important bill. I think that there has been productive and very professional co-operation between the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and the Liberal government.

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The hon. member referred to the value of the content produced by our media. What our media outlets produce does have value. When we give an interview in a newsroom, as every one of us has done, what the interviewer does has value. What the researcher did has value. What everyone does has value. What the window washer does has value. All of it has value.

The web giants exploit this work. It helps them ensure that people spend a lot of time on their devices. It attracts a lot of eyeballs and creates financial value by allowing them to sell advertising.

However, they are not sending any money to newsrooms in return. It is completely imbalanced. The reason the government has proposed this approach rather than the Bloc Québécois's approach is that we want to be as far removed as possible from all decisions. What we are doing is simply providing a space for the web giants, the newsrooms and the media outlets to all sit down together to negotiate fair value between them.

That is what we are doing, rather than creating a fund, appointing a manager and so on. That is essentially the reason behind our approach, but I thank my colleague for his very important work on this.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to mention a few publications from my riding, namely, Burnaby Beacon, New West Anchor, Burnaby Now and New West Record.

All of these news publications will benefit from this bill. However, as the minister well knows, the web giants are making threats. They are saying that Canada, this democracy, the House of Commons, does not have the right to pass legislation that will force them to pay a little money for all the information they take and for the hemorrhaging in local newsrooms across the country.

I would like to ask my colleague the following question. The Conservatives have been blocking this bill from the beginning and they are blocking its passage now, but there are also web giants that are making threats. Is it important for parliamentarians to vote on this bill so we can get it passed and help the country's newsrooms?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, once again, I thank my colleague for his question and his tireless work. He is an MP I respect enormously. We have known each other since we started working together in 2004. I have seen the quality and thoroughness of his work over all these years, particularly on Bill C-18.

He is absolutely right. There is no democracy or sovereign nation that can allow a web giant, a foreign company, to come in and dictate terms.

We cannot allow a company, any company, to come in and tell a sovereign government, one elected by the people, that it must do this or that or risk suffering the consequences and paying the price. That is absolutely unacceptable. Some of the actions taken by certain web giants constitute bullying, pure and simple. They are bullying Canadians, members of the House of Commons and senators. It is unacceptable.

We must stand strong. Unfortunately, the Conservatives caved immediately. They caved to pressure from the web giants at every step and at every opportunity, but we will stand strong.

• (1730)

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his fine speech. I had the opportunity to meet with the media in my riding of Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, along with the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Together we saw how important it is to speak with the media, to get information out, and to share good news like what we announced in my riding.

Could the minister tell us a bit about the potential impact of Bill C-18 on small media in a rural riding like mine?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his extremely important question.

I mentioned earlier that nearly 500 media outlets and newsrooms had closed down. These were media outlets across the country, both in urban centres and in the regions. They were in ridings like my colleague's, which we had the opportunity to visit together. We had a great time doing that. In fact, I bought several things in his riding to support the local economy.

There is a direct impact. There are regions where there is no media reporting the news at all. This shows a lack of respect and is deeply undemocratic. It is concerning when a region does not know what its member of Parliament is doing in Ottawa, what its member of the National Assembly is up to in Quebec City, or what decisions its municipal councillor is making. These businesses must be allowed to resist, and even to rebuild, so that Quebeckers and Canadians have access to free, independent and unbiased news. This is fundamental.

[English]

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have seen the bill through; we had collaboration from the NDP and the Bloc. If we go back in our time machine a bit, to the last election just about a year and a half ago, we saw support for this very initiative in the Conservative platform. I believe it was at page 152.

When did the Conservatives flip-flop and become shills for big tech?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, this shows how good he is. I will quote a portion of the Conservative platform in the last election, which says:

Canada's Conservatives will:

Introduce a digital media royalty framework to ensure that Canadian media outlets are fairly compensated for the sharing of their content by platforms like Google and Facebook. It will:

Adopt a made in Canada approach that incorporates the best practices of jurisdictions like Australia and France.

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This is exactly what we are doing here in Canada, but they changed their minds.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The hon. member was using a prop. He was holding an image up to the screen. The minister is maybe a relatively new member in this place, but I think he knows the rules relating to the use of props.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): He was quoting from a document, which is allowed. On the other side was the text the minister was quoting.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, I am just sorry he sees their platform as a prop.

Hon. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I am tabling, in both official languages, a document entitled “White Paper on the Status of Trans and Gender Diverse People”, written by the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke and Dylana Thompson.

• (1735)

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-18, the online news act. I do so in response to a bill that has returned to the House, after being in the Senate for quite some time. It was sent to the Senate earlier this year. I believe the Senate started to study at the end of January or the beginning of February. It has arrived back in the House as of June 16, and it has been considered by the government; a motion has been drafted in response to the Senate amendments.

To refresh our memories, Bill C-18 is about supporting local media and building a fairer news ecosystem, so said the minister. I will get to these false claims in a moment. The bill would compel digital platforms, such as Google and Facebook, to enter into monetary negotiations with a news outlet and pay when they simply provide a link to a news source and not the entire content. Under this bill, those negotiations would take place between the two parties, and there would be no transparency with respect to what the negotiations look like or any terms the platforms might put on these news outlets. That being the case, one has to wonder about the implications for journalistic independence and what this would do to true journalism and news coverage in this country. I will get to that in a moment, but I would like to highlight that as one of the main issues in this bill. It is also an issue the government had an opportunity to fix.

In order to fix the bill, there were amendments brought forward by my Conservative colleague and me here in the House of Commons and at committee. There was an amendment brought forward by a Conservative Senator to fix this problem as well. Therefore, the government had plenty of opportunity. We heard from witness after witness that the bill was a direct threat to journalistic independence, so it is on that premise that we must begin the discussion today. We know that the bill fails not only journalists and news outlets but also Canadians, because they deserve access to news that is independent of any pressure from a government or a platform.

We have to begin by looking at the importance of media. The Liberals try to paint us as being against media. They have accused us of being on the side of tech giants. The bill is not at all for the media or the independent journalists, who are proud of their work,

day in and day out, and want to maintain that good work going forward. Let me talk about this a bit here.

The media plays a few key roles in society that we support. It is the watchdog. In other words, it protects the public interest. For example, just this year, in the last six to eight months, we have seen stories in the media with respect to the government turning a blind eye to China's interference in our elections. We know that there was interference both in 2019 and 2021, because of a brave whistleblower who came forward. We know the Prime Minister's Office was aware of this. We know the Prime Minister turned a blind eye and chose to do nothing with intelligence reports from CSIS that were put on his desk or perhaps in his hands. Based on his chief of staff testifying at committee, we know that he reads everything and that he is shown everything.

Here we are in the House of Commons, and we have had committee meetings and asked questions with respect to this issue of interference in our elections. The reason we have been empowered to do this is that a brave whistle-blower came forward. This person works within CSIS, Canada's foremost intelligence agency, and brought forward the truth. Documents were produced and given to the Prime Minister, and he turned a blind eye and allowed Beijing to interfere in our elections, because it would benefit the Liberals in the long run. We know that because of a brave whistle-blower using the vehicle of media.

• (1740)

Therefore, make no mistake, media has an important role to play in our society. Media has a role to play with respect to telling stories, raising awareness and with respect to accountability. Media has an important role to play in celebrating incredible things going on in our country and in our local communities.

Media has an important role to play in educating folks with regard to various things that are going on, for example, right now, the many wildfires taking place across the country. We are thankful for the key role that media plays in our country.

The way that media is able to play its greatest role is when it is kept independent, when it is allowed to thrive without government intervention, without undue pressure, without being dictated to. What Bill C-18 would do is put the government squarely in the middle of the newsroom.

The government determines, through this legislation, what the CRTC will do. The CRTC then makes decisions and those decisions are applied to media. According to this bill, the CRTC can compel information from these news businesses, even confidential information.

Further to that, through the bill, there also has to be these negotiations that transpire between the platforms and the news businesses. We do not know what the terms of those negotiations are. Let us just say that the terms of those negotiations are that, as a news business, one gets rewarded for the number of clicks. As a news business, one is motivated to create clickbait. That is not news. At least, it is not the type of news that we would expect. It is not the type of news that is most beneficial to Canadian society.

We can see right off the bat that there is this massive problem with the bill. Therefore, when the minister says that this bill is about levelling the playing field, that it is about creating a more fair news ecosystem, that it is about access, that is just wrong.

At the end of the day, yes, we do need media, but we need independent journalists who are going to tell the stories that need to be told without pressure from the government or tech giants. We need journalists to truly be free to come at things from a non-partisan angle. I wish we had more of that in our country. It would benefit us all.

The minister has claimed that the landscape has changed and therefore this bill is needed. I would agree with him in that the landscape indeed has changed. Where I would disagree is that I do not agree that the bill is, in fact, the answer.

We know that the landscape has changed. We know that fewer people are buying newspapers. We know that fewer people are watching news on television. We know that more and more people are shifting their attention online. They like to go on a website, or they like to click on a Facebook post or they like to access it through Twitter.

We know that folks prefer to stream in the moment if they are going to watch their news. Many are going to read their news. However, we know that they are not necessarily going to read from a paper; they are more likely to read from an iPad or a phone.

Yes, the landscape is changing. As a result of that, because the consumer, the Canadian, is changing his or her habits, it means that more and more traffic is going online. Because more and more traffic has gone online, it means that ads are also being placed online, which means that those entities that have been innovative and have evolved in that space are getting the ad dollars.

Of course, when one is advertising, one is going to go where to the people are, and the people are online. What has happened is that one has these legacy media companies, whether it is newspapers or broadcasters such as the CBC, Rogers and Bell Media, and they have started to see the shift in their ad revenues, and, of course, it is not in their favour.

• (1745)

As a result, many concerns have been expressed to the minister. In response, the minister has come up with Bill C-18. It is in direct response to legacy media. It does not account for the innovative or creative ways of incoming media outlets that are actually thriving in this new tech space.

I would like to read a couple of quotes into the record.

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This entity was heard from at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. It is by Independent Online News Publishers of Canada:

Any government intervention into the free press, however well-intentioned, must be carefully considered, as there is a potential to warp outcomes, stifle innovation, determine winners and losers, and compromise journalistic independence.

This is a key warning regarding this legislation and the impact that it is going to have.

Further, Professor Dwayne Winseck of Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication and director of the Canadian Media Concentration Research Project said:

The media's money troubles are long-standing and this latest proposal is a bandaid on a bullet wound.... I just think the whole thing is a real dog's breakfast.... This bill is being saddled with expectations and being sold as a rescue package — that, I think, [is] really disingenuous.

In other words, as much the government might want this legislation to be the answer to the many problems faced by media and, in particular, revenues dwindling, it is not the answer.

The world innovates. The world generates. The world moves forward. Instead of punishing those individuals who are new, innovative and going to that next place, and rewarding legacy media, I believe it is the government's responsibility to take a step back and allow the world to evolve, to allow consumer demand to evolve, and to allow journalistic independence to maintain itself.

Another individual who spoke to this bill at committee was Jen Gerson. She is the co-founder of The Line and Independent Journalist. About the bill, she said:

...this bill...is predicated on a lie. The bill adopts a very ancient complaint of newspaper publishers that aggregation-based news websites and social media networks are unduly profiting by 'publishing' our content. However, we know this isn't true. In fact, the value proposition runs in exactly the opposite direction. We publishers are the ones who benefit when a user posts a link to our content on Facebook, Twitter and the like. This free distribution drives traffic to our websites, which we can then try to monetize through subscriptions and advertising.

It is so clearly stated.

We have these online entities that can be connected to through platforms posting links. In other words, it is propagating or propelling free traffic. It is doing the advertising for these news sources.

This individual, Jen Gerson, is calling it what it is. She is saying the sharing of their links is actually a good thing. That is what drives people to their sites and gives them the opportunity to make money. This legislation is built on the wrong foundation. It is built on the foundation that somehow these platforms should not be sharing these news links, that they should be punished by having to pay a financial penalty for sharing these news links. That does not make any sense.

The way that information flows online is when links are shared. If we want the news to be read, if we want the source to be accessed, then allow for the links to be shared. If we allow for the links to be shared, of course it drives more traffic.

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● (1750)

If it drives the traffic, then of course there will be more people viewing the content, and if there are more people viewing that content then there are more people who will want to advertise with the source of that content. What she is saying is that, really, the government has this bill all wrong.

Let us get into some of the nitty-gritty of the bill. There are many serious concerns that were raised at committee, both in the Senate and here in the House of Commons with regard to where the benefit lies. Government officials said that this is going to generate about \$215 million for the various news sources across Canada. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, an independent entity, said that this bill is going to generate about \$350 million. What is going to happen with that money? The Parliamentary Budget Officer said that it was reported that 75% of the money will go to the CBC, to Rogers and to Bell, which leaves less than 25% for newspapers.

Despite this entire bill having been put forward by the minister to protect local newspapers, that is not true. This bill will not help local newspapers the way he has said it will. This bill will not help ethnic media sources. This bill will not help digital media sources. This bill looks to the past. It does not look to the future, so this bill is incredibly problematic. While the CBC, Rogers and Bell would accept 75% of the revenue, local newspapers in cities like Lethbridge, or towns like Picture Butte, Coaldale or Coalhurst in my riding, are not going to get a dime from this legislation. The minister continues to be incredibly disingenuous in how he touts this legislation, saying that it is going to benefit the smallest newspapers when in fact this legislation was built or designed solely in favour of legacy broadcasters.

Further to that, this bill gives a tremendous amount of control to the CRTC. The CRTC now will be responsible for determining if a news outlet is truly a news outlet. How will it be defined? We know somewhat. We do not know entirely, but we know somewhat. We know that some of that definition will be based on whether the entity has a licence with the CRTC. That is interesting to me. Just because an entity has a licence with the CRTC does not mean it produces news. That begs the question then of where the money will go. Is it truly going to local news? Is it truly going to ethnic media? Is it truly going to digital sources? Is it truly going toward the future of news in our country? The answer to that question we already know is “no”.

The CRTC will not only determine if an entity is an eligible news business, but the CRTC will also determine some of the negotiating factors. There is some independence. In fact, the CRTC again can compel these new businesses to give up information, including confidential information. Here is what a few people had to say: “Bill C-18 will only perpetuate a market already distorted by subsidy and it will punish independence.” “If Parliament values a free press, it will not approve Bill C-18”. Who said that? It was the former CRTC commissioner, Peter Menzies.

Peter Menzies went on to say:

Bill C-18 is as likely to kill journalism in Canada as it is to save it. The very prospect of it is already perverting news coverage and undermining trust, the commodity upon which the industry depends most. Bill C-18 will permanently entrench the industry's dependency not on the loyalty of citizens, readers and viewers, but

upon the good graces of politicians and the ability of offshore, quasi-monopoly tech companies to remain profitable.

Could there be a more damning statement?

● (1755)

If we truly value the independence of our press, if we truly value the future of our country and if we truly value having access to real news, everyone in this House should vote against this bill in a unified manner.

Here is another quote from Dr. Michael Geist, who is at the University of Ottawa and specializes in this area. He said:

Bill C-18 doesn't only increase the power of the Internet companies. It also provides exceptional new powers to the CRTC. These include determining which entities qualify as [news businesses], which agreements create an exemption, which Canadian news organizations qualify as eligible news businesses, and whether the arbitration decisions should be approved. On top of that, the CRTC will also create a code of conduct, implement the code, and wield penalty powers for failure to comply. Far from a hands-off approach, the CRTC will instantly become the most powerful market regulator of the news sector in Canada.

Again, this bill fails to protect the independence of the press, and when it fails to protect the independence of the press, it then fails Canadians as a whole, because Canadians depend on being able to access news that is not a result of pressure from tech companies or from the government. As such, when the government points fingers and says that Conservatives are in the pocket of the tech giants, actually the government is. The government is squarely in the pocket of the tech giants, because it created legislation that directly benefits those tech giants, as those tech giants get to give direction to these new outlets as to what to produce and what not to produce. It is the government that took power and gave it all over to the tech giants. Let us make no mistake of that.

Let us talk a bit about this bill and whether it actually supports local newspapers.

I have already said that in my riding, there is hardly a dime to be gained, but mine is not the only one. We know that many local newspapers across this country are struggling right now, and we know that many of them are dependent on only one journalist. Because of that, they will not be able to apply for this. They will not get the CRTC's stamp of approval as an allowable news outlet, so this bill will put them under. This bill has nothing in store for their future. In fact, this bill will result in their demise, because this bill will raise up legacy media and big broadcasters and put them in a favourable position, while simultaneously pushing down those local newspaper outlets that exist in ridings like mine.

Shame on the government for trying to mislead Canadians.

I should mention that it is not just that this bill will support the big Canadian broadcasters or the big Canadian newspapers; I should also mention that this bill is so broad that it actually extends to foreign news outlets, such as The New York Times. I should also mention that it will extend to hundreds of broadcasters that are licensed by the CRTC, whether or not they produce news.

The question is this: Is this bill actually doing what the government says it is? The answer is no.

This bill will not revive the media. This bill will not save local entities. This bill is not the solution. In fact, I would argue that this bill actually is the problem. It perpetuates the problem. It personifies the problem. It embodies the problem. It is synonymous with the problem.

I will read another quote from Andrew Coyne. He is a columnist in *The Globe and Mail*. It took a lot of courage for him to provide this, but nevertheless it is an important one. He says:

The premise, that the problems of the newspaper industry can be traced to search and social-media platforms like Google or Facebook “stealing” their content, is utterly false. The platforms don't take our content. They link to it: a headline, sometimes a short snippet of text, nothing more. When users click on the links, they are taken to our sites, where they read our content. Much of the traffic on our sites, in fact, comes from social-media links, which is why we go to such lengths to encourage readers to post them - indeed, we post such links ourselves, hundreds of times a day.

● (1800)

Again, let us make no mistake: When platforms post links to news, it is of great benefit to the National Posts of the world, the *Globe and Mail* of the world and so on and so forth. That is what Andrew Coyne is getting at here. It is of great benefit to have these links posted.

Here is the problem, though. Because of this legislation, Facebook has already said that it will no longer be carrying news links and Google has indicated that it is considering doing the same, which means that these links would no longer be made available to Canadians, not on Meta or Facebook, not on Instagram and not on Google. If that is the case, this bill would kill newspapers, because Canadians would no longer have those links available to them within the framework of a Google search or within the framework of Facebook or Instagram.

That is a problem, because, as I just read into the record, Andrew Coyne makes it very clear that the entire model is dependent on those links' being made available. In fact, the news outlets themselves post those links. In fact, he said they do not just post them once or twice but hundreds of times per day, so the government, in forcing this legislation upon Facebook and Google and causing them to make a business decision to retract and not carry news links anymore, will actually kill newspapers.

But the government does not care. The government would prefer that people did not know that, because at the end of the day this legislation, though touted as something that would benefit newspapers, is actually built to benefit CBC, Rogers and Bell Media. We know that. The government has built this piece of legislation on a lie, but it sounds nice. It sounds like the government is for local media. It sounds like it is for ethnic media. It sounds like it is for progress, and the Liberals like that word, “progress”.

In fact, this bill is one of the most regressive pieces of legislation that I have ever seen, and it would put a spear directly through the heart of newspapers. Eventually, other outlets would dwindle too. Make no mistake.

Let us talk about this legislation for what it truly is. Let us talk about the fact that the CBC would receive the greatest amount of benefit from this legislation and let us talk about the fact that the CBC is already funded to the tune of about \$1.2 billion per year in

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taxpayer dollars. Let us talk about the fact that this legislation then would allow the CBC to enter into negotiations with platforms and thereby gain more money. Let us talk about the fact that this legislation would actually benefit the CBC to a massive extent: It would get money from the government, money from its negotiations with Google and Facebook, and money from advertising revenues.

Guess who does not have the benefit of all of those sources of income: local newspapers. Guess who else: ethnic newspapers. Guess who else: innovative, creative news start-ups.

Make no mistake: This bill is not about supporting the future of news. This bill is not about supporting newspapers. This bill is all about supporting legacy media. It is all about the CBC, primarily, and secondly it is about Bell Media and Rogers. That is what this bill is about. If the government wants to present this bill under a true premise, I would be more than happy to debate it under that premise, but the one that has been put forward today is altogether false and incredibly misleading.

It should also be considered that this bill would likely violate our agreements with the United States of America, and that point has been brought up.

● (1805)

Ms. Katherine Tai, the United States trade representative, has warned that Bill C-18 has serious trade implications for Canada. We have been warned that if we move forward with this legislation, the U.S. is likely to retaliate, and if it retaliates, that will be to the tune of about \$350 million. That means that the government is choosing to benefit legacy media at the expense of small and medium-sized businesses in our country that are going to be subject to that punitive response by the United States.

The government shrugs its shoulders, because it does not care. It is going to pass a bad piece of legislation that is going to result in newspapers dying, ethnic media dying and new start-ups not gaining a dime of support. Then, on top of that, it is also going to result in punitive outcomes for our small and medium-sized businesses that are going to have trade barriers or penalties placed against them.

At the end of the day, this bill is a lose-lose-lose. There is nothing here to be gained. If the government wanted to give the CBC more money, it could have just cut a cheque. It does it all the time. However, the biggest thing is that Canadians lose. Canadians lose because they want access to a variety of media, and unfortunately, that variety is going to be depleted. Canadians lose because they want access to independent media. They want to be able to trust the journalists who are bringing forward the stories that they so long to hear, but this bill would not protect journalistic independence.

Furthermore, Canadians lose out because right now they enjoy the convenience of being able to go online and find links to news, and this bill would result in those links largely being removed. Therefore, at the end of the day, this bill is a direct attack on Canadians and their ability, and I would even say their right, to access the information that they depend on as timely news in this country, and there is no one else to blame for that shift, that change, that damaging effect than the government.

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It had opportunity after opportunity. Whether it was here in debate, hearing from witnesses at committee, incorporating amendments that I or my colleagues brought forward, or Senate amendments, the government has had plenty of opportunity to correct this bill, and every step of the way it has chosen not to. That is to its shame, but sadly, it is also the shame of Canadians, because they are the ones who are ultimately punished by this bill.

That said, because this bill is so damaging to Canadians and their ability to access news from independent sources, a plethora of sources, in a convenient and timely manner, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the first word "That" and substituting the following:

the order for the consideration of the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-18, An Act respecting online communications platforms that make news content available to persons in Canada, be discharged and the Bill withdrawn.

• (1810)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to read a quote into the record and get the member to respond to it.

This quote is from nothing other than the Conservative Party of Canada's election platform. Not that long ago there was a national election, and this is what the Conservative Party of Canada was telling the people of Canada:

Canada's Conservatives will:

Introduce a digital media royalty framework to ensure that Canadian media outlets are fairly compensated for the sharing of their content by platforms like Google and Facebook.

That is what this legislation is all about. If the Conservatives voted in favour of the legislation, they would be able to say it was something they campaigned on in the last election.

Something has happened, once again, in the far right element of the Conservative Party. They have now taken yet another flip-flop. We talked about the price on pollution before, and we all remember that flip-flop. Here is another one.

How can the member have gone to knock on doors to talk about how this was what they were going to do? This legislation is doing what they said they were going to do, and now, not only is the member going to vote against it, but she is also spreading all sorts of misinformation about the bill? Why is that?

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I find it very interesting when the members opposite throw around the word "misinformation".

It is the usual buzzword Liberals go to to sling mud in this direction without having substance over there in that direction. It is the word they go to when they think that it cannot be argued against. They think it is a nail in the coffin. They think it is a trump card played. They think that, if they call something "misinformation", they can silence the individual's voice.

Witness after witness who appeared before our committee here in the House of Commons and the Senate committee raised incredibly rich and significant concerns with this bill. For this member to state that my speech, and the concerns that were raised there, are misinformation is for him to launch an attack against those witnesses who come with a greater understanding of this legislation than he certainly has. They probably have a greater education and professional background as well, and he is choosing to silence them.

The member is choosing to call that information "misinformation" because it is made up of the quotes and the voices I have stood here to represent today. Shame on the member for trying to silence me.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Lethbridge for her brief speech. She spoke a lot about the fact that Bill C-18 offers nothing positive for smaller media outlets, weeklies or newspapers.

Oddly enough, however, over the course of our study, the most vocal proponents of this bill were people like Pierre-Elliott Levasseur, president of La Presse, and Benoît Chartier and Sylvain Poisson of Hebdom Québec, an organization representing about 150 Quebec weeklies. There was also Paul Deegan of News Media Canada, which represents various media outlets across Canada. There was also Jad Barsoum and the folks from Quebecor, which is by no means a second-rate media organization. All of these people, who represent very small to average-sized media outlets and mega media companies, unanimously agree: Bill C-18 is a necessity.

I have a simple yet complicated question for my colleague. I want to know whether she listened only to the version of the web giants like Google and Facebook and those who signed agreements with those companies. Did she also take the time to listen to the people from News Media Canada, Hebdom Québec, and other media outlets like La Presse and Les coops de l'information, who have been calling for a bill like Bill C-18?

• (1815)

[*English*]

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I will answer with a fact. I will take the emotion out for a moment here. This legislation states that, even to be considered for CRTC approval to enter into these negotiations, a news business has to show that it has a minimum of two journalists. Many local newspapers or ethnic media newspapers do not have two journalists. That means they would not even be considered by the CRTC to qualify. When I state that local media and ethnic media will be left out in the cold, I state that as fact.

While I understand there may be a few niche outlets that could benefit from this legislation, the vast majority of local and ethnic newspapers will not benefit.

The committee heard testimony from Steve Nixon, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association. He said that they only have four publications out of 56 that would benefit from this legislation. That leaves 52 out in the cold. It means they are unlikely to make it because of the imbalance that would be caused by this legislation.

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Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the issue of providing funding to community newspapers is important. In fact, New Democrats fought for it. The hon. member referenced that they have to have a minimum of two employees. I believe it was the New Democrats who fought for 1.25 or 1.5 FTEs at the request of small independent outlets. That is more than one but not quite two.

The member would know that groups, including the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association and the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, fought for this in its final iteration. They wanted this. They wanted this legislation so they could compete with the big giants.

I am wondering, as the member talks about silencing expert testimony and witnesses, what she has to say in response to the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association and the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, from her neck of the woods, which actively fought for this legislation that she is now fighting so actively against?

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I hope the member takes the time to post my answer with his question. I would like to correct the record.

Mr. Matthew Green: Probably not.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: He probably will not. That is what he said.

Mr. Matthew Green: I will censor it.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: He will censor it, he said. That is true. That is exactly what will happen.

Madam Speaker, this is your House. I will let you bring it to order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Could we allow the honourable member for Lethbridge to answer the question?

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, the member for the NDP just stated that the NDP brought forward a motion asking that there be allowance for news outlets with 1.25 or 1.5 full-time employees to be considered. I am curious if one person would be doing the work of 1.25, 1.5 or 1.75 full-time employees. They would not. Two journalists would work that amount of time.

My point still stands. This bill is designed such that, if an outlet has fewer than two journalists, it would not be considered.

To correct the record for the member, because I am sure he would not want to mislead anyone, it was Conservatives who brought forward a motion calling for a minimum of one journalists and for an outlet to be considered based on that premise. The NDP voted against that common-sense Conservative motion asking for the consideration of outlets with only one journalist.

The NDP insisted that there be a minimum of two. Whether those are two people splitting one full-time job or two people splitting one and a half jobs, I guess that is up to the outlet. Nevertheless, there have to be two individuals for the outlet to be considered. That is just not the case in so many of these local regions.

Further to that, I will just raise that this is rather rich for the NDP members. They are socialists. They very much like to complain that people are not making enough wealth. They like to see government handouts and things of that sort. Their arguing that two journalists should split a job that is one full-time job or one and a half full-time jobs is rather concerning to me. I was advocating that there be two journalists, each with full-time wages.

* * *

• (1820)

**SELF-GOVERNMENT TREATY RECOGNIZING THE
WHITECAP DAKOTA NATION / WAPAHA SKA DAKOTA
OYATE ACT**

(Bill C-51. On the Order: Government Orders:)

The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations — An Act to give effect to the self-government treaty recognizing the Whitecap Dakota Nation / Wapaha Ska Dakota Oyate and to make consequential amendments to other Acts — Order respecting proceedings at report stage and third reading stage — June 19, 2023

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, Bill C-51, entitled An Act to give effect to the self-government treaty recognizing the Whitecap Dakota Nation / Wapaha Ska Dakota Oyate and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be deemed reported back from the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs without amendment, deemed concurred in at the report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): All those opposed to the hon. minister moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

[*English*]

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

(Motion agreed to, bill reported back from committee without amendment, concurred in, read the third time and passed)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Drummond.

* * *

ONLINE NEWS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, there is never a dull moment in the House. It truly is incredible. There is always some event or other that grabs our attention.

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I am very happy Bill C-18 has reached this stage. I am happy, but I can promise my colleagues that there are an awful lot of people at media outlets in my riding and pretty much everywhere in Quebec, not to mention everywhere across Canada, based on our conversations with stakeholders, that will let out a big sigh of relief when we finally pass Bill C-18.

I would humbly like to dedicate my speech to the 1,300 workers in the news sector whose jobs were cut at Bell Media last week. We talked about it here in the House. I would like to spare a thought for two of them. I am sure that many of my colleagues have some in their ridings throughout Quebec and Canada.

Martin Brassard, a journalist with 35 years of experience at Bell Media, in my colleague's riding, Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, lost his job to the cuts. Back home in Drummond, Louis-Philippe Harnois-Arel, a talented young journalist full of potential and promise who worked on the Bell-owned Noovo news desk, was also among those who lost their jobs because of these cuts.

Mr. Speaker, you may not have had a chance to read today's news yet, but in today's *Le Devoir*, Boris Proulx reports that my colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood hinted that Bell's decision to cut 1,300 jobs and close six radio stations may have been part of a plan, made in cahoots with the government, to force the adoption of Bill C-18 this week.

I wondered what kind of movie script we were playing out. Have we really got to the point where we believe that a company will fire 1,300 people just because we want to push through a bill that is long overdue and that was obviously going to pass in the coming days or weeks anyway?

Honestly, I think that is going a little overboard with the conspiracy theories. I wanted to say it. I really admire my colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood. I sit with him on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, which we co-chair. I know that he loves the media industry and that before becoming an MP, he had a career in the media, as did I. He and I will definitely have an opportunity to talk about it again.

To provide some context, the media, and especially the news media, has been struggling for many years. Facebook and Google in particular appropriate the news stories, the news content, without paying royalties or compensation for the material produced with hard work and passion by newsrooms.

In the early 2000s, red flags were already being raised regarding the presence of the web giants, the major corporations that were taking up more and more space on the Internet. The government decided at that time to exempt them from the Broadcasting Act, to exclude them from those regulations. Perhaps the government was short-sighted. I do not want to criticize the decisions made back then, because they were based on the information available at the time, but I think the government could have shown a little more agility. The government may not have given itself sufficient freedom to re-evaluate its position over time.

For years, the news media in particular, but also the cultural industry, have been sounding the alarm and urging caution because these giants were taking up more and more space, and warning that

the space taken by these giants was hurting them, eating into their revenues and putting jobs at risk.

That is exactly what has happened over time. Successive governments were warned, but no one ever bothered to lift a finger or consider whether something should be done for the news media and the cultural industry.

• (1825)

As I said earlier, I was in the media before switching to politics. I also worked in the private sector, always with some connection to advertising. For years, I had a front-row seat to the impact this new player in the advertising world was having on the market. For example, representatives would come to us to sell us advertising and explain that it was more profitable for us to buy advertising space from them than from the digital platforms, even though the digital platforms were offering rock-bottom prices compared to traditional media. Obviously, it was very tempting for all kinds of companies to choose the option of switching to digital media, to Google and its ilk.

Today, more than 80% of advertising revenue is generated online. The market has been cornered primarily by Google and Facebook, which, again, pay no royalties. They pay nothing to the people who produce the content. They get to monetize that content and use it to sell their advertising.

On top of that, they collect data. We know that data is even more lucrative than advertising. They are really raking it in and not leaving anything for anyone else. Journalists are slowly seeing their work picked up by digital media, and high-quality reporting by talented journalists is ending up being shared on Facebook or Google in search results. Not a penny goes back to them for that, and not a penny goes back to the media that paid to produce it.

This makes no sense to me. We urgently needed to address the calls from news media and implement legislation that would impose not specific amounts or a payment, but rather a framework for negotiations. Bill C-18 does not tell companies that they have to pay a certain amount. What Bill C-18 does is tell companies that they have an obligation to negotiate in good faith within the legislated framework. That is what Bill C-18 is all about.

Government Orders

It is a bit of a stretch to say that this will give one party an advantage over another. It is going a bit far. I think this bill could likely be improved and it will not solve all of the problems. That is obvious. The news media have fallen so far over the past 10 or 15 years that Bill C-18 alone is certainly not the solution. However, it is definitely a step in the right direction. We are certainly sending the right message to the web giants by telling them that they cannot cannibalize our news outlets' content and our cultural content.

It is urgent that we pass this bill and it is urgent to see what impact it will have so that we can then put measures in place to help media outlets—

• (1830)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Minister of Tourism on a point of order.

[*English*]

BILL C-18—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the consideration of Senate amendments to Bill C-18, an act respecting online communications platforms that make news content available to persons in Canada.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent on a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, it is totally unacceptable what is happening right now in this debate.

[*Translation*]

We were in the middle of a debate on an essential bill, Bill C-18, with arguments in favour and arguments against. The member for Drummond, who has been working hard on this for months, if not years, was in the process of delivering a very interesting and important speech in this debate. Then, in the middle of his speech, as though it were no big deal, the Liberal minister intervenes and ends the debate. This is completely unacceptable.

This bill was supposed to be debated all evening. Only the governing party has been able to speak in the time it was allotted, and the official opposition had a chance to speak, but this is not about chances, it is about debate and parliamentary democracy. The second opposition party had started its time, but it got barely eight out of its 20 minutes, not to mention the period for questions and comments that would have followed, when we could have enriched the debate and demonstrated its importance. Instead, the government is pulling the plug—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I understand the gist of the point of order, but this is in order and allowed.

[*English*]

Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, the motion is deemed adopted.

(Motion agreed to)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. whip for the official opposition.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Speaker, I have a point of order.

With less than 30 minutes' notice, the government informed the official opposition that it intended to switch the business before the House this evening. We had planned on debating Bill C-18, the online news act, until midnight, because that is what the government told Canadians and members of Parliament it would do through the projected order of business, which was published on the parliamentary website.

It is the common practice of the House that the government provide accurate information on the projected order of business so that all members can plan accordingly. Of course, the government has the right to determine the business it brings to the House on any given day. It also reserves the right to change the business throughout the day. That said, it should always provide at least the professional courtesy of informing other parties of its intentions as early as possible. In this case, it would appear that this standard of professionalism was not met.

I understand that the government House leaders had difficulty managing the agenda of the House, but for the future, I think it is proper that we should expect better planning. The government is in chaos as it relates to the economy. It has been embroiled in scandals, including the latest one on the transfer of Paul Bernardo. I ask that the government House leader contain this chaos to his cabinet table and not bring this level of disorganization to the House.

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

The hon. member for Lethbridge has a point of order.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas: Madam Speaker, I was part of leading the charge on the debate with regard to Bill C-18, the online news act, and the bill was scheduled for debate tonight. A whole host of speakers from all parties were prepared to speak to it. With only a moment's notice, that debate was cut short.

I would have the House know that this has happened in the past at second reading of the bill—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are entering into debate. The motion was deemed adopted and we are proceeding to orders of the day.

Government Orders

● (1835)

CANADA BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT

The House resumed from June 16 consideration of Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am rising today to speak to Bill C-42, which is the government's proposal for a beneficial ownership registry.

I would like to critique this registry, because this is an incredibly important issue. The fact of the matter is that Canada has become a haven for global money laundering. In fact, do not take it from me. Here is just some international reporting on Canada. In the New York Times, just a few months ago, on March 25, an article written by Ian Austen, the Times journalist who covers Canada, begins with the sentence, "Canada is such an attractive place for money laundering that there's even a special name to describe the activity here: 'snow washing'."

The U.S. State Department, in 2019, designated Canada as a "major money laundering country". In fact, I pulled up the State Department's report from March 2022, titled "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report", volume 2. The report says, under "Canada", that it is estimated that between "\$36 billion [and] \$91 billion is laundered annually in Canada". Assuming those are U.S. dollars, that represents, roughly, between \$50 billion and \$120 billion a year that is laundered through this country. One hundred and twenty billion dollars a year is roughly 5% of our GDP. Five per cent of our GDP consists of money laundering.

That March 2022 report says, "Noted deficiencies include limited oversight of the domestic non-profit sector, gaps in [customer due diligence] responsibilities for [designated non-financial businesses and professions], and a lack of beneficial ownership transparency for trusts and similar legal mechanisms." Therefore, not only has our status as a money-laundering haven and, by consequence, a sanctions-avoiding haven and a proceeds-of-international-crime haven become documented in The New York Times; it has also been noticed by the State Department.

It is not just internationally that it has been documented. In the province of British Columbia, there was a huge commission of inquiry into money laundering. Its final report was published in June 2022 by the Honourable Austin Cullen, who was the commissioner. The commission found that billions of dollars were being laundered through British Columbia companies, British Columbia real estate and British Columbia trusts, and that this was having a deleterious impact on people living in British Columbia. This report came out just last year, highlighting the problems with money laundering in just one province, which represents roughly 10% of Canada's population. It is clear that we have a problem with money laundering and that, by consequence, we also have a problem with becoming a destination for the proceeds of sanctions evasion and a destination for the proceeds of international criminal activity. The government introduced this legislation, in part, to try to respond to these very real concerns, but the problem with the legislation in front of us is that it is deeply flawed.

I asked the Library of Parliament to do some research on the number of federally incorporated entities in Canada. The information it provided for me was that, for the year 2020, the most recent year for which data have been provided, the number of CBCA corporations, federally incorporated entities, is 421,301. The problem is that there are some 4.3 million businesses in Canada, of which only roughly 10% are CBCA corporations.

● (1840)

Ninety per cent of businesses in Canada are incorporated under 10 different provincial statutes, of the ten different provinces, and these corporations and trusts would not be included in Bill C-42's beneficial ownership registry. The Liberal government would say that it is working with the provinces to encourage them to create a beneficial ownership registry. The problem is that one province, Alberta, has not made any moves to create one. The problem with the other provinces is that their beneficial ownership registries have major loopholes in them. The only beneficial ownership registry in the country that is worth the paper it is written on is that of the province of British Columbia. That proposed registry includes provincially incorporated entities, trusts and real estate; it is capturing all of that in its registry. As a result, that provincial registry, combined with the federal one, would include all companies in the province of British Columbia. The problem for the other nine provinces is that they are not including real estate, which the Cullen commission in British Columbia identified as a major asset through which money, international money in particular, is being laundered.

The registry in front of us would only be as good as the weakest link in the entire system, and at least eight of the 10 provinces are not including real estate in their beneficial ownership registry. As a result, people overseas trying to avoid sanctions enforcement and trying to launder the illicit proceeds of crime and terrorism would be able to use Canadian real estate in eight out of 10 provinces to continue to launder their money, just like the Cullen commission identified in the province of British Columbia. Those individuals overseas and outside of Canada who want to avoid sanctions or want to launder the illicit proceeds of their crimes or terrorism could do so through provinces where a beneficial ownership registry for provincially incorporated entities has yet to be proposed. It is clear that the proposed beneficial ownership registry that the government has put in front of us today would not solve the problem of Canada's status as a destination for snow washing, a destination for international money laundering.

Government Orders

What the government should have done is to have used the broad and deep criminal powers accorded to it in the Constitution, which courts in this country, through various rulings, have long upheld as being broad and deep, to create a national beneficial ownership registry that would have included all companies in Canada, whether they are incorporated under the Canada Business Corporations Act or whether they are incorporated under one of 10 provincial statutes. It should have included all trusts in Canada, whether they were incorporated federally or provincially, and it should have included the beneficial owners of all real estate, real property in Canada, in order to ensure that we start cracking down on those who would use our country as a haven for money laundering for the proceeds of terrorism or for the proceeds of crime. The Liberal government did not proceed down that path, so, once again, we would have implementation of a good idea from the government in a very flawed manner, as it has been with so many things that the government has made announcements about.

I will finish here. The beneficial ownership registry in front of the House today would not plug the hole that has allowed this country to become such a haven and such a destination country for sanctions evasion for the proceeds of crime, for the proceeds of terrorism and for money laundering in general that landed us, in March, on the front page of the *New York Times*, and in the State Department's assessment of global havens for money laundering.

• (1845)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would encourage the member to go back a little further in terms of Canada's involvement in money laundering. Donald Fleming, a former Conservative finance minister, was instrumental in setting up the Cayman Islands as an international tax haven, and he set up many others, in the Bahamas and elsewhere. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that Canada is known for money laundering, because Canada helped set up some of the financial centres of the world where money laundering takes place, and, through various taxation treaties to avoid so-called double taxes, made it possible for money to move very easily between Canada and these other jurisdictions. That is why we lose tens of billions of dollars in tax revenue from legitimate sources of income, in addition to the damage that is done in Canada through money laundering.

I wonder if the member perhaps has some reflections on the way that a certain kind of anti-tax rhetoric has been used over decades now to position Canada as a world leader in money laundering.

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Speaker, the member's question allows me to highlight that there is a distinction between tax havens, like the Cayman Islands, which was mentioned, and money laundering. The whole purpose of money laundering is separate and distinct from that of tax havens. The purpose of money laundering is to hide the provenance of the money, and, in particular, to hide the fact that the money was produced illicitly through criminal activity, terrorism or sanctions evasion.

With the plethora of sanctions that have been announced by the government and other governments in the last year because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it becomes even more important to enforce sanctions, and it starts with having a proper beneficial ownership registry, which this one is not. I am pointing out the holes in this registry so that when we come back in another Parliament, the

holes can be fixed and plugged so we can start cracking down on money laundering in this country.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, the one part of the member's speech that certainly drew my attention was when he said that the system is only as strong as the weakest link. One of the challenges is that provinces may say that they are going to put in place their own registries, but the problem is the interoperability. The government has raised expectations and has basically said it is going to eliminate money laundering and see greater transparency in real estate, but that would apply to only a very small number, regulated under the federal watch.

Could the member maybe elaborate a little further on his views about this issue and the lack of interoperability between these systems?

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Speaker, in the research we did, only the Province of British Columbia, at the provincial level of government, is implementing a registry that will include provincially incorporated companies and provincially incorporated trusts, which will include real estate. Nova Scotia is the other province that has already implemented a separate beneficial ownership registry for real estate. None of the eight other provinces has any plans to implement a registry for real estate, and that is a problem because the Cullen commission highlighted the fact that significant international money laundering is being laundered through real estate in British Columbia, and, no doubt, is being laundered through real estate in other provinces, such as Ontario.

The system is only as strong as the weakest link, and the fact that eight out of 10 provinces do not have a beneficial ownership registry for real estate, and that one province has no beneficial ownership registry for provincially incorporated entities and trusts, means that the system would be ineffective. That is why the federal government should have proposed legislation that used the criminal power given to it in the Constitution to create a registry that mandated all companies in Canada, federally incorporated companies, provincially incorporated companies, all trusts and all real estate, be registered under a single system to start giving law enforcement the tools they need to crack down on money laundering, the proceeds of crime and the proceeds of terrorism.

• (1850)

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, as always, it is an honour to be able to enter into debate on the important issues that Canadians are facing in this country and, specifically, those issues that impact Battle River—Crowfoot.

However, I was celebrated, along with so many in this place and fathers across this country, this past weekend on Sunday, as our nation recognized fathers. If I could for a brief moment, before I get into the substance of what is a very substantive debate, I would just like to pass along my greetings, officially on the record, to my father, all fathers across the country and those grandfathers who have impacted us. Although I do not have grandfathers alive anymore, I know the significant role they played in my life. I wish a happy belated Father's Day to all the fathers represented across our country from coast to coast to coast.

Government Orders

We are debating Bill C-42 here this evening. Although, unfortunately, it seems that the government did some tricky manoeuvring to change the debate from Bill C-18 to Bill C-42, this is an important issue that bears fulsome and comprehensive discussion in this place.

I will back up a bit and talk about something that is probably not on the radar of many Canadians, because when it comes to the idea of money laundering, most Canadians do not really understand the significance of what it is. For example, I know the Panama papers are part of the discussion that has surrounded this bill in particular. I will enlighten us on the challenge that brought us to the point that we would be debating this here this evening. I will then get into what is proposed and where I think some additional items need to be challenged, discussed and addressed, when it comes to the larger issue of what the bill is trying to accomplish.

Most people who have spent much time watching Hollywood movies will have heard of the Cayman Islands, Switzerland or other jurisdictions that are known for hiding money. Criminal enterprises, gangs and thugs store money there, access it in a secretive manner and ensure they could take dirty money that was earned by some nefarious process, whether that be the sale of something illegal, the proceeds of crime or whatever the case is. They go through a process where the money comes out, and it might not be clean on the other side, but at least it is not traceable to the original way that it was earned. This is why we call it “laundering”.

Things like the Panama papers and other news articles make headlines on occasion, and specifically, they often only make headlines when there are significant figures that are involved. This may happen if there is a businessperson or a politician who has some notoriety and is named in these sorts of releases. However, one of the really unfortunate realities is that Canada has become a place where we are known for being able to have money laundering take place.

That is incredibly concerning, especially in a world where digital technology, artificial intelligence and the dynamics associated with some of these things are incredibly complex. We have not had a great deal of time to discuss artificial intelligence in this place. The fact that Canada has become something of a safe haven for money laundering and the proceeds of crime is incredibly concerning.

Some of those proceeds would be from criminal activities that take place on Canadian soil, but the unfortunate signal that has been sent to the criminal enterprises that exist around the world is that Canada seems to be the place where one can see money laundered, regardless of where those proceeds are from. This is something that definitely needs to be addressed.

This has a few unintended consequences as well that I think bear mentioning. Just to highlight for those watching, one of the things that has been highlighted that would be a possible way to see this happen is through the purchase of real estate. At a time when we already have some of the lowest per capita housing availability in the developed world, it is incredibly concerning that some of the pressures that exist there would be for purposes that are nefarious and certainly not benefiting Canadians for the pricing structure that exists. Especially when we have a price point that is determined in a market that is not based on the product and its availability, laun-

dering artificially inflates it. This is something that definitely needs to be addressed.

● (1855)

That is the problem. Now we have Bill C-42, which is a step in the right direction to address some of those things. The question is whether it goes far enough, and I will get to the ways that I do not think it does. However, it does address some of the challenges and attempts to ensure that some of the currently existing loopholes that allow Canada to be this safe haven, as I mentioned, are addressed.

One thing is to ensure that there is greater accountability for those who are purchasing businesses that have those large financial interests in this country. The reason this is important is to ensure that there is that registry and that ability to have accountability at every stage of the corporate process. For those who have no reason to hide their actions, of course, this is not something that will concern them. There may be some reporting requirements through financial institutions and whatnot, but if a person is not doing anything wrong, these burdens are not something that would be part of the daily life of the accounting of a business's operations; that is valuable.

When it comes to the fines, and we have certainly heard a lot about the fines as we have had debate about this issue, there would be an increase in the penalties, both monetary penalties and possible prison sentences. Certainly, I think that is important, although I will note the irony that it seems as though the Liberals have this habit of being soft on crime in many regards, but they want to send a signal through the legislation, it would seem, that Canada is willing to get tough when it comes to white-collar crime. However, there are certainly some challenges when it comes to the crime that is affecting so many Canadians.

There are a number of aspects that build on some of the actions that have been taken by the previous Conservative government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, which saw this as a challenge and started to make some of those changes. Notably, back in 2014, I believe, there were some significant changes that the Harper government made to ensure that it would tighten up some of the areas that were loopholes at that point in time. A number of steps have been taken over the last number of years.

I believe my colleague for Wellington—Halton Hills said it well when he talked about a chain being only as strong as its weakest link. We are seeing that there could be some holes plugged in the challenges that Canada faces when it comes to money laundering. However, it is fundamentally important to ensure that we do not stop here.

A lot of this discussion took place at committee, and I know folks who are watching are interested in seeing some of that. The work that the committee did highlighted some opportunities that existed in terms of strengthening this legislation, and we saw a few amendments pass. However, a whole host of other amendments could have made this legislation stronger.

Government Orders

To address some of this strange occurrence that happens increasingly with the government, it seems to be quick to rush everything through, because it is a crisis. This is unfortunate; as it is rushing things through, it often ends up having to go back and fix the challenges or the gaps that could and should have been addressed in the earlier stages of the process. At the industry committee, there were some challenges brought up, including from some senior public servants who were concerned about the possibility of challenges when it comes to implementation. There are privacy concerns that the Liberals have to address, and this is simply another part of those areas.

To conclude, it is incumbent on us all in this place to do our utmost to ensure that every bill that comes forward is debated thoroughly and that we have engagement from the affected stakeholders. When it comes to something like this, it may not be on the forefront of many Canadians' minds, but it is fundamentally important that we get it right, so that we can stop Canada from being a safe haven for money laundering in this world.

● (1900)

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

My colleague spoke with a great deal of knowledge on this point. I can see he represents his constituents well for a relatively young MP, compared with people in mid-life like me; I am at the tender age of almost 45 now. I said I was 44 the other day, and I heard about it.

Money laundering has had both a pervasive and a significant impact. I will ask my colleague this: Could he comment on how his riding of Battle River—Crowfoot has perhaps been, maybe not directly impacted, but impacted generally by these types of things?

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, I appreciated being called “young” in this place, although with the rate my hair is turning grey, I am not sure if that is more the job or my age.

I can highlight how this would specifically impact my constituents, although this would not be unique in the context of this discussion. Most people do not understand the intricacies of major business operations, how a corporate registry would affect them, how that would affect the accounting of major multinationals or what reporting requirements banks have.

For example, if the average Canadian were asked on the street what FINTRAC is, most people would probably not know. However, this all has to do with Canadians having confidence in our economy to be able to purchase anything, to go into a bank and trust the fact that the institution is going to have security on its deposits and to ensure that our law enforcement is able not only to pull somebody over for speeding but also make sure that there are consequences for serious crimes, such as laundering money from the proceeds of crime.

This comes back to the very basic principle of ensuring that there is trust in our institutions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would first like to say how disappointed I am with Bell Canada's decision to eliminate jobs back home, in my region, particularly in Rimouski. One of the people who lost his job was an experienced journalist, Martin Brassard. He has 35 years' experience and worked for the Énergie radio station, which he left recently, and then for Rouge FM in Rimouski.

Local and regional information is vital to the development of our communities and also to the health of our democracy. I hope that the government will listen to reason and put in place the solution proposed by the Bloc Québécois of creating a special fund to support regional media.

Members know that the Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-42 because it seeks to foster transparency. We have heard much about the Panama Papers. Is it normal that there are whistle-blowers and people hiding behind corporations, but that we do not have any information about this? Does my colleague agree that there should be more transparency in corporations?

[*English*]

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, there is a lot to address. I will try to get to all three points.

We need to strengthen whistle-blower protections in this country. That is absolutely essential to ensure that those who are taking risks, whether they are professional risks, risks to the possibility of advancement or sometimes even further risks than that, have those protections. Certainly, I have talked at length about that at the ethics committee here in Parliament.

When it comes to transparency and the need for it, this is absolutely and fundamentally important. That comes back to my response to the previous question. Most Canadians may not understand the intricacies associated with multinational business operations and why money laundering may affect them, but when it comes to trust in our institutions, every Canadian feels that. Unfortunately, we have seen an erosion of trust in the institutions that we all count on.

When it comes to job losses in the member's constituency, I hear his concerns. When the Keystone XL pipeline was cancelled by President Biden, and the Prime Minister refused to do anything about it, I had to face 2,000 constituents who got pink slips. They lost their jobs because of the inaction and political indifference of a party that has wanted to shut down the largest economic driver in our country. I hear that member and the pain associated with so many individuals who face the personal crisis of a job loss, especially when it is a surprise. We need to do more in this country to ensure that we create a business environment that allows for prosperity.

Certainly, the member for Carleton has talked about everything that we have been talking about. We are working diligently to ensure that we can be a country that fosters prosperity again. Together we can do that and bring it home.

Government Orders

• (1905)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak about Bill C-42 today. It is an honour for me not only because I am speaking on behalf of the good people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola but also because it also gives me a chance to recall some of my work as a member of the finance committee in 2017, where we did an extensive review of the money-laundering regime in Canada as it relates to not only money laundering but also to the financing of terrorism.

Let me give a quick shout-out to the former chair of that finance committee, the Hon. Wayne Easter, who basically said that we should travel to places like London and Washington as part of it. I was a member of Parliament who was quite skeptical of junkets in all their forms, but he told me that he thought it was important for the committee to do that, and some of the best testimony we received as a committee on how Canada is seen in the world with respect to things like money laundering was absolutely correct. I have to thank the Hon. Wayne Easter for those observations, because it really showed that Canada is an outlier, and for all the wrong reasons.

We have seen Transparency International talk year after year about how we are slowly becoming a country where money laundering has become a problem. We were once very respected under the Transparency International regime.

Those 2017 recommendations from the committee still stand. It was an all-party report. The Liberals, Conservatives, Bloc members and New Democrats participated in the report and came to many unanimous recommendations, partly as a result of those trips and experiences, because we saw very clearly that Canada had a lot to achieve.

Coming back to Bill C-42, there are a number of things missing from this legislation. For example, recommendation 10 from the 2017 report refers to a rule in the United States.

It states:

That the Government of Canada make it a criminal offence for an entity or individual to structure transactions in a manner designated to avoid reporting requirements. These provisions would be modelled on Title 31 of U.S. code section 5324.

What that means is that while this will capture some of the significant control of a particular corporation's holdings so that someone would be able to find out who had significant control of an asset, such as a piece of real estate, it operates only after the fact. Only then can law enforcement start to draw evidence together to link a particular group, such as organized crime or a terrorism group, with a group of accountants or business owners and lawyers, and through that web be able to trace exactly who is connected to whom and be able to start pulling on those threads.

The Americans have taken a much more proactive approach by making it a crime to help someone to structure their affairs to avoid transparency. This is quite important. While there are many measures in the Criminal Code, it is important that we look at Canada. One of the outcomes of the report is that the legal community is still not within the FINTRAC regime. While we have seen an expansion in recent years, I think partly because of our report regard-

ing FINTRAC, we still do not see everything included, such as lawyers.

Members may ask why that is important. It is because they are the very professionals who structure those affairs so that the money can be laundered in Canada, so I think it is an area still worthy of investigation.

Let us go to the beneficial ownership registry itself. When we went to the United Kingdom, one of the things that struck me there is that it has this beneficial ownership registry online. It is free, and there is very limited information.

• (1910)

First of all, I do not think most Canadians will go to a beneficial ownership registry. There is always a temptation to see what one's neighbour owns and, of course, there could be some abuses that way, but essentially, the people who would be looking at this are law enforcement and Canada Revenue Agency employees working on files that are related to the matter of money laundering. It is absolutely critical that those law enforcement officials, people who are lawfully accessing it for investigate purposes, be able to do so quickly.

However, this registry would only carry just a sliver. Again, for the people at home saying that a beneficial registry sounds good to them, it would only be for those corporations that are registered under the Canada Business Corporations Act. As someone who has lived in British Columbia my whole life, I will say that, from speaking to many lawyers, I know that the bulk of solicitors' work is when they are processing real estate and updating the registry of which a company is kept, and most of that action happens provincially.

As my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills recently said, this particular measure might offer some good points, but it is only as strong as the weakest link. If we have 10 different registries, we may end up in the tyranny of small differences.

We could take health care as an example. Not all health care information is delivered to the Public Health Agency of Canada in a uniform manner. We find that fax machines are still being used. If one province only gives information under certain forms, it is then very difficult to aggregate that to get a whole picture.

The government, just as it has done in previous agreements with provinces, comes to an agreement on principle, but when it comes time to do the work, unfortunately it does not seem to have a true consensus. I will just harken back to the Canada free trade agreement, which apparently all parties sided with. Half of it was exemptions. One may agree in principle with something, but when it comes to the operability of what comes out of something, it seems that the government is only looking for the big announcement. In this case, it is a beneficial ownership registry that would be transparent.

Government Orders

Again, if it is only a sliver of the activity and it does not necessarily create a uniformity of interoperable registries where everyone can funnel the same information and have aggregated information that is the same, meaning that it is always going to have the same basics available, one is going to have that tyranny of small differences. When someone is looking for that information, the last thing we want to do is end up where we do not supply the information to law enforcement in a straight, one-stop shop.

I should also point out that in the U.K., the so-called transparency model has some caveats. When I was at committee, I asked officials about this, and they did say that for persons under 18, their information would not be shared, which probably is for the best, although I would ask how someone under the age of 18 would end up with significant control over a Canadian asset, but we will leave that for another time. Also, there would be exemptions on a case-by-case basis. In the U.K., politicians and celebrities are often taken off. This creates, just like all government systems, a system where someone who is working the registry is now making choices about who is included and who is not.

It is an honour for me to step forward here, and it was an honour to serve on the finance committee. This is an area where I think we can do more. As the Prime Minister likes to say, better is always possible. Unfortunately, we will just have to take what we can get today and hope that a new Conservative government would do the hard work with provinces so that we could really clamp down on money laundering.

• (1915)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, there are a couple of themes I have heard in Conservative speeches about this bill. One is that the ownership threshold is too high at 25%. I think one of the awkward tensions with another line of Conservative argument is that the 25% standard is actually present in most of the provincial registries that currently obtain. I think part of the goal of starting with a 25% ownership threshold was to have more congruence with existing provincial systems.

My concern is that, as we try to resolve these tensions between, as the member rightly pointed out, the importance of collaborating with the provinces and some of the things we might like to see as more stringent requirements in the legislation but that are not congruent with the existing provincial situation, the clock is ticking. There are folks, like Putin's buddies, who are hiding money here in Canada and whom a public beneficial ownership registry would help pursue.

It is not perfect legislation, but can we get the legislation passed before summer in order to ensure that we can begin doing the work to bring those folks to justice?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, that is a very reasonable question. Again, we are essentially putting a line in the sand with this 25% threshold. Let us be clear: It is arbitrary, and it is following the provinces rather than leading on the arguments. Being able to say who is involved and who has significant control over large assets in Canada, particularly from a law enforcement perspective, is quite important.

We have seen that some of the lawyers, accountants and other professionals who have been compromised in this area will use ev-

ery planning tool possible to evade scrutiny, which is why I made the suggestion that we should follow suit by making it a Criminal Code infringement for those who structure their clients' assets in such a way as to evade transparency. Those are the mechanisms.

While my colleague and I may not agree on the 25% threshold and on whether the federal government is showing leadership, I do understand his point that we need to get moving. I also think we need to send a signal to those who operate in this space that it will not be tolerated.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, in his speech, my colleague spoke about certain loopholes, particularly with regard to individuals who facilitate money laundering. I am referring to lawyers, notaries and other professionals.

Would my colleague agree that, at some point, we should also legislate so that there is less of an incentive to support businesses and individuals involved in money laundering?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, this is an important issue for Canadians, who understand that the crime rate in this country is high right now. It is also important that the federal government make clear the consequences of criminal activity.

I think that the federal government needs to introduce a new crime bill to crack down on fraud and crime.

[*English*]

I appreciate the member's question. This is how we can convey that to professionals. I also think a reference to the Supreme Court, as was laid out in the 2017 FINA study, so we can clarify what protections there are—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would like to give one more member the opportunity to ask a question.

The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola for his very substantive speech tonight. Can he share with the House how his constituents feel about ending money laundering? What do the great people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola think the government should be doing to provide more transparency and accountability as it relates to money laundering?

• (1920)

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, simply put, British Columbians have heard a lot of politicians talk and talk when it comes to money laundering. We have had the Cullen commission, which seemed to talk about many of the activities, but we seem to see a dearth of action from both the federal and provincial governments.

Government Orders

There have been some improvements in casinos. As B.C.'s casinos tightened up, a lot more suspicious activity went on in Ontario. This requires leadership from the federal government. My constituents believe in the law. They want to see the laws enforced.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, before I begin my speech, I want to pay tribute to the people back home, especially those who are helping to fight the wildfires. The town of Normétal has been spared so far, but it is important to mention that the situation there is now critical. As of tomorrow, we are expecting really dry weather. The firebreaks put in place by the SOPFEU should hold, but there is a chance that there will not be enough resources to keep the flames at bay if new fires break out.

I therefore want to say thank you to all the responder units. I am thinking especially of the firefighters from New Brunswick. One of them, Bruno Pelletier, whose name has been in the news, explained all the operational details to me, for example, how a firefighting team takes action on the ground. It is rather impressive to see how they are able to deploy not just to Abitibi-Témiscamingue but anywhere in North America. I want to commend them for their courage, and I am very grateful to them for being there to help with what is to come, because we are still on high alert. We will just have to wait and see what happens in my region and others, obviously.

I am rising to talk about Bill C-42 and how vitally important it is. The bill amends the Canada Business Corporations Act and makes consequential and related amendments to other acts.

I want to begin by noting that this bill is long overdue. It is the result of federal-provincial agreements reached in 2017 and 2018 about collecting and sharing information. During those negotiations, all parties agreed to amend their laws on business corporations to ensure they would remain harmonized. Ultimately, this will make us more effective in the fight against money laundering and terrorism.

Information in the registry of one province is automatically recognized in another, thanks to the similarity of our laws. However, it is important to note that Quebec recently made changes to its law in 2021, through Bill 78, and it is expected that the other provinces will follow suit. Bill 78 contains provisions to create a beneficial ownership registry and make it public.

However, this amendment to Bill C-42 does not stem from an agreement with the provinces and is not intended to maintain this harmonization. It is poorly timed. Obviously, we opposed it in committee.

We need to recognize the importance of maintaining cohesion and respecting the process done previously. I commend the leadership of the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, because he was able to put together a bill that took into account harmonization and the priority of the provinces in something like this. As a result, the debates are less tedious, and harmonization is easier to achieve in this kind of context. What is more, Bill C-42 went through rather quickly at the Standing Committee on Industry and

Technology, despite some rather constructive amendments on both sides.

The market relies on investor confidence and that confidence is directly tied to the transparency and good governance of corporations. Businesses also have to fully understand the purpose of the changes made to the business registry.

By passing Bill C-42, we are strengthening the principles of corporate governance, not only to the benefit of shareholders, but also in the interest of the public as a whole. The whole notion of a registry that will enable us to do searches is something that is very important. We received witnesses from the RCMP who came to tell us how a tool like this could help them in their work, which is far from trivial.

This bill is much more than a simple administrative measure. That is why I am urging my colleagues to move forward with it as soon as possible. The House is about to rise for the summer. It would be really unfortunate if the bill were to die on the Order Paper, because the future is hard to predict at this stage. This is an opportunity to fight organized crime, money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

By strengthening our legal framework, we are creating an environment that is less conducive to illegal activities and that helps protect our fellow citizens and financial institutions. As a result, by rejecting the amendments that threaten the harmonization of the legislation, we are sending a clear message—and that is what the Bloc Québécois has done—that we are determined to fight these scourges and preserve the integrity of our financial system. Obviously, that is the basis of our economy. Maintaining a strong economy depends first and foremost on trust and predictability, as well as on robust laws that are not easily circumvented.

● (1925)

To say that this bill was necessary is an understatement. I wonder why it took so long to present it in the House. A consensus could have been reached in the previous Parliament, or even in the one before that.

It is vital to recognize that corporate governance principles are important for the proper functioning of the market. By encouraging transparency, accountability and informed decision-making, we are bolstering investor confidence and promoting long-term financial stability. We must ensure that our companies have a transparent governance structure that allows for informed, responsible decisions not only in the interest of shareholders, but also in the interest of the Canadian public, obviously. However, shareholder interests are not trivial.

Legislative amendments must never be taken lightly. They have a ripple effect on our entire economic system. If we throw the harmonization of our legislation off balance, we could create disparities and needless obstacles for our companies. This could slow economic growth, discourage investment and detract from the ability of Quebec and Canada to compete internationally.

We are at a pivotal moment. We need to pass Bill C-42 in its current form, after the amendments that were adopted by the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology. I am not talking about the one we are debating right now, which essentially strikes me as a waste of valuable parliamentary time. In fact, I hope that the voters of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount are watching our debates right now and will think about this before going to the polls at the last minute. Maybe it will make them think twice about supporting the Conservatives, if they were tempted to do so.

Passing this bill would be an illustration of our commitment to combatting organized crime and terrorist financing, as well as promoting sound corporate governance principles. We will continue to work with the provinces and stakeholders to maintain harmonized legislation and ensure market fluidity.

We must seize this opportunity and take action. Bill C-42 is a positive measure for Quebeckers and Canadians. It is essential that we commit to passing it, recognizing the importance of transparency, corporate governance and co-operation with the provinces to maintain legislation that can provide a robust mechanism to combat money laundering and catch fraudsters.

Together we can strengthen our economy, protect Quebeckers and Canadians, and promote a fairer and more prosperous society for all.

When I think about studying this bill in committee, I think about the day we received the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry. We were able to question him about a number of things, including how this fight against organized crime is being conducted. I asked questions about how much it costs to fight organized crime, but also how much it costs to not fight organized crime. The figures are staggering. I think that in a society like ours, when we are fighting, when we see the forest fires, when we see the consequences for the economy, when we are forced to keep investing in tax credits for oil companies, I think we are fooling ourselves economically. We need to be able to refocus our investments responsibly. That means having the means to match our ambitions. If we want to make this economic transition a success, we are going to have to come up with the money to do it. That money can be found in tax havens.

We have lists of corporations, but the problem is that we do not know who the real owners of these corporations are. One corporation belongs to another corporation, which also belongs to another corporation and so forth. That is often the problem in the financial world. Who is the true owner? It is all very well to say that there is an ecosystem of 120 or 150 countries that are working together and sharing data, but the fact remains that the threat continues to be that we do not know who the real owners are.

There are companies that want to open mines and process minerals in a region such as mine. However, there is a risk, because a Chinese mining company whose ownership is unknown will have particular interests, and perhaps its sole objective will be to take over our resources and process them in China so they can keep them, or to thwart Canadian companies' growth in order to maintain a monopoly and keep the price of raw materials high.

Government Orders

At some point, there must be a paradigm shift. We must be able to determine who really owns corporations if we are to make the changes needed in our society. Clearly, money has a certain value in our democracy. If we want to continue providing quality social services, we have to go and get the money back from where it is stashed, by fighting against money laundering and tax havens.

● (1930)

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. As a member of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, I helped analyze this bill. Obviously, it is a very important bill, considering that it aligns with the provinces' legislation, as my colleague pointed out. I would like to ask him a question.

My colleague mentioned Bill 78, which was adopted in Quebec in 2022 or 2021, with respect to the beneficial ownership registry. I would like him to tell me how the legislation we are about to pass aligns with Bill 78. Obviously, no one can object to the value and importance of catching fraudsters, who are unfortunately present in Canada, and more so in some provinces than in others. I think that fraud is a major problem in British Columbia, although it exists in Quebec too.

As a law-abiding business person who follows the rules, I agree with the importance of laws that help us catch fraudsters. I would like my colleague to talk to me about the importance of ensuring that the two bills are interoperable.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for his intervention and his hard work in committee standing up for the interests of Quebec. We do not always see eye to eye on what is best for Quebec, but I think that we are certainly strong voices for standing up for these interests.

As members know, in February 2020, the Government of Quebec announced its intention to create a registry. Bill 78 was introduced in the National Assembly in June 2020 and was passed in December of the same year. To answer my colleague's question, there were provisions to create this registry of beneficial owners and make it public.

What are the challenges involved in bringing in such a registry and harmonizing it with those of the other provinces? That will become clear over time. If we are careful and create legislation based on what the provinces have already created, then we are more likely to achieve harmonization. There will no doubt be some bumps along the way, but solutions might present themselves.

I think that in a context like this, the provinces have jurisdiction. It is essential that the federal government build on what the provinces are doing and not fight what the provinces are doing. I think that is one of the intentions. Obviously, in Bill C-42 before us, information sharing and transparency are fundamental.

Government Orders

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I think that we see eye to eye when it comes to fighting tax evasion and the misuse of tax havens. We are on the same wavelength.

The federal government is doing something it has never done before. The Canada Revenue Agency now measures what is known as the “tax gap”, meaning the difference between the tax revenue it should be collecting from individuals and companies, and what it actually collects. It calculated that in 2022, Canada's tax gap was \$23.4 billion.

Our shortfall is \$23.4 billion. I would like my colleague to tell us what he thinks the Liberal government should do to go after that money.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, I recognize the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie's leadership on the issue of fighting tax havens. It is not the first time I have heard him speaking about this in the House of Commons. I also want to highlight the commitment of my colleague, the member for Joliette.

This is a fundamental matter. We must be able to take much more robust action. According to Statistics Canada, Canadian corporations invested \$381 billion in the top 12 tax havens in 2019. That represents almost one-third of all Canadian foreign investment.

It is all well and good for the minister to tell us that more and more countries are becoming our allies, that they are working on the same things as we are and that we will have a common registry. The fact remains that if our wealthiest corporations and individuals, who do not care about the common good of society, invest in the 12 most notorious tax havens in the world, we will not make progress.

The first thing that needs to be done is to go and get our money where it is hiding and ensure that everyone pays their fair share of taxes.

• (1935)

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, money laundering in Canada is a big problem, and it is a very big problem because it has a worth. That worth, as we heard in committee, is \$113 billion a year. It is a staggering number.

The UN estimated that Canada's has up to 5% of the world's money laundering. Canada has become known, unfortunately, across the world as a place to park dirty money. There is even a name for Canada's ability to hide money. It is called snow washing. I think there are advertisements in some circles. It is theft, plain and simple.

While Bill C-42 aims to combat this \$113-billion problem, it falls short of combatting the future of money laundering and relies on the provinces to do most of the work. The bill may do some of the work for today, and certainly in this House we can support a lot of that, but there is a lot of work to do as we move forward.

I sit on the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, and we dealt with this very rushed bill. It came through very suddenly. We were talking about how it is tackling things not only today but tomorrow. As we went to the witnesses, we heard how it fails to address the problems of tomorrow and money laundering.

Money laundering became very popular after the 2016 release of the Panama papers. The Panama papers revealed trillions of dollars of money laundering, and there were certain lessons we were meant to learn from that. One was that there was a widespread scope. The Panama papers showed a vast scale of global money laundering and tax evasion. They exposed offshore financial activities of individuals and entities from around the world, including politicians, but we will not talk about that today.

The Panama papers exposed the use of shell corporations. They exposed the widespread use of shell companies and offshore entities to conceal the true ownership of assets and facilitate money laundering. It was of a cross-border nature. When we looked at how money was being laundered, it was being done across state lines and country lines across the world. The papers also brought attention to the role of professionals, such as lawyers, accountants and financial intermediaries, in facilitating money laundering. In other words, it was widespread.

When we talked about this with regard to Bill C-42, there were a couple of lessons the bill probably has taken into account that we can learn from. One is the need for transparency. Another is public awareness and the fact there are shell corporations using their own entities to launder dirty money.

We looked at the benefits we wanted to see from this bill in bringing it from committee to Parliament. The Conservative Party stands behind the fact that we need to combat money laundering. When it comes to certain aspects of the future of how money is going to be laundered, including blockchain technologies, the use of AI, decentralized exchanges, privacy enhancing technologies, and smurfing and layering, this bill falls short in addressing those things.

Furthermore, many people do not understand that when we look at the way we are going to collect data from these businesses when tackling money laundering, which is through the Canada Business Corporations Act, or the CBCA, it is only on 15% of businesses in Canada, meaning that we will rely on the provinces to do the work for the remaining 85%. If any last holdout province, for instance, does not want to join the registry and all of a sudden we see a certain province's limited partnerships start to skyrocket as other provinces' go down, there is pressure to be put on that particular province: Why do they want to be Canada's last secrecy jurisdiction?

This follows what we saw with the U.K. registry, where Scottish limited partnerships dropped by 80%. One way to mine the data once the registry comes online is to look for movement shifts, because of course crooks are going to go where the weakest link is. That is why it has to be a harmonized approach, not just a federal approach.

The CBCA governs the incorporation and operation of businesses at the federal level, setting the framework for corporate governance, accountability and transparency. By enforcing strict obligations on corporations, directors and officers to maintain accurate records and disclose information, the CBCA enhances transparency and hinders criminals from exploiting corporate structures for illegal purposes. Additionally, the CBCA empowers regulatory bodies, law enforcement agencies and courts to investigate suspected money laundering activities within corporations.

• (1940)

We heard from the RCMP at committee. One of the concerns we had was about how strict the rules are that protect whistle-blowers. We need whistle-blowers to identify where illegal activity is happening. As a small business owner myself, I have about four corporations that govern different parts of my business. Members can understand that without the ability to protect whistle-blowers, it is really easy sometimes for a small business owner to hide money and find different loopholes to hide it. I normally rely on an accountant to do that for me, but there is a reason that Canada has been able to hide \$113 billion a year: It has become very easy.

One of the main aspects of this is that we have to be able to protect whistle-blowers. We asked questions of the RCMP on whether that is going to happen. This bill was so rushed that it went through committee in only two meetings, which included clause-by-clause and having testimony alongside the clause-by-clause. Some of the experts could not even get back to us, including the RCMP, on how effective this bill would be in protecting whistle-blowers, and that is a big concern.

When it comes to the future of money laundering, there was also testimony on the fly during clause-by-clause, with questions that I tried to get witnesses to answer, but the witnesses did not really have the right answers. For cryptocurrencies and blockchain, for instance, criminals may increasingly turn to cryptocurrencies for money laundering purposes. The anonymous nature of certain cryptocurrencies and the decentralized nature of blockchain technology can make it more challenging to trace and monitor transactions.

We saw that in a study we finished on blockchain technology. Blockchain is really good for Canada and good for the future. We employ 16,000 employees in blockchain, and it is worth over \$2 billion. However, as we have seen blockchain for good, there is also blockchain for bad. This is certainly one aspect in the future where criminals will try to hide and launder money, and this bill would do nothing to address that.

When we talk about decentralized exchanges, criminals might explore those exchanges to launder money. DEXs, as they are called, operate on blockchain technology and facilitate peer-to-peer transactions without centralized oversight, making it more difficult for authorities to track and identify suspicious activities. We just had an incredible blockchain study, but at the same time as this bill would not address the criminal element of blockchain technology, we are not looking at the good. That is something the government is not embracing. Most times, it would rather slag cryptocurrencies and blockchain as a whole, even though we should be looking at deregulation and ensure they are part of money laundering bills.

Government Orders

On privacy-enhancing technologies, criminals may utilize emerging privacy-enhancing technologies that aim to provide increased anonymity and obfuscation of transactions. Those technologies could make it harder for authorities to trace the origins and destinations of funds involved in money laundering. Smurfing and layering involves breaking down large amounts of money into smaller, less conspicuous transactions.

That brings me to an amendment we brought forward that was turned down by the government. Instead of looking at ownership that was only 25% or higher, it should go as low as 10%. The technologies of the future are going to allow companies to hide more money easily, and 10% is something that we found should have been easily amended in this bill and was not.

It is important to address the potential regulatory gaps and weaknesses and make sure that this bill addresses the system that criminals may wish to exploit. As regulations evolve, criminals may identify new vulnerabilities or target regions with less robust anti-money laundering frameworks. Strengthening international co-operation and collaboration among governments and financial institutions is crucial to countering the global nature of money laundering effectively.

The Conservatives can support this bill. This bill would address the \$113-billion problem. We just wish it was not so rushed. We wish that we had been able to address some of the amendments that went further. What the bill would not address is the future of money laundering, which will include blockchain and advanced technologies. This bill would just address today and would not address tomorrow.

I know that a Conservative government, which will be in power in the next few years, will be able to address that. I look forward to contributing to it to make sure that we bring down the \$113-billion theft of Canadian money and work toward a better future where we have less snow washing in Canada.

• (1945)

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the other day I drove through the hon. member's riding for the very first time in almost a decade. I remembered how wonderful the beaches are where he lives. They are quite amazing on the lakes.

The member raises an important question about how much further this bill could have gone had we had enough time at committee and not been rushed with hearing from witnesses and automatically going into clause-by-clause. If the government wants collaboration and wants to work with all political parties effectively, what could it have done differently to stop some of the nonsense due to its parliamentary practices?

Government Orders

Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to talk about the beaches of Bay of Quinte. Sandbanks is the largest freshwater sandbar in all the world. We welcome well over a million visitors a year, and everyone is welcome. Some of us wish we were there today.

The bill deserves the attention that we are trying to give it, as rushed as it is. We need to spend time on a lot of different bills right now. We are dealing with Bill C-34 and are waiting for Bill C-27. The reality is that there is a lot of important legislation that we need to get through, and we need to spend the ample amount of time that these bills deserve to have spent on them. As I have mentioned, we certainly would have liked to see a few more amendments studied. We wanted to see the future of money laundering studied and not just to catch up to today.

There is a lot of great work to happen ahead, and as soon as we are done with the beaches and it gets a little colder, we will see everyone back here in Parliament so we can keep working on behalf of Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to my colleague's remarks, I was reminded of the debates we had at the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology.

My colleague asked some very good questions. We have heard that the amount of money laundered in Canada could be as high as \$113 billion a year, which is a staggering number. According to a United Nations statistic, the amount of money laundered worldwide represents between 2% and 5% of global GDP.

Coming back to my colleague's speech, I would also like to remind him of a question he asked Ms. Ryan from the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada. This centre works primarily to combat money laundering.

How can we ensure that cryptocurrency cannot be used to circumvent the system? That was the gist of his question, and he also asked whether the current bill could guarantee the appropriate protection or whether a new bill should be introduced.

Basically, we understand that under this bill, the authorities will be using more and more mechanisms to address the issue of virtual money and the fight against money laundering. However, this is a brand new phenomenon, of course, and there are gaps in the current context.

I wonder if my colleague could elaborate on that. What does he think should be done in a future bill?

[English]

Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of great work my hon. colleague and I do, and I have a lot of respect for him. He does a lot of great work at the INDU committee, and I am happy to work with him.

There is a \$113-billion question for money laundering, and my colleague and I are on the same page when it comes to blockchain technologies. As I mentioned in my speech, we finished that report.

When it comes to blockchain, it is tremendous for Canada, because it is about a \$2-billion industry, with 16,000 jobs. With the

companies and the work being done here in Canada, Canada right now, in the meantime, is considered a world leader. From there, we need bills that tackle the regulation of those industries so we can become and continue to be a leader. We also need to tackle money laundering problems that exist with cryptocurrencies and blockchain itself.

The member is right that we need a separate bill that takes up the work we completed over eight or nine meetings at the industry committee on blockchain to ensure that cryptocurrencies and blockchain are used for good in Canada. Canada can be a world leader in this. We can take the examples that have been brought to committee and make sure that Canada benefits the most from them. I know that my colleague and I would be happy to work further on that together at the INDU committee as we continue it.

• (1950)

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, with regard to Bill C-42, if we were to talk to our constituents today about money laundering and ask them what it is, how it works and how to stop it, I am sure they would have fairly clear and strong opinions about it.

However, some would think that we are still living in the time of Al Capone and that money laundering is actually done through laundries. Times have changed, but I will come back to that. Everyone would agree that money laundering is unfair and unethical. It is unfair to honest workers, to those who start and run honest businesses and pay their taxes.

It is unfair to all those who see that their health care system is struggling for various reasons, but I will not get into that. It is unfair to all those who are wondering how many billions of dollars a year are not going into the government coffers in Canada because of money laundering and whether those billions of dollars could be used to improve the health care systems in Quebec and the other provinces. These people are right to wonder about those things. They are right in thinking that it is unfair for some people to fly below the radar and launder the proceeds of crime or even just money that was not declared. Everyone would also agree that the governments need to do more, be stricter and put in place laws to better control money laundering.

Bill C-42 is a step in the right direction. This bill amends the Canada Business Corporations Act while respecting what is already in place in Quebec and the Canadian provinces, while respecting the agreements already reached between Quebec and the Canadian provinces, which is certainly a good thing.

Government Orders

Bill C-42 also amends the Access to Information Act, the Income Tax Act, the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act, and the Budget Implementation Act, 2022, No. 1. A number of laws are being amended, but there is one that is not, specifically the Criminal Code. Perhaps we need to think about that, and I will come back to that.

As I was saying, when we talk about organized crime, people often think of Al Capone, outlaw biker gangs, street gangs and the various mafias that exist today. However, we forget that criminals can be found outside of the groups I just named. There are also white collar criminals who often fly under the radar. However, their sources of income are not necessarily any more legitimate.

As I said, some people may still think that laundering money requires a laundromat. The many ways of laundering money have been modernized, and it is important for our laws to be modernized as well. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since the days of Al Capone, but money laundering is as lucrative as ever. It may be more insidious, but it is no less lucrative for criminals. It is a different story for our society, however.

In the U.S. alone, an estimated \$300 billion per year is generated by illegal activities. This amounts to about \$1,000 per U.S. resident. In Canada, the same \$1,000 would add up to \$40 billion in illegal activities unaccounted for in Canada and absent from the treasury. This \$40 billion is only \$14 billion more than Quebec and the Canadian provinces are requesting in health transfers.

• (1955)

That is a huge amount of money. Let us imagine what we could do by regulating this.

Transparency and the obligation of transparency are excellent means of countering organized crime. This is what Bill C-42 proposes. If forced to name themselves or be included in a registry, people and businesses that want to launder money will perhaps think twice before trying to do it themselves or hiring investors whose purpose is to launder money. No self-respecting company wants to see its name and reputation dragged through the mud. It takes a long time to build up a reputation, but not long for it to be torn down.

However, the current law only mentions directors. Only directors can be named. Even if all the saints in heaven are sitting at the boardroom table, a company will not be cleaner or more legal if the investors and owners are demons from hell. The ideas will not be any better and the money will not be any less criminal. Naming the owners explicitly in the registry will remove the temptation for criminals to invest in businesses.

What is happening right now? We often learn about scandals from whistle-blowers. Unfortunately, they may be taken to court, have their lives threatened or, in some cases, even be imprisoned. We need to ensure that these whistle-blowers are protected because they are valuable to society.

Today's crime requires the collaboration of professionals who are very familiar with the flaws in the system. Those flaws allow them to help criminals to launder money. One of the flaws in Bill C-42 is that it does not cover the people who knowingly help criminals

launder their money or those who are forced to do so. That is an improvement we need to think about making in a future bill.

Right now, I also see that, if a company commits an offence, then it has to pay a fine of \$100,000. If they refuse or fail to add certain names to the registry, then they may be fined a maximum of \$100,000. For some companies \$100,000 may be a lot, while for others it may be very little. It seems like a rather arbitrary amount to me. I think that perhaps we should look at other ways of calculating the fine. Perhaps, instead, the fine should be based on profits declared. We should look into that. However, as I have already said, this is still a good start.

This bill, while not perfect, is an excellent step towards greater transparency and greater honesty, and it will allow Canada to be a role model rather than a dunce. I also want to say again that this is an excellent example of co-operation rather than intrusion into the jurisdictions of Quebec and the Canadian provinces, which is quite exceptional these days. However, it is a good idea.

The Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of this bill, despite some minor flaws that can be corrected over time.

• (2000)

[English]

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech that the member from the Bloc made. However, I would like the record to show how interesting this is in the light of the negotiations that go on to create orders and speaking lists and whatnot. That was meant to be an NDP speech, in the midst of what I thought was the confidence and supply agreement the NDP has with the Liberals. I did not think the NDP members were big fans of bringing in what is known as “scab labour”.

I am concerned that there are certainly some parties in this place that do not seem to be taking this seriously. The Bloc Québécois members obviously want to take those spots, as do Conservatives. They want to take spots to speak about the fact that Canada has become a haven for money laundering. I think it is important that the record does show that the NDP members are not taking advantage of the spots that were allotted to them.

Specifically, my question to the member from the Bloc Québécois is this. Canada has become known around the world as a haven for money laundering. I understand that in money laundering circles, it has been coined as “snow washing”, and it represents more than \$100 billion a year in economic activity. I am wondering if the member believes that this bill goes far enough. Is there more that needs to be done beyond what is contained in Bill C-42?

I know that some things were discussed in committee, but certainly there are a whole host more in addition to those. Is there more action that needs to be taken to combat money laundering in our nation?

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[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, first, if I understand correctly, we all agree on passing Bill C-42. We have taken our speaking time to say that we agree but there are some flaws we needed to think about. The Conservatives are doing the same thing. If the Liberals or the NDP do not take their speaking time, that is on them.

Every party could have said that they agree the bill is not perfect, but it is a good step and we are ready to pass it quickly. That could have been a possibility. It is up to the parties, and even though I do not necessarily agree, I will respect it.

As far as Canada's reputation is concerned, it is time to do something. This first step is better than nothing. If we need to introduce another bill to make improvements, then that is what we will do, but the first step is always the most important.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in regard to Bill C-42, we were approached by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, or CFIB, which asked us to determine how we could help businesses, because one of the challenges is all the red tape that comes with this.

We definitely agree that there should be more transparency, but at the same time we must ensure that this burden is not shouldered by all businesses, which are already struggling to survive because of all the paperwork. How can we strike a balance in this case? How can we help small and medium-sized businesses with Bill C-42?

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, there is already a law affectionately called the Red Tape Reduction Act. It should be enforced intelligently; that would help businesses. According to this act, if one page is added to a form, one should be removed elsewhere. That is the problem: It has to be removed elsewhere. It may not necessarily be in the same department and for the same reason. We have to give some serious thought to our obsession with forms. We must simplify forms and ensure that they are truly important and relevant to the information we seek.

[English]

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

It seems as though we were supposed to be debating Bill C-18, which is legislation that deals with online news. It is interesting that, in this House, Liberals have accused Conservatives of playing partisan games, then half an hour before the debate on that bill begins they tell us we will be debating Bill C-42, so clearly these games are going both ways, but they probably do not want to admit that.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge the life of Ms. Kathleen Beauchamp from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. She was my grade 5 teacher who later went on to become the principal at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Elementary School where I went to school. I ran into her a couple of years ago as I was getting into politics and I remember she gave me a really big hug. It was nice to see somebody with so much life, exuberance and vitality. She was volunteering into her nineties. I found out about her passing recently and I want to recognize her life because it was a life well lived.

She was a model for the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. May perpetual light shine upon her and may she rest in peace.

I also want to recognize the life of Jerrid Larkin, the brother of a constituent and friend Sean Larkin. May perpetual light shine upon him and may he rest in peace.

Today, we are debating Bill C-42, an act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts. It is always nice to get up to learn about areas that might not be one's area of expertise. Despite being a lawyer and having some corporate law background, the Canada Business Corporations Act is far from being my area of expertise. However, I know a bit about some of the areas, particularly when we talk about money laundering and how that has impacted corporate crime and the Canadian economy.

I recall being a young criminology student, about 20 years old, and having a professor who told us to put down the sports section and pick up the business section. It was then I realized that corporate crime costs society much more than street-level crime. The problem with corporate crime is we do not always see it. It happens through things like price fixing and illegal influencing. We do not always see these types of things and sometimes, because it almost always happens behind closed doors, it is really hard to detect.

As a former prosecutor I can say that part of what the police authorities have to do is connect the dots and sometimes build what is called a circumstantial case, which is when they take facts from here and there and paint a picture. Each piece of evidence is like a piece of the puzzle. This is obviously an important aspect when we talk about a registry under the Canada Business Corporations Act. It is something law enforcement is asking for and really does need.

Again, as has been said repeatedly in this House, this bill is required, but it could have gone further. I was speaking with our shadow minister, the member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, and I believe he spoke about this in the House this morning. He said that there were witnesses at committee and within minutes of hearing from them the committee went into a clause-by-clause analysis. In other words, the testimony of those witnesses who had information to give that was directly germane to the bill at hand was not fully incorporated into this legislation, because the government seems to have been in a rush to deal with this.

I believe four speakers were put up at report stage and then the government moved closure. It is a government that has repeatedly moved closure to stymie debate by saying it needs to get legislation through. I understand that there is a legislative objective, everybody understands that, but it should not push legislation through this way; rather, it should be done co-operatively.

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• (2005)

This is a government, as I understand it, that said it would not use closure and time allocation. I am sure it was highly critical of Stephen Harper when he did it. We now see the Liberals and the party that is supposed to be the conscience of Parliament, the NDP, backing them up at every step of the way. I cannot remember a bill, controversial or not, for which we have not seen some sort of time allocation or closure invoked by the Liberals; their coalition partners, the NDP, just go along with it. What happened to being the conscience of Parliament and to hearing debate?

Yes, the government wants things to go through quickly. Here we are at the end of June. It is not Canadians' problem. It is not everybody in the House's problem that the government did not manage its time effectively and has not been conciliatory in terms of addressing things that would be of mutual interest. The Liberals say they want to work together. I am just not seeing that when we see these types of actions.

I will move on to some of the elements of this bill and the necessity for it. For me, as a British Columbian, the necessity comes when I review the Cullen commission. The Cullen commission was authored by Austin Cullen, from British Columbia; I believe he was associate chief justice at the time. He found that money laundering had risen to an unacceptable level in British Columbia. The province and law enforcement not only were not keeping up with it, but enforcement and shining a light on these types of issues had also become secondary.

This is a timely issue to be dealing with. The Cullen commission report, I believe, came out in the past couple of years. However, we have to remember that we should not be rushing these types of things in order to simply get them through, when more things could be done.

One thing that stood out to me was that the threshold for share ownership for being listed in the registry is at 25%. That is actually a high threshold. When we look at other corporate legislation, if memory serves me from when I was studying, there is a threshold of 10%. When somebody owns 10% of shares, that is enough to trigger a warning system.

Therefore, 25% of shares seems inordinately high. I would suggest that we perhaps move back to 10% of shares. As I understand it, the RCMP was supportive of this. Its view is that 10% would get more names into this registry, and the more names, the better. With more names on the registry, more dots can be connected for the police. Moreover, the police will have more tools to combat money laundering.

Before I go any further, I just want to highlight a couple more things from the Cullen commission, because I think they are really important to this discussion. There are unexplained wealth orders. I believe they would probably be an issue for the provinces, but while we are talking about commercial crime and Canada as a whole being a safe haven for money laundering, the provinces should really explore this issue in conjunction with the federal government as we enact this legislation. They could be used in conjunction with civil forfeiture and things of that nature.

The Cullen commission made a number of recommendations and really came up with things that the government should be doing. It looked at how money laundering was occurring in British Columbia. For instance, it was occurring by laundering money through casinos; the commission looked at how this impacted the real estate market.

Before I end, I want to recognize a news anchor, Bill O'Donovan, who received the RTDNA career excellence award in broadcasting. I am the godfather to his granddaughter. Bill is a great human being and a great broadcaster. Congratulations to him.

• (2010)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for his thoughtfulness, particularly when he mentioned the people of his community, including his teacher, in those circumstances.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the whole notion of fighting fraud. At the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, I asked Mr. Beaudoin from the RCMP whether his organization had enough resources to combat fraud. Mr. Beaudoin talked about the fact that fraud has evolved, that it is quite broad, that it has changed, particularly in the past five to 10 years, and that cybercrime to obtain money fraudulently has really changed the game. Obviously, as he said, there is no doubt that they could do more if they had more resources.

Should we give the RCMP more resources, specifically to do more to combat fraud and to go out into the field where they have the means to recover some money?

• (2015)

[*English*]

Mr. Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, I understand where the member is coming from. I also understand where the RCMP is coming from; they are expected to do more with less, each and every day. When it comes to fraud, there are limited resources. We are finding there are limited resources for the RCMP, period. The Liberal government is running a \$60-billion deficit, yet when it comes to the enforcement of crime, whether it be in fraud, as my colleague referred to; in things like simply proving a firearm is a firearm; or in the area I used to prosecute in mostly, Internet offences against children, it takes 12 months to 18 months to analyze a hard drive. The RCMP needs more resources.

It is puzzling to me how the government could rack up \$60 billion in deficit and still have a national police force that does not have the resources to deal with these extremely salient issues of the day. To me, that is unacceptable; I agree with my colleague. These things, and commercial crime, fraud and money laundering, impact each and every one of us. We do not always see the impact of them, but they do impact us.

I would like to see the government focus its spending and divert some of the funds that, in my view, are being recklessly spent, to matters of significance like the one the member raised.

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Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, the invasion against Ukraine made it obvious, now more than ever, how important it is to place sanctions against those people who are closely connected to Putin, for example.

Could the member explain how sanctions enforcement could be improved with the public beneficial ownership registry in place?

Mr. Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, this is not something I turned my mind to when I was preparing this speech, so I appreciate the fact that the member raised it.

This is another piece of the puzzle. When we talk about connecting the dots for proving an offence, it would seem that we would have to connect dots in order to prove who owns what when it comes to sanctions. Perhaps that would be another by-product of this legislation. There is an illegal invasion of Ukraine, and there are also other people around the world who have committed all sorts of atrocities, and those people should not be using Canada as a safe haven for their money. I fully support using this registry and every tool available to find their assets and seize them.

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are here in closure again with the Liberal government. Does the member opposite agree that more time to study this bill at committee would have helped strengthen it? I am looking at letters from stakeholders. They were pleading for more time. I wonder if the member could answer that and speak to our being in closure again.

Mr. Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, the member raises an excellent point. Why are we rushing this through? This is important legislation. Everybody around here says that this is important legislation, and when legislation is important, so is debate. We should not be settling for an okay bill or a good bill; we should be pursuing excellence for the people of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, and I want to take a moment congratulate all of the young folks. In fact, everyone is taking the opportunity to thank everyone else because of the short time we have left in the House of Commons. I would like to take a minute to thank and congratulate all of the young people who found a summer job in all of the ridings, mine in particular. These young people are contributing to the regional economy of our communities and embracing work. As I see it, work is an extremely important value to instill in young people to help them rise to the challenges of the future and gain experience through summer employment.

I am very pleased to rise in the House this evening to speak to Bill C-42, an act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts. This bill is one phase of the government's plan to create a national registry of individuals with significant control over corporations in Canada pursuant to the Canada Business Corporations Act, or CBCA. Of course, we are talking about federally regulated companies.

The purpose of this bill is to require Corporations Canada to make public some of the information collected under the 2022 amendments to the CBCA. The bill also introduces whistle-blower protections, introduces exemptions for certain individuals, adds new offences and gives Corporations Canada additional powers

with respect to inquiries, data validation and information sharing. For one thing, these powers allow Corporations Canada to share information with provincial authorities. We know that Quebec already has a registry. Since I am an entrepreneur myself, my name is on this registry, as are the names of my company's shareholders. I think it is important for the public to have access to this information.

According to what the government is saying, this bill basically seeks to protect Canadians from money laundering and terrorist financing, deter tax evasion and tax avoidance, and make sure Canada is an attractive place to conduct business. I completely agree up to that point. It is a worthwhile initiative. Money laundering and terrorist financing do a lot of harm.

Unfortunately, Canada has a poor record when it comes to fighting these modern scourges. Canada is known as an easy target for criminal groups and as an epicentre of money laundering and tax evasion. According to a 2020 investigative report published by Criminal Intelligence Service Canada on money laundering and fraud in Canada, the estimated extent of money laundered in Canada is between \$45 billion and \$113 billion. That is a huge amount of money, and it is good that the government is doing something about that.

The Conservative Party has agreed to vote in favour of Bill C-42, but not because it is perfect, far from it. The review process in committee was rushed. There were only two meetings. I am a member of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, and I would say that everything happened quick as a flash, leaving members and stakeholders little time to develop and debate amendments to improve this bill. We also proposed amendments that were unfortunately rejected, and that is what I want to focus on.

The first amendment we proposed that was rejected had to do with share acquisition thresholds. We proposed: “(a) any number of shares that carry 10% or more of the voting rights attached to all of the corporation's outstanding voting shares; or (b) any number of shares that is equal to 10% or more of all of the corporation's outstanding shares measured by fair market value.”

This amendment would have added a new clause to the bill, amending the parts of the CBCA that define significant control to lower the threshold from 25% to 10%. We know that there are several categories of shares in a business. In this case, we are talking about voting shares, those with decision-making authority.

James Cohen, the executive director of Transparency International, made the following comment regarding our proposal, and I quote:

I don't think...lowering the threshold from 25% to 10% and a risk-based approach are mutually exclusive. I think they actually go hand in hand. I would note that the 25% isn't so much a standard as it was an initial global recommendation that everyone just kind of grabbed on to. There is room to go down to 10% and provide more information for the RCMP.

The amendment that we proposed would have enabled the RCMP to cast a much wider net in terms of tax avoidance in particular, and also money laundering.

● (2020)

We also moved an amendment to make it easier for law enforcement to access information during investigations. This amendment would have added specific wording to the bill to ensure that law enforcement and other investigative bodies such as the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, or FINTRAC, could access information from the director rather than having to approach companies individually. It would also have removed the reference to prescribed circumstances with regard to exceptions, ensuring that only minors are automatically exempt from having their information disclosed and that everyone else must apply for an exemption to prove that it is necessary. Once again, this amendment was rejected. This bill could have been improved, but the NDP-Liberal coalition said no.

Not only were our amendments rejected, but, as I said earlier, the bill was rushed, to put it mildly, through the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, on which I sit. In fact, we had just one meeting to hear from departmental officials, and we heard from justice experts on the same day that the clause-by-clause process took place.

Briefs from interested organizations such as the anti-money laundering campaign and the Canadian Bar Association were received the day after amendments were submitted. There were several amendments, and several of these briefs were received after the presentation of certain amendments. It is strange because we received some very interesting briefs from law firms, which had some significant reservations about this bill.

It is truly unfortunate, but that is how this government operates. It waits to take action and then, at the last minute, it acts hastily and imposes time allocation, which is what we have been experiencing for practically two months in the House of Commons. Time allocation is introduced time and time again. I will take this opportunity to point out that the NDP has now adopted almost 55 time allocation motions, which it never, or almost never, did before. This demonstrates the extent of the government's hold over that political party.

As I was saying, by colluding with the NDP, the government is getting its way with obviously shoddy results. Canadians expect the federal government to combat money laundering and the proceeds of crime in a way that aligns with our economic and security partners around the world. Canada must shed its reputation as a haven for dirty money. A future Conservative government will make it happen.

In 2021, the Conservative Party committed to establishing a federal registry of beneficial owners for residential properties and implementing comprehensive changes to the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act to give FIN-

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TRAC, law enforcement and prosecutors the tools they need to identify, arrest and prosecute money launderers and, ultimately, stop illicit funds from making their way into the real estate market. This is the kind of policy our government will bring in to really tackle the problem of money laundering and tax evasion. Particularly in the Vancouver area where my colleague lives, absolutely huge sums of money are being invested by outside entities that launder money directly through real estate acquisitions.

The provincial and federal registries must be harmonized. In Canada, about 15% of corporations are in federal registries, while 85% are in provincial registries. The two types of registries therefore need to be harmonized so that the provinces and the federal government can work together. As I was saying, Quebec has a great registry that works very well, but it was recently amended. The federal registry could have been even better had the time been taken to study it.

● (2025)

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup for his work. I was thinking back to the question that he asked me earlier. The key word that I missed was interoperability. It is important to have laws that are interoperable, so I would like to try again by putting it in a comment and asking him the following question.

How important is it that our laws remain interoperable?

Mr. Bernard Généreux: Mr. Speaker, by interoperability we understand the connections and interplay between the provincial laws and the federal law that enable them to work together. It is imperative and fundamental that these laws can work together so that the work done upstream or downstream—whether at the federal or provincial level—can be constructive and effective, particularly against money laundering.

I think my colleague is right, and I thank him for that. I must say publicly that my colleague is a very fine individual who does great work on the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology and who always makes an effort. As he said earlier, we do not always agree. However, in general, I think his arguments are geared towards the common good of Quebec and Canadian society as a whole. That is what we are arguing for as well. To answer his question, I think it goes without saying. Everyone should realize that this is really something that should be interoperable.

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● (2030)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on this same point, I would say that this interoperability is really important. The provinces that already have a public registry have set the threshold at 25%. The member mentioned 10% before, but, for the bill to be compatible with the laws of the provinces that already have a public registry, it seems to me it would be important to start with a 25% threshold and to then have some conversations with the provinces, instead of legislating something in the House that is incompatible with the provincial registries.

How can we address this and make sure we create laws that allow the federal government to have an important tool it can use to go after the Russians who are hiding their assets in Canada?

Mr. Bernard Génèreux: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his excellent question.

To move society forward, we must move bills forward, be it at the federal or provincial level. I realize that the registries are all harmonized at 25%. We are fully aware of that, but, in moving amendments like the one meant to lower the ownership threshold to 10%, we have made people think, not only in the House, but also at the provincial level.

In doing so, we could perhaps improve the registries to ensure that all the information could be collected more effectively, both at the provincial and federal levels, so as to eliminate, once and for all, money laundering, tax evasion, and related crimes.

The tighter the measures across Canada, the greater the chance of limiting the damage. I am an entrepreneur and I regularly consult the Quebec registry. I will be consulting it again soon, because my daughter will be taking over for my associate in my company. I will be required to have a notary make the change at the IGIF, the institute that records all the information in a registry. We will record my company's new shareholder, my daughter. Actually, it will just be my daughter and me. That is very important. We each hold 50% of the companies' shares, but there could have been several shareholders, and the threshold could have been 10% instead of 25%.

In our case, it does not matter, because we are not fraudsters. I remember that my colleague said that there are companies that own multiple companies. It becomes a sort of puzzle. It would have been more obvious to have a 10% threshold rather than a 25% threshold.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1.

[*Translation*]

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.

● (2035)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote, please.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 20 at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. I believe that you have received the proper advance notice and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at midnight so we can begin Adjournment Proceedings.

The Speaker: I have received notice from all recognized parties that they are in agreement on this request.

[*Translation*]

Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am standing today representing my constituents and the constituents of Alberta. I want to tell a bit of a story. In May 2020, amid COVID-19 shutdowns, on the Friday afternoon before the May long weekend, Alberta's United Conservative government quietly revealed that it was rescinding Alberta's coal policy that had protected the Rocky Mountains and the eastern slopes from exploration and mining since 1976.

Albertans had no insight into this. They had no inkling that this change was going to happen, but the mining companies absolutely did. Within days, on 240,000 hectares of environmentally sensitive land on the eastern slopes, areas that included the headwaters of Alberta's major watershed serving Edmonton, Calgary and southern Alberta, thousands of trees were bulldozed and hundreds of kilometres of temporary roads were carved through the landscape by coal-mining companies. The outcry from Albertans and other Canadians was swift. It was overwhelming.

Through various petitions and forms, hundreds of thousands of Canadians turned to the federal government for help. They asked that the government enforce federal laws, including the species at risk legislation and the Canada Water Act, and consult with first nations and other indigenous groups in keeping with the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is something that the provincial Conservative government had very clearly failed to do.

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I stood in this House and called on the government to close a loophole in the legislation. In fact, I brought a private member's bill forward to do that. The loophole was that in the past any mine that was under 5,000 tonnes per day did not trigger the Impact Assessment Act. What we were finding was that mining companies were building two mines side by side that were 4,950 tonnes or 4,925 tonnes to get under that 5,000 tonnes per day loophole.

Therefore, I brought my private member's bill to the minister of the environment at the time, the now Minister of Natural Resources, and he agreed with me and he agreed in policy to change that loophole. It was the best day of my life as a parliamentarian because my legislation was put into policy, so we were delighted. It meant that all coal mines in the Rocky Mountains were going to trigger an environmental impact assessment. I am pleased to say that meant that some of the mines that were going to be most destructive in southern Alberta were shut down and the ones that were most destructive in the eastern slopes were shut down and did not go ahead. The investors pulled out, the mining companies pulled out and our water and our land was protected in Alberta.

However, after that we got a new minister and the new minister has now rubber-stamped a coal mine that is going into the Grande Cache mountains. The minister has completely discarded the policy that his predecessor put in place. Either he is not paying attention or he does not care, and if that is the case it is a betrayal. Either the minister thinks that this mine does not have to be under the threshold of 5,000 tonnes or he thinks that selenium is not a risk.

What I would like to know from the government is, which is it? Which reason is it that the government is betraying Albertans and not triggering an environmental impact assessment on a coal mine in the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains?

• (2040)

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the question by the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona regarding the impact assessment process and coal mining.

I want to assure the member that the government will continue to lead the global effort to phase out coal-powered electricity and the mining of thermal coal, and to ban thermal coal exports from and through Canada as swiftly as possible, and no later than 2030.

In June 2021, the government issued its policy statement on the new thermal coal mining or expansion projects, stating that these projects are likely to cause unacceptable environmental effects within federal jurisdiction and are not aligned with Canada's domestic and international climate change commitments. Canada is taking decisive action to address climate change, and we will consider the policy statement in deciding whether to designate any new thermal coal mines or expansions under the Impact Assessment Act.

With respect to metallurgical coal mines, we will consider designating any new mines or expansions that have the potential to release selenium into the environment. Canada has a rigorous federal impact assessment process that considers the positive and negative environmental, economic, social and health impacts of mining projects, among others. The type of projects subject to this process

are identified in the regulations known as the project list under the Impact Assessment Act.

Summit Coal Inc.'s proposed summit mine 14 project near Grand Cache is a metallurgical coal mine, not a thermal coal mine, and is well below the threshold identified in the project list that would automatically trigger a federal assessment process.

In August 2022, a number of first nations wrote the Minister of Environment and Climate Change about the proposed summit mine 14 project, and requested we consider designating it for assessment. To support our consideration of this request, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada provided the minister advice about the project informed by science, indigenous and community knowledge, input from the proponent, and consultation with Alberta, other jurisdictions and potentially affected indigenous groups.

On November 14, 2022, the minister decided, after carefully considering the scientific analysis and advice from the agency, to not designate the project. His response and the analysis that the agency provided him are publicly available on the Canadian impact assessment registry in support of transparency and accountability.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I have three additional questions from that response.

One is this: Does the minister not understand the damage coal mining does to the mountains, whether it is metallurgical or thermal? The minister before the current Minister of Environment and Climate Change promised they would assess every single coal mine.

We also know that there is no way of him knowing what the selenium outcomes are going to be. We do not have that information because we have not tested and we have not looked at it yet. Selenium poisoning is what is going to kill the water, kill the fish and kill the land.

Does the minister not understand how selenium poisoning works, and will he not listen to the indigenous groups in the community that have asked for this impact assessment and have asked him to close this loophole? He has the ability to do this. I beg of the minister to close this mine down and bring in an impact assessment, as was promised, now.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to preventing and managing pollution from industrial sectors. Effluent from coal mines in Canada can be a source of pollution that harms aquatic life, specifically fish and fish habitat.

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Environment and Climate Change Canada is developing coal mining effluent regulations under the Fisheries Act. These regulations would reduce the risks to fish and fish habitat by limiting levels of harmful substances in coal mining effluent. Once in place, they will apply to the 28 existing coal mines in Canada and to all future coal mine expansions and new coal mine projects.

• (2045)

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the pandemic there were folks who were in quite desperate financial situations.

One group was foster kids graduating out of care in the spring of 2020. There were no jobs available. They were told by the provincial government that they could not access social assistance unless they applied for CERB. The provincial government knew very well that it was a no-fail application. That is how those kids, at the time, got money to support themselves, as they were striking out on their own at the age of 18.

Now, the government is calling in all of those debts, and many of those Canadians are still in a desperate financial situation. The government said it was going to take a compassionate approach, but recent media coverage has said it just cancelled the \$5- and \$10-a-month payments, so people cannot access that anymore. The government is clawing back benefits.

If the government is really committed to a compassionate approach, at the very least it should know how many CERB debtors fall below the low income cut-off. Has it done the analysis, and if so, what is the number?

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Elmwood—Transcona for his question and his ongoing advocacy on behalf of his constituents.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we quickly introduced the Canada emergency response benefit, or CERB, and ended up helping more than eight million Canadians. When it came to delivering the benefit, we knew that speed was of the essence. We knew that we needed to get money into the hands of Canadians quickly so that they could feed their families and pay their bills.

We were clear from the onset that eligibility would be verified at the back end, once tax data became available. This approach kept workers attached to their jobs and positioned our economy to come roaring back. Since day one, we have treated all cases individually and fairly to ensure that Canadians were not placed in financial hardship. We have also been committed to responsible financial stewardship. That is why we developed a comprehensive four-year plan to support post-payment verification activities on the CERB.

By late 2021, we estimated that about 1.8 million people had an outstanding amount, owing between \$500 and \$2,000 as a result of CERB advanced payments. That is when we began to notify people who had an obligation to repay. When we started the post-payment verification process in January of last year, we asked people who had received the benefit to assess their own eligibility and voluntarily repay what they owed, and many people did just that. To date, ESDC has sent out 1.8 million overpayment notices of CERB ad-

vance payment reconciliation for an amount of \$3.1 billion as of June 16, 2023, and \$2.17 billion has already been repaid.

While we recover overpayments, we are doing everything we can to avoid causing undue hardship to Canadians. We are continuing to take an empathetic, people-first approach. When a person facing repayment tells the CRA that they are struggling financially, the agency will assess the person's ability to pay, based on their entire situation, and that includes family size, current income and assets. In addition, we are not imposing penalties or interest on overpayments. We treated Canadians with compassion and understanding when we created these benefits and we are continuing to do that now.

Once again, I thank the member for Elmwood—Transcona for his ongoing advocacy on behalf of his constituents.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, a compassionate government would proactively assess the financial situation of people it was trying to collect a debt from and then have that assessment inform the debt collection strategy. That is not what this government is doing, and it has recently cancelled a lot of the measures that it claimed were part of its so-called compassionate approach.

I have been asking for almost two years now how many people who owe CERB debt fall under the low-income cut-off, and I think it is pathetic from a government that wants to claim it is compassionate that it still does not have an answer to that question.

One more time: Of the people who owe CERB debt, how many of those folks have an income that falls below the low-income cut-off?

• (2050)

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Speaker, we were clear from the onset that we would recover CERB overpayments without any interest or penalties. To prevent undue hardship, flexible repayment options are available. People can establish repayment schedules based on their financial situation and their ability to pay.

We understand that some Canadians may still be struggling to make ends meet, and they will be treated with compassion and understanding. We will continue to take a responsible approach to ensure a fair process.

I thank the member opposite for his advocacy.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be able to stand today and address a question I originally raised on April 17. It is based on a letter that came from the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, where 60 plus prominent Canadians who are military leaders, former ministers of defence and other parliamentarians from both sides of the aisle, both Conservative and Liberal, as well as a former chief justice, Beverley McLachlin, all wrote a letter addressed to the Prime Minister, which was published as an open letter. It says, “There is no more important responsibility for the federal government than protecting Canadians against all threats—foreign and domestic”. Then it goes on to say, “Now is the time to fully discharge the commitments we have made to our allies and partners in sharing the burden of collective security, commitments which are essential to safeguard our peace, prosperity and way of life [for all Canadians]”.

In that quote, they are referring to the commitment we made to NATO, at the Wales Summit in 2014, that we would spend our 2% within 10 years. That was nine years ago. We know the NATO summit in Vilnius is coming up this July. Of course, there is going to be extra pressure on the Government of Canada, under the Prime Minister, to come up with that 2%. We know from the Pentagon leaks that happened just recently that the Prime Minister said there is no way Canada is ever going to reach that 2% commitment.

Our other collective security agreement that is important to us is NORAD and NORAD modernization. We know the Americans are concerned about that. The letter from the Conference of Defence Associations Institute further reads, “Years of restraint, cost cutting, downsizing and deferred investments, have meant that Canada’s defence capabilities have atrophied.” They have atrophied so badly under the Liberals that, today, we are 10,000 troops short of where we should be to be able to fulfill the commitments we have here domestically, and for what we are able to do in NATO, especially the missions we have undertaken as the leadership in the enhanced forward position in setting up a battalion in Latvia and leading that battalion. We are slow in getting our numbers up to over 750 troops.

We know we were not able to participate in the recent military air force exercises that 26 nations of NATO participated in. Canada was a no-show because we do not have the equipment or the personnel to fly the planes we have today; we are short on pilots.

We know that we are short on military procurement, although there have been some announcements which have recently come from the government, and we are going ahead with the Canadian surface combatants that were originally ordered by the former Conservative government. We know that the F-35s are finally being bought. The Prime Minister said, in 2015, that he would never buy the F-35s, but finally, we are purchasing them. However, we do not necessarily have the right people doing the procurement; according to the Conference of Defence Associations Institute and other sources, we know we are short 4,200 military procurement experts within the Department of National Defence, as well as at PSPC Canada.

We see this happening. We are hearing stories coming from the front in Latvia, where our troops are actually having to go out and

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buy their own helmets, hearing protection, radio communications equipment and flak jackets because the kits they are getting from the Canadian Armed Forces under the Liberals are inadequate. In a letter that was recently leaked, one commander wrote to Ottawa saying that it is embarrassing, as they have seen the Danes walking around in new Canadian equipment that was purchased from Canadian companies, the very equipment that our troops should be using and wearing. Unfortunately, the government has not been able to carry off those procurements, leaving our troops vulnerable and embarrassed. Of course, we also know that our troops in Poland were not provided with any meal vouchers, and they are out of pocket for thousands of dollars that the government has not been able to reimburse them for. That is shameful.

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his empathetic agreement that our government has no greater responsibility than to keep Canadians safe. If there is one thing that everyone here can agree on, it is that the threats we face today are many, complex and rapidly evolving. Our military must evolve with them.

That is why we have been working to ensure that our brave people in uniform have what they need to defend this country and its citizens, now and into the future. Since launching Canada’s defence policy of “Strong, Secure, Engaged” in 2017, we have committed to invest significantly in our people and in the equipment, infrastructure and programs that set them up for success.

Our defence policy commits to increasing Canada’s defence spending by 70%. Through SSE, our military has been able to count on sustained and reliable investments to meet evolving security challenges, with a funding model that offers the flexibility to adapt to changing situations.

In January we announced that Canada is acquiring a fleet of 88 F-35 fighter jets with the United States government, and Lockheed Martin with Pratt & Whitney. These state-of-the-art jets will ensure our air force’s ability to protect Canada from a broad range of threats for decades to come.

In March, the Prime Minister also announced a \$7.3-billion investment to upgrade and build new infrastructure that would house this fleet of F-35 fighter jets.

This is just one part of a broader, nearly \$40-billion plan to modernize Canada’s NORAD capabilities, in close collaboration with our partners in the United States.

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At sea, we continue to work on delivering a new fleet of 15 Canadian surface combatants for our navy. Three Arctic and off-shore patrol ships have been delivered to the navy, with three more in production. On land, we are equipping the Canadian army with a new and modern fleet of 360 armoured combat support vehicles. These will serve as ambulances, mobile repair and vehicle recovery vehicles, as well as engineer support vehicles and command posts for both domestic and international operations.

We will continue to move quickly because the threats we face continue to evolve rapidly. No matter the domain and no matter the challenge, we are committed to ensuring our armed forces have the modern equipment they need to protect Canada's interests, as well as global peace and security.

• (2055)

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, just to go on with the letter from CDAI, they said:

Russia's brutal war...in Ukraine...as well as the continuing expansion of the military arsenals of authoritarian regimes...should have prompted a re-assessment of our defence posture.

The reality is that well-connected consultants, big bankers and wealthy bondholders get more from the Liberal government than our troops. We know that the deficit that is going to the big bankers is over \$40 billion. We know that McKinsey and other Liberal-connected consultants are getting billions of dollars every year, while our troops do without.

In this fiscal year that just ended in March 2023, we had \$2.5 billion of lapsed military spending that will never be available again. That has dropped our GDP ratio, which was supposed to be at 1.33%, down to 1.29%. The difference between what was supposed

to be spent on military expenditures and where we are at relative to the 2% of GDP shows that we are actually \$20 billion short.

That is unacceptable. People cannot buy house insurance when their home is—

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Speaker, of course we are not just investing in equipment; we are also investing in our people.

Everyone in uniform deserves a workplace where they feel protected, respected and empowered. That is why we are taking concrete steps across the defence team to eliminate unacceptable behaviours like sexual misconduct, harassment and discrimination.

In her first biannual report, which was released last month, external monitor Madame Jocelyne Therrien found:

A significant level of tangible activity within National Defence as it responds to the hundreds of recommendations from external reviews on sexual misconduct in CAF ranks.

We are also investing in our women and men in uniform. Our government has raised military pay and benefits and is spending over \$140 million on improving the CAF health care system. We have increased funding for military family resource centres and added mental health and counselling supports for military families.

Canada's defence policy makes it clear that—

The 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 8:59 p.m.)

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