



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

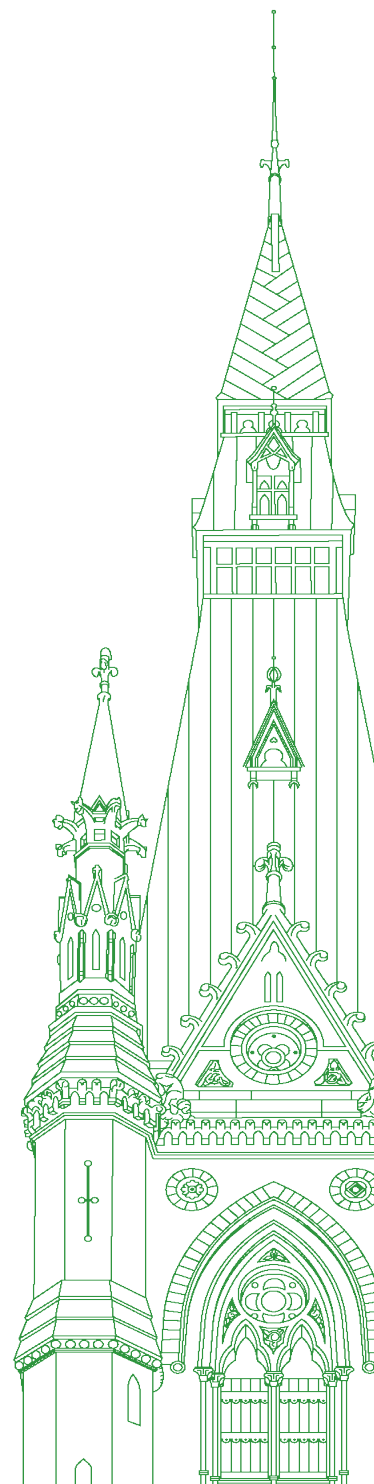
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

# House of Commons Debates

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Monday, November 27, 2023

Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, November 27, 2023

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1105)  
[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP)** moved that Bill C-273, an act to amend the Criminal Code (Corinne's Quest and the protection of children), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off by acknowledging that Parliament is built on the unceded Anishinabe Algonquin territory. The peoples of the Anishinabe Algonquin nation have lived on this territory for a millennia. Their culture and presence have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land, and we honour the people's land of the Anishinabe Algonquin nation.

That land acknowledgement is part of what we are attempting to do as a country in the reconciliation process of moving to put in place calls to action to ensure that we achieve lasting and meaningful reconciliation with first nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. We know about the horrific conditions in the residential schools. We know about the cultural genocide that killed thousands of children. Therefore, we know that as a nation we must respond.

I note that eight years after the tabling of the landmark truth and reconciliation report, we have still to implement many of the calls to action. That is what is before us today, call to action 6 on education, as a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which reads as follows, "We call upon the Government of Canada to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada."

Section 43 is what permits physical punishment of children. It has yet to be implemented, which is fundamentally a repudiation of our attempts as a country to achieve that reconciliation. I believe that the adoption of this bill will take that meaningful step with respect to call to action 6 and its implementation, and it should be supported by all members of Parliament.

I reference that former senator Murray Sinclair believes that the death count that came from those residential schools could be five to 10 times higher than what was submitted and recorded as the

number of children who died at the schools. The official figure is 4,100, but he believes it could be much higher.

I quote from the Toronto Star. It states:

When the churches and the government began the IRS system, the goal was to "kill the Indian in the child." They aimed to assimilate these children into the new "dominant society...to suppress the Indigenous Peoples and begin appropriating the land and resources of this vast land. At the same time, the people suffered the loss of their most precious resource – their children.

It goes on to say, "To 'kill the Indian in the child'" meant that it was "stolen from the children, literally cutting them off from everything they knew and should have learned. Corporal punishment is a polite 'label' for the atrocities that were done to these children."

Former national indigenous bishop Mark MacDonald of the Anglican Church of Canada has said this about section 43 of the Criminal Code, and the churches have responded, in their own drive for reconciliation, in supporting the idea that we would repeal section 43 once and for all and ban the legal physical punishment of people. He said:

Section 43 of the Criminal Code is a living and dangerous remnant of the system that caused such damage to Indigenous Peoples...Its repeal not only addresses the damage of the past, it safeguards the future of Indigenous children by removing the justification for the use of force in the discipline of children.

I note that on the website today, the Government of Canada, in its follow up to the 94 calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it says with respect to call to action 6:

Next steps

The Government of Canada continues to explore how best to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 6 to repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code.

The step forward is obvious; it is voting yes on Bill C-273. It is banning the use of physical punishment against children. It is taking that important step as a nation, and Parliament to do that in the next few weeks. In the vote that we will have in the New Year, all members of Parliament could join together to take that important step on reconciliation by voting yes to Bill C-273 to remove section 43, which permits the legalized use of force, the legalized use of physical punishment against children.

*Private Members' Business*

The bill is entitled, “Corinne’s Quest and the protection of children” because of Corinne Robertshaw. She passed away in 2013. As a lawyer working for the federal government, she was concerned about the reports of child injuries and deaths caused by parents and caregivers. She stated that the cause was physical punishment of children, and she was determined to end this practice. She founded Corinne’s Quest.

Kathy and John Lynn from New Westminster, have been involved since the very beginning. Dawn Black, former member of Parliament of the House, is involved as well. Corinne’s Quest has a network across the country.

The support in my community also comes from the Spirit of the Children Society. Ruth Weller, executive director wrote the following:

Good parenting begins by treating children with dignity and respect. In the past, Indigenous children were not given this right. Through the Residential Schools, a culture of pain and hurt was inflicted upon too many innocent children. These children were not given dignity nor respect. Instead, they were treated as property, forced to be bent to the will of the church and Government. Today, the Canadian Government has learned that this was wrong. Now, we can fix another wrong, by eliminating the pain-based behavior of child rearing. This is why we strongly support Bill C-273, as this is a Bill to meet the fundamental human needs to belong.

It is not just local organizations in my community that are calling on Parliament to adopt this bill. The joint statement on physical punishment of children and youth, which predates the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, was adopted 20 years ago, and continues to add signatories today.

Just some of the organizations that are calling on all members of Parliament to repeal section 43, just some of the organizations that are saying, “Let us ban physical punishment of children”, include: Amnesty International Canada; the Anglican Church of Canada; the Canadian Association for Community Living; the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies; the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists; the Canadian Association of Paediatric Health Centres; the Canadian Association of Paediatric Nurses; the Canadian Association of Social Workers; the Canadian Centre for Child Protection; the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport; the Canadian Child Abuse Association; the Canadian Child Care Federation; the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates; the Canadian Dental Association; the Canadian Federation of University Women; the Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law; the Canadian Home and School Federation; the Canadian Institute of Child Health; the Canadian Medical Association; the Canadian Mental Health Association; the Canadian Nurses Association; the Canadian Psychological Association; the Canadian Public Health Association; the Canadian Red Cross; the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Over 700 national organizations, important regional organizations, are calling on all members of Parliament to adopt this bill. This is not something that comes with only the support of child advocates, but it is a universal truth that organizations that understand the negative impacts of physical punishment are all calling on members of Parliament to adopt the bill.

It is not just in Canada where the debate is being held. Over the last couple of decades, we have seen a massive shift in how people perceive physical punishment of children.

The following countries have banned physical punishment of children include South Korea, Japan, South Africa, France, Argentina, Brazil, Poland, Costa Rica, Greece, Ukraine, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Scotland and Wales. Sixty-five countries and other regions around the world have all banned the physical punishment of children. By adopting this bill, Canada would become the 66th country internationally.

Some countries have refused to do this. I note that countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Russia still permit the physical punishment of children. However, when we look at our allies, when we look at democratic nations, they stand together in banning the physical punishment of children. Why? Because of numerous deep and profound research that has been done over the last few decades.

• (1110)

The American Psychological Association states:

Many studies have shown that physical punishment — including spanking, hitting and other means of causing pain — can lead to increased aggression, antisocial behavior, physical injury and mental health problems for children.

The *Canadian Medical Association Journal* makes the link “between “normative” physical punishment and child aggression, delinquency and spousal assault in later life.”

The Australian Institute of Family Studies states:

A meta-analysis involving over 160,000 children found that physical punishment can carry the risk of physical abuse...and can have similar negative outcomes for children: mental health and emotional challenges, lower cognitive ability, lower self-esteem, more aggression, more antisocial behaviour and negative relationships with parents.

The Canadian Child Care Federation talks about the “fear, anxiety, insecurity and anger” and the use of “aggression to solve problems” that come from physical punishment of children.

The evidence is very clear. Other countries, at a rate of one every four months, around the world are adopting a ban on physical punishment of children. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission clearly calls for it. Over 700 important national organizations are calling for it. Now is the time to adopt Bill C-273.

• (1115)

[Translation]

Bill C-273 constitutes an important initial follow-up on all of the work that has been done on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action.

Call to action 6 calls for the repeal of section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada, which currently legalizes the physical punishment of children. That is unacceptable, and it must be changed. Under this call to action, we have a responsibility to state very clearly that we need to eliminate this section of the Criminal Code that allows for the corporal punishment of children.

Over 700 national organizations are calling on the government to repeal section 43 in order to prevent the practice of physical punishment of children. That includes the Association des centres jeunesse du Québec, the Association des CLSC et CHSLD du Québec and the Association des médecins en protection de l'enfance du Québec. It also includes school boards, such as the Center-East Catholic School Council, the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario, the Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord de l'Ontario, the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador and the Conseil scolaire publique du Nord-Est de l'Ontario. All of these organizations want Canada to join the 65 other countries that have already banned the physical punishment of children, including France, Germany, Brazil and others.

Indeed, the World Health Organization said that, "Corporal punishment is linked to a range of negative outcomes for children across countries and cultures, including physical and mental ill-health, impaired cognitive and socio-emotional development, poor educational outcomes, increased aggression and perpetration of violence." This has been shown by all the studies out there, and 65 countries have agreed this practice must be banned. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has asked us to do so, but this has been dragging on for eight years. Some 700 national organizations have asked the members of the House to vote in favour of Bill C-273.

I genuinely hope that all members will support this bill. This has been dragging on for eight years. Now is the time.

• (1120)

[English]

**Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for bringing this important legislation to us today.

I understand that some of the opposition to passing the legislation in the past was from teachers who feared that it would take away some of their right to defend themselves in the case of students who became violent. I would ask the member whether he has a response to that concern of different teachers groups.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, the member may be aware that more than 100 countries around the world have banned the use of physical punishment in schools. When we are talking about a ban on physical punishment, we are talking about the use of it by parents and teachers, and there is a great impetus around the world to ban the practice in schools. As I noted in the French part of my speech, there are school boards and teacher organizations, including early child care educators, that very clearly have said that Parliament needs to adopt the bill and that we need to repeal section 43.

Finally, my father, who passed away two years ago, was a long-time educator, and both he and my mother, who were very involved in the education sector, believed very strongly that physical punishment was not justified. It was a blessing to be in that family. I am hoping we can raise all children the same way.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, I am of course completely opposed to Bill C-273.

First, the bill seeks to repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code, which deals with correcting a child. Section 43 clearly states that force must not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

I am a father and an educator, and I was a school principal for 20 years. If I had to put something like this to my teachers, things would not go well. We are talking about reining in children in a school environment like we do when they are running amok and have to be stopped. Section 43 does not take this approach at all. No harm is done provided that an intervention is reasonable. I find it rather absurd that this is being associated with physical punishment.

The current bill talks about physical punishment. The Criminal Code certainly has a lot of provisions to deal with physical punishment. Can my colleague draw the line between physical punishment and a reasonable measure?

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I hope the member will listen to what Quebec's child care centres are saying. They are asking members to pass Bill C-273. This is also what the Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance, Association des centres jeunesse du Québec, Quebec local community service centres and nursing homes, and the Association des médecins en protection de l'enfance du Québec are calling for. All of these organizations support this bill. I will not name them all, because I could spend 10 minutes listing all of the Quebec associations and francophone organizations across the country that support this bill.

Certain court rulings were mentioned, and this is important. However, the organizations say that the court rulings create even more confusion regarding the physical punishment of children. This is why all of these Quebec organizations are asking members to vote in favour of Bill C-273.

[English]

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will ask again the question that our Liberal colleague asked, because the NDP member did not answer it: Would the bill interfere with a teacher's right to self-defence?

The Liberal member indicated that teachers groups have raised the fact that there are situations in which kids can sometimes get a little violent, for a number of reasons. Would the bill interfere with a teacher's right to self-defence and to protect themselves when dealing with violent children in schools?

• (1125)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, it would not impact self-defence. The reason why more than 100 countries have said that banning physical punishment of children in schools is important is that they understand the negative impacts on children and in the school system. That is why we have seen, over the last 20 years, so many studies saying it is important to repeal section 43 and it is important to ensure that we are not legalizing the physical punishment of children.

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join second reading debate on Bill C-273, an act to amend the Criminal Code with respect to Corinne's Quest and the protection of children, which was introduced by the member for New Westminster—Burnaby on May 19, 2022.

Bill C-273 proposes to repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code, which provides a defence to parents, caregivers and teachers who apply reasonable force to children in their care. For parents and those exercising parental responsibilities, section 43 applies to the use of corporal punishment. This means that parents can use mild physical force, such as spanking or light hitting, to discipline a child in their care. Section 43 also allows parents to use physical control to restrain or remove a child in appropriate circumstances. The defence is more limited for teachers, who may never impose corporal punishment. Section 43 protects only the teacher who uses reasonable physical control to restrain or remove a child in appropriate circumstances.

Bill C-273 engages highly sensitive issues such as parental authority, children's rights, the appropriate role of government and the line between appropriate parental discipline and child abuse. We know that Canadians hold a wide range of views about what constitutes an acceptable level of physical discipline when parenting or teaching a child. These divergent views have prompted debates about what behaviours are harmful enough that they should be prohibited, while keeping in mind that how one chooses to parent their child is a deeply personal matter. I welcome the opportunity the bill before us has provided to consider these important questions.

The government supports Bill C-273 and its important objective of protecting children from violence and abuse. However, we have heard some concerns from parents, especially from over-policed demographics, and teachers that they may be criminalized for reasonable actions such as minor uses of physical control that do not cause harm.

Section 43 has been part of the Criminal Code, and largely unchanged, since 1892. Its origins flow from the parental duty to protect and educate children. The defence typically applies in relation to assault charges, because assault is broadly defined in the Criminal Code as the non-consensual application of force. This definition captures non-consensual touching or even threats against another person, regardless of their age or whether or not physical harm or injury occurs. Section 43 represents Parliament's attempt to avoid criminalizing certain conduct by teachers, parents and caregivers, but its application today is not intended to protect against abusive and harmful conduct.

The Supreme Court of Canada, in its 2004 decision *Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law v. Canada*, found that section 43 is consistent with sections 7, 12 and 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and clarified that the defence applies only to parents who impose minor corporal punishment "of a transitory and trifling nature". The court also set certain parameters on the defence. For example, the defence applies only where the child is aged two to 12 and is capable of learning from the situation. No object may be used when applying force. The child's head must not be slapped. There can be no physical harm or reasonable prospect of harm and the adult must not be acting out of frustration or anger. The court limited the defence even further for teachers,

who may use reasonable physical control only to maintain order or enforce school rules, such as removing a child from a classroom or securing compliance with instructions. The court emphasized that corporal punishment by teachers is never permitted. Since the Supreme Court of Canada decision almost 20 years ago, evolving research and information on the harms associated with the physical discipline of children has resulted in increased calls for the repeal or reform of section 43.

The government is committed to implementing all of the calls to action stemming from the 2015 final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Repealing section 43 would be one more step in accomplishing that commitment, as repealing it would be in alignment with call to action No. 6. This call to action was supported by documented evidence of widespread corporal punishment and abuse of children by staff in the residential school system, with the commission noting in its final report that "[t]he failure to develop, implement, and monitor effective discipline sent an unspoken message that there were no real limits on what could be done to Aboriginal children within the walls of a residential school."

● (1130)

Those who favour the full repeal of section 43, including many civil society organizations and the United Nations' Committee on the Rights of the Child, argue that the current criminal law does not provide children with the same protection as adults. Furthermore, a growing body of medical and social science research indicates that corporal punishment has a detrimental effect on children. Corporal punishment places children at risk of physical injury, physical abuse, impaired mental health, a poor parent-child relationship, increased childhood aggression and anti-social behaviour, and increased violence and criminal behaviour as adults, thus perpetuating cycles of violence. Over 650 organizations in Canada endorsed the position that the physical punishment of children and youth has no positive effects, and they called for the same protection from assault for children as that given to adults.

However, the complete repeal of section 43 raises concerns in some sectors. For instance, some religious organizations, legal experts and organizations representing teachers, such as the Canadian Teachers' Federation, have opposed the complete repeal of section 43, as it may leave teachers and parents vulnerable to charges for minor or trifling physical contact with children, such as preventing a fight between siblings or removing a student from a classroom for their own safety or that of other students. Without a defence for parents, teachers and caregivers who apply reasonable physical force to children in their care, the assault provisions may apply. This is because the assault provisions cover a very wide range of behaviour, which includes minor applications of force that do not result in physical injury. This could capture, for example, a parent restraining a child to put them in a car seat. As I alluded to earlier, it may also have an unintended negative impact on populations that are over-policed and that are overrepresented in the criminal justice and child welfare systems, including the indigenous and Black communities, as well as members of other racialized groups.

International responses to the question of corporal punishment reflect the divergent positions on this issue and the need to achieve a balanced approach. A growing number of countries, including Sweden, New Zealand, Scotland and Germany, have repealed legislative provisions that are similar to section 43, in order to prohibit corporal punishment. By contrast, some jurisdictions, such as Australia, for example, continue to provide protection to parents who use minor corrective force against their children.

It may be worth considering whether the defence could be tailored to address these various concerns by excluding from the scope corporal punishment, while allowing it for parents, caregivers and teachers who use minor physical force that is both transitory and trifling. In other words, forms of corporal punishment such as hitting and spanking would be excluded in all cases. Such an approach would also recognize the shifts in research and evidence regarding the harms that physical punishment poses for children, while trying to ensure that parents, caregivers and teachers can use minor, non-harmful physical force without being exposed to criminal liability. Changes in this area of the law would also impact provinces and territories, given their jurisdiction over the administration of justice, education and the provision of child welfare services. For this reason, it would be important to provide some time before reforms come into force, in order to allow the various parties to prepare for their effective implementation.

We all recognize the important role that education plays in encouraging safe and appropriate parenting practices. The current government has always and will always continue to support parenting education programs that promote the non-physical discipline of children and alternative disciplinary choices, and it regularly releases public education material targeted toward parents. Any reforms relating to section 43 would need to be accompanied by an educational campaign informing parents and teachers of the changes to the law and teaching alternatives to physical punishment. The Government of Canada is unwavering in its commitment to ensuring the protection and physical safety of children across the country. Bill C-273 would provide a valuable opportunity to develop a modern approach to the discipline of children, one which would ensure that children are protected from harm, while supporting reasonable choices by parents, teachers and caregivers.

### *Private Members' Business*

I look forward to studying the bill at committee.

● (1135)

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to be able to enter into debate in this place on the important issues that Canadians face. I do so today on Bill C-273, understanding the complexities surrounding the debate we are having here when it comes to the issues of reconciliation, parenting and parental rights, and ensuring children are given the best and every opportunity to succeed in our country.

As one approaches the important discussion we have here, it is meant to be taken seriously and with a full understanding of what the implications of such a bill would be. I note that it is very simple; it is one line that would repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code. For those watching, who may not have the full breadth of understanding surrounding what section 43 of the Criminal Code is, it states:

Every schoolteacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

We have before us a bill that would take out something that has been the course of debate and a subject of debate in this country for the last half-century or so. In fact, I believe there have been around 30 bills brought forward endeavouring to accomplish this or something very similar to it.

I note first a process challenge that exists when it comes to this conversation taking place in the form of a private member's bill, and that is the limited time we have to address the many complexities surrounding this debate. Certainly, two hours of debate in this place and a short committee study is not nearly long enough to speak to the complexity that exists on a whole host of issues, which I will endeavour to get into during the course of this speech.

Let us be clear: Child abuse, as well as violence against children, is wrong and should always have been wrong. However, we have examples throughout our history where, unfortunately, it has been permitted and even state-sanctioned. What we have here is a disconnect, I would suggest, between what the bill purports to do and what the Criminal Code actually says. I emphasize this because there are no provisions in the Criminal Code that permit violence against children or child abuse.

I find it troubling that this has created a notion that one needs to support Bill C-273 in order to be opposed to violence against children. In reality, in terms of section 43, a number of Supreme Court challenges have taken place that brought forward the legitimacy of this. I note that the member for New Westminster—Burnaby failed to take into account some of the challenging nuances surrounding it, including some of the communities he referenced. That is part one.

*Private Members' Business*

I would also suggest that another important element is the process of reconciliation and how important it is to ensure that we continue to have that conversation in this country. In fact, I am very proud to be a part of the party that brought forward the apology for the government's role in the residential process, kicking off the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which led to this report. I am very proud that we have been able to be strong supporters of the process of reconciliation. There is a need for that process to continue in order to ensure it is done in a way that gives every opportunity for meaningful reconciliation to take place.

Specifically, when it comes to Bill C-273, there are nuances in this debate that indigenous communities are concerned about with regard to the possible implications if we do not take into account every aspect of what this would mean for children, parents and educators in our country. Some of my constituents with indigenous heritage have shared this with me. It is unfortunate that, as with many other issues faced in this place, the voices of parents are not being meaningfully heard.

• (1140)

We have seen attempts, time and time again, to diminish the role played not only by parents but also by the family as a fundamental building block of society. Any attempt to see that diminished would be wrong. We can see the implications of this over the course of our recent history. We need to be very careful, as the family has done so much to build this country.

I would suggest that, when it comes to the state's involvement in matters such as this, in terms of removing a parent's right to parent their children as they feel fit and the appropriateness around what is reasonable, there is a fair discussion to be had. One of the most challenging things, when I hear these debates taking place, is that we see that this is a response to, especially, the conversation surrounding reconciliation.

We see how the things that were sanctioned by the state ended up causing such significant harm, specifically to children. Now we have the inability to have a reasonable conversation around a parent's role in raising their children and what could take away some of the tools that are available for a parent to do so. We have the state, the possibility of taking and, in some cases, even criminalization.

In fact, there is a concern raised by many parents, parental groups and a number of teachers, including teachers' organizations. I know that the members raised a host of organizations that support this. I can tell us, very clearly, that the support is not unanimous.

The history of the debate that we are having today speaks to that very thing: We have to have that fulsome understanding of what the implications of this would be. As we endeavour to understand this, it comes back to the need to be able to trust our parents to raise children. That includes ensuring that the reconciliation process is undertaken.

I would note, just in terms of a process question, that there is a similar bill in the Senate. It has passed second reading in division. It has not yet been studied in committee there.

I would suggest that the discussion we are having here is of a limited nature, but the widespread consequences that it could bring about for our nation are profound. If we do not take that seriously, we are certainly not doing our job as parliamentarians.

I would just note that the courts have ruled on this. In fact, the Supreme Court of Canada laid out very clear parameters for the use of physical correction and stated that section 43 does not extend to an application of force that results in harm or, and this is important, the prospect of harm.

I spoke before about how the Criminal Code has very clear and wide-reaching applications of what constitutes abuse and assault. To ensure that parents are able to have the full latitude required to raise healthy and productive citizens is absolutely fundamental.

I find it very concerning. Certainly, my constituents have reached out to me. Moreover, I have heard from a number of groups across the country, which have shared their concern that, if we allow section 43 to be removed without the appropriate conversations surrounding what the implications would be, we open ourselves up to allowing for further state control. This would not end up benefiting the children.

In conclusion, in fact, I noted that my Bloc colleagues and Liberal colleagues had noted a number of concerns that they have with the bill. However, I believe that the Liberals said that they would be supporting the bill going to committee. Those concerns should be taken very seriously. They necessitate further conversations and reasonable dialogue to ensure that we are doing what is best for our country and for the future of our children, as well as to ensure that we can have those reasonable and sometimes difficult conversations, so that we strike the right balance in this place.

I would simply say that I have followed this debate closely over both my years in Parliament and the years before as a parent. As somebody who cares deeply about our nation's future, my concern is that this bill simply does not facilitate the conversations that are required to have the meaningful dialogue about what raising children in Canada should look like in the future.

• (1145)

[Translation]

**Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, our children are usually what gives our lives the most meaning. They are the apple of our eye. They make us laugh, cry and dream. They are society's most precious asset. None of us would want to see them hurt or saddened by the words or actions of others for anything in the world. All we want is to protect them from harm. Anything less would be concerning.

Guiding and nurturing them sometimes requires a bit of strictness and discipline. Because we love them, we sometimes have to protect them from themselves, or from the harm they might cause others and then soon regret. The Criminal Code states that every parent or schoolteacher "is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances."



Should we be concerned or happy about this provision? That is the question. I think that if we really love our children, we should thank the legislator who included this provision. There are many examples showing that words, hugs and sweetness are not enough to discipline a child. Sometimes they need to know that if they step out of line, a responsible adult will look after them.

There are many examples of this. Imagine a child who loses it and has a tantrum in the classroom, then destroys equipment around them and forces the teacher to leave the classroom with the rest of the class. Imagine a number of children fighting and punching each other in the face. Imagine a child hitting, spitting on or biting a teacher. I am not making this up. I did not see it in a horror movie. My wife experienced something like this again this morning and she was just telling me about it before I arrived in the House. This was not an exceptional morning. It was not an isolated incident. This is a reality that all teachers face almost every day.

Teachers are in tears and they no longer know what to do to discipline children. We now have specialized educators who are called into classrooms to take control when kids run amok.

Last week I was reading a Radio-Canada article that said school personnel in New Brunswick increasingly have to resort to protective equipment. When long-sleeve jean jackets are not enough, teachers turn to Kevlar clothing. When I read that, I felt like I was reading science fiction, but this is not science fiction. It is happening now, today, in 2023, in our classrooms in Quebec and in Canada.

What do we do with that? Of course I am against physical punishment. I do not think you should hit a child to get even or punish them, but using reasonable force to discipline them and keep them on track is something I think should remain. I do not know how we will function without it. Are there parents in the House who never had their arm squeezed by their mother or father? Are there parents in the House who never did that to their own children to calm them down during a meltdown?

Once again, we are talking about reasonable force. We are talking about “using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.”

Of course, a teacher hitting a child with a ruler makes no sense. It is not reasonable or necessary and should be prohibited. The Criminal Code already contains provisions dealing with assault, which apply as much to parents and teachers as to anyone else.

● (1150)

What we are talking about here is what goes on in a family, in a home or in a classroom when a child loses control. It takes an adult to help them regain control. If we let children do whatever they want, we should not be surprised later to find we live in a chaotic society, and it will be our own fault.

Currently, teachers in Quebec are in negotiations with the government. That does not concern the federal Parliament. I would not ask it to resolve the dispute. They are asking for a number of things and I am convinced it is the same everywhere in Canada. They are asking of course for better salaries, as well as a better teacher-stu-

### *Private Members' Business*

dent ratio. Increasingly, there are too many students in classrooms and teachers have trouble controlling their classes. They are also asking for support. In classrooms, there is an increased need for specialized professionals in every field.

Today, the NDP, the party we are accustomed to seeing side with union members, working to improve their living conditions, finds itself on the other side of the fence. I was very surprised to read this bill and see that it came from the NDP. To my mind, it would be logical and reasonable for the NDP to side with parents who have trouble controlling their children and to side with teachers, who are asking for support, who are asking to be able to control their classrooms. Teachers are asking for time to teach; they cannot take it any more.

I mentioned my spouse earlier. There are plenty of other people who have told me that they have trouble spending even half their class time teaching. They spend all their time disciplining the kids. They have no choice. Teaching math is impossible when everyone is shouting and arguing. This is not normal. We are going to have to make drastic changes in our society, but we are not there yet. We are not here to decide how to educate children.

Still, regarding the idea that acts of parental or teacher protection should be considered criminal acts going forward, in other words that teachers should be prosecuted if they decide to separate two boys who are punching each other in the face in the schoolyard, I doubt anyone would even want to send their kids there. What would we say if, as parents, we went into the schoolyard and saw our daughter or son being punched in the face by another child, while the teacher was looking on and simply telling the kids to stop, because it is not nice? We would tell that teacher to step up and do their job and that we have entrusted them with the responsibility of looking after our children; we would ask that teacher to look after the children properly. That would be perfectly normal.

*Private Members' Business*

I do not see how we could support such a bill. I do not even see how we could refer to committee to debate it and try to amend it, because there is nothing to amend. One clause in the bill says it would repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code. Not only can this not be amended, but, with all due respect to the sponsor, this would be a waste of our precious time in committee. There are so many things we need to address at the Standing Committee on Justice. We do not have time to look at everything. I have submitted requests for us to work on certain topics such as criminal groups. We do not have time to deal with that. We do not have time to deal with judicial appointments. There are so many things we are having a hard time working on because we do not have enough time. We would have to work on this for who knows how many meetings. As I was saying, we would not even be able to amend this bill. We have come to the conclusion that this does not make sense. We cannot stop parents and teachers from raising children. The world has gone mad.

Again, with all due respect to the sponsor, I am sure that this bill was well-intentioned and done in good faith. Unfortunately, this bill is as bad as the children running amok in classrooms, if not worse. I invite members to vote against the bill.

• (1155)

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am proud to support Bill C-273. I thank my NDP colleague, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, for introducing this bill in honour of Corinne's Quest. Bill C-273 will do great things if it is allowed to pass. It will protect children. It will end allowing adults to physically punish children. It will implement call to action number six from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In my statement, I remind Canada that since 1892, the Criminal Code still allows for the physical punishment of children. I outline why the Truth and Reconciliation Commission would have introduced call to action number six. I remind Canadians about international law and conclude with Corinne's Quest to ensure her story remains alive as long as the physical punishment of children is legally allowed.

Spanking or hitting children as a form of punishment should never have been legally allowed in the first place. Section 43 of the Criminal Code allows it, and that is why, through Bill C-273, this section of the Criminal Code must be repealed. The current law in Canada states:

Every schoolteacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

Instead of protecting children, this section creates arguments for adults to make justifications for physically punishing children. Canada's history of making justifications for hitting children is deeply rooted. For indigenous peoples, it remains a part of federal genocidal policies.

For more than 150 years, Inuit, first nations and Métis were taken from their parents, families, homes and familiar environments and sent to attend schools run by churches. According to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the first church-run In-

dian residential school was opened in 1831. By the 1880s, the federal government was funding church-run residential schools. The aim, as we all know, was to "take the Indian out of the child". Indigenous children were beaten, sexually abused and forced to be ashamed of who they were. They were beaten if they spoke even a word of any of their first nations, Métis or Inuit languages.

Survivors of residential schools only recently, in the last few years, have started openly sharing their experiences. We must honour their stories. I still remember vividly experiences shared with me from former students like Monica Ittusardjuat, Ernie Bernhardt, Marie-Lucie Uviluq and Marius Tungilik, just to name a few. Horrid traumas were inflicted on them. Their stories guide me to this day.

I remind members that these stories were only allowed to be shared because of the great work of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which was so cruelly cut by the Conservative Party. This is at a time when so much healing is still much needed to this day.

In 2020, the University of Manitoba Press said that records showed everything from speaking one's aboriginal language to bed-wetting to running away provoked whippings, strappings, beatings and other forms of abuse and humiliation. This pattern continues in the foster care system. According to Indigenous Services Canada, 53.8% of children in foster care are indigenous, despite the fact that they make up only 7.7% of the Canadian population.

• (1200)

In November 2018, the University of Toronto said that, in many of these situations, children are taken from their home communities and raised elsewhere without regard for their language and culture. It also said that reports of maltreatment, neglect and abuse in the foster care system are rampant and that indigenous children are more than 3.4 times more likely to have a substantiated case of maltreatment in comparison to non-indigenous children. Also, the sixties scoop has been well known by indigenous peoples for generations. This phenomenon is only now becoming understood by mainstream Canada and reported by academics.

Canada's reconciliation with indigenous peoples still requires dedicated, well-invested and true commitment. Indigenous peoples have yet to experience active reconciliation. Banning the physical punishment of children would be a positive step. Justification for harming children can end. It can be the 44th Parliament that achieves this.

According to Indigenous Watchdog, a federally registered non-profit organization dedicated to monitoring and reporting on reconciliation, the government has only completed 13 of the 92 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. It is obvious that reconciliation is not a commitment of this and past governments. Passing Bill C-273 would be a step in the right direction. It would be a small but important signal toward reconciliation.

In 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Canada signed on shortly thereafter. The convention states, among other things:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

The Library of Parliament published "The 'Spanking' Law: Section 43 of the Criminal Code", under its "HillStudies", in June 2016. I note:

By maintaining Section 43 on the books, Canada is clearly in violation of a treaty it signed, and Canada has been repeatedly reminded of this fact by the UN. This, and other reasons provides Canada with ample reasons to repeal s. 43.

Canada must do its part. Sweden was the first country to ban it, in 1979, France banned it in 2018 and Scotland in 2019. Even China proposed legislation in 2021.

The main driver behind Bill C-273 has been an organization called Corinne's Quest. Corinne's Quest was founded in 1991 by retired lawyer Corinne Robertshaw, who was concerned with reports of child injuries and deaths caused by parents and caregivers. She fought for decades to repeal section 43 and finally end the physical punishment of children. While Corinne sadly passed away in 2013, her legacy lives on as Corinne's Quest. It has grown into a national collective of lawyers, pediatricians, social workers and teachers. Corinne's inspiring work and that of so many others can be completed with the passage of Bill C-273.

For these reasons, I urge all parliamentarians to support this bill. It is unacceptable that the Criminal Code still justifies the physical punishment of children. I remind Canadians of our responsibility to have reconciliation with indigenous peoples and to complete the TRC's calls to action. We must respect international law, especially with Canada's adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We must finish Corinne's work to protect children. More than anything, we must protect the indigenous children who are still in the foster care system.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

• (1205)

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak on a point of order.

Last Thursday, in my answer to a question from our colleague from Calgary Confederation, I told this House, "2.45 million people used their tax returns to indicate they wanted to be donors." I want to offer a clarification by explaining that it is indeed 2.45 million people who indicated their interest in becoming organ donors by requesting additional information, which they can now do through their tax return, as per Bill C-210, in participating provinces.

I apologize if my answer caused any confusion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the minister for her clarification.

## Government Orders

# GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed from November 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to rise in the House to represent the amazing folks of Essex. I give all my thanks to God for giving me the opportunity.

Just a couple of weeks ago, I lost my momma. If the House would allow it, I would like to share a few words before I dive into Bill C-58.

Mom would text me during question period to say, "Christopher, you are not wearing a tie today, so you must not be speaking." Mom would also text me to say, "Christopher, stop chewing gum", "Smile", or "Christopher, wake up."

The little things in life get us through, and the real little things in life were mom's chocolate chip cookies. Mom was known on the Hill for her chocolate chip cookies. However, if a member did something bad, I would get a text saying that the member would not be getting a chocolate chip cookie that day.

She was a servant. She served beyond belief. She is the great reason I am where I am, and why I am who I am.

Although those texts have come to a very abrupt end, after she spent only 13 days in hospital battling cancer, her legacy lives on. If my dad and my brothers Jeff and Kim are watching, I want them to know that Helen, our momma, is in the House of Commons with us all here today. As I promised momma at her bedside, I will make her proud and live to serve. I love her. I thank the House for indulging me.

Bill C-58 has two main elements. First, it would ban the use of replacement workers in federally regulated workplaces, such as banks, airports and telecommunications, but not in the federal public service. It would replace an existing, albeit much more limited, prohibition on the use of replacement workers in the Canada Labour Code.

Second, Bill C-58 would amend the maintenance of activities process to encourage not only quicker agreement between employers and trade unions on what activities should be maintained in the case of a strike or a lockout, but also faster decision-making by the Canada Industrial Relations Board in this connection. The provisions of Bill C-58 would only apply to federally regulated workers. If enacted, the provisions of Bill C-58 would enter into force 18 months after royal assent has been received.

*Government Orders*

It brings forward a lot of questions and a lot of discussion. I would start by saying that I am very proud to be the shadow minister, the critic, for labour. I have travelled across this country, literally from coast to coast to coast, speaking with both unionized and non-unionized workers in places such as Halifax; St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador; Vancouver, at the Port of Vancouver; and Montreal.

• (1210)

I have been across this country, meeting with both unionized and non-unionized workforces, their management teams, and the folks with their boots on the ground. What I hear all the time is them saying, "Just let me go to work. I want to go to work. I don't really want to be on strike. What I really want to do is have a good-paying job so I can ultimately feed my family, put diapers on my babies, fill their little mouths with pablum and afford to buy my wife some flowers. I can't do that when I'm on strike."

At the end of the day, we have seen an unprecedented amount of strikes across this country over the last number of years. Every time I turn around, we are dealing with another strike. Why is that? One has to really wonder if it is the cost of living. Is it the cost of food, which our workers cannot afford? Is it the high interest rates? Is it the carbon tax on fuel and food? Is that the reason why? It always goes back to the same question: Why are we seeing an unprecedented amount of strikes? We have to believe that it is due to inflation. It is due to the cost of living, as well as uncertainty, no doubt.

I will speak quickly to the topic of the Stellantis battery plant in Windsor. One good thing about Air Canada is that it is almost always delayed, which allows me more time to speak to my constituents back home when I am at the airport.

Last night, I spoke to someone at IBEW, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, who said what the problem is. We have an amazing workforce here in Canada of electrical workers. They are bringing them in from Manitoba and Alberta. They are there in Windsor. They are literally in Windsor to start to work. However, they are very concerned about all of the folks potentially being brought in from South Korea to do all work. In the past, those workers did all the work at tier 2 and tier 3. They have done all that work. He said he understood that 10, 20 or 30 people may need to be brought in to program the computers, but the rest of it they already know how to do.

Then I spoke to the carpenter's union, and they said the same thing. They have the whole workforce there. Why are folks being brought in from other places to do the work that they, quite frankly, are trained to do?

The part of this bill that is somewhat confusing to me is that it is only for federally regulated workers. It does not apply to federally regulated public sector workers. If the government is going to tell businesses that there will be no replacement workers, why would the government not do it for itself? It makes one wonder.

We have had amazing, amazing yields in southwestern Ontario this year from our farmers. Some of the highest bumper crops that we have seen in a long time. About 90% to 92% of our grain is exported. If we cannot get the grain onto the ships and overseas, we have a major issue, and we have a major issue right now.

• (1215)

There was just an issue on the Great Lakes, which, by the way, got solved. It is like what was reported yesterday in the news about No Frills. The issue with workers at No Frills was solved yesterday, just like at the Port of Montreal and the Port of Vancouver. How were they solved? They were solved at the table through democracy. There is always a solution when we speak. There is always a solution when people come to the table to have good, fair, strong, respectful dialogue. That is how things get solved.

Because I sit on the transport committee, am a bona fide farmer and was a businessman, my concern is that this potential legislation could drive fewer jobs for the country. It is a matter of fact that this could drive potential Canadian business investment away from Canada, which would ultimately mean fewer jobs.

Ironically, at 9 a.m. tomorrow, I head to the Senate to do my darnedest to get Bill C-241, my private member's bill, through committee. Bill C-241 is a bill that would allow the writeoff of travel expenses for both unionized and non-unionized skilled trades workers. I do not know of anyone in the House who would disagree with me when I say that Canada is absolutely in a major housing crisis, and Bill C-241 would allow the mobility of our skilled trades, both unionized and non-unionized workers, to travel across the country.

I look at Stellantis and the entire project, the upwards of \$50 billion for the three battery plants, and I know one thing for sure: We need skilled trade workers at those sites. However, I also know that we need to build homes from coast to coast to coast. Hopefully, tomorrow the Senate will give us the green light, so to speak, and Bill C-241 will get through the Senate to support our skilled trade workers.

For clarity, for anybody watching at home, and I am sure a lot are watching me, this is only for federally regulated workers. This does not dive into the provinces and their regulations.

This is going to sound goofy, but during the Port of Vancouver strike, a message was left at my office, and I called the gentleman back. He said he owns a coffee shop, but he cannot get any cups for the coffee, so he will have to shut his doors because he ordered the cups from overseas. It sounds small and insignificant, but that is one more business that shut its doors, is not paying taxes, that is not employing people or laying them off. It is one more business that Canada is, quite frankly, bleeding.

There is nothing more important than our labour force. My father always said it best. Someone can have the greatest widget in the world, but they cannot build it and they cannot sell it without people. There is not a business I know of that is not about the people, and they only ever will be.

*Government Orders*

● (1220)

The answer is very simple: Get to the table, get the folks at the table and have a conversation. Deliberations have worked in the past. That is where the answer lies.

In closing, I will just finish with the following. I come from the business world but I also was boots on the ground. In my role as shadow minister for labour, I met some pretty extraordinary folks. I think about the folks at the ILWU out in Vancouver, who treated me with so much respect when I visited them two or three times. I think about the folks out in Halifax and St. John's, Newfoundland. I think about the folks in my own backyard in Essex. Again, it is resounding that it is only about the people.

There is only one way that we are going to rebuild Canada, that Canada is going to be built, that we are going to have enough homes, that we are going to have the manufacturing and we are going to be on the front line in leading-edge technology, and that is with people. However, they need to be Canadian people. They cannot be folks from overseas who are taking away the jobs of Canadians.

I want to thank the Speaker for allowing me to celebrate my mother and allowing me to have a bit of freedom in my speech today. I am so darn passionate and compassionate when it comes to our labour force and it means the world to me.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All of us give you our best and our condolences on the loss of your mom. Many of us probably have the same stories about our moms sending us a little note to say to straighten our tie, look a little more lively or that we are looking tired. “Why do you look so tired?” is one I get a lot from my mother. I'm sure your mom did the same thing.

Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do extend our most sincere condolences to the member and his family.

It is interesting trying to draw Conservatives out on how they are going to vote. Here we have labour and others who want to see this legislation pass to committee. I have listened closely to the member opposite, and I cannot tell exactly what the Conservative Party is going to do on this. This is Bill C-58.

Just last week, we had debate on Bill C-57, the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. The Ukrainian heritage community was very excited about that legislation and wanted the House to pass that legislation. Like today, we were left wondering why it was that the Conservative Party did not seem to support Ukraine.

Can the member give a clear indication as to why he voted against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement?

**An hon. member:** Relevance.

● (1225)

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a relevance issue that we are looking up, but I will let the hon. member make his comment.

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, this was one of the examples where somebody would not get a chocolate chip cookie from mom. I am just teasing.

I guess I will answer the question, and the question is really an easy one to answer. If the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister are so friendly with labour, why did only one Liberal in the entire caucus vote for Bill C-241? That is a really easy question, so I will answer a question with a question. Why do they not support skilled trades?

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my deepest condolences to the member and his family. It was very moving when he shared the story about the passing of his mother. My own mother passed away one year and 22 days ago, in November last year. There is not a day I do not think of her. I know it will be the same for him. I wish him all the best in honouring her memory and in working through the grief that comes from her passing.

I want to come back to Bill C-58 because the member spoke very movingly about his mother, as well as other issues, like housing and other bills, but did not actually speak to Bill C-58. The NDP has pushed so hard for this and forced the government to table the bill because of the use of replacement workers in the Windsor area, for example, and Essex County. I know he is familiar with this. Right across the country, Rogers has locked out workers for Shaw cable. Dozens of steelworkers are on the picket line because of the Rogers' lockout, which is using replacement workers in the federal sphere of jurisdiction. It is simply untenable.

As has been pointed out, Bill C-58 would seek to bring a more rapid close to labour disputes because it would mean that CEOs of major corporations would not be able to run roughshod over the rights of their workers, but would have to negotiate in good faith.

What remains a question for me is whether Conservatives will stand with working Canadians and vote for Bill C-58. Could the member tell me if they will vote in favour of the bill?

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member so much and really appreciate his compassionate and very thoughtful comments about momma.

At the end of the day we have to ask why the federally regulated public service is not part of this legislation. Why is it that the government, which with all due respect is supported by the NDP, does not have its own employees as part of this legislation? We really have to question whether it is trying to hide something or whether there is something that we do not know. Perhaps if it would open the book and tell us the rest of the story, then we would know exactly where we stand.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, for a really long period of time, the screen actors guild's labour dispute with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers impacted the Canadian film industry in a major way. One of the major sticking points in negotiations was the use of artificial intelligence to act as replacement workers for many people in that situation.

*Government Orders*

Could the member comment on how the federal Liberal government's inability to articulate a strategic vision for artificial intelligence writ large in Canada, particularly with respect to the impact on labour in the future, could make this legislation moot?

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, every time we turn around it almost looks like the legislation that comes from the Prime Minister and the Liberals is made from band-aids pieced together.

I think there is a much larger solution available to us, which is that all parties get together to come up with a solution. I would suggest that, whether it is with respect to AI, mines to the north or the busiest international border crossing in Canada, each and every one of those is equally vital to what the member has spoken about. We have a really long way to go and a lot of work to do.

• (1230)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I may be mistaken, but I do not think we have talked about Bill C-58 in the past 15 minutes. Bill C-58 is an anti-scab bill.

Scabs have not been used back home in Quebec since 1977. I am very pleased to see that there is equity between Quebec workers with a Quebec employer and Quebec workers with a Canadian employer.

The bill is very sound. I would like my colleague to explain why the Conservatives object to it.

[English]

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I do not think I said I was against anything in my speech. I did not say I was for, I did not say I was against, so that is an interesting comment.

I realize that Quebec actually has its own legislation. That is great but I have to look outside of just Quebec. I have to look at this whole country.

Conservatives will continue to look at this entire country, to move our commerce forward, to ensure that there are good-paying jobs, that there are diapers on the babies, that there is pabulum in their mouths, that people can afford their rent and their mortgages, and, maybe, just maybe, that there is a little bit of money left over to put presents under the Christmas tree this year.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Halifax.

I am proud to speak to and defend Bill C-58, which proposes amendments to both the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012. With good reason, the labour movement has consistently criticized the use of replacement workers, deeming it destructive and unfair. Bill C-58 is about restoring that long-overdue fairness and about levelling the playing field.

Relying on replacement workers not only diverts attention from the bargaining table but also prolongs disputes, ultimately poisoning the employer-worker relationship for generations. The crucial question that arises is why Canada should now consider banning the use of replacement workers. Practices' merely being customary does not automatically render them justifiable. Should a worker's

right to engage in meaningful labour strikes be compromised by the looming threat of replacement? Is a bargaining table where negotiating power is significantly curtailed truly fair? Can the reliance on replacement workers be deemed appropriate in 21st-century labour relations? The answers to these questions are no, no and no.

My parents fled a right-wing fascist dictatorship to come to Canada to work hard and to contribute to our democracy. In dictatorship Portugal, organized labour and unions were banned because the dictator did not want workers to be treated fairly, to have the right to assemble or to have bargaining rights, and he definitely did not want workers to be able to strike.

I stood on picket lines as an eight-year-old, alongside union members, my parents. My father, a proud member of United Steelworkers at John Inglis and Company, a highly profitable company, contributed to the production of industrial machinery here in Canada. The USW union and the Teamsters were two unions my dad belonged to, and my mother, Maria Fonseca, was a card-carrying member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, CUPE. I can attest to the pivotal role these unions played in enhancing the life of our family and the lives of thousands of union employees, and benefiting all workers.

Recalling a distressing moment from my childhood, I vividly remember when my father, Joachim, "Jack", Fonseca, informed my mother that his union brothers and sisters would be commencing a strike the next day, a chilly February day. His fight was centred around securing better wages, improving benefits, gaining advancements for health and safety conditions and safeguarding his pension. The ensuing strike lasted nearly two months, with replacement workers being a significant factor in its prolonged duration. The company opted to deploy non-unionized management personnel on the production line and brought in replacement workers, commonly referred to as "scabs". Additionally, it exploited vulnerable workers, employees who were struggling, by encouraging them to cross the picket line. This strategic move not only hindered the progress of negotiations but also poisoned relations between employees and employer and led to the deterioration of friendships among co-workers.

Extended disputes of this nature tend to bring out the worst, placing workers in untenable positions where they must choose between asserting their rights and providing for their family. Recognizing the detrimental impact of such situations, various jurisdictions have enacted legislation to prohibit the use of replacement workers. Quebec implemented such legislation in 1977 to curb the violent confrontations arising from strikes and picket lines in the province. Similarly, in 1993, the Government of British Columbia passed comparable legislation in response to the escalating tensions between employers and the labour movement. The outcomes in Quebec and B.C. following the passage of such legislation were notable. The frequency of strikes decreased, providing for more predictability and stability.

We consistently emphasize the importance of focusing on being at the bargaining table. Conversely, on the other side of the aisle, Conservatives always seem to have jumped up and introduced back-to-work legislation, as they say, and to have used replacement workers. It is just wrong. It is crucial to acknowledge that striking represents a last resort for workers, as no one desires to lose benefits and rely on strike pay. Collective bargaining, while challenging, remains the preferred solution.

• (1235)

Our economy relies on employers and unions engaging in meaningful negotiations to secure the best and most resilient agreements. Bill C-58 seeks to maintain focus on the bargaining table, promoting stability and certainty in supply chains and in the overall economy. While each industry and bargaining table may differ, the overarching goal is consistent: keeping parties engaged at the table, fostering a more predictable process and eliminating distractions. The legislation aims to achieve these outcomes for business, employers and unions alike. Emphasizing the importance of this approach is not only a smart strategy but also the right one. Labour has long advocated for such measures, and the positive reactions from labour leaders since the bill's introduction underscore the significance of the bill. As expressed by Gil McGowan from the Alberta Federation of Labour, "[t]his is Canadian politics at its best. This is Parliament working for workers." Past victories by unions have significantly enhanced the ability of workers to enjoy a decent quality of life. I highlight these points because, now more than ever, legislation supporting workers is crucial.

There are members of Parliament, including the Conservative leader, with a history of attacking labour, attacking unions and undermining the interests of workers. The Conservative leader has been a strong advocate for implementing U.S.-style right-to-work laws in Canada. It is telling that the Conservatives and their leader avoid mentioning the words "union", "labour" or "scab". These omissions speak volumes about their anti-labour stance.

Unionized workers are currently leading the way in negotiating substantial wage increases amidst rising inflation. Moreover, it is great that an increasing number of young Canadian workers are expressing interest in the labour movement, initiating union efforts in diverse workplaces such as Uber, Starbucks and grocery stores.

Let us not forget, from during Stephen Harper's administration, the Conservative leader's anti-worker Bill C-377. The Conservatives vigorously opposed card-check legislation, which aimed to fa-

cilitate unionization. They opted instead to make things more difficult for workers and to afford employers more time to intervene in union initiatives. The Liberal government, in response, enacted legislation to reverse the anti-union Conservative amendments under Bill C-377 and Bill C-525, bills that undermined unions and the ability of workers to organize. Across Canada, employers invest millions in legal, consulting and security services to thwart union drives, ensuring their lack of success. There have been employers that have helicoptered replacement workers over picket lines into job sites.

The Conservative leader and the Conservative Party advocate importing into Canada U.S.-style right-to-work laws that weaken the labour movement by hindering unions and collective bargaining. Shamefully, the Conservative leader actively promotes right-to-work laws here in Canada. In 2012, the Conservative leader spearheaded a campaign to allow public sector workers to opt out of union dues, directly challenging the Rand formula, a rule backed by the Supreme Court that allows unions to collect dues. The Conservative leader is, unequivocally, an anti-labour-union proponent, aligning himself with extreme right-wing, MAGA politics. Despite the pivotal role played by the labour movement in securing progressive labour laws and improved working conditions, the Conservatives consistently fail to acknowledge these contributions. The Conservative leader's history reflects consistent support for anti-union, right-to-work policies looking to rob individuals of civil and job rights.

In contrast, Bill C-58 legislation under consideration would be unique, arising from tripartite collaboration among employers, workers and the government. It aims to enhance labour relations in Canada, fostering greater stability and certainty for all citizens.

• (1240)

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's speech, and he talked about the legislation and how necessary it is. Why, in 2016 and in 2019, did he vote against legislation that would have done the same thing that the bill before us would do?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's party has always been anti-labour. The member cannot even say the word "labour". He cannot even say the words "organized labour". I have never heard the member say the word "union". That is because, on that side of the House, Conservatives do not believe in labour, in fairness and in supporting workers. That is what I have seen from that side. We see it day after day. The Conservative Party is against labour, organized labour in particular, and unions here in this country.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague why the government waited so long to introduce anti-scab legislation. Quebec passed its law in 1977. Canada has had models for years and has watched Quebec evolve in that regard.

First of all, I would like to know why the government waited so long. Second, why call for an 18-month delay before the legislation comes into force? Is it because the government is hoping for a change in government before then?

[English]

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, the member is quite right that the legislation is long overdue. The way the legislation has come together is the right way. It has been a tripartite type of agreement where business, government, and labour and unions are at the table working together. With respect to the prolonged period, the 18 months, we are working together with those groups. That is what we want to do: ensure that we get it right and that we have all the pieces in place so we have the best labour stability here in Canada. We are learning from what is happening in Quebec, with its legislation, and in British Columbia. We are taking all the best ideas and bringing them into Bill C-58. That is what we have done. We will do it at the table, working with all the parties.

• (1245)

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I heard my friend, in his speech, decry the fact that the Conservatives voted repeatedly for back-to-work legislation, yet, if memory serves, the Liberal Party was right there with the Conservatives when the Port of Montreal was out on strike and when Canada Post was out on strike.

Does the member's speech reflect a change of heart? If so, and I very much hope that is the case, will he apologize to the workers who were affected by such draconian legislation?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, the member would know or ought to know that this is something the Government of British Columbia was asking for.

What is most important here is that we understand that the best agreements are those had at the table, and that the legislation to stop replacement workers is the right legislation. It is the legislation that would level the playing field and bring fairness to workers, unions and labour, which for too long they have not had.

I am proud to stand here in my place in Parliament, advocate for Bill C-58 and make sure we bring in the best legislation possible for the workers of Canada.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we often talk about labour in terms of unions, but the union movement has had a profoundly positive impact on a wide spectrum of social issues and has improved conditions of non-union members. Can the member provide his thoughts on that issue?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, the member is so right. This is not just about union and labour workers; this is for all workers. They have improved health and safety conditions in the workplace, improved wages in the workplace and improved benefits in the

workplace. The Conservatives have voted against all of those measures and all of those things to help workers in Canada. It is unfortunate the Conservatives have been against helping the worker. I know this legislation would help all workers in Canada.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Halifax, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise today to speak in support of Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012. With this piece of legislation, our government is taking meaningful action to improve labour relations in Canada and ensure that Canadian workers can benefit from good, middle-class jobs.

As we know, I come to this chamber from the riding of Halifax. Our city is home to many private and public sector unions and their workers, who continue to contribute to our local economy, to enrich our community and to build the Halifax of tomorrow.

One may be a health care worker or a schoolteacher with NS-GEU, a child care worker with CUPE, a firefighter with PSAC, a shipbuilder with Unifor, an electrician with IBEW, a trucker with Teamsters Canada, a port worker with the Halifax Longshoremen's Association or a postal carrier with CUPW. These are just a few of the many union jobs done by workers in Halifax.

Since the days of Confederation, unions have gone on to build and shape the economy as we know it today. In fact, the middle class, weekends, and maternity and parental leaves were created by unions.

A union job promises a living wage that supports families and communities; it is permanent and helps build toward a pension. It provides protection and security in the workplace. These are the values that the current government believes in and the kinds of jobs that we believe Canadian workers deserve. With Bill C-58, we are staying true to the promise by banning replacement workers.

Unions have repeatedly told us that hiring replacement workers goes straight against and flies in the face of their free and fair collective bargaining power. It undermines the workers' legitimate right to strike.

It takes away a lot of power from them at the bargaining table. It literally puts their back against the wall. It also brings frustration and increases tensions, which can sometimes lead to violence on the picket line. That can lead to rifts in a community.



Hiring replacement workers can have an impact on labour relations. Unions have told us that this creates an unequal footing in negotiations. They explain that allowing replacement workers weakens workers' main tool to exert pressure, which is the right to withhold their labour, to withhold the means of production.

Bill C-58 would set clear rules for both parties. It would set the table for free and fair collective bargaining. It would put the employer and the union on equal footing. All they would have to do is sit down together and find a solution. If they can do that, they will bring stability and certainty. They will stimulate the country's economy and prosperity.

On top of that, with clear and fair rules in place, we may be able to avoid unnecessary strikes and lockouts. This would create more stability for Canadians and more certainty for investors. That will secure good jobs with good working conditions for the workers.

We are banning the use of replacement workers, or scabs, because we believe in a balanced table, in truly free and fair collective bargaining.

We believe that it is not us against them. It is us, with them. Nobody should be afraid that anyone will try to take something away from them or be better off than they are. It is about helping each other out and finding a solution that will work for everybody.

That is what we are doing with Bill C-58. We are working on getting rid of some of the entrenched resentment that has built up over the years during labour disputes. We are making one of the most significant changes to the federal collective bargaining system that Canada has ever seen, in fact.

Why are we doing that? It is because workers are the backbone of the Canadian economy, and the lifeblood of our communities. They are entitled to safe workplaces and to good working conditions.

We have already done a lot in this direction. We ratified the International Labour Organization's convention 190 to end harassment and violence in the workplace. Federally regulated private sector workers now have 10 days of paid sick leave. We are modernizing the Employment Equity Act.

Bill C-58 is the next step that will help improve work and working conditions for Canadians. It is about keeping parties focused at the table and providing more stability and certainty for the economy.

• (1250)

When people have good working conditions and are treated fairly by their employers, our society and our economy are more resilient. When the parties focus on the table, the deals get done and they last. The labour movement was founded on the idea that our workplaces and workers' lives can be better. That is what we should all keep striving for.

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member's speech. He talked about how necessary it is to have anti-replacement worker legislation, so I would like to give him the same opportunity as his colleague from Mississauga, who refused to answer.

### *Government Orders*

If this legislation is so good and so necessary, why did he vote against similar legislation in 2016 and again in 2019?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may recall that in both cases, those labour disputes were protracted. They began to impact all Canadians in a way that was harming the economy and harming Canadians, their prosperity and their unfettered access to the services and goods they needed. However, I will stress what the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville said to the same hon. member, which is that the legislation we are presenting today is not about picking sides. It is about working together.

This spirit of togetherness is going to keep people at the table. As we all know, the table is where the best work gets done.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was alarmed to hear that the government was spending billions of dollars on a plant in Ontario that would use over 900 workers from South Korea. These would essentially be replacement workers. This is after telling Canadians time and time again how many jobs this would create.

If the government is so supportive of labour in Canada, why is it essentially farming out jobs that should be going to Canadians and sticking Canadian taxpayers with the bill?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Mr. Speaker, it sounds a little bit as though the question is straying from the intention of the bill. I am going to take the opportunity to talk about the bill a little bit more and remind members that we are banning the use of replacement workers. That is going to be very productive at the bargaining table. As we know, the use of replacement workers prolongs disputes. It can poison the workforce for years.

A good collective bargaining system and a worker's ability not only to work but also to strike are absolutely fundamental to our democracy and to the functioning of our economy.

• (1255)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is being very insistent. He is saying that this bill must pass, that it is important, that it is crucial and that it will make huge changes. However, why should it pass now, in 2023, when there have been 11 attempts over the past few years? Eleven similar bills have been introduced in the past, mainly by the Bloc Québécois.

What is so special about our current situation for this to be so urgent and for the Liberal government to finally believe in it?

[English]

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleague will not mind if I respond in English.

In fact, this commitment was in the Liberal Party's election platform in 2021, which flowed from an affirmation of the Supreme Court in 2015. Therefore, it has long been a part of Liberal DNA to protect workers and to make sure that they have access to the fair bargaining they deserve.

*Government Orders*

As the member knows, the world has been very complicated for the last couple of years, with the pandemic and the interruption of Parliament. However, I think we are pleased to be coming to this very important legislation today.

**Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a quick question for me is this: Does this include all unions not having anti-scab legislation? If it does not, why not?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. This legislation, of course, affects what is in the purview of the federal government, which would be federal employees. These changes to collective bargaining relate only to federally regulated industries. I can be more specific for the member: The federally regulated private sector includes the following industries: banking; telecommunications and broadcasting; air, rail and marine transportation; most federal Crown corporations, for example, Canada Post; and first nations band councils.

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. colleague from Halifax leads right into my question. This legislation is going to apply to small airlines that deliver pharmaceuticals and fly air ambulances, as well as to firefighting, which could be very serious. Lives are going to be put at risk because small airlines are not going to be able to bring in replacement pilots in emergency situations. How is that going to be addressed in this legislation?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Mr. Speaker, the legislation is very clear that the elimination of replacement workers would not apply in certain specific cases. These cases include potential danger to life and safety, and that is what the member is referring to; damage to the environment; significant damage to private property; and some other very limited cases, which would be under the watchful eyes of the labour regulation board.

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents in Chilliwack—Hope.

I will be splitting my time today with the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

It has been an interesting debate this morning. We have heard the Liberals talk about how the legislation is long overdue. They have asked how anyone could not support this type of legislation. The fact is that over the last couple of decades, and even during the eight long years of the Liberal government, every member of that caucus has voted against anti-replacement worker legislation on multiple occasions. The last two Liberal speakers voted against anti-replacement worker legislation a couple of times each, both in 2016 and 2019.

The Minister of Labour, who has been on a cross-country tour meeting with union leaders to extol the virtues of the bill, voted against similar legislation when it was introduced through private members' bills by the Bloc Québécois and the NDP. He has voted against it on numerous occasions. Therefore, everyone will forgive us if we take with a grain of salt the high and mighty words and condemnations of other members of Parliament when the Liberal government has members, including the Minister of Labour, who voted the other way on this type of legislation on multiple occasions.

What has changed? We know what has changed. The government, which is continuing to make life more difficult for Canadians, owes the NDP. The NDP is back-seat driving for the Liberal government and it is quite happy to go along as long as it gets chauffeurs for their ministers and continues to enjoy the benefits of power. Multiple times the Liberal government voted the other way, so it is hard to take them seriously when Liberals talk about the urgency and necessity for legislation that they themselves railed against in the very recent past. Therefore, we will take no lessons from the Liberals on supporting union workers.

We will take no lessons from the government, which hectors the official opposition on its support for Canadian workers. Not only is the government supporting replacement workers, but it is using taxpayer dollars to do it. Let that sink in. We are talking about union and non-union workers getting up before it is light out and going to do their blue-collar jobs, in many cases sending 30%, 40% or 50% of their paycheques to different levels of government, including Ottawa. The government is then giving that money to multinational corporations that are going to use foreign replacement workers to build the plants.

It is bad enough that the government would bypass skilled Canadian labour to build projects such as the Stellantis battery plant, but to take the money those workers send to Ottawa and use it against them is the height of hypocrisy. The Liberals want to lecture others about replacement workers, but they are using foreign replacement workers not only at the Stellantis plant but at the Northvolt project in Quebec.

We now know that hundreds of taxpayer-funded, which means worker-funded, foreign replacement workers will be filling jobs that should be going to Quebecers despite over \$7 billion in taxpayer subsidies going to this project. This is the record of the Liberal government when it comes to replacement workers. It is bringing in foreign replacement workers to do the work that we know Canadians can do. The Liberals have talked about the Stellantis battery plant not having the specialized skills available to set up the plant, that they need 900 to 1,600 foreign workers, depending on who one talks to, from South Korea.

● (1300)

I have news for the government: We have the skilled labour that can set up those plants. We know that if we give them the plans and blueprints, they have the know-how and they will get the job done. However, the government is bringing in foreign replacement workers.

Because the government refuses to release the contracts on these “investments” of workers' money into those projects, the Conservatives have demanded that the industry committee look at this. We are demanding the release of the contracts. How many foreign replacement workers did the government negotiate in these deals?

There is \$45 billion in major projects. We know now that two of them include foreign replacement workers, and we assume that the others do as well. We want answers. That is why the member for South Shore—St. Margarets has demanded emergency meetings on this issue. We will not allow the government to let this slide, at \$15 billion a crack at these plants and bringing in foreign workers.

This is supposed to be about Canadian jobs and Canadian workers, yet the government continues to provide the money that Canadian workers send to Ottawa for foreign replacement workers. That is absolutely shameful and reprehensible, and the official opposition is demanding answers. We want those contracts released. If the government is still proud of those contracts, it should have no problem releasing them. However, of course, we have to fight tooth and nail every step of the way, and we are up for that fight as well.

The government continues to punish workers, not just union workers but all workers, with its carbon tax and its policies that are driving up interest rates, making it harder for workers to afford a home. It is hard to take the Liberals seriously. They feign how much they care about workers, but everything they are doing is punishing those workers who simply want to provide for their families.

We heard just this morning that a record number of Ontarians are seeking help from the food bank. That is the record of the government when it comes to workers. People are using the food bank for the very first time. Two million people a month are using a food bank. People do not know how they are going to afford to live in their own home when their mortgages come up for renewal. More money is going to service the national debt than is going to health care facilities in the provinces. These workers have to wait eight to 16 hours for their kids to be seen when they have RSV or other seasonal issues. When they are sitting in the emergency room, they can know that it is because of the reckless fiscal policies of the government that punish workers, that more money is going to service the Prime Minister's deficits and debt than is going to our health care system. Therefore, we will take no lessons from the Liberal government on supporting workers.

We will support workers by standing up for the jobs they need and standing up for the projects in which they work. The Liberal-NDP government has been the most anti-worker government in Canadian history, voting against, acting against and advocating against major energy projects, for instance, that give family supporting jobs right across the country. The government opposes those. The Liberals cannot tell me and other members of the Conservative Party that they are pro-worker. They are against the projects that workers need to put food on the table. They tax those workers and send that money to foreign replacement workers. Their policies are making the cost of living for those workers out of reach. Interest rates are going up and up. Inflation is going up and up. The government is not only doing nothing, it is making it worse.

• (1305)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe the member has the temerity to say that the Liberals and NDP are anti-workers. It causes me to think about the fact that there is labour component in the Canada-Ukraine

trade agreement. Is that the reason the member opposite voted against it? If that is not the reason, could he have the courage to tell us why he voted against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement?

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I understand why that member does not want to talk about his voting record on anti-replacement worker legislation, because he too voted against anti-replacement worker legislation in 2016 and again in 2019. However, he is good company, because so did the Minister of Labour. It was not an urgent issue until it was urgent that they get the support of the NDP to maintain their power-sharing agreement in Ottawa.

Now he has seen the light, and the light comes from the NDP, which is demanding this is the new way things are going to go. The NDP-Liberal coalition is alive and well. I understand why that member does not want to talk about this legislation or the fact that he has consistently voted against the interest of workers in our country.

• (1310)

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy these sessions in the House, where the Conservatives and the Liberals compete over who is the worst at things. Whether it is the worst at supporting Ukraine, or the worst at supporting housing or the worst friends of workers, it is nice to hear that debate between the two of them.

I have a very serious question. The Conservatives like to talk about powerful paycheques, and we know what made powerful paycheque, the trade union movement. It was the trade union movement that raised wages. It was the trade union movement that set the standards for leave, including parental leave and sick leave, and even weekends. It was the trade union movement that set standards for occupational health and safety.

Does that mean, if the Conservatives really are the friends of workers and better friends than the Liberals, that they are going to be supporting this legislation in order to make paycheques more powerful?

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for recognizing it is the Conservatives who are fighting for more powerful paycheques, and that would start by getting rid of things like the NDP-Liberal carbon tax, which drives up the cost of everything, including groceries, gas and home heating. We certainly want to have more money go to workers. As well, when the workers' money is taxed, we do not expect that money to go to foreign replacement workers, which is what we have seen under the Liberal government with the Stellantis battery plant and the Northvolt project in Quebec.

*Government Orders*

The Conservatives support workers, whether they are in trade unions or not, and workers support the Conservative Party, as we have seen from the bring it home events that the Leader of the Opposition has held right across the country. The polling certainly shows workers are on the side of the Conservative Party, just like we are on the side of workers.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Chilliwack—Hope has made an important point about the job-destroying track record of the government when it comes to energy policy. These are unionized workers, non-unionized workers and indigenous workers. These are every kind of worker in some of the highest-paying, best jobs in the Canadian economy.

Could he comment on the government's track record on jobs in this industry?

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, it is abysmal. The Liberals have not only driven out hundreds of billions of dollars in investment in our country, but they have driven away the jobs that go with that.

Whether it is in forestry, mining or oil and gas, the Liberal-NDP government consistently opposes those projects that put people to work, that give them economic opportunity and the opportunity to provide for their communities and families. Instead, it advocates against those projects and gets them shut down. Then when the workers send their hard-earned money to Ottawa, the government turns around and gives it to multinational corporations to hire foreign temporary replacement workers. We will never support that kind of a plan.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

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

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, during the debate pursuant to Standing Order 66 on Motion No. 42 to concur in the third report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair and at the conclusion of the time provided for debate or when no member rises to speak, whichever is earlier, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred pursuant to Standing Order 66.

[Translation]

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

**CANADA LABOUR CODE**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, since I was elected in 2015, I have spent most of my energy speaking up for the workers I represent in Calgary. They have been systematically crushed by the government, its NDP coalition partner and, sadly, from 2015 to 2019, by a short-lived NDP government in Alberta. Therefore, this bill is not one that is going to be a great prescriptive answer for workers in my riding. They have been punished by the government and it appears they will continue to be so.

I am passionate about the freedom of workers in my riding to work, about their freedom to organize and to bargain collectively through union membership. I am passionate about freedom of association. It is an essential and foundational freedom on which our country was built. Let there be no doubt about that.

Also, let there be no doubt that there is only one party in the House of Commons that supports worker, which is this party. The other three parties in the House have never supported the workers in my community. Everything the NDP-Liberal government and its fellow travellers in the Bloc do, every instinct they possess runs counter to the interests of the workers in my riding.

Let us examine the track record of the NDP-Liberal government as it relates to the workers in my community. The very first thing the government did, even before Parliament met for the first time, was to cancel the northern gateway pipeline by an order in council. This decision instantly killed thousands of jobs, union jobs, non-union jobs, indigenous community jobs, every kind of job one can imagine.

The people who would have been employed by that project were among the highest-paid workers in the Canadian economy. Had that critical infrastructure actually been built, it would have led to thousands of new jobs in extraction projects that never materialized for the lack of infrastructure that the government deliberately killed. It was literally the first thing it did when it took office.

It also denied the world access to Canada's energy products, leaving it vulnerable to dictator oil, much to our folly and what we see tragically happening in the world today as Putin funds his war machine with energy exports that could have been displaced by Canadian exports.

The Liberals passed Bill C-69, which ensured that no major project would ever be approved again. They used to have talking points that tried to deny that was case, but when the Minister of Environment was a candidate, he let the mask slip and admitted that killing the energy industry was exactly the purpose of Bill C-69. Who is paying for this? It is the workers who are paying for the destruction to the Canadian economy that has happened in this sector under the government. That bill ruined the lives of thousands of workers and their families. Under the NDP-Liberal government, 200,000 energy workers lost their job. I say that deliberately.

*Government Orders*

Let us not forget that before the federal NDP-Liberal coalition took place, there was a different alliance between the NDP and the Liberals, and that was the Alberta NDP and the federal government. Together they destroyed thousands of jobs and the lives that depended on them.

Again, these were union jobs, non-union jobs and indigenous community jobs. The callous way in which the NDP and the Liberals threw away all these jobs and made sure they would not come back is shameful. Therefore, we will take no lessons from them on protecting jobs for workers, whether they belong to a union or not.

I have said before in the House, especially between 2015 and 2018, that I had grown men in their fifties reduced to tears in my office over the loss of their livelihoods. These are highly paid, professional, proud people. Some of them were old enough that they had entered the workforce when Pierre Trudeau was prime minister. They told me that they had even managed to survive the NEP, but now they did not have a job. Women, who had reached the senior levels of corporate Calgary, were suddenly without a job.

● (1315)

I have knocked on doors. I knocked on one door where a mom said their family came to Canada 20 years ago. Her husband was working in the Middle East and her son was working in Texas. They had to leave the country for work in the energy industry. I will take nothing from the government on jobs.

What are the Liberals doing now? They are subsidizing replacement workers from foreign countries to come and take work away that should be given to Canadians. There was \$7 billion for the Northvolt project with foreign replacement workers. There was \$15 billion to Stellantis for foreign replacement workers. It is disgraceful and it is shameful the way the Liberals come here and try to lecture Conservatives on supporting workers.

We are now at the end of the year. The NDP-Liberal government tabled this bill banning replacement workers in federally regulated industries as per the demand put upon the government by the NDP. This is not what the Liberals campaigned on. This is something the Liberals voted against. The NDP has tabled this very policy in the House through private members' business.

The same Liberals who are speaking this morning in debate, who voted against this, would now have people believe that this is somehow part of their policy and what they ran on. This is clearly a long-standing NDP policy, but this is nothing more than the NDP tail wagging the Liberal dog. That is exactly why we call it the NDP-Liberal government.

The bill would ban workers from working in federally regulated industries if the workers who belong to a union go on strike. It is a bill that risks pitting workers against each other. Workers who choose not to join a union are workers too. Workers across picket lines are workers too, but not to the NDP-Liberals.

I even heard this morning the use of dehumanizing language. The Liberals referred to these workers as "scabs". Let us think about that. It is a degrading, humiliating and dehumanizing word they used, not because this is about power for workers. It is not. It is about control and that is why they use this type of language.

The market is an amazing and undeniable force of nature, and it does tend to sort things out quickly. It allows the best decisions to be made at the bargaining table and incentivizes agreements. The government is presiding over a cost-of-living crisis where rent has doubled, mortgage payments are up 150% and a generation of young Canadian workers have given up on the dream of home ownership because they cannot afford to live in this country. We have seen food inflation. We have seen every kind of inflation fuelled by taxes paid by workers.

The NDP-Liberal government has nothing to teach Conservatives or tell Canadians about supporting workers. There is only one party that is supporting workers, the one party that stands for powerful paycheques that can be used to buy homes that people can afford in safe communities. That is what the Conservative vision is for this country. It is not spending billions of tax dollars, paid for by workers, to pay foreign workers to come and take their jobs away from them and bid up the price of homes in their communities. It is shameful.

I will take no lessons from the Liberal-NDP government on support for workers. The workers in my riding have seen the sharp end of the Liberal government. I saw desperation at people's doors, especially in the 2019 election. The community I represent is full of talented, hard-working, ambitious workers who have been crushed by the government.

The good news is they see hope. They know workers are increasingly turning to the Conservative Party, and it is the workers in Canada who are going to elect a Conservative government that will deliver powerful paycheques that Canadians need to be able to afford to live, and rein in the wasteful spending and corporate welfare that has become endemic under the government.

It is only the Conservatives in this place who are standing up for workers in Canada.

● (1320)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is saying to support workers and jobs. Trade agreements support workers and jobs, yet we saw just last week that the Conservative Party, en masse, voted against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. Can the member indicate why he voted against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement?

*Government Orders*

• (1325)

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that question was out of order for relevance, but I can understand why this member would not wish to ask a question relevant to the speech that I just made; he knows he is one of the members who has already voted against anti-replacement worker legislation in this House more than once. Therefore, I fully understand why the member will not talk about the bill or ask me a question about this bill. It is because his flip-flop that he is undertaking right now is not something that he wants well understood by his constituents, perhaps.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, just following up on some of the remarks that the member made about Canada's oil and gas industry, I wonder if he can confirm, as I believe is true, that the Canadian oil and gas sector today extracts more barrels per day than at any other time in Canadian history. I wonder if the member wants to confirm the number, above and beyond the over \$30 billion that the current Liberal government has put into the TMX pipeline and the amount of public subsidy for the Canadian oil and gas sector.

While he is at it, perhaps the member has numbers for temporary foreign workers who work in the oil and gas industry because it has certainly made use of TFWs and workers under the international labour mobility program as well. Perhaps the member would like to comment on those phenomena.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Mr. Speaker, there is demand for the product that the energy industry produces. Despite everything that the current government has done to kill that industry, the billions and billions of dollars that the businesses lost and the hundreds of thousands of lost jobs, we are a long way from catching up to where we could have been and the promise that existed.

With respect to the TMX, the member is right to bring up the waste on that. This is a project that should have been built with private capital. We had a private proponent who was going to build the TMX with its own money. If it ballooned from \$4 billion to \$30 billion, that would be on the proponent and its shareholders to worry about. However, it is the people and the workers of Canada who are paying for the overage now that the government has been put in a position to nationalize it after it chased private capital out.

With respect to the member's third question, I oppose the subsidizing of any industry where the crown is subsidizing a private business on the promise of creating jobs when it is really just importing temporary labour, bidding up the cost of housing and making the taxpayer, the workers in Canada, pay for the jobs for the foreign replacement workers.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we know that Quebec passed anti-scab legislation in 1977. From what I understand, the Conservatives are against passing a similar law in Canada.

Can my colleague tell me whether he thinks Quebec made a mistake by passing that law in 1977?

[English]

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to put this all on that particular policy change in 1977. Maybe even going back earlier

than 1977, the Province of Quebec has been the laggard in the Canadian economy for most of these past 45 years. Its per capita GDP has been much lower than other provinces. If the member would ask me if there is a grand economic success behind the policies of Quebec, we could have that discussion. I do not think it is really appropriate for the purpose of this chamber, but I do not see a connection to a grand period of economic expansion behind that policy in 1977.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Vancouver East.

I want to start by reminding Canadians that the middle class in Canada was built on the union movement. It was not until we had a strong union movement that we developed a strong middle class.

There have been a number of studies over the years by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Centre for Future Work and others that have shown that, starting in about the 1980s, union density, which is just a fancy word for what percentage of workers belong to a union, has gone down, from 38% in 1981 to just 29% in 2022. That is a Stats Canada number. That number, according to these studies, correlates with a decrease in the number of Canadians who belong to the Canadian middle class and with the decline in real wages for Canadian workers.

We see that belonging to a union has meant more powerful paycheques for Canadians, has meant more job stability in many cases and has meant a stronger Canadian economy overall. When we see fewer workers belonging to unions, we see more vulnerability for those workers, lower pay and consequences for the Canadian economy.

When workers are well paid for the work they do and they have spending power in the local economy, that helps feed local businesses, helps feed our economy and creates strong conditions for business. That is the lesson of Henry Ford, who is by no means a socialist, but even he realized that if we do not pay workers well enough to buy products in the economy, it is not long before the economy overall suffers, as well-paid workers are the cornerstone of prosperity.

How is it that the union movement has been able to win powerful paycheques for workers or to help them win them for themselves? There are many components to the labour movement. There are many ways they do advocacy, and there are many ways that workers within the union movement advocate for themselves and for fellow workers. However, all of that, at the rock bottom, is supported ultimately by the ability to strike.

That means the ability to say they are not satisfied with the terms and conditions of work, whether that is pay, benefits, pension, workplace procedures or workplace safety and health, and that they are not going to go into work on those terms and conditions. They want to stand with the people in their workplaces who feel similarly and demand better. Ultimately, all of us in a workplace, if we are of the same mind, should be able to withhold our labour.

The right to strike is the most important principle that subtends all of the power and influence the union movement has had in order to improve the position of Canadian workers. The most significant way this can be undermined is when employers are allowed to hire replacement workers during a strike. While some workers are out on the picket line saying they deserve better pay or want to address workplace safety and health issues, other workers come in the back door, perform their work and sometimes get paid, egregiously, on better terms than the workers who are out on strike were paid before the strike began.

New Democrats have been arguing alongside the labour movement for decades now and have presented, many times, legislation that would end the practice of employers being allowed to bring in replacement workers. The Liberals will say this was a campaign commitment of theirs. However, if we look at their platform, it is not true. It was a commitment they made to ban replacement workers when companies lock out their workers essentially to impose a strike.

It is only since the NDP used our power in this Parliament that the proposal became a comprehensive one that defends the right to strike instead of offering punishment to employers who would lock workers out. What we need in order to vouchsafe the power of Canadian workers' paycheques and the right to strike is a ban on replacement workers in the context of a strike as well. I am very proud to be part of an NDP caucus that has delivered that and made sure that this legislation does the whole job and properly respects and protects Canadian workers' right to strike.

• (1330)

It is the kind of legislation we needed for almost six years when IBEW Local 213 was out on the picket line against Ledcor trying to secure a first contract. Nobody ends up with a six-year labour dispute unless an employer is using replacement workers. The business wraps up a lot sooner than six years if it is not using replacement workers. What that means is the business is forced to bargain.

In this House, I have watched as Liberals and Conservatives voted together. As I have said, the real coalition in Ottawa is the Liberal-Conservative coalition. It voted to order workers back to work, to essentially take away their right to strike. We saw it with the Port of Montreal and we saw it with Canada Post workers.

Notable have been the examples where the federal government has refused to say that it will legislate workers back to work, because then we saw the company come to a deal. One of those instances was in 2019 with CN. CN was asking for back-to-work legislation. The government departed from its usual tack and refused to promise back-to-work legislation. Very soon after the federal government clearly refused the idea of bringing in back-to-work legislation, we saw a resolution to the strike. The company's strategy for bargaining could not use the federal government to get out of

### *Government Orders*

paying workers their fair share and to circumvent a real negotiation at the table.

It is likewise with replacement workers. If replacement workers are banned so that they cannot be part of the bargaining strategy of a company, we will see more speedy resolutions to labour disputes and ultimately, I believe, fewer labour disputes. In fact, there is some evidence for this from jurisdictions with anti-scab legislation. Those who say this is a travesty that would prolong labour disputes or that there would be more labour disputes are speaking against the evidence and, frankly, have an ignorance of how collective bargaining works and the ways companies mobilize replacement workers in order to get out of having to bargain fairly at the table.

We have heard a cornucopia of red herrings in this debate. We have heard Tories talk about replacement workers at battery plants that have not even been built yet. I share their concern about tax dollars being invested to create jobs for Canadians. Those are legitimate issues, but they do not have a place in a debate about anti-scab legislation.

The Tories are using a new term they are developing today for replacement workers to distract from the fact that they refuse to take a clear position on whether they support replacement workers coming in the back door while real, current Canadian workers are out on strike bargaining for better pay and a better future. That is a red herring. Canadian workers should not allow them to get away with being dishonest, quite frankly, about their position on anti-scab legislation by trying to distract with this other conversation, an important conversation but a different conversation nevertheless. This is our time to have a conversation about replacement workers in the case of a strike.

The Conservatives want to talk about the NDP wagging the Liberal dog. There is some truth to that on this point, for sure. As I said, the commitment the Liberals made is not what they are moving ahead with. We have a formula that would protect workers' right to strike. I am proud of that. They can go sing that from the mountaintops. We are also doing that. We want workers to know that we have their backs when they are out on strike, like the Ledcor workers, who needed legislation like this.

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I would remind Canadians, too, of Bill C-377, from the Parliament when the Conservative leader sat at the cabinet table, and Bill C-525, bills that would have made it much easier to decertify a union in the workplace, not with the touted 50%-plus-one majority that is talked about when it is time to form a union, but with a 40% minority. That is how the Conservatives would have allowed unions to be decertified in a workplace. Not only that, but they would have required a bunch of sensitive financial information about individual union members to be published online, which would have put workers at a serious disadvantage in their strike position because it would have required unions to reveal the amount in their strike fund to employers so they could plan to bring in replacement workers and wait out the strike fund.

• (1335)

Give me a break when Conservatives say they are standing up for workers. We know that a strong union movement is integral to the powerful paycheques that Canadian middle-class workers have been able to bring home. We know that banning replacement workers is important to protect that. That is why New Democrats are proud we have this legislation before the House.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member made indirect reference to the part of the Liberal election platform that said we would bring forward back-to-work legislation. I am glad there is a high sense of co-operation taking place between the New Democratic Party and the government to ensure this legislation passes. I see that as a good thing. The labour movement benefits not only union members but non-union members, and in fact all of society collectively.

My question for my friend is with regard to this being federal legislation, which only considers a certain percentage of the overall population in Canada. I think the member might know where I am going with this question. I would like provincial jurisdictions to follow suit with Quebec and B.C. The other day I made a mistake. It was an NDP government in B.C. that brought this in and a Liberal government in Quebec, which again shows that this goes beyond one political party.

Would the member not agree, with the legislation we are seeing today in Ottawa, that it would be nice to see other provincial jurisdictions follow suit and bring in similar legislation?

• (1340)

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see this legislation in jurisdictions across the country. I was very proud that the new premier in Manitoba, Wab Kinew, in the election campaign that led to his premiership, committed to bringing in anti-scab legislation in Manitoba. I very much look forward to seeing the Government of Manitoba move ahead with that.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I both reacted to the answer that a Conservative member gave earlier to my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles's question, which was very well put. Quebec was ahead of its time with its anti-scab legislation. Such a law is already in effect in Quebec. However, one political party is trying to make a dubious connection between Quebec supposedly being an "economic laggard"

and this legislation. I say "supposedly", because I do not agree with that at all.

I would like my colleague to talk about the dubious connection that my Conservative colleague made.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I would say that calling it a "dubious connection" is very generous. I see no connection at all between the bill preventing Quebec employers from using scab workers and an economic situation that is not working in Quebec. Those are my colleague's words, not mine. I think he was linking one thing to something that does not exist. Even if it did, it would still be a dubious connection.

Therefore, I would say that that comment was absurd.

[English]

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am indeed proud that it was the government in British Columbia that brought in the provincial version of this legislation. I very much look forward to the member's province following suit in short order.

We obviously have the opportunity, should this bill pass at second reading, to strengthen it at committee. I wonder if the member could share his thoughts on what ways this bill could be strengthened beyond what we see before us.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, the thing the New Democrats will be looking for assistance on most of all is the coming-into-force provisions. Right now, as the bill stands, there is an 18-month coming-into-force period after royal assent. We think that is a lot longer than it needs to be. As I recall, when we first started talking about implementing a dental plan, we heard from the government it would take seven years. We pushed back and it is getting done in 18 months.

We know that initial bureaucratic deadlines are often padded. New Democrats think that can come down, and we will be looking for the assistance of other members of this House to make that happen. If Conservatives are anywhere near as worker-friendly as they like to make themselves out to be, perhaps they will work with us to amend the bill at committee and move up the coming-into-force date.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to enter into debate on this anti-scab legislation.

This legislation is so important because we know that workers are struggling out there. We know that, when we have the union supporting us and fighting for us for better working conditions, better treatment and better wages, we are elevating the workforce not only for union members but also for all workers across the country.



I have been working ever since I was in grade 4, but years ago, I was a student trying to make ends meet through the course of the summer and to pay for my university tuition. I started working as a dishwasher, and later on that summer, I landed a job as the mail girl, which was the actual title at that company. Unfortunately, there was a strike, and for that entire summer, I did not make any money. I walked the pickets though, and I learned a lot about the labour movement and the importance and history of it.

I learned what the labour movement was fighting for and what it meant for the family members of those in that fight. I had a choice as a student to just say, "Hey, I don't have time for this" and find myself another summer job, but I did not do that. I stayed on the picket line to support those families and learn about that history. For me, it was such an important lesson. In fact, I learned so much, it was much more than I could have learned otherwise in any other scenario. Since then, I have been converted to believe in the labour movement, its history and what it means for current day workers.

We are talking about anti-scab legislation today. What does it really mean when we refer to "anti-scab" legislation? It is the importance of respecting and protecting the value of the workers in a particular union in a particular workforce. It means bringing balance to the whole equation of the imbalance of power for employers. All too often, employers will leverage different powers against the workers, and an example of that would be to bring in workers from outside to cross the picket line and undermine the position of existing workers. There are times when workers are even locked out while the employer brings in outside workers to do the work of the existing workers. This is to undermine them, drive them out and, really, dismantle labour and the voices of the workers.

The NDP, as members know, was founded by the CCF, by the labour movement. We strongly believe in the rights of workers. However, this is not the first time that the NDP has brought forward anti-scab legislation. We have done this at least eight times over the last number of years, most recently in 2016. However, both Liberals and Conservatives voted against the NDP's legislation on anti-scab workers. Fast-forward to today, and 25 New Democrats were able to force the Liberal government to take action in a minority government. We are now seeing anti-scab legislation tabled and debated in the House.

Our leader had a press event on the morning before the legislation was moved, which was held just outside of this chamber, with labour leaders. The media asked: "How is this relevant today? Are there any examples of where this is happening today?"

Well, as it happens, in my own riding of Vancouver East, at the Rogers site, workers were being locked out and Rogers was bringing in scab workers, and not from just within the local community. When I visited the picket line, the workers were telling me that the company was bringing in workers from outside of the country. It was bringing in workers from Toronto, and paying for them to come to Vancouver to do the work of the members there. I was at the picket line late afternoon on a Friday and then again on the Saturday. On the Friday afternoon, scab workers were driving in and out of the site, and the workers who were picketing there were being undermined by those scab workers.

### *Government Orders*

• (1345)

That means the workers will not be able to get the wages they need to support their own families, especially at a time when the cost of living and housing costs are so high. People need to be respected.

However, they were not necessarily fighting about wages. They were fighting for job protection. I met workers at that picket line who have been there for 30 plus years. They told me that they are not in this fight for themselves but are in this fight for future generations. They are close to retirement and want to make sure future workers coming in will not be undermined by the employer and that they will have the ability to fight for their working conditions and their rights.

They were there to bring balance to the equation of the power imbalance between the worker and the employer. They want to make this mark, not just for themselves, but for future generations. They also know, when they make this mark in this fight, they will impact other workers outside of Rogers. They want to move the entire labour force forward for workers. This is what the labour union movement has been about. That is what this anti-scab legislation is also about for these workers at Rogers.

I understand they have come to a tentative agreement, so fingers crossed that things will go through smoothly. However, it did not have to be this way. If this legislation had been in place, this would not have happened to those workers. This is what we are talking about, which is the need to protect workers.

The Conservatives claim they support workers. Talk is cheap. They need to show it in action. The Conservatives and their leader have a choice right now on what they are going to do with this bill. Are they going to support this bill, or are they going to play silly buggers, with games, in delaying the passage of this bill?

• (1350)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, there have been lots of discussions on how we need to treat one another civilly. We should not be referring to one another with unparliamentary names. I would suggest that that is what that was, and I would ask the member to withdraw the comment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I tend to agree that we should not be calling each other names.

The hon. member for Vancouver East could maybe retract that and then we could move on.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are sensitive. I will retract the words "silly buggers", but will they stop playing games with this bill and stop undermining the rights of workers? Will they end the debates in the House for what has already been studied, for example at committee, to delay the passage of bills, as they have done on the GST exemption bill for housing?

*Government Orders*

We have seen them play this game over and over again, so will they do what is right by the workers? Will they show their support in voting for this bill, or will they continue to distract from the work that is so necessary for the rights of workers? Time will tell, and the votes will come up. I urge the Conservatives to move forward in doing what is right.

In addition, I urge the government to move the timeline. Instead of 18 months for this bill to come into effect, I urge the government to bring it forward now to protect the workers.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are many things the member said that I agreed with this afternoon. When we speak of Bill C-58, we often talk about labour in the form of unions. One of the things I want to emphasize and ask her thoughts on relates to unions and negotiations and how non-union workers have benefited because of union workers. We have seen this through generations. There are many social causes at the forefront today, even going all the way back, and social programs that came out of pressures and advocacy of unions.

I am wondering if the member could provide her thoughts on this being great legislation and that we should be getting it passed. We can look at the possibility of amendments at the committee stage, which would be wonderful. Could she just add her thoughts to the many contributions unions have made to our communities over many decades?

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the labour movement has paved the way for better working conditions and wages for all workers, not just for people with a union. They are also working hard to make sure that those without unions have a chance to unionize.

We call on the Liberal government to make efforts to facilitate that process instead of impeding it.

• (1355)

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has been a theme of this debate on anti-scab legislation that the Conservatives have tried to change the topic and talk about something else. They have talked a lot about temporary foreign workers in the context of this debate.

I wonder if my colleague from Vancouver East would like to comment on the fact that, in the oil and gas industry, we see a lot of public subsidies. We also see the use of a lot of temporary foreign workers. One company, the Horizon Oil Sands project, was singled out for terrible abuses of temporary foreign workers. They were stealing their paycheques. Two fatalities happened on that job. We did not hear at that time about Conservatives wanting to take away public funds, even though perhaps that should have been the conversation. They were in government at the time. The use of temporary foreign workers between 2006, the first year of the Harper government, and 2011, just mid-term, escalated by 69%, and there were more people coming to Canada under the TFW program than there were through the normal immigration streams.

I wonder if the member for Vancouver East would like to take some time to enlighten Canadians on the Conservative track record when it comes to TFWs.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, indeed, the Conservatives have relied heavily on temporary foreign workers for the oil and gas sector and for many sectors. In that process, what are they doing? They are allowing for the exploitation of workers because they do not have permanent resident status. They are absolutely relying on the employer, and they face abuses and exploitation that are out of the ordinary. That needs to stop.

The Liberals, though, also continue to rely on temporary foreign workers. That needs to stop, too. That is why New Democrats have called for landed status on arrival now. We have also called on the government to regularize existing workers who are here in Canada, so they can have their rights protected.

Will the Conservatives show up for workers, and for the immigrant community, particularly?

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the member knows, Greens support this legislation, but we are concerned that, once again, the coming into force date is 18 months away. It is the same thing we saw in play with the Canada disability benefit, where members of the governing party have this rush in their rhetoric, but then, once the bill passes, it waits for far too long.

She mentioned at the end of her speech her concern with how long we would have to wait and whether an amendment could be brought forward to address this.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, the government could move this forward. It is the NDP's intention to amend the 18-month timeline. There is no reason to wait that long for it to come into force and effect. In fact, when I was on the picket line with Rogers workers, one of the first questions to me was: Why 18 months? Why so long? It is not reasonable. Workers said that six to 12 months could be accepted, but 18 months is out of touch with reality.

We want to see that amendment go through. We want the government to do what is right and to actually follow up with real action to move that timeline up from 18 months.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned that the government's legislation only covers federally regulated private organizations. If we want to make sure that replacement workers are not brought in, then why does it not apply to the public sector employees the federal government is in charge of, as well as the contracts they are signing with companies such as Stellantis, which is going to bring in 1,600 foreign workers?

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives were really concerned about workers and getting anti-scab legislation, first, they would actually vote for this and not play games with it. Second, I would like to hear them say they are against scabs and that they are against scab workers crossing picket lines. I have not heard them say that in this entire debate.

The other thing I would like to see them do would be to call on the provincial governments, call on their buddy from Alberta, Danielle Smith, to bring in anti-scab legislation for Albertans. That would go a long way. Next, they should go to Ontario and call on Doug Ford to do exactly that as well.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, intimate partner violence is increasing in Canada. More than four in 10 women have experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime, and it is estimated that up to 70% of domestic violence is not reported.

We need to work together to end gender-based violence by fostering a culture of respect and equality. Men have a crucial role to play in this effort. It is important for men to stand up publicly against gender-based violence, call out situations and not remain silent.

I want to emphasize the importance of men helping young men and boys at home, in schools and in our communities, so they can break free from the harmful ideas of toxic masculinity. We need to listen to women and girls and understand their experiences. We need to support them and provide them with the resources they need to escape violence. We need to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and ensure they face justice.

Together, we can make a difference. Let us work toward a future where gender-based violence is no longer a reality for women and girls in Canada.

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### AMBER ALERT PROGRAM

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my constituent, Alina Durham, for her tireless efforts to bring attention to the issue of adult missing persons. Her daughter, Shaelene Keeler Bell, was reported missing on January 30, 2021. Tragically, Shaelene's body was found several months later in the Fraser River.

Alina has used her personal tragedy to draw attention to a gap in Canada's missing persons protocols. Right now, Amber Alerts are only issued if the victim is under the age of 18. There is no Amber Alert system for adults.

To honour Shaelene's memory, I have introduced a private member's motion, Motion No. 89, which calls on the government to work with the provinces and territories to expand protections for

### Statements by Members

victims of crime over the age of 18 by amending the criteria for the activation of an Amber Alert for missing persons.

I want to thank Alina for her advocacy for missing adults, and I hope that all members of this House will join me in supporting my private member's motion in honour of Shaelene.

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### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Markham—Stouffville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last year, the UN's Secretary-General wrote, "Violence against women and girls is the most pervasive human rights violation in the world." Here in Canada, 184 women and girls were violently killed last year, and our government is taking action.

In 2017, we launched our whole-of-government strategy to end gender-based violence. We are working with provinces and territories by supporting crisis hotlines in every jurisdiction, and we are funding over 1,400 women's shelters and sexual assault centres.

Local organizations in York region and across the country are making a difference, including the 20-plus agencies that are part of York Region's Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee. I would like to salute all those working in this field in York region, including the early pioneers: Yellow Brick House, Sandgate and Belinda's Place.

We know that girls and women cannot reach their full potential if they are not safe. Working together, we can help bring about positive change in Canada and around the world.

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[Translation]

### 60TH FINALS OF THE 2026 JEUX DU QUÉBEC D'HIVER IN BLAINVILLE

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on November 2, my riding of Thérèse-De Blainville received some big, exciting news. Sports Québec has selected City of Blainville to host the 60th finals of the Jeux du Québec d'hiver, the Quebec winter games, in 2026. This honour recognizes of our community's expertise and determination, as well as the fact that the people of Blainville are committed to making this event a real success.

I would like to commend Liza Poulin, the mayor of Blainville, for the incredible energy she put into rallying the people and for the widespread support she was able to drum up from numerous partners.

The quality of Blainville's bid was remarkable. Hats off to the members of the organizing committee for all their hard work. We are very proud that Blainville will be hosting these games. Congratulations.

*Statements by Members***INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November 25 was the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and it was also day one of our 16 days of activism campaign.

In Sherbrooke, we have organizations like L'Escale de l'Estrée, a women's shelter, and Aggression Estrie, a sexual assault centre, working tirelessly to help women take control of their lives. I commend the dedication, passion and commitment of their workers. They are the ones who truly inspired me to bring their message here to the House of Commons.

Although a lot remains to be accomplished, I am extremely proud to be part of a government whose commitment to ending violence against women since 2015 has been backed up by concrete initiatives. We will use the new investments announced last Friday in Quebec to assist women's shelters and crisis centres and invest in raising men's awareness.

Together, let us work to build a world where no woman dies just for being a woman.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

*[English]***MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING**

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the poor, the homeless, the abused, veterans, seniors, youth, adults suffering with disabilities and those people suffering with depression and mental health conditions are among the most vulnerable in our society. They are falling through the cracks of Canada's medical assistance in dying regime. They are the ones who will be at risk when the MAID laws in Canada are expanded in March 2024.

Last year, death by euthanasia increased by 30% from the year before. Every day in Canada, 36 people use MAID to end their lives, which is the highest in the world.

Last week, I hosted a forum with Canadians who are disturbed by the expansion of Canada's euthanasia regime to include the mentally ill. This expansion is not about compassion; it is a betrayal of the most vulnerable. I call upon the government to reverse its course and instead provide help and hope for Canadians suffering with mental health conditions.

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**INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday, November 25, marked International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and launched 16 days of activism, which will conclude on Human Rights Day on December 10. It is a time to reflect, unite and advocate for a world where every woman can live free from fear and violence. It also serves as a stark reminder that, despite progress, countless women around the world still endure physical, emotional and psychological abuse.

Violence against women is a pervasive and insidious issue that knows no boundaries; it affects women of all ages, backgrounds and social statuses. It ignores our shared humanity and creates barriers to achieving equality. It is a violation of basic human rights that demands collective efforts from all society.

Let us use this time not only to raise awareness but also to ignite action. Together, we can build a world where every woman can live with dignity and be free from the shadow of violence. It is a collective responsibility, and by standing united, we can and must eliminate violence against women once and for all.

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*[Translation]***GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is day three of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. I want to take this opportunity to talk about this issue, which continues to plague us. In 2022, 184 women were brutally killed in Canada, mainly by men. In other words, one woman or girl is killed every 48 hours.

Thousands of women and children use the services of women's shelters, but every night, roughly 300 women and children are turned away because the shelters are already full. That is a real problem. As a society and as a country, we need to do better.

I would like to say how much I appreciate the work that the women's shelters do to help women who are victims of domestic violence. I would like to thank a couple of organizations in particular that are making a huge difference in the community of Saint-Laurent: the Centre Amal pour femmes, and Bouclier d'Athéna.

To all the employees of these centres and all those who work every day to save women's lives, I thank them very much.

[English]

#### NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, suicide is a deeply personal issue that impacts us all. Years of hard work and advocacy are finally paying off. On November 30, more than 1,000 days after the House unanimously passed my motion to bring 988 to Canada, and after relentless pressure by Conservatives, Canadians struggling with their mental health will finally have access to a simple, easy-to-remember three-digit suicide prevention hotline. This life-saving service will be open 24-7 and staffed by expert crisis responders. It will allow Canadians to call or text 988 in their darkest hour to receive confidential, immediate and non-judgmental support.

On behalf of the Conservative Party and myself, I would like to extend a personal and heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been involved in the process of creating and launching 988. From the over 700 communities across Canada that passed motions to bring 988 to Canada to the crisis workers and the first responders on the front line, their efforts are going to save lives. To those who are struggling with mental health, they can know that they do not have to suffer alone; they are loved, they are valued and their life is worth fighting for.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

#### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Toronto—St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, gender-based violence is not a women's issue. Sally Armstrong urges us, "Stop making this a women's problem. It isn't. It's a men's problem." Ten years after the horrific attack at École Polytechnique, the Hon. Margaret McCain, at a ceremony on December 6 at the Women's College Hospital, courageously added that Marc Lépine had been physically abused by his father as a child. Hurt people hurt people. We have a moral obligation to prevent the preventable. Hurt people need timely access to trauma-informed, culturally safe and evidence-based care.

In 1991, Jack Layton, Ron Sluser and Michael Kaufman founded the White Ribbon Campaign. Today, it is the largest movement of men and boys to end violence against women and girls and to promote gender equity, healthy relationships and a new vision of masculinity. In response to MMIWG, indigenous communities have led the Moose Hide and I Am a Kind Man campaigns.

There will never be enough shelter spaces to prevent the plague of femicide until we see systemic and generational change that starts with confident and caring men.

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[Translation]

#### FOREIGN WORKERS

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians recently learned that a second Northvolt battery plant, subsidized by the Liberals, will give hundreds of jobs to foreign replacement workers rather than to unionized workers. Those jobs should be for Quebecers. The government allocated over \$7 billion in taxpayer subsidies to this project.

#### Statements by Members

We found this out after hearing that Stellantis will be doing the same thing at its plant in Windsor. At first, the Liberals called that news disinformation. Then they changed their story and said that there was only one foreign worker. Soon after, they changed their story again to just a small number of workers. Stellantis has now confirmed that at least 900 taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers will be brought to Canada to work in this plant.

Now that we know that foreign replacement workers will be used in the Stellantis and Northvolt plants, are the Liberals going to do the same thing at the Volkswagen plant in London?

The Prime Minister seems to have forgotten that he is supposed to serve Canadians first. The common-sense Conservatives are calling for the Prime Minister to finally be honest and publish the contracts for all taxpayer-funded battery plants.

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[English]

#### FOREIGN WORKERS

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the NDP-Liberal government is just not worth the cost.

Last week, we learned that Stellantis and LG are bringing in foreign workers to their manufacturing facility in Windsor. This is the same facility that is receiving \$15 billion in taxpayer subsidies after it threatened to close up shop unless the government paid up. That is about \$1,000 in additional debt for every Canadian household. The government sold this sweetheart deal as a win for Canadian workers in the automotive sector, but when the news from the Windsor police first broke that taxpayer dollars were subsidizing foreign workers, Liberal ministers responded that the number of foreign workers would be anywhere from one person to a very few people. We have now learned that it is close to 1,000 people.

Behind all the noise, we have a government that has lost its way and is afraid to admit its mistakes. Canada, including Windsor, is home to many skilled workers. People in Windsor and in all of Canada know that taxpayer dollars should not be used to fund foreign workers. The government needs to release the Stellantis and LG contract so Canadians can know the truth.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]***GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, gender-based violence perpetuates cycles of fear and trauma, hinders social and economic development and reinforces gender inequality. Women and girls are often the primary victims, but men and non-binary people can also experience this type of violence.

Our government is committed to preventing gender-based violence by promoting a responsive justice system and supporting victims, survivors and their families.

Awareness, education and legislative measures play a key role in promoting a culture of respect and equality. We must all mobilize and stand up. Let us work together to put an end to gender-based violence once and for all.

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● (1415)

*[English]***CHILDREN**

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today we started debate on Bill C-273, which aims to protect children by ending the legalized physical punishment of kids. Canada would join 65 other countries worldwide by adopting the bill. This is an important step. It would implement call to action number 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is a start, but we can do much more in a country as wealthy as Canada.

We support children also by supporting their families. Every child and everyone should have a home and a roof over their head at night. Every child and everyone should have safe drinking water, good, safe schools and great health care, including dental care and mental health supports. Children should not have to worry about whether their family can afford medication that keeps their loved one in good health, whether they or their family will have to go into debt for decades for them to go to university or whether this planet will be burned beyond repair by climate change because no one took action.

The NDP believes that every child deserves love and support and deserves to be able to fulfill their full potential. We will continue to fight to build a Canada where every child matters and no child is left behind.

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*[Translation]***40TH ANNIVERSARY OF GROUPE AMICAL DE STE-JULIE**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to highlight the 40th anniversary of a seniors' group known as the Groupe amical de Ste-Julie. This milestone was celebrated on September 9 with a meal that brought together many of the volunteers who have worked with this remarkable organization over the past four decades.

For nearly half a century, this organization has dedicated itself to improving the well-being of Sainte-Julie's seniors, regularly cooking up healthy, tasty and comforting meals at modest prices and then inviting them to get together to share those meals and take part in activities. This helps enrich their social lives. Forty years of service to a people with some 400 years of history is nothing short of remarkable and deserves to be properly celebrated.

I thank the visionaries who founded this group 40 years ago and the volunteers who have come through the doors over the years. It is their four decades of exemplary dedication that we are celebrating. Congratulations to the Groupe amical de Ste-Julie and its members. I wish them continued success.

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*[English]***CARBON TAX**

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of reckless spending and sky-high carbon prices, Canadians are out of money and the NDP-Liberal government is out of touch. Last week's mini-budget just offered more of the same. The Prime Minister chose to quadruple his carbon taxes on gas, groceries and home heating, and Canadians cannot afford it. Between April 2022 and March 2023, 5.9 million visits were made to Ontario food banks alone. That is an increase of 36% over the previous year and the largest single-year increase ever recorded by Ontario's food bank network. This is in Canada in 2023. Common-sense Conservatives have offered real solutions. Bill C-234's carbon tax carve-out would save Canadian farmers a billion dollars over six years. Lower costs for farmers mean lower food prices for all Canadians.

It is time for the Prime Minister to put Canadians ahead of his environment minister and above his politics. Canadian farmers have made it clear. The Prime Minister must stop pressuring his appointed senators to vote against Bill C-234.

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**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during my previous career, I spent many years covering murder trials, and I would say that most of them were cases of violence against women. I cried with the families after difficult days of testimony when we witnessed horrific evidence, heard terrifying details and listened to violent offenders try to justify their actions. I still get choked up when I share the families' stories. I still relive the horrors in my nightmares. Eleven million Canadians say that they have experienced intimate partner violence at least once since the age of 15. It is not only the victims who suffer; it is also their families, their friends and the frontline workers who were there trying to help.

In my role as parliamentary secretary, I have heard from organizations across the country. The national action plan to end gender-based violence provides half a billion dollars to help prevent or address the cycle of violence. As the 16 days of activism get under way, let us all commit to doing this work. Gender-based violence has to end.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[Translation]

### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is spending \$44 billion to subsidize three battery plants. That \$44 billion breaks down to \$3 billion for every Canadian family.

That money was supposed to create jobs, but now we find out that 900 foreign replacement workers are coming to Windsor. Another several hundred foreign workers are coming to Montréal.

Can we see the contract for each plant to find out how much of Canadian taxpayers' money the Prime Minister is spending on foreign workers?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Canadians are seeing just what a risky bet the Conservatives are.

When he was minister of employment, Canada's manufacturing sector lost not 3,000, not 30,000, but 300,000 jobs.

Stellantis is going to invest \$3.4 billion to build one of the largest plants in North America. We are going to create 2,500 jobs for Canadians.

We will continue to invest in Windsor, we will continue to invest in the sector, and we will continue to invest in Canada's workers.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he would make a good employment minister for South Korea.

As a side note, the Prime Minister told us there would be no consequences for doubling the national debt. In its economic update, however, the government now admits that next year, it will spend \$52 billion, or \$3,000 for every Canadian family, on interest on the debt. That means it will spend more on debt interest than on health care.

Why is the Prime Minister spending more on bankers than on nurses?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has the lowest debt and deficit in the G7, and we have a AAA credit rating.

At the same time, we have a responsible economic plan that will enable us to make the necessary investments in Canadians. We are building housing faster than ever. We are there with supports for dental care and child care.

## Oral Questions

The Conservatives just want to make cuts, but we know that we need to invest in Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

## CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Feed Ontario, a coalition of food banks, released staggering numbers yesterday: 800,000 Ontarians went to the food bank for a total of six million visits. This is a 36% increase, the biggest increase ever. If the total number of people who visited a food bank were a town, it would be the fourth-biggest town in all of Ontario.

Will the Prime Minister therefore cancel his plan to quadruple the carbon tax on the farmers who feed us, and pass common-sense Conservative Bill C-234 to carve out the tax for farmers?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that things are challenging for Canadians right now. That is why we are there for them, building more homes faster, providing dental care for children and seniors and cutting child care fees by 50% across the country.

The only thing that Conservatives know how to do is cut, cut, cut. They would cut child care, dental care and housing. That is not common sense; that is nonsense.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister and the Prime Minister have imposed brutal cuts on Canadian families who open their fridges to find nothing there.

The report that is out demonstrates that in each of the last seven years, Ontario food bank visits have gone up. Last year, they went up by record numbers: 800,000 people went a total of 6 million times to the food banks in this province.

There is a bill before the Senate to take the carbon tax off the farmers who feed us, rather than quadrupling it as the Prime Minister has said he will do. Will the Prime Minister stop interfering with the independence of the Senate and let the bill pass so we can bring home affordable food?

*Oral Questions*

● (1425)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the leader of the Conservatives is demonstrating this week that he just cannot tell the truth to Canadians. If it is about the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, where there is no price on pollution, he cannot tell the truth to Canadians about what he is doing. If it is with regard to why he jumped to the conclusion that there was a terrorist attack, he cannot tell the truth to Canadians. If it is with regard to misogynistic hashtags on YouTube, he cannot tell the truth to Canadians. We need to understand why he does not trust Canadians with the truth.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I will remind all members not to approach the limit of what would be considered parliamentary and to stay far away from that so it is not implied that a member is deliberately not telling the truth.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the Prime Minister wants to quadruple the carbon tax, including on our farmers. There is a farmer in my riding who is spending \$10,000 a month on carbon taxes alone. All of that is passed on to the consumer. The consequences have been a record number of Canadians relying on food banks. Seven million Canadians are going hungry and one in five is skipping meals regularly because they cannot afford the price of food.

Will the Prime Minister get out of the way, stop interfering with the Senate and let it pass common-sense Conservative Bill C-234 to take the tax off the farmers who feed us?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just because the leader of the Conservatives says something does not make it true, as we saw several times last week, whether it was with regard to how they voted on the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, perhaps why he blamed others for his mistake when he jumped to a conclusion about a terrorist attack, and now what he is saying about Bill C-234 he know is patently false. When it comes to food prices, it is because of the war in Ukraine and inflation.

He cannot direct the Senate either and, unfortunately, his members are doing things that are threatening the democratic principles and rights of independent senators. That is shameful.

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[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the middle of a housing crisis, Statistics Canada revealed that in just one year, rents went up 8.2%. That is higher than the rate of inflation. It is unheard of.

What is causing this? According to the National Bank, it is “an unprecedented increase in the...population”. The National Bank’s chief economist says that “Unless Ottawa revises its immigration quotas downward, we don’t expect much relief for...households”.

The National Bank is not against immigration. It is telling us that there is a problem.

Will the federal government finally admit it instead of insulting everyone when we talk about it?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member across the way knows full well that Quebec controls its own immigration levels.

It is a little much to presume that the higher rents are due only to the increase in population. However, it is clear that we have challenges in Canada when it comes to ensuring suitable immigration that takes into account integration capacity.

That is precisely what we are working on.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if integration capacity is not important, then why stop at 500,000 immigrants a year? Why not go as high as two million, or up to 10 million immigrants?

The government stops at 500,000 immigrants because, somewhere, it understands that there is a limit, that integration capacity is an actual thing. However, its target of 500,000 immigrants does not take housing into account. National Bank has told us so.

We know that the government did not talk to Quebec, so it does not take health care into account, it does not take education into account, it does not take French-language training into account and it does not take infrastructure into account.

I would like to know this: What is the target of 500,000 immigrants based on, if not those factors? Did it come from a Ouija board session?

● (1430)

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue. This is the first time I have heard the Bloc Québécois say that it would like more immigrants. I could tell them more about it, but let us have a meaningful discussion on the issue.

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[English]

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is escalating across the country. In Halifax, homelessness is on the rise. As winter approaches, urgent calls to repurpose empty buildings as affordable homes are mounting, yet the Liberals are so out of touch with reality that they are delaying much-needed resources to get homes built until 2025. Under the corporate-controlled Conservatives, 800,000 affordable low-cost rental apartments were lost to housing profiteers to turn a bigger profit.

As it turns to winter, snow and freezing rain mean people will die of exposure. Will the Liberals roll out the housing funds now to save lives?



**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for her very hard work on this issue and for her concern. It is a concern we share. That is why, over the past few months alone, we have put in place measures that will lead to the building of more than 100,000 new rental units. That includes lifting the GST on all purpose-built rental construction. It includes adding \$15 billion of financing to the apartment loan construction program. It includes another \$1 billion for the housing co-investment fund for affordable housing.

We need to build and that is what we are doing.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a 45-year-old woman in London, Ontario, who works full-time and makes above minimum wage is living out of her car because this government failed to offer her affordable housing options.

While the out-of-touch Liberals fail to deliver homes people can actually afford in their community, the corporate-controlled Conservatives sold off 800,000 affordable homes to rich developers when they were in power.

Canadians deserve better. When will this government start building homes people can actually afford so that they do not have to live out of their cars?

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at the heart of everything we do as a government is putting families first. For the woman who was just referenced who is experiencing a difficult time, we are there. We continue to develop programs through the Canada child benefit program and through early learning and child programs. We continue to ensure that we provide the support that is needed so that families across this country have what they need.

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### CARBON PRICING

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last year, almost six million Ontarians visited a food bank, an increase of more than 40% and the highest single increase ever recorded. Clearly, this Prime Minister's carbon tax plan is not worth the cost.

Conservatives have a common-sense bill, Bill C-234, in the Senate, which would reduce costs on farmers and make food more affordable for Canadians, but the Prime Minister is blocking this bill, forcing Canadians to food banks.

Will the Liberal minister of agriculture do his job? Will he defend Canadian farmers, and phone Liberal senators to support Bill C-234 to have this carve-out for farmers and make food more affordable for Canadians?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we understand that it is absolutely essential today to be investing in Canadians, to invest to support families and to invest in an economic plan for jobs and growth. That is why we are building housing, because we are focused on supply. That is why we have an economic plan, which has made Canada the highest per capita for an investment destination in the

### Oral Questions

G7. Meanwhile, the only thing the Conservatives know how to do is cut.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is good to see the agriculture minister stand up and defend Canadian farmers, but if the finance minister's plan for Canadians is to cut meals and cut their heat, well, mission accomplished, their carbon tax plan is working extremely well.

A common-sense Conservative bill, Bill C-234, would provide a carbon tax carve-out for farmers and make food more affordable for Canadians, but the Prime Minister's environment minister has promised that if this bill passes he will resign. Is that why the environment minister is bullying senators in the Senate to block Bill C-234? Is it because he wants to save his job rather than ensure that Canadians can afford to feed themselves?

• (1435)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party of Canada should be ashamed of asking this question in this House after they directed their MPs to bully senators who disagreed with them. One of them had to apologize for bullying some of his colleagues in the Senate. They should be ashamed of themselves. We are not telling senators how to vote. They are doing it, and they are asking them to bully other senators.

**Mr. Kyle Seebach (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, Canadians know the Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Over 800,000 Ontarians visited a food bank over six million times, 41% for the first time ever. The first time ever they had to do it is after eight years of a Liberal government. Now, that is not bad enough. If these 800,000 people formed a city, it would be the fourth-largest city in Ontario, and it would be dependent upon feeding itself at a food bank.

The government could do something: Stop holding up Conservative bill, Bill C-234, to take the carbon tax off farmers. Will it do it?

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard directly from Canadian families who are struggling to buy groceries, and on this side of the House, our government continues to make investments to support families through difficult times, investments in affordable housing, and investments in early learning and child care and the Canada child benefit.

*Oral Questions*

The Leader of the Opposition continues to oppose these supports. His common sense is nonsense. On this side of the House, we will continue to do all that we can to support Canadian families.

**Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a Liberal minister who gets almost \$300,000 a year and drives around in a limo says that it is nonsense to talk about the 800,000 Ontarians who went to a food bank for the first time. This kind of conduct from these Liberals is disgusting, and there is an answer. There is a fix. They could tell their senators to stop blocking Bill C-234, which would take the carbon tax off farmers, the people who feed us, but no, they are not doing it because of the delicate sensibilities of the environment minister who says, “I’ll resign if there are any more cuts to the carbon tax.”

Will they take it off? Will they pass Bill C-234?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again we have trouble putting the actual facts on the table, from the leaders of the Conservative Party of Canada. When it comes to working with the Senate, the Senate is independent. There is only one party that is directing senators, and that is the Conservative Party of Canada. As a member of Parliament from Ontario, he should recall the common-sense revolution that cut services to education, to health care and to water, which led to deaths in Walkerton. It was an absolute disaster. Canadians know their common sense is absolute nonsense.

**The Speaker:** There are many experienced members in this House, on both sides, who know when a colleague has the floor that colleague should be the only person speaking. I ask members to please keep their comments to themselves until they have the opportunity take the floor.

[Translation]

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

• (1440)

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years under this Prime Minister, we are once again seeing that he has no respect for a decision made by the House of Commons.

A majority of MPs voted in favour of Bill C-234 and sent it to the Senate, where it has stalled. The Minister of Environment is even lobbying senators.

Will the Prime Minister ask his minister to stop exerting pressure to block the bill, respect the decision made by the House of Commons and let the senators do their job so that they can vote in favour of Bill C-234?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my colleague that there are no longer any Liberal senators. There are Conservative senators.

Since we took office in 2015, we have appointed independent senators. Anyone who works with the Senate knows that they are independent. We do not tell the Senate what to do. The Conservative Party is the one telling Conservative senators what to do and how to vote, and it is even asking them to intimidate other senators from other Senate groups.

That is unacceptable and scandalous.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I would like to remind the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier not to speak when another person who has been recognized by the Chair is speaking.

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

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is clear, and we saw it in last week’s economic statement, is that the Liberals want to drastically increase the carbon tax.

However, Conservative Bill C-234, supported by a majority in the House, will carve out an exception to the carbon tax being imposed on Canadian farmers.

The Minister of Environment has promised to resign if this bill passes. Perhaps that is why he is going off to the other side to talk to independent senators. He is telling them to vote against it.

Will the Prime Minister tell the senators he appointed to put the interests of Canadians ahead of the environment minister and pass Bill C-234 so Canadians pay less to feed their families?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, after the member for Regina—Qu’Appelle posted a photo of the female senators who opposed Bill C-234, the Senate and the police had to launch an investigation in response to the threats these independent senators received.

We do not tell senators how to vote, unlike the Conservative Party, which not only tells them how to vote, but encourages them to bully other senators who do not think like them. It is unacceptable.

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## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government needs to reimburse Quebec for the \$460 million it has spent to take in asylum seekers, which is a federal responsibility.

However, to sidestep the issue, the Minister of Immigration is claiming that this has suddenly become a shared jurisdiction with all the provinces. First of all, it is not shared. It is a federal responsibility. More importantly, it is not shared with the provinces, because Quebec takes in 48% of all asylum seekers in Canada.

Quebec is doing all the work while the federal government twiddles its thumbs. Even worse, Quebecers will have to foot the bill.

When will the minister reimburse Quebec?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, instead of reading his cue card, the member should read section 95 of the Constitution. He would see that this is definitely a shared jurisdiction.

I think my mistake is debating with the Bloc Québécois on the floor of the House of Commons.

I have a very good relationship with my counterpart in Quebec. I will be meeting with her in a week. It will be a private meeting, and we will deal with things like the competent governments that we are.

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, he was appointed minister. He has to be willing to debate this issue publicly.

The Minister of Immigration told us that he could not find \$460 million to fulfill his responsibilities toward asylum seekers.

We are going to ask the Minister of Finance. Perhaps she knows. Her colleague needs \$460 million to do his part to properly integrate asylum seekers. Those funds will make it possible to continue providing housing and social services assistance, among other things.

Will the Minister of Finance give her poor, broke colleague a little money so that he can finally live up to his responsibilities towards asylum seekers?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think people need to stop seeing the federal government as an ATM.

We clearly have a relationship with Quebec. Quebec is clearly responsible for taking in asylum seekers and refugees.

I have a meeting with the ministers in a week. We also have demands for Quebec. We will talk about it in private and resolve this as responsible governments.

• (1445)

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 50% of our taxes go to Ottawa. We have the right to talk about it. This is not a shared jurisdiction; it is a federal one.

It is funny. For years, the Liberals have been opposing Quebec's desire to repatriate all immigration powers, but now when it comes time for them to pay a bill that falls under their jurisdiction, they are no longer interested in such powers. When it comes to providing services to asylum seekers or paying the bill, they are running for dear life.

Rather than fleeing, will they take responsibility for asylum seekers and reimburse Quebec?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will say this in response to the same question asked in a different way: I am meeting with the minister in a week's time, and we are going to resolve this like responsible governments.

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-234 would take the carbon tax off propane and natural gas used on farms. Five premiers, countless farm organizations and farmers from across the country have asked the Prime Minister to axe the carbon tax and give farmers a break.

The carbon tax on farmers is where food inflation and high grocery costs start for Canadian families.

Will the Prime Minister and the environment minister stop interfering with the Senate and let the vote happen tomorrow?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the truth is that my hon. colleague and his party do not even have a plan to address the environment, and that is truly a reckless approach. However, we as the government have a policy to address the environment, to deal with farmers and to make sure they stay on the cutting edge.

For example, in Winnipeg a couple of weeks ago, I announced \$9 million. With the provincial government in Manitoba and the Canola Council of Canada, we are able to put a program together to deal with the environment and to keep farmers on the cutting edge.

Our government will continue to keep farmers on the cutting edge.

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting answer.

The Liberal government has never respected the environmental good that farmers do and it proves it every day by hitting Canadian farmers with high carbon taxes. One farmer in the Conservative Leader's riding had an \$11,000 carbon tax bill in one month.

With the Liberal carbon tax, it is now cheaper for Canadians to buy food trucked from Mexico than from local Canadian farms. How is that right? How is that good for the Canadian consumer, the environment or Canadian farmers?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, it is vitally important for any political party that is wishing to be in power to have an environmental plan. We as a government have an environmental plan. Another example deals with the minister of agriculture in Ontario. We were able to announce \$25 million a couple of weeks ago in order to make sure that farmers in Ontario would be able to deal with the environment and stay on the cutting edge.

We have made sure and will continue to make sure that farmers thrive in our country.

*Oral Questions*

**The Speaker:** Before I move to the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands for his question, I would like to remind all members, and in particular the member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, to please allow both the questioner to ask questions and the member answering to answer questions. He will have his turn when his name is on the list.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me how clueless the agriculture minister is about the real-life costs of agriculture. One reason is that ranchers buy their fuel at outrageous prices. One rancher just showed me that his propane costs are over \$1,500 a month. The carbon tax is a third of that cost. The quarterly rebate cheque does not even begin to add up to that much let alone to other costs for gas and diesel. This is all a tax on growing our food, which makes it more expensive to buy the food.

The Prime Minister needs to quit telling his appointed senators to block Bill C-234. When will he back off so we can finally remove the carbon tax from all on-farm fuels?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I will remind the hon. colleague, the Senate is independent and we do not direct senators, unlike the Conservative Party of Canada.

The real question Canadians should ask themselves is, why did the Leader of the Opposition direct his party to vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement? Is it because there is a group of Conservative members of Parliament who are pro-Russia and anti-Ukraine and they have to cover for them? Is that what is going on? Is right-wing American extremism going into Canadian politics? I wonder if the Conservatives had a free vote, who would have voted in support of the agreement.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

**OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, after a summer of record wildfires and drought, Canadians want a federal government that is serious about fighting climate change with the urgency that it demands, yet we see climate pollution from the oil and gas sector going up year after year, while its CEOs rake in record profits.

The oil and gas industry can no longer be allowed to sit on the bench during the fight of our lives. Will the minister put a hard cap on oil and gas emissions, commensurate with Canada's national target; or has the oil and gas lobby finally gotten to him?

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

We will, as the Prime Minister has said, publish before the end of the year the framework to put a cap on the emissions of the oil and gas sector, because he is right. These emissions have continued to rise over the year, while other sectors like agriculture, electricity and buildings have reduced their emissions. The oil and gas sector must do its part to fight climate change in Canada and to help Canadians with affordability. This framework will come before the end of the year.

[Translation]

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting months for these rules and we have heard nothing but silence. That is why the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development gave the Minister of Environment a failing grade on the climate crisis. The Conservatives do not even believe there is a climate crisis, and the Liberals are just dragging their feet.

When will the minister stop this nonsense and announce a cap on greenhouse gas emissions for oil and gas companies?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. colleague that we are the only G20 country to have eliminated fossil fuel subsidies two years ahead of schedule. Not only has no one else done this, but we did it two years ahead of schedule. We have already introduced regulations to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by at least 40% by 2025. We have implemented carbon pricing and, as I mentioned to his colleague earlier, by the end of the year we will be announcing the framework for a cap on greenhouse gas emissions for the oil and gas sector.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, gender-based violence is unacceptable and has no place in the country, including in my home town, Brampton South. November 25 marked the start of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. This is a global campaign to raise awareness about ending violence against women and girls.

This month, the federal government stepped up by investing in and supporting the implementation of the national action plan to end gender-based violence in Ontario.

Could the hon. Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth share the details of the national action plan with the House?

**Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Brampton South for her unwavering advocacy in supporting women and girls.

Gender-based violence has no place in Canada or anywhere else. It is why the national plan to end it is crucial, a plan in every province and every territory.

Recently, the member for Brampton South and I announced \$162 million to support Ontario through the national action plan. This creates a safe pathway for those who need it most. We now have nine provinces and territories with agreements. I look forward to others in the coming weeks.

\* \* \*

### CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of Liberal-NDP policies being forced on Canadians, we see that the Prime Minister is simply not worth the cost. Recent reports show that food banks saw nearly two million visits in the last month. The tragedy is that this is a feature, not a flaw, of the Prime Minister's plan to quadruple the carbon tax on gas, groceries and home heating.

How high does the number of Canadians starving have to get before the Prime Minister gets out of the way and allows his appointed senators to pass a common-sense Conservative bill, Bill C-234 and help farmers and ranchers lower the cost of food for all Canadians?

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, we continue to look at policies and programs like the Canada child benefit, like early learning and child care, opportunities to support Canadian families when they need it. At every turn, the Leader of the Opposition continues to oppose the hard work that we are doing. His common sense is just nonsense.

We will continue to do the hard work to ensure that we are there to support Canadian families.

• (1455)

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it sounds like that high-priced communications consultant certainly is not worth the cost. The real nonsense is the rhetoric coming from the Liberals.

There is a real opportunity to lower the cost of food for Canadians. It is in the name of a common-sense Conservative bill, Bill C-234. It is a simple and pragmatic way to reduce the cost of food production on our farms.

Will the Prime Minister put his ego aside and do what is best for Canadians and stop the pressure he is applying to his appointed senators, which is keeping them from passing a common-sense bill, Bill C-234?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the nonsense needs to stop coming from the other side.

When it comes to this bill in the Senate, it has been the Conservative senators who have been bullying and harassing independent senators, limiting their ability to participate and exercise their democratic rights. The RCMP is involved.

It is the Conservative Party of Canada that needs to stop directing senators and let the Senate do its work, as it was supposed to do. We do not interfere in the Senate, but clearly the Conservatives do.

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight long years of the NDP-Liberal government, everything is up. Taxes are up, fuel is up, food is up and Canadians are fed up, but they are still hungry. Now, in the midst of this affordability crisis, the Prime Minister has doubled down on his plan to quadruple the carbon tax. We, as common-sense Conservatives, have brought forward Bill C-234, which would create another carbon carve-out for our farmers. We understand that when one taxes the farmer who grows the food, one taxes the trucker who ships the food and one taxes everyone who buys the food.

Will the Prime Minister finally back off, prioritize food security and let his appointed senators pass this bill?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would like to read a few extracts from a CBC article from last week that reads: "Three independent senators say they were bullied by Conservative Leader [in the Senate] Don Plett". It says, "Police and the Senate security team are also now investigating outside threats directed at [Senator] Clement".

It continues: "threatening phone calls and online harassment directed at Clement after her confrontation with Plett on Nov. 9 'got so out of control' that she feared for her physical safety 'and was forced to leave her private residence and spend her weekend elsewhere in a secure location.'"

That is what they are doing.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if the 800,000 people who used Ontario's food banks last year were their own city, it would be the third-largest city in Ontario. It is clear after eight years that the NDP-Liberal government is just not worth the cost.

Conservative Bill C-234 would remove the carbon tax for farmers, making food prices cheaper. The Liberal environment minister has promised to resign. I hope he sticks to that.

Will the Prime Minister tell the senators to put Canadians first and pass Bill C-234, so Canadians can feed themselves?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the premise of her question is false, first of all. We know that this is a pattern of behaviour that we are seeing from these Conservatives where they are not putting forward the actual facts and telling the truth to Canadians about how these things work.

*Oral Questions*

Let us be clear: In the Liberal Party, we have no senators in our caucus. The same cannot be true about the Conservative Party of Canada. What we have heard is that not only are they directing senators, interfering with their independence, but their senators are also threatening independent senators. This is a clear pattern of behaviour, their obstruction of democracy.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, \$2 billion is the total amount that the federal government has invested in strengthening English in Quebec since 1995. It spent \$2 billion to support the language of the 360 million anglophones that surround us, and enrich groups that are advocating for Quebec's anglicization. We will say it over and over again until the federal government finally gets the message: French is in decline, not English. English does not need help or money.

When will this government realize that it has to stop funding the anglicization of Quebec?

• (1500)

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government was the one that said it first: French is in decline and it has to be promoted and supported.

We passed a new Official Languages Act that the Bloc Québécois supported. It is very misleading to calculate spending at roughly \$70 million over 27 years when in fact we have been giving Quebec \$500 million to \$700 million a year for the past 30 years to support francization. We assist Radio-Canada and Telefilm Canada because, on this side of the House, we support not only French, but francophone content as well.

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Ottawa is spending \$2 billion to anglicize Quebec, and it does not stop there. In its action plan for official languages, Ottawa has earmarked \$800 million for English in Quebec over the next five years, and let the chips fall where they may. This is typical of our Liberals. They say there is a difference between the situations facing francophones and anglophones. They claim to care about the future of French, but they do not walk the talk. Once again, English is being favoured, with \$800 million in federal assistance.

Why not redirect that money to French instead of anglicizing Quebec?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as Quebecers, we must always defend and promote French. That is what we are doing, for example, with record investments in official languages. That is what we are doing for language of work and language of service initiatives in Quebec.

The Bloc Québécois is clearly trying to pick a fight. It is trying to divide Quebecers.

Will the Bloc Québécois ever understand and accept that a Quebecer is a Quebecer, regardless of their mother tongue?

[English]

**AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are spending billions on taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers on the new EV battery plant in Windsor.

Windsor officials report that there will be up to 1,600 foreign replacement workers. One Liberal minister said there was only going to be one. Another minister said there would just be a few. A third said of course there will be foreign workers. The company said there would be 1,600, then 900 and then 1,600.

The Liberals cannot get their story straight. Will they come clean, tell the truth and release the contract, so all Canadians can tell what is going on here?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us set the story straight.

Let us listen to Dave Cassidy, the president of Unifor Local 444 in Windsor, Ontario:

We have 900 skilled trades working on the site today — 900. We're gonna go up to about 2,000 trades, they tell me it's going to go up to about 2,000 trades. There's also on top of that going to be 2,500 unionized Local 444 members inside that facility.

We should listen to workers.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we noticed he did not say “Canadian” workers.

On top of that, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry said that he is going to hold a meeting with the company to find out from the company what its plans are for the contract he negotiated and signed. I cannot make this stuff up. He has to ask the company what is in the contract he negotiated. A \$15-billion subsidy is going to cost every Canadian family \$1,000 in taxes and leave Canadian union workers in the cold.

If they have nothing to hide, will the Liberals come clean and release the contract?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives, especially from a party whose leader, when he was minister of employment, oversaw the loss of not 3,000, not 30,000 but 300,000 manufacturing jobs. Can we imagine? It is shameful.

With an investment of \$3.4 billion by Stellantis, we will be creating 2,500 jobs at the plant. We are going to continue to invest in Windsor. We will invest in our workers. We will invest in our industries.

*Oral Questions***AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**

● (1505)

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister gave billions of tax dollars to subsidize a single battery plant. Now we learn that hundreds of the jobs linked to the plant will not be filled by qualified, local, unionized Canadian workers but by taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers.

If that is not bad enough, now the Liberals are desperately fighting to keep the details of the contract hidden. Why are they doing so? If it is such a good deal, what does the government have to worry about? Did Liberals actually sign off on giving billions of tax dollars without securing guarantees that Canadians would get the jobs?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am fairly certain that Dave Cassidy, the president of Unifor Local 444, speaks for his membership, which are Canadian workers.

He said, "This is nothing new", that they go through launches like this all the time. He said that this "is nothing more than political hay." He cannot believe our politicians are playing this game and riling up thousands of people; this is the circus around politics. If Pierre had his way, these factories would not even be built.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I would like to remind all members that, even if they are reading a quotation, they cannot refer to a member of the actual House aside from their riding name.

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I will end the same way I ended before: We should listen to workers.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**JUSTICE**

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development recently recognized Canada as a world leader for its national action plan to end gender-based violence. One important component of that plan is a better justice system.

It was not so long ago that a judge presiding over a rape trial asked the victim why she could not just keep her knees together. The Conservatives at the time gave that judge a promotion.

Can the Minister of Justice share the progress that has been made since that Stone-Age response?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her commitment.

Gender-based violence is an epidemic in Canada. We recently passed Bill S-12 to improve the national sex offender registry and give victims more power in the criminal justice process. We also passed a bill that guarantees that judges will receive sexual assault training.

We will continue to fight against gender-based violence so that all Canadians, both men and women, can be safe and feel safe.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, nearly \$50 billion of taxpayers' money is subsidizing three battery plants. That is nearly \$3,000 for every Canadian family. We have learned that hundreds of workers who will receive this money will be foreign replacement workers. We expected Canadians' money to be used to fund unionized, well-paying jobs for Canadians and Quebecers. Instead, this money will be used to hire 900 foreign replacement workers in Windsor and hundreds more in Saint-Basile-le-Grand and McMasterville.

After eight years, why has the Prime Minister failed to secure Quebec jobs in Montérégie?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians watching at home must be wondering what is going on.

One thing they see is that the Conservatives were against Volkswagen's investment. They were against Stellantis' investment. They were against GM's investment. They were against Ford's investment. Now we have just learned that they are against Northvolt's investment in Quebec.

With Stellantis' record \$3.4-billion investment in Windsor, we will create 2,500 jobs. Up to 2,300 Canadian workers will build the plant.

We believe in the automotive industry. We believe in our workers. We believe in Canada's prosperity.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Quebecers watching us on television right now that the Liberals are doing everything in their power to keep Quebecers from finding out the truth about contracts.

First, a Liberal minister said that there would be just one foreign replacement worker in Windsor. That changed to a handful. Then the chief of police said there would be 1,600 foreign workers. Radio-Canada added to the story when it reported that hundreds of foreign workers would be replacing Quebecers in jobs subsidized by Quebec taxpayers in Montérégie.

This Prime Minister is not worth the cost. I challenge him to make the contracts public. Will he do it?

● (1510)

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, people watching at home are realizing what a risky bet the Conservatives are.

When the leader of the Conservative Party was the minister of employment, Canada lost not 3,000, not 30,000, but 300,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector.

*Oral Questions*

One thing Canadians know without a doubt is that we are with them. With Stellantis' record \$3.4-billion investment, we are going to build one of the largest battery industries around. There will be 2,500 workers working at the plant and up to 2,300 building it.

We believe in workers and we believe in Canada.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after learning that this government has earmarked \$15 billion in public money to fund foreign workers in Windsor, now we learn that Northvolt in Quebec will also need foreign workers. We are talking about another \$7 billion in taxpayers' money.

The Liberals said there would be only a small number of employees. We are now talking about several hundred employees. We need to get to the truth.

This Prime Minister has failed to protect jobs for Quebecers. He must make the battery plants contracts public.

When will he make them public?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know people watching at home are wondering what is really going on. It is simple.

Thanks to our government's efforts, we have secured the largest private investment in the history of Quebec. For once, Canada is entering the automotive sector through the front door. Everyone in the House should stand up and applaud. Quebec will now be part of the automotive industry and Quebec will have a battery industry.

We should all be proud of what Quebec and Canada can accomplish. Let us be proud.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday was the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. As a mother of three young men, I raised my boys to be respectful of women and to recognize that eliminating gender-based violence is an issue for all people, regardless of gender.

Can the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth please provide an update on how we can raise boys and young men to be champions of women and support ending gender-based violence?

**Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fight to end gender-based violence will not end unless men and boys are involved. Since we launched the national action plan to end gender-based violence, we have funded organizations such as White Ribbon that work every day to make sure men and boys are involved in this fight.

Gender-based violence must not and will not be tolerated. All of us can make that a reality.

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, the federal housing advocate says the government fell short in building homes across the country. Under the Liberals, too many indigenous people everywhere, especially in cities, are homeless or sleeping in overcrowded houses. They have failed to uphold indigenous people's basic rights.

Thanks to the NDP, the government announced \$4 billion over seven years for housing, but indigenous people are still waiting. Why have the Liberals not released all of this urgently needed funding to respect indigenous people's right to housing?

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her advocacy on this and many other issues in the north.

We agree with the finding of Canada's housing minister that Canada's colonial history is the absolute cause of the oppression of the Inuit, as well as first nations and Métis. That is why we are on the road to reconciliation with our indigenous partners.

We have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in housing in Inuit Nunangat, but we know there is more to do. We will keep doing it in the spirit of co-development and in the spirit of reconciliation.

\* \* \*

● (1515)

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, while other countries get set to up their climate ambitions before COP28, Canada is getting singled out for the massive gap between our words and our actions, and the federal government's home energy retrofits grant program is running out of money. The greener homes grant program could easily be funded and expanded simply by taxing the record-breaking profits of the oil and gas industry.

Will the government expand the successful program to support Canadians struggling with the rising cost of living?



**Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, transitioning the way people heat their homes is not only important for the environment but makes life more affordable. That is why it is so important that our government created the oil and heat pump program, which is helping people right across our country who rely on oil to transition to heat pump heating. That is going to reduce their bills going forward.

More than that, the greener homes grant has been amazingly successful. It has been wonderful to see so many Canadians take advantage of this program. I agree with the member that it is a very important part of what our government has been doing.

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

### ORAL QUESTIONS—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now ready to rule on the point of order raised on November 23, 2023, by the member for Edmonton Strathcona concerning language used by the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake.

In her intervention, the member for Edmonton Strathcona alleged that the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake had repeatedly used unparliamentary language in characterizing her and her party's position on the situation in Gaza.

In response, the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake acknowledged having called members of the New Democratic Party “ Hamas supporters”, repeating the statement into the record. I should point out there was an extended and, I might add, disorderly back-and-forth when the point of order was raised.

[Translation]

In House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, at page 623, it is stated:

The proceedings of the House are based on a long-standing tradition of respect for the integrity of all Members. Thus, the use of offensive, provocative, or threatening language in the House is strictly forbidden. Personal attacks, insults and obscenities are not in order.

[English]

Further down, at page 624, it says:

In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the Member speaking, the person to whom the words at issue were directed, the degree of provocation, and most important, whether or not the remarks created disorder in the Chamber.

[Translation]

In a ruling on March 29, 2022, found at page 3739 of the Debates, the Deputy Speaker stated:

The use of inflammatory and provocative statements is contrary to the respect owed to all members. Accordingly, the Chair reminds members to be mindful of the language they use in debate, with respect to their colleagues, in order to maintain proper civility and respect in our proceedings.

[English]

To quote the Chair's statement of October 18, 2023, found at pages 17591 to 17593 of the Debates:

## Points of Order

We have, in the past, had members likening their colleagues to Mussolini or calling each other racists or shouting obscenities. Latitude in expressing one's point of view will be given, but questionable language and unnecessarily provocative statements will no longer be tolerated.

Clearly, it is disruptive and disrespectful to associate other members with a terrorist organization. As a result, I have concluded that the words used by the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake were unparliamentary.

[Translation]

In a ruling on a similar matter, my predecessor set forth the Chair's expectation of what must follow to bring resolution to the matter. He stated on May 8, 2023, at page 14090 of Debates:

To be quite clear, any remarks the Chair deems unparliamentary will be required to be withdrawn immediately and accompanied by a full and proper apology. If a member refuses to comply, the Chair will cease to recognize them until further notice.

● (1520)

[English]

In consequence, in accordance with my statement from October 18, 2023, the member will not be recognized by the Chair until such time as he apologizes in writing to the Speaker.

In conclusion, while reviewing the proceedings of last Thursday, November 23, I noted that other words and phrases were used that, while perhaps not strictly unparliamentary, certainly do not contribute to the level of decorum that we all desire. I therefore strongly encourage members, from all sides, to choose their words judiciously and avoid provocative interventions.

I thank all members for their attention, and I would invite their co-operation in raising the level of decorum in this place by not engaging in the kinds of comparisons or associations we have heard.

### ALLEGED UNPARLIAMENTARY COMMENTS IN THE HOUSE

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have stood on this point of order in the past and am not satisfied with how it has been dealt with in this place.

Again today, through you Speaker, the House leader on the other side of the floor insinuated that, in my decision as a member of Parliament with the right to vote in this place, I was forced to make the vote I chose to make. I am sorry, but as you have said over and over again, we cannot do indirectly in this place what we cannot do directly. If you were to take the time to listen to every conversation that came from that side of the floor toward this side of the floor on that vote, it was despicable.

I am of Ukrainian heritage. My grandfather came here just before the Holodomor from a Russia that destroyed our people there. We are facing those same circumstances now, and this is the kind of behaviour coming forth in this place.

I appreciate what you did just now. However, you also had an opportunity to do that today when the House leader on the other side of the floor said something with regard to lying. I am not allowed to say that someone has lied in this House when he or she has, but I can be punished for bringing forth the truth, which is that someone lied.

*Points of Order*

This is irresponsible and shows a lack of respect, as you have said, but in this case, it is being ignored. Therefore, I want a full apology from that side of the House, which can come through the House leader, because clearly it was an orchestrated event to bring disagreement and divisiveness within the Ukrainian community in Canada, let alone where they are already—

**The Speaker:** Before I recognize any other points of order on this issue, I thank the member for Yorkton—Melville for her intervention. I would like to refer her to the end of my ruling from today, which I think is important in addressing the issue that has been raised here.

We need to make sure that we use language that avoids causing great disruption in this House. As I mentioned, while there were terms that were not strictly unparliamentary, they certainly do not contribute to the level of decorum that we all desire, which the member for Yorkton—Melville has raised here today. I encourage all members to ensure that they refrain from raising disorder in this House by using unnecessarily provocative terms.

I will now recognize the other members' points of order and we will bring this to a close relatively quickly.

• (1525)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this point of order, I certainly recognize and do not entirely disagree with what the member said. We have a rule that seems to suggest it is okay to imply that somebody is not telling the truth, yet we are unable to call out members on that.

I would be open to suggestions on how to properly adjust our rules to reflect this fact, because I think quite often it happens on both sides of the House that people feel exactly how the member is suggesting. If there is an opportunity to do so, I would strongly encourage her to bring that forward.

**The Speaker:** I thank the member for Kingston and the Islands. It is a point that I will be happy to raise with House leaders as I continue regular meetings with them.

I recognize the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, the hon. House leader.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on something you referenced. You said toward the end of your ruling that indeed other things were said, and you were urging all members to adhere to your statement of a few weeks ago. There is an issue, though. You have now indicated that the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake has to specifically apologize in order to be recognized by the Chair going forward. In fairness, that same standard should be applied to members of the government, who today and last week were making all kinds of terrible insinuations that are on par with calling other members sympathetic to or supporters of Hamas.

What I endeavour to do now is go through the blues for today and the transcripts from last week and provide you with specific examples where that same standard should be applied to government ministers. I will then await your ruling ordering them to apologize for their remarks.

**The Speaker:** I look forward to the hon. member's intervention. I will read it and, if necessary, make a determination.

The hon. member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie.

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Grande Prairie—Mackenzie, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, today in question period, the House leader of the government stood in her place and accused members on this side of being supporters of Putin's Russian regime in the current war; the current genocidal, illegal invasion into Ukraine.

As a Ukrainian descendant, it is unbelievable to me that the member, having had a personal conversation with the member who made the accusation about the number of people within my own family who were murdered in the Holodomor, in the years that preceded it and that passed after, would stand in this place and make general accusations that members on this side, including me, would in any way, shape or form be supportive of Putin's illegal, genocidal attack on Ukraine.

I would ask that the House leader for the government apologize to members on this side having clearly made the statement today with the intention to be provocative and to elicit a response. The response came from this side in that moment; it caused disorder in that moment.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member. We have had a number of interventions on this.

Are there any new interventions or are they on the same point? If they are on the same point, then I would ask all members to take their seats. The point was very eloquently made by the member for—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I am going to be very clear to all members. I ask all members to please take their seats.

The Chair has heard the interventions that were made on this point. The Chair will review the Hansard to make a determination and will come back to the House if necessary. I thank all members for making very important and thoughtful statements, and I will come back to the House on this matter.

I see the member for New Brunswick Southwest rising, I hope on a new point of order.

• (1530)

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is.

With all due respect, I chair the public accounts committee and, last week, I cut a member off who was trying to make a point of order and I was reprimanded for not allowing the member to speak. Every member here has the right to raise a point of order and be heard to bring in new information and their perspectives. I was in the chamber last week and we heard the point of order from the hon. member from the NDP; we heard several. I would implore you, Mr. Speaker, to do the same. If members feel they have points of order to bring that will inform your decision, they should be given the right to be heard in this chamber before you rule.

**The Speaker:** I appreciate the intervention from the member for New Brunswick Southwest.

*Points of Order*

On points of order, I really do ask members to please exercise great restraint, so that we can move on with the business of the House. We will listen to new information that is important to raise.

The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to say that I am very proud of my Ukrainian heritage. I am a proud Canadian, I am a patriotic Ukrainian, and everyone in the House knows how passionately I have been defending Ukraine for all these years. For the government House leader, the member of Parliament for Burlington, to actually suggest that any one of us of Ukrainian heritage on the Conservative side would at all be supporting Putin in any way, shape or form is incredibly disappointing. It is gutter politics, and she has taken it to a whole new level. I would ask that the member be reprimanded and forced to apologize in this place, because she has offended all Ukrainians and Canadians and especially everybody in our Conservative caucus for making such an allegation.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Speaker, I am obviously not going to make a ruling from the chair on this. I did not hear exactly what the member heard. I will review Hansard.

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned with the approach that the opposition is taking on this issue. When the government made other decisions a year or so ago, all sorts of unfair accusations were being made toward the government. The reality—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member needs to calm down.

**The Speaker:** Order, order.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party en masse last week voted against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. As a direct result of that, there have been all sorts of accusations levelled against the Conservative Party for their behaviour. There is nothing wrong with a government minister or others reflecting on that particular vote.

**The Speaker:** I am being very patient and generous in listening to points of order.

I would ask that the hon. parliamentary secretary get right to the point. That would be very helpful to the Chair.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the point is that the government House leader was responding to the way the Conservative Party voted and it was very much in line with the parliamentary rules of this chamber, as we have witnessed on many other votes where opposition members and, at times, even government members reflect on the manner in which a political party votes. It happens all the time.

• (1535)

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I want to reinforce the comments that Conservatives have made.

I represent the highest percentage of Ukrainians of any of the federal ridings in the country, at 25%. We just all turned our attention to the remembrance of the victims of the Holodomor over the last weekend. Edmonton was the first place in the world to erect a monument to remember those victims and to never forget. President Zelenskyy mentioned that in his visit here.

I have also married into a family where the Ukrainian side has been settled longer than Alberta has been a province and, as members will know because of the geographical breakdown, where most members of Parliament on the Conservative side come from and represent. There is a very high percentage of Ukrainian Canadians on the Prairies and that is why Conservatives have such a strong record of standing up for the strong ties between Ukraine and Ukrainians and Canada and Canadians.

That is why I too, in response to your ruling today, Mr. Speaker, would join the call of my colleague from Yorkton—Melville for her request for clarification and an apology from government members, including the representatives of the Prime Minister, the House's leader's office and their whip, whatever role he has, who just will never miss a chance to stand up and characterize our role—

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for raising this point. The point was very well made.

The hon. opposition House leader has a quotation that he would like to read into the record, and then we will move on to the rest of the business of the House.

The hon. opposition House leader.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to raise these remarks to you, in light of your ruling. Essentially, what you have ruled is that the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake's statement about another political party, the NDP, as being sympathetic to, or supportive of, Hamas, an organization that is inflicting great cruelty on innocent human lives in the Middle East, rises to the level of being unparliamentary.

Today, in the chamber, the government House leader, in response to a question, asked, "Is it because there is a group of Conservative members of Parliament who are pro-Russia and anti-Ukraine...?"

In the situation with the war in Ukraine, we have a brutal regime led by Vladimir Putin illegally invading a sovereign country, committing atrocities and committing tragic murders of innocent human beings. I would put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that there is tremendous similarity between the parliamentary contexts of the member for Miramichi making a blanket statement about a political party supporting Hamas and the government House leader making an allegation about a political party supporting Vladimir Putin.

In light of your ruling, in which you said that the member for Miramichi now has to personally apologize and withdraw those remarks, we would ask you to look at these remarks and apply the same treatment to the government that you have now imposed on the opposition.

*Routine Proceedings*

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. House leader for reading that statement and I will take that into my consideration. I will come back to the House.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 34th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled “Emergency Management in First Nations Communities”.

I believe there will be a dissenting report coming from the official opposition in one moment.

• (1540)

[Translation]

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

[English]

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to table the Conservative Party's dissenting report to the Auditor General's report “Emergency Management in First Nations Communities—Indigenous Services Canada”.

I have to congratulate the Minister of Indigenous Services and the department for probably the worst Auditor General's report since Mr. Michael Ferguson's 2017 report on the “incomprehensible failures” of the government. The emergency management report would, I think, be better called “Incomprehensible Failures 2”. It says, “We found that Indigenous Services Canada spent 3.5 times more on responding to emergencies than on supporting First Nations communities to prepare for them. We...found [Indigenous Services has] not addressed problems with preparedness and mitigation that we identified...a decade ago, when we audited this topic in 2013.”

The absence of tangible and immediate actions has jeopardized the lives of indigenous people. Therefore, the Conservatives members of the committee recommend the following. Recommendation 1 is for the Government of Canada to immediately cease all bonuses to every executive who has failed to address the concerns with emergency management in first nations communities. Recommendation 2 is to “[fire] the Deputy Ministers who failed to provide support for First Nations communities to manage emergency services.”

Recommendation 3 is that “[t]he Government take immediate action to complete the necessary infrastructure projects for emergency management”. Recommendation 4 is to “establish mutually agreed-upon evacuation service standards in the jurisdictions that lack such standards”. Recommendation 5 is that the approach of emergency preparedness must be proactive and funds must be allotted likewise. This is correctly meant to rectify the department's spending of three and a half times more money on responding to and recovering from

emergencies than actually supporting the communities to prevent or prepare for them.

Recommendation 6 is that “Indigenous Services Canada should work with First Nations to implement a risk-based approach to inform program planning and decisions on where to invest in preparedness and mitigation activities to maximize support to communities at highest risk of being affected by emergencies.” Recommendation 7 is to “[a]cknowledge that it is in Canada's best interest to implement effective Emergency Management in First Nations Communities—Indigenous Services Canada and that it is a priority of this government.” Recommendation 8 is that “[t]he Government identifies and holds a singular government department accountable for the [failures] outlined in the Auditor General's report entitled “*Emergency Management in First Nations Communities—Indigenous Services Canada*”.

To summarize, stop the photo ops, stop the empty rhetoric and get the bloody job done.

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I believe, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I will point out to all members that the motion was passed unanimously by members in the public accounts committee.

The motions reads, simply:

That the Thirty-Second Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, presented to the House on Thursday, November 9, 2023, be amended to substitute the name of the organization “CATSA” with “The Canadian Transportation Agency” on page four of the report in English, and “ACSTA” with “Office des transports du Canada” on page four in French.

**The Deputy 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)

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to present a petition on behalf of my constituents. I rise for the 27th time on behalf of the people of Swan River, Manitoba, to present a petition on the rising rate of crime.

The NDP-Liberal government has neglected Swan River and its 4,000 rural residents who are impacted by a wave of criminals in their community. One individual in Swan River was responsible for 20 violent offences and 93 service calls in 18 months. This is exactly why the rural community is calling for action in the form of jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders.

The people of Swan River demand that the Liberal government repeal its soft-on-crime policies that directly threaten their livelihoods and their community.

I support the good people of Swan River.

• (1545)

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petition e-4652, which was started by a group of human rights students at Carleton University and signed by nearly 12,000 people.

Petitioners call our attention to the tragic loss of innocent civilian lives in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, as well as the worrying rise in incidents of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Canada. They call on the Government of Canada to advocate for an immediate ceasefire, to support diplomatic efforts aimed at a peaceful and just resolution to this enduring conflict and to encourage the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know that Bill C-318, which would amend EI and the Labour Code for adoptive and intended parents to give them time to attach, needs royal recommendation.

I am presenting a petition today in which citizens and residents of Canada call upon the Government of Canada to support adoptive and intended parents by providing a royal recommendation for the bill so parents can have time to attach to their children.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present what I believe is the 18th petition like this that I have presented. I am not quite as far along as my Conservative colleague across the way.

The petition brings to the government's attention the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most recent report, which indicates that the next two decades will bring widespread devastation and extreme weather. Petitioners indicate we are certainly feeling this in Canada now with increased flooding, wildfires and extreme temperatures, and that addressing the climate crisis requires a drastic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

Petitioners therefore call on the Government of Canada to move forward immediately with bold emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that are comprehensive in scope and realistic in achieving the necessary targets that Canada has set to reduce emissions by 2030.

#### FIREARMS

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to

#### Government Orders

bring forward to the House a petition from the many citizens of the riding of Skeena—Bulkley Valley, including the communities of Smithers, Terrace and Kitimat. Sadly, their member of Parliament was not interested in bringing forward the petition, which supports law-abiding firearm owners.

Petitioners draw to the attention of the House Commons that the government has attempted to ban and seize the hunting rifles and shotguns of millions of Canadians, that the targeting of farmers and hunters does not fight crime, and that the government has failed those who participate in the Canadian tradition of sport shooting. Therefore, they call on the Government of Canada to stop any and all current and future bans on hunting and sport-shooting firearms.

\* \* \*

#### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

#### CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my dear colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

I feel like saying, “at long last”. It was about time we got Bill C-58, a federal anti-scab bill. We have been calling for one for ages. The Bloc Québécois will definitely be supporting the bill in principle.

It might bear repeating that the Bloc Québécois has tabled several bills in the House aimed at ending the use of scabs during labour disputes. The first one was tabled by our colleague, the dean of the House, before the Bloc Québécois even existed. There have been 11 bills total. Although Canada is 46 years behind Quebec, because Quebec has had an anti-scab law on the books since 1977, this bill is a great accomplishment, but there was a lot of catching up to do to address the power imbalance in the employer-union relationship.

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We were delighted when the bill was introduced. We welcomed it. We decided that it if was good for the workers of Quebec, the Bloc Québécois would support it. We think it was welcomed in all quarters, by the major unions of both Quebec and Canada. They have been calling for such a bill for years, even during consultations with the government in 2021 and 2022. The government announced that it would introduce a bill by late December 2023. It has done it, but we said at the time that that date was too far away and much too late. Some will say better late than never, but in this case, every passing day is a grave injustice for workers. The fact that the Canada Labour Code still allows the use of replacement workers in the event of a dispute creates a serious power imbalance.

Why is this so important? At the very least, it is a question of rights and freedoms. I just want to remind my colleagues that in the 2015 Saskatchewan ruling, the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, recognized that the right to strike is not merely derivative of the right to bargain and to organize, it is indispensable in our society. That makes this right as important as the right to bargain. Using replacement workers and allowing them to be used in the event of a strike or a lockout is tantamount to fundamentally denying the right to strike. This problem absolutely had to be fixed.

This bill will also restore the balance of power. Now we will hear employers and big industry rise up against the bill, as we have heard them do before. They will argue that the bill will create an imbalance, that it will be dangerous for supply chains and the economy. The opposite is true. Back in 1977, the strikes in Quebec were tough. There was violence on the picket lines. That is one of the reasons Quebec passed a law to restore balance, as well as to restore a certain degree of industrial peace in labour disputes.

• (1550)

The only leverage available to a union or workers in the event of a dispute with the employer is their final resort: a strike. Employers have a similar right, the right to lockout. If employers are allowed to use replacement workers on top of imposing a lockout, they will be living the high life.

What does an employer stand to gain by settling the dispute as long as other workers cross the picket lines and are able to do the work without anyone getting their nose bent out of shape? What is happening right now in Quebec?

The conflict at the Port of Québec has been going on for almost two years. For more than 18 months, unionized workers with the Canadian Union of Public Employees have been locked out. What is more, the port is using replacement workers—scabs—who are often paid more than the employees, so the dispute continues. No one is getting worried. No one is connecting the dots. In terms of the economy, it is the workers who provide services at our ports, on our waterways and as part of our major infrastructure. They are part of those supply chains people talk about.

When workers do not have good working conditions, which is what they are demanding by going on strike, and when the dispute drags on, workplaces get weaker. Occupational health and safety can also be compromised, because replacement workers do not always have all the skills and attributes it takes to do the job. We have to pay attention to that.

We often see people act like the sky is falling when port workers go on strike. Just look at what happened at the Port of Vancouver. With the strike not even 24 hours old, people were already panicking and demanding special legislation. In many situations, disputes involving workers under federal jurisdiction were ended by either passing special legislation or allowing scab labour. That makes no sense anymore. This situation must be addressed.

We are pleased to see a bill on this matter. What worries us now, and with good reason, is whether the bill will succeed this time. How fast will the government move this bill forward to make sure it is not simply an intention that ends up dying on the Order Paper because it did not have enough time to make it through the process?

We are saying this for a reason. The bill already states that the legislation will not come into force until 18 months after royal assent. That is a year and a half. How can we count on that? There is no justification for that. I think things are clear. The provisions to be amended in the Canada Labour Code are quite clear.

There is no need to wait 18 months. The time frame must be shortened so that the bill comes into force as soon as it receives royal assent, as most other acts do. We can make it happen. We need to be able to respond to workers and give them what they need. It cannot just be wishful thinking.

Mr. Speaker, you are telling me I am out of time. Sign language is very difficult for me to understand.

I will conclude by saying that we absolutely must speed up the process. We need to ensure that this bill does not give full legitimacy to the right to strike and lockout by prohibiting replacement workers while at the same time limiting that same right to strike.

This is essential. The bill requires two major corrections.

• (1555)

[English]

**Mr. Jake Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I was not here earlier when the Speaker made his ruling. I would like to offer my apologies and withdraw the unparliamentary language I used last week.

• (1600)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his retraction and apology.

Moving on to questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand and appreciate that there have been concerns raised regarding the date this would take effect after receiving royal assent. I do believe at the committee stage, if not even before committee stage, members could always approach the minister, I am sure directly, to find out some of the rationale that was used.

On the member's personal experience and knowledge of what has happened in the province of Quebec, we all know that Quebec has led the country in anti-scab legislation, which was first enacted many, many years ago. I have always advocated for anti-scab legislation and supporting the collective bargaining system. To me, this legislation does just that. I wonder if the member could provide her insight, being from the province of Quebec, on how the community has benefited labour, in particular, and even non-unionized people.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, is it a benefit? I dare say it is a right.

It has become important in terms of regulating labour relations during disputes. We know it is a fundamental right, as I just said. Allowing this right to be fully exercised without interference forces the parties to come to a satisfactory agreement. When there is a greater balance of power, both sides are encouraged to resolve disputes faster. It also prevents serious health and safety issues. It makes a return to work possible. I am not saying that returning to work is always an easy task. There has to be some level of industrial peace to keep fighting.

When the sword of Damocles hangs above one's head, and nobody on the employer's side has any interest in settling, it can only poison the labour environment. A law that protects basic rights effectively ensures some level of industrial peace during negotiations.

[English]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member shares with me my enthusiasm for this new legislation in that it has something that Quebec and British Columbia both lack, which is attention to the fact that, with the rise of remote work, there is often no longer a physical picket line to cross, so this new legislation that we are bringing forward would be an improvement over both Quebec and British Columbia in that it anticipates strikebreaking could be done through remote work.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, some Quebec unions welcome this bill. I will talk only about Quebec, not British Columbia.

People have already had to turn to the courts in Quebec. Quebec's legislation was passed in 1977. Of course, in 2023, the whole workplace issue has changed; I am thinking among other things of telework. The bill will settle questions raised by Quebec workers concerning place of work and new definitions. That is a plus.

However, an even bigger plus would be for the bill to come to fruition quickly.

[English]

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns that Conservatives have with this legislation is that it would not impact the federal government itself. Does the member share that concern as well?

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, when we say it is important to pass this bill and send it to committee, it is because we see that it would not affect federal employees. That is rather worrisome.

During the last strike, federal employees who were working from home or working as subcontractors were perhaps being pushed by their employer, the government, to be scabs. We must not fall on our own sword. The things we want to protect in the private sector are the same things that should also be protected in the public sector.

I sincerely hope that the Conservative Party will support this bill so that we can treat it as a matter that is just as urgent and pressing as other legislative measures.

• (1605)

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to this bill.

As my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville said, we feel like saying “finally”. The Bloc Québécois has been working for an extremely long time to have such a bill introduced and studied.

As my colleague mentioned, the first time a Bloc Québécois member introduced an anti-scab bill was in 1990. I was not even born in 1990. That was a long time ago. It was our dean of the House, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel who introduced a similar bill. After that, we did the same thing 11 more times. The Bloc Québécois introduced similar bills 11 times. In other words, if the Bloc Québécois had been in power, we certainly would have passed such a bill by now. However, the Bloc Québécois has no aspirations to be in power.

That being said, I am glad to finally see, in 2023, that the other parties in the House—the NDP and the Liberal Party, at least—have made this a priority. I am eager to start working on this bill. I also want to highlight the work done by my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville, who just spoke. She has been the Bloc Québécois critic for labour for the past four years, and she does an amazing job. She is there for workers and unions. She is a former union leader herself. I think we can all thank her. I will do it on behalf of my colleagues, because she definitely played a part in the tabling of this bill. I think that many workers in Quebec will thank her for her work once this bill is passed.

*Government Orders*

She also said that, in Quebec, we may have been pioneers. We passed this type of legislation in 1977, and that created two classes of workers in Quebec with respect to scabs, federally regulated workers and all the others. This bill will finally eliminate these two classes of workers, at least that is our hope. As I heard in previous discussions, this bill even takes some steps forward, so we are extremely pleased about that. This bill is being applauded by several unions in Quebec, including Unifor and the United Steelworkers. In fact, I would say that this bill is being applauded by most unions. Everyone is very happy about it.

In that regard, my thoughts are with the Front commun workers in Québec who are on strike for better working conditions. Obviously, that is not exactly the same situation, but I am still thinking of them. I think that these exercises are extremely important. Even though the workers in that case are employed by the Government of Quebec, we can still stand in solidarity with them.

I have heard about this type of bill because of all the bills the Bloc Québécois has introduced over the years. I have also been approached by people who told me how important anti-scab legislation is, including a friend in telecommunications. He wrote to me several times in the past few months to find out if this was in the pipeline. He heard that the federal government wanted to introduce this kind of bill. He wanted to know whether it had been introduced or when it would be. I was always very disappointed that I had no news to give him and that I could not tell him it was coming or that we had started debating it. We had no news, and it took a very long time for the government to introduce the bill. My thoughts are with him and all his colleagues in the telecommunications sector, who will be significantly affected by this bill.

The bill proposes a ban on the use of replacement workers, including subcontracted workers, unless one of the following three situations arises. The first is a “threat to the life, health or safety of any person”. These terms may need to be better defined when the bill is being studied. That is why the Bloc Québécois hopes that the bill will be referred to committee so that we can examine these questions in greater depth and have a little more clarity. The bill also refers to a “threat of destruction of, or serious damage to, the employer's property or premises”. There is also mention of a “threat of serious environmental damage affecting the employer's property or premises”.

The bill also proposes a complete ban on crossing the picket line, including by employees in the same work unit. It also proposes issuing fines of up to \$100,000 per day when the employer fails to comply with the law.

• (1610)

Bill C-58 would also require employers and unions to sign an agreement at the start of negotiations to specify which operations must be continued in the event of a strike or lockout, and they would have 15 days to do it. If they do not come to an agreement, the Canada Industrial Relations Board would decide within 90 days which operations would be continued. The minister would still have the power to refer the issue to the board to protect the health and safety of the Canadian population.

As I mentioned earlier, some of the points will need to be looked at in committee. There is the issue of the 90-day period for the

Canada Industrial Relations Board that we, at the Bloc Québécois, have looked into. It seems needlessly long. A 60-day period might be more appropriate. We will have to see with the experts that will appear before the committee. There is also the definition of the exception for threats to the life, health or safety of any person. Exceptions like this one cannot be allowed to become catch-all measures that can be pulled out from a hat to bring everything to a halt. That will have to be looked at in committee. There is also the 18-month timeframe before the bill comes into force. My colleague alluded to that. It is obviously too long. Anyone who has ever gone on strike or been locked out knows how important this bill is. I have a friend who asked me every month if this bill was coming, because it is definitely important for these workers. Is it really necessary to wait 18 months after royal assent? That begs the question. Our leader spoke publicly on that subject.

We need to pass this bill as soon as possible. Obviously, it has to go through the legislative process step by step. There are a few issues we will want to raise in parliamentary committee, but all parties need to agree so we can move forward quickly, before Christmas if possible. Many workers would really appreciate this. According to the government's figures, roughly 1.03 million employees are covered by the Canada Labour Code. This affects a lot of people. We are talking about federally regulated industries and businesses, such as those in the air, rail, road, marine, interprovincial and international transportation sectors, as well as banks, the communications sector and postal services.

Apparently, there was an attempt to amend this part of the Canada Labour Code in 1999. However, the change was hijacked by employers who simply had to claim that they were negotiating in good faith. I think that what we have before us today is a true step forward compared to that feeble attempt in 1999, which clearly did not carry much weight.

I am running out of time, but I just want to quickly talk about the positive effects of anti-scab legislation. These measures are essential for civilized bargaining during a dispute. They promote industrial peace. They are the cornerstone for establishing a level playing field between the employer and labour. They also put an end to the situation where there are two classes of workers in Quebec, those who are regulated by Quebec or in the private sector and those who are federally regulated. We are sure that all of this will go quickly, but we know that the parliamentary process can be long sometimes. We just hope everything will go well.

In closing, I want to note something said by Nina Laflamme, union representative at the Canadian Union of Public Employees, who represents the longshore workers at the Port de Québec. She said that when this bill is adopted, we will be able to bargain on an equal footing.



I think that is a rather strong statement that makes sense because without this legislation and these anti-scab measures, unions and workers cannot effectively bargain on an equal footing. This has been a real problem for many years at the federal level. We applaud the introduction of this bill and we will obviously vote in favour of it.

• (1615)

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in my hon. colleague's speech. She raised a number of points that will have to be discussed in greater detail at committee. I do have a question about the 18-month delay that everyone has been talking about.

I, too, asked why the 18-month wait before coming into force. It seems that it is a matter of expertise and that the Canada Industrial Relations Board needs the time. We do not have as much experience as Quebec or British Columbia.

Does my colleague agree that it will take a certain amount of negotiating expertise before the legislation is implemented?

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Speaker, the committee will obviously be able to ask officials questions about that expertise and the 18-month delay. Is it necessary to wait that long?

We have talked about the law in Quebec and the law in British Columbia. I think the federal government has quite a few tools in its toolbox to follow their lead and know a little about how to operate once the legislation takes effect. It took so long to introduce this bill that I cannot believe they did not look at how things are done. I am confident that we might be able to shorten this time frame so that the legislation comes into force more quickly.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as the member mentioned, like British Columbia, where I live, Quebec has had similar legislation for a long time.

Can the member tell us a little bit more about the impact this law would have on people?

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for asking her question in French. That is always appreciated.

I think that we have seen many examples of lockouts and strikes in Quebec where the workers were not federally regulated. When there are no replacement workers being brought in during a labour dispute, the workers and the unions have a little more room to negotiate. As Nina Laflamme said, it puts workers on an equal playing field with the employer. I think that is extremely important.

Obviously, this bill does not resolve all of the issues. Negotiations can take a long time. We are seeing that right now with the Front commun in Quebec. Sometimes it takes a long time to come to an agreement, but having scabs involved only complicates things.

I think that, since 1977, Quebec has been able to prove just how important it is to have this type of legislation.

[English]

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, given that my colleague is from Quebec, could she expand on the legislation that Quebec already has? Does she feel this would im-

prove it, or would she still like to see other improvements in the legislation that has been put forward?

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Speaker, from what I understand of this legislation, it is quite good. There might even be some progress. That makes sense. As my colleague said earlier, Quebec forged ahead in 1977 when it passed similar legislation. Of course, if there are improvements that could be made here, we can always learn from that piece of legislation, even in 2023, and come up with something worthwhile.

It is always important to have this process of questioning experts in committee. It gives us the opportunity to see if those who are knowledgeable and have the expertise want to add anything to the bill or take anything out. I think that is important. I may not be an expert on the subject, but the experts will certainly be able to guide us at this stage of the study. The little bits we have seen so far are mostly about time frames.

As I was saying, I think we may have acquired all the tools we need to be able to move forward in a shorter time frame than the proposed 18 months prior to royal assent.

• (1620)

**Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia and my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville have already said, this legislation has been in force in Quebec for quite some time. It has become part of Quebec's social mores. The Bloc Québécois is closely attuned to Quebec's social mores, which is why we applaud this bill.

Does my colleague have any idea why the House of Commons has refused for so long, 11 times, to pass this legislation? Do Canada's social mores oppose this kind of worker and labour relations protection?

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Speaker, it seems that this great Canada, which is so different from Quebec, may be resistant to this, either for unknown reasons or for the reasons my colleague before me mentioned.

However, I think it is important to move forward and pass this kind of bill immediately. Parliament could have done so as far back as 1990, when our colleague from Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel first introduced such legislation.

We certainly had to negotiate in order to convince the government of the importance of such a bill. I am pleased that we have reached this point we are at today. It took time, however.

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, Canada Post Corporation.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise and speak in this House.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

The purpose of Bill C-58 is to support free and fair collective bargaining. If passed, it will help restore and maintain the balance of power between unions and employers during strikes or lockouts. According to the unions, employers are in a position of strength in labour disputes. We therefore need to ensure that each side can have equal strength when they go to the bargaining table.

Workers have rights. I think that everyone agrees on that. They have the right to organize, to bargain collectively and to go on strike. Striking is the tool they use to put pressure on the employer, but when they go on strike, they have to make sacrifices. They sacrifice their pay, their benefits, their day-to-day security.

[English]

I will be splitting my time with the member of Parliament for Labrador, who is a long-time friend and colleague, with whom I sit on the natural resources committee.

[Translation]

With regard to employers, the sacrifices they make during a lockout are not always comparable to those of striking workers. Before introducing Bill C-58, we did our job. Among other things, we held consultations with all stakeholders, including employers and unions. The unions told us about the shift in the balance of power during a strike or lockout. Restoring balance is a key element for them.

According to what the unions we met with told us, employers always have the upper hand in the negotiations because they have a lot more financial power than the workers. They explained to us that when employers use replacement workers, it creates an even greater imbalance. It weakens the workers' main pressure tactic, which is to deprive the company of its workforce.

Some have even argued that employers could use the replacement workers to avoid making compromises. For unions, this shift in the balance of power makes the bargaining process more difficult and makes strikes and lockouts last even longer.

Workers who are not being paid do not feel as though they are on a level playing field with their employer, who has the means to pay workers to keep the business running. Unions feel as though both sides are not equally motivated to negotiate and come to an agreement. Employees do not think it is fair or equitable when an employer replaces a worker who is on strike. That can also impact what is happening at the bargaining table and have a very negative impact on labour relations. What is more, it increases the risk of violence on the picket lines. We have often seen that in the past. Workers get frustrated and tensions rise. It puts everyone's safety at risk, including that of replacement workers.

What the unions are telling us is the truth. These things have happened. Take, for example, the lockout of unionized employees at the Co-op Refinery in Regina in 2019. The company spent millions of dollars building a camp that it filled with scabs from outside the province. It had so much financial power that it was able to bring replacement workers in by helicopter so that they could get across the picket lines.

● (1625)

The company hoped that the unionized workers who were locked out would give up their pensions. The conflict lasted 200 days and was marked by blockades, arrests and even a bomb threat. Is there a better example to illustrate how imbalanced the power relationship between unions and employers can sometimes be and how much damage that can cause?

The point is clear: Resorting to replacement workers diverts attention away from the bargaining table. It prolongs disputes, and it can poison workplaces for years, if not decades.

We are banning the use of replacement workers because we believe in balanced collective bargaining, free and fair collective bargaining. How would Bill C-58 restore that balance?

This bill would encourage unions and employers to resolve their differences as they should—together, on an equal footing at the bargaining table. In other words, it brings the focus back to the bargaining table. That is where this has to happen, because that is where the best deals are made. We are going to do this by ensuring that employers can no longer get others to do the work of striking or locked out workers. I am talking about employees and managers hired after notice to bargain has been served. Contractors, regardless of when they were hired, would also be prohibited from doing the work of striking or locked out employees.

Now, as in all things, there are exceptions. Employers could use replacement workers to prevent threats to life, health or safety; to prevent destruction of or serious damage to the employer's property or premises; or to prevent serious environmental damage affecting the property or premises. Any violation of the rules would be considered an unfair labour practice under the Canada Labour Code.

I will spare the House the details of the complaint process, but it should be noted that it would be handled by the Canada Industrial Relations Board, or CIRB.

Bill C-58 also provides for improvements to the process for the maintenance of activities. To prevent serious danger to the public, employers and unions should agree at the beginning of the bargaining process on what activities are to be maintained during a strike or lockout. The parties will have to come to an agreement within 15 days of the start of the negotiations, before they can issue 72-hour notices of their intention to strike or impose a lockout. If there is no agreement, it will be up to the CIRB to make a decision within 90 days. If no agreement or decision can be reached, there will be no strike or lockout.

I talked about what the unions told us during our consultations. As I mentioned, however, we consulted all the parties involved. We reached this point today because we worked in a spirit of tripartite collaboration. Together, the government, the unions and employers all sat down at the same table. We had open, honest and direct discussions. We worked freely and fairly, which is exactly what we want for the future of labour relations in Canada.

Bill C-58 will unquestionably improve labour relations, protect the right of workers to strike, limit collective bargaining interruptions and ensure greater stability for Canadians during disputes in federally regulated industries.

Bill C-58 will lead to free and fair collective bargaining at all times.

• (1630)

[English]

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to start by pointing out that this member and all his Liberal colleagues voted, twice, against legislation to prevent replacement workers, in 2016 and against in 2019.

I would like to know why the bill does not apply to heavily subsidized projects, like Stellantis, which is going to bring in 1,500 or 1,600 scab labourers from Asia. That is one question.

I heard the member mention that critical services would get exempted, such as pharmaceutical products, air ambulances and things like that. I have had people in the aviation industry point out to me, and I know they have studied it a lot, that things like fire-fighting, delivery by air of pharmaceuticals and air ambulances are threatened by this legislation.

Could the member provide the House with the clauses in that bill that would exempt those aspects of the aviation industry from this legislation?

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, first, the best deals are done at the negotiating table between the parties, the employer and the union.

Second, I am fully for foreign direct investment in this country. I am fully for Volkswagen, Stellantis, Toyota and Honda, and any other entity in the automobile sector, in this example, to come and invest here. If those entities need to bring in workers with specialized technology so that Canadians can have jobs, that is a win for our country, our communities and Canadian families.

Foreign direct investment in every part of our economy, whether it is Ferrero Rocher from Italy, Toyota or any company that is here in Canada, operating from abroad, General Motors, Ford, Stellantis, all these companies employ literally hundreds of thousands of Canadians. We want them to come here and invest in Canada. We will partner with industry and labour, unlike the party on the opposite side.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia said earlier, the Bloc Québécois introduced a similar bill in 1990 and reintro-

duced it 10 times. What is rather odd is that, every time the Liberals were in power they voted against the bill, and every time they were in opposition they voted in favour of it. This leaves the impression that they are anti-union.

There is a provision in the bill that once again gives the impression that they are anti-union, specifically, the one that says the bill will only come into force a year and a half after it receives royal assent. This means that, after the work of Parliament here and the study by the Senate, there will still be a waiting period of a year and half. As a result, an election will very likely be called before workers are given these basic rights.

Does my colleague not think that a year and a half is unreasonable? Why do we need so much time for a legislative measure that is simple to implement and that is easily implemented in most developed countries?

• (1635)

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very important question.

I would like to say that I have supported unions my entire life.

[English]

I have always been pro-labour. Before I entered university, I worked at a pulp and paper mill in British Columbia. They were on strike. I walked a picket line. I walked a picket line for the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union at a cannery, where I grew up in Prince Rupert. Private sector unions and their training facilities are located in my riding, along with their headquarters.

I will always be in support of the rights of workers from coast to coast to coast. This is just another example of that. Again, the best deals are done at the negotiating table. We know that. Whether they are carpenters, labourers, electricians or workers in federally regulated sectors of our economy, we know the best deals are done at the negotiating table.

We always need to make sure that the balance is there. We know that 97% or 98% of deals are done even before a strike happens. We understand there are methods of mediation and arbitration. Mediators come in. We all understand it.

This is just another step in the maturity of our Canadian labour market. It is the right thing to do. It is a good thing for Canadian workers. We, on this side of the aisle, will always stand up for Canadian workers, unlike the official opposition.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will remind members to keep their questions and answers as short as possible so everyone can participate in the debate this evening.

We will resume debate with the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs and to the Minister of National Defence (Northern Defence), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak to this bill today. It is legislation that I have supported for a very long time. I have advocated for it since my days sitting in the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

We know that the Government of Canada believes in collective bargaining. We always have. We have always been very supportive of the union movement, and we are one of the governments that has made significant amendments and has had several pieces of legislation to support workers in Canada since we began our time in office.

We really believe that Canadian workers have the right to fair, honest and balanced negotiations where replacement workers are not waiting in the wings to take their jobs. We have all seen it. We have seen how this story plays out across Canada when workers have earned the right to strike and have earned the right to collective bargaining, yet when they are out on the picket line, someone else is called in to do their jobs.

Canadian workers need to be able to trust that union jobs are good jobs and that union leaders are able to represent their best interests in fair, honest and balanced negotiations at that bargaining table. That is a fair process. It is why we are introducing this legislation today, which bans the use of replacement workers in federally regulated workplaces. I hope this is the beginning of a process of fairness that we will see legislated in provinces and territories across the country.

The union movement has been making this case for generations. For generations, it has been saying that the threat of replacement workers tips the bargaining table balance in the employer's favour. We have seen that many times over and over again. We think its members are right, and we agree with the statements they are making. It is unfair and contrary to the spirit of the true collective bargaining process, which has been legally binding in Canada for many decades.

We are trying to level the playing field, and level it in a way that supports unions and the rights that they have fought for and have won over many decades in Canada. This legislation is so important for Canadian workers because, when contract negotiations drag on and consistently reach a stalemate, workers are ultimately faced with a decision between two choices. They can either take the less-than-satisfactory employer offer, or they can go on strike. Those are the only options they have. They certainly feel that it is not always a fair process.

Making a decision to go on strike is not an easy one. No unionized workers vote to walk the picket line without weighing the decision and its implications carefully. It is invariably a money-losing proposition, at least in the short term, for all of them. It hurts their families financially, and hurts them and their families psychologically. Sometimes withdrawing labour is the workers' only way, the last case scenario, to exert the pressure they need to get the deal they deserve and have worked for.

I have walked the picket line with unionized workers many times in my political career simply because I believed in what they were doing—

• (1640)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I hate to interrupt the hon. member, but we are having some interpretation problems.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia raised this issue.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Speaker, that is correct. There is no interpretation.

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are hearing that the audio is not as good as it should be.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, I have a House of Commons-issued headset, so it should be working. Maybe I could continue, and if there is a problem, you can let me know.

During the time I have been serving people across Labrador, in particular, and across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, I have continuously—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are still not getting the interpretation. I will confer with the Table for a second. I do apologize.

The problem we are running into is the headset. Unfortunately, for interpretation, it does not sound as good.

We will have to go to the next speaker. I will confer with the Table to see if we can allow the hon. member to complete her speech. The hon. member only got about halfway through before there was a problem with interpretation. Hopefully, we will have the opportunity to rectify the problem so the hon. member will be able to finish.

I apologize. I guess that is the fun part of being virtual.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your reserving the time for me.

• (1645)

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

It is always a privilege to stand in the House to speak on behalf of the constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country. Today, I rise to speak to the government's legislation, Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board regulations. The bill has two main elements. First, it would affect the use of replacement workers only in those workplaces that fall under federal regulation. To be clear, this is not for federal public sector workers. Second, the bill would amend the maintenance of activities process. Again, to be clear, this is not for federal public sector workers. This is only for companies that fall within federal regulation.

*Government Orders*

If this legislation is so fantastic for workers, as the labour minister and other Liberal members say, it is extremely curious that the Liberals did not implement it into the contracts it negotiated just recently in the federal public sector. The Liberals plan to enforce legislation for the private sector that they themselves will not be held to. The golden rule of doing unto others as one would have them do unto oneself does not exist for the NDP-Liberal government.

One of the most interesting parts of this legislation is that, if it were to pass through the House of Commons and the Senate, and receive royal assent, it would not come into effect until after the next election. Here we have another example of the Liberal government promising sunny ways now and pushing off the effects its policies would have until after an election.

One of the great privileges of serving as the shadow minister for employment and workforce development is the number of meetings and conversations I have with workers, including unionized workers. I have talked with many workers from many different industries across many provinces in the country, in Yukon, and in my community.

Most workers whom I have talked to have top priorities in their concerns with tax increases, inflation and interest rates eating away at their paycheques. These are the top issues they bring up with me. I have had workers talk to me about concerns with stable EI programs, access to training, temporary foreign workers, better access to professional testing, and the ability for people working in the trades to expense items such as tools.

I was recently speaking to a young man who is a construction worker who told me that he has a place to sleep, but it is not a home. Even though he has a good job, he does not feel like he will ever own a home. We know it now takes 25 years to save for a home in Canada. There are so many good jobs that either have left the country or have evaporated, but the NDP-Liberal government does not want to talk about that.

Let us look at the forestry sector. Thousands of good-paying jobs have been lost in my home province of British Columbia alone. These were good-paying jobs supporting families. It is not like there was less of a need for softwood lumber or pulp, but due to the Liberal government's not negotiating a softwood lumber agreement with the U.S., a lack of business confidence and an unfriendly business regime created by the government, the jobs have gone south of the border. The Prime Minister promised a new softwood lumber agreement within 100 days of his first election in 2015. We are now thousands of days past this, three U.S. presidents later and no closer to that agreement.

Mills have shut and thousands of jobs have been lost in B.C. alone. This is another broken promise. Two hundred workers whose livelihoods supported their families in my community of Kelowna—Lake Country lost their jobs when the mill closed. The Liberals were not successful in negotiating a softwood lumber section into CUSMA either. They left it up to negotiating a separate agreement, and this has not happened.

In the energy sector, over \$100 billion in investments evaporated with project cancellations under the NDP-Liberal government, and tens of thousands of jobs have either been lost, or there were lost

opportunities. Many cited Canada's red-tape regulatory regime as a major barrier. There used to be direct flights to Fort Mac from Kelowna International Airport, with families living in Kelowna or Lake Country. When there were massive layoffs in the energy sector early in the Liberal government's time, the flights stopped.

● (1650)

Around this time, I recall speaking to a family where the husband had a good job working for an oil and gas company, and his company laid off a lot of its workforce. The only work he could find at the time was cutting lawns, and he and his wife had to make the tough family decision for the wife to go back to work, even though, with two young children, she did not want to. Even with them both working, they were making less than his one previous job in the energy sector. She was also no longer able to volunteer at the kids' school, and it created a lot of coordinating challenges with activities in the family. These are the tough decisions parents make every day. If the government were truly concerned about workers, as it says it is, it should focus on making sure there is investment in Canada and removing red tape and bureaucracy. It should stop stifling business and focus on creating well-paying jobs.

The anti-energy Prime Minister and radical activist environment minister have shrunk Canada's energy workforce while promising a "just transition" that cannot guarantee workers the same pay or benefits. The government's own document on the just transition refers to affecting 2.7 million workers' jobs within the energy, manufacturing, construction, transportation and agriculture sectors. Let us not forget the anti-energy industry bill, Bill C-69, parts of which have now been deemed unconstitutional.

The Prime Minister said there is no business case for LNG, yet the U.S. has become a major exporter in the world in just a few years. This is another lost opportunity for Canadian workers. If the NDP-Liberal government is so concerned about replacement workers, why did it seemingly negotiate an agreement in Windsor, Ontario, which will include foreign replacement workers? The Liberals originally called this disinformation, but we now know and have confirmation from the very company hiring the workers that at least 900 taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers from South Korea would be brought in to work on that plant, which would be subsidized by 15 billion taxpayer dollars.

### *Government Orders*

The executive director of Canada's Building Trades Unions has called the decision to allow foreign replacement workers to replace Canadian jobs at the EV battery manufacturing facility in Windsor "a slap in the face" and an "insult to Canadian taxpayers." We now know that the Northvolt project in Quebec will bring in taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers as well.

The government needs to make public copies of all contracts, memorandums of understanding or any other agreement between any minister, department, agency or Crown corporation of the Government of Canada, as well as all companies it has announced tax breaks and subsidies to in relation to battery production. When the Liberals put taxpayers on the hook for billions of dollars, the jobs those subsidies pay for should go to Canadian workers, not foreign replacement workers. Common-sense Conservatives are calling on the Prime Minister to release the documents for all these taxpayer-funded battery plants, so Canadians can see if the Liberal government did anything to secure guarantees for Canadian workers.

Let us talk about another recent broken promise of the Liberal government, with the announcement that it will now be raising EI premiums on every paycheque of workers in Canada in 2024. Just seven months ago, in budget 2023, it said that premiums would not be increased. The government's inflationary deficits have crushed the purchasing power of workers' paycheques. Inflation increases the costs of basic necessities, and food inflation has been even higher. Despite the finance minister's victory statement in September, inflation is still high; the Prime Minister's promise of bringing down food costs by Thanksgiving has come and gone. We know there is a record number of two million Canadians using a food bank each month. Rents have doubled, and taxes such as the carbon tax keep increasing. Families of all generations are being squeezed; they are on the edge of not being able to fulfill their financial commitments and pay their bills.

After eight years, inflation and interest rates at generational highs are impacting workers and their families everywhere they turn. Only a Conservative government will focus on making life more affordable and removing red tape and bureaucracy so Canadians can bring home powerful paycheques once again.

• (1655)

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs and to the Minister of National Defence (Northern Defence), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to ask my colleague a question. I listened very attentively as she spoke on Bill C-58. We all know that good deals happen at the bargaining table. That is where workers have the opportunity to get the powerful leverage they need to ensure they get fair wages, fair benefits and job security. These are all the things they and their families need and depend upon. The fact that companies can bring in replacement workers while they are on strike has always been a disadvantage for workers.

Is my hon. colleague prepared to support Bill C-58 and support workers in Canada?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, do we know what is not a good deal? It is 200 people in my community losing their jobs when a mill closed or the worker I talked about who worked in the energy sector and lost his job because of the policies of the Liberal govern-

ment. His wife had to go back to work. As I mentioned in my intervention, both of their wages together did not even come close to what he was making himself working in the energy sector.

Those are the types of tough decisions that are affecting families every day. Those are the tough situations that have played out in households across this country because of policies that the government has implemented.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the ban on replacement workers to ensure balanced collective agreement negotiations has been part of Quebecers' DNA for decades.

I know that the Conservatives think they are in the middle of an election campaign, but I feel uneasy. I listened to my colleague's speech and it was interesting. We talked about the carbon tax and battery plants. The Liberal member asked her a clear question about whether the member will support the principle that replacement workers should be banned to ensure balanced collective agreement negotiations. We received a non-answer. The Conservatives are uncomfortable. They do not want to answer to avoid implying that they are not on the workers' side.

I would like a clear answer from the Conservatives. Do they support the principle of the bill to ban replacement workers, yes or no?

It is either yes or no. I would like a real answer.

[English]

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, it is really interesting that the member is from Quebec. We know that the Northvolt project in Quebec will be bringing in hundreds of taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers to fill jobs, taking jobs away from workers in Quebec. There needs to be more clarity on taxpayer-funded foreign workers who will be funded through the hard-working people of Canada. We are asking for the government to disclose what those contracts are. We need to see what is in them, so we can see how this is affecting workers. Is it written into the contracts that foreign replacement workers are acceptable for those companies that are accepting all this taxpayer money?

• (1700)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, hopefully the third time is the charm, because the hon. member did not actually answer the questions of my last two colleagues. I too listened to the hon. member's speech. She did not really speak a lot about the bill in question. Yes, the cost of living is rising but, again, this bill will help ensure that workers have the ability and the power to negotiate as equals with their employers.

Again, will this member and will the Conservative members of the House support this bill and support workers' rights when dealing with potential replacement workers?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the NDP-Liberal government always wants to talk about anything other than the fact that people cannot afford to pay for basic necessities. We have nurses and construction workers who are living in their cars in British Columbia. We know that this is across the country. We know that there are tent cities across this country, because people cannot afford the basic necessities they need to live. Reports came out just this morning about how close seniors are to being homeless.

The government has created this problem with high inflation, which has also created high interest rates. This is creating higher mortgage payments for people, putting them on the edge and out of their homes. The government should be focusing on policies and legislation that can actually stop what is creating this situation, where people cannot even afford basic necessities in this country.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know that improving labour relations should be the ultimate goal of any government. It is better for workers, employers, the economy and all Canadians. However, the current labour climate suggests that we are moving in another direction. Across the country, we are seeing more labour strife than we have at any other time in recent history.

The strife is undoubtedly being fuelled by the spiralling cost of living crisis in this country, which is a direct result of the NDP-Liberal government's inflationary deficits and taxes. The costly coalition has made life more difficult for hard-working Canadians, and paycheques are not going nearly as far as they once were.

We know the carbon tax is increasing the cost of everything. Food prices have gone up year after year, housing costs have doubled and mortgages have gone up by 150% since the Liberals took office. There are reports indicating that over 50% of Canadians are \$200 or less away from going broke, which is simply outrageous. Working Canadians across this country are struggling to put food on their tables and to keep a roof over their heads. That is unacceptable, but it is the devastating reality after eight years of the Liberal government, which continues to be propped up by its NDP friends. They have failed Canadian workers and broken the unspoken promise that if one gets a job and works hard, one will be able to pay one's bills and build a better life.

That is the climate in which the Liberals have tabled this bill. As we consider Bill C-58, it is critical that we do so with a view to finding balance. Governments should never encourage labour disruption or give either side in a dispute an uneven advantage, because there are very serious implications for all Canadians when labour is disrupted. This is particularly true when we consider the industries and the sectors that are federally regulated.

Whether it is our rail system, our ports, our telecommunication networks or air travel, labour disruptions in these critical industries have a serious cost for businesses. Beyond that, they can also have a potentially devastating impact on everyday Canadians. That downstream impact should not be cast aside in this debate, and it cannot be ignored. It raises questions about what happens when

medicine cannot get to the end destination on store shelves and, ultimately, is not there when Canadians need it.

### *Government Orders*

What happens if telecommunication services are down? How does a family member check in on loved ones? What impact would this have on payment processing? Would there be Canadians unable to access basic necessities? If fresh food in transportation spoils, what is the cost to consumers? These questions raise just a few examples of what impact a strike could have on Canadians. Ultimately, a strike that impacts our supply chains, such as those in our ports or railways, will always have a ripple effect beyond the employer and worker.

It will also impact small businesses that depend on the efficient flow of our supply chains. The longer a strike lasts, the greater the harm it will cause. For small businesses, it is a situation that is generally well beyond their control. This is certainly true for farmers, who need to get their commodities to market. In my province of Saskatchewan, which is a landlocked province, a disruption in any part of the supply chain network is seriously detrimental.

It is critical that, in considering this legislation, we understand the potential impact on farmers and their operations. Farmers certainly cannot afford to take any more hits. They are already some of the hardest hit by the NDP-Liberal coalition's failed policies. Farmers I have spoken to certainly feel that it is intentional and that the government has no regard for their industry or their contributions to our country. Failed policies such as the Liberal carbon tax are putting the viability of farm businesses in jeopardy. There is also, of course, the Senate; so-called independent senators are now doing the government's bidding by dragging their feet on Bill C-234. Ensuring the viability of farm operations is critical to the industry, as well as to an affordable and dependable food supply.

• (1705)

I recently had a farmer in my office who shared with me that a single day of rail disruption delayed his shipment by a matter of weeks, which, of course, directly impacted the cash flow of his operations. That is because a single day of disruption never equates to a single day of backlog. This brings to mind this past summer's port strike in Vancouver, which created a massive bottleneck in our supply chain infrastructure. The job action in Vancouver lasted weeks, and now all these months later, the port is still working to clear the backlog.

### *Government Orders*

Let me be clear that Canadian workers, without question, have the right to collective bargaining and striking. Striking should be the last resort, and it should not be incentivized. The best outcome for all parties is coming to an agreement at the bargaining table. That is why it is critical that government foster a level playing field for unions and businesses so that ultimately government is helping only to foster better labour relations. Government should not intervene to tip the scales.

Other jurisdictions that have implemented similar bans have seen an increase in job actions, which should be cause for warning. It is not clear what lessons from those jurisdictions are being applied in this legislation, and it is not clear that this legislation strikes the appropriate balance between labour and employers. In fact, the bill contains a lot of ambiguity that requires clarification. This is, of course, a pattern with the Liberal government, which has a tendency to introduce what it has coined as “framework legislation”.

There is another matter of great curiosity. The bill would impose a ban on replacement workers for federally regulated industries, but it would not apply to the public service. This policy decision certainly raises questions. If the Liberals have determined through their consultations and analysis that what they are proposing is positive for labour relations, then it would make sense to apply it to themselves, but they deliberately chose to exclude the federal government and the public service from the scope of this legislation. I think industry deserves clarity from the labour minister on this particular policy decision.

In another example of “do as I say and not as I do”, the Liberal government seems to villainize replacement workers through this legislation while at the same time funding foreign replacement workers. Last week, we learned that the Stellantis battery plant is reportedly hiring 1,600 foreign workers despite receiving \$15 billion in subsidies from the NDP-Liberal coalition. This is not in the interests of our Canadian workers, and it certainly is not fair to them or Canadian taxpayers. Canadian taxpayer subsidies should be going to support Canadian workers, not foreign replacement workers.

We do not even fully understand the extent of the government's budgeted contract negotiations, because not only does the story keep changing on that side of the House, from claiming disinformation to claiming one worker and then a handful, but the Liberals are deliberately choosing to keep the contracts hidden. If it is such great news for Canadian workers, why the secrecy? What are they trying to hide?

Well, we know now that the Northvolt plant will be utilizing taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers, which also calls into question whether Volkswagen will. Canadian taxpayers and tradespeople deserve answers. The Prime Minister must confirm what provisions were negotiated to secure good, long-term jobs for Canadians, because at the end of the day, that is what Canadians workers want. They want to work. They want Canadian businesses and industries to succeed so they have job security. They want businesses to continue to invest and create jobs in Canada that will allow them to keep a roof over their heads and food on their table. They want a guarantee that they can build a life for themselves.

As I said at the outset, improving labour relations should be the government's goal. Having healthy and good labour relations is what is best for workers, employers, the economy and ultimately all Canadians.

• (1710)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the Conservative colleague who spoke prior to the member was asked three times whether or not the Conservatives would vote in favour of the bill. When the member spoke, she debated whether Conservatives would be supporting it. I think they should have learned their lesson after how they treated the Ukraine-Canada free trade deal. They were basically silent on it the entire time, would not make a commitment and then suddenly started voting the way they did last week, to the surprise of the entire country.

I am wondering if the member would like to tell the House and Canadians whether she will be voting in favour of this bill or against it. Will we see a repeat of what we saw on other issues?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, this is an example of the petty, gut-wrenching politics the Liberals partake in. All they do is deflect and divide. That is what they are good at.

If anybody listened to my speech, I posed a lot of questions, because that is what debate is for. Debate is for hearing different views, especially from different representatives across the country, to come to a formulated, educated solution or end goal.

I have asked how this bill is going to affect everyday Canadians. That is my question.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member started her speech by talking about the importance of improving labour relations as a priority of the government. I am curious if the member could please share the ways the leader of the Conservative Party has shown this priority. Was it when he passed laws to make it harder for unions to win better pay for workers? Was it when he voted against establishing a minimum wage, twice? Was it when he made it harder to get a pension, delaying the retirement age to 67? Was it when he made CEOs and rich investors richer by giving away \$55 billion in tax cuts to big corporations while cutting services?

Which is it? Is the Conservative Party in support of labour relations or lining the pockets of its rich friends?

• (1715)

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, we can see the NDP spinning its partisan talking points.



I am here thoughtfully discussing, and asking questions and seeking answers on Bill C-58. I asked questions throughout my remarks today about how this piece of legislation is going to affect everyday Canadians.

It is unfortunate to see the NDP marrying and partnering with the Liberals and being invited to sit next to them.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, at least it has become clear that the member will probably not support the bill. I am surprised because the Conservatives normally try to find a carbon tax in bills to avoid supporting them, but there is no such tax in this one. The member is using the fact that some plants will use temporary foreign workers to deny workers fundamental rights and calling that a defeat. These foreign workers in Quebec obviously fall under Quebec jurisdiction.

Does my colleague agree that all temporary foreign workers, including workers who live here in Canada, should have decent working conditions and that, for all these workers, replacement workers should be banned?

*[English]*

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, if he had listened to my speech, I talked about what is contributing to the cost of living crisis, which is also contributing to why labour is the way it is today. Canadians are literally living paycheque to paycheque. Many Canadians are \$200 or less away from going broke.

Canadians want to make sure there are jobs for Canadians and that what the government is doing in the contracts it is negotiating, to look at Stellantis, for example, ensures their jobs are at the forefront and are going to be protected. It looks like the government will not release the details of the contracts, so we do not know if the Liberals care about protecting Canadians' jobs.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know that in the member's riding, the government's track record is particularly horrific given the jobs it has killed through its attack on resource industries.

I wonder if the member would like to comment on the NDP tail suddenly wagging the Liberal dog, forcing a bill onto the House that the Liberals twice voted against when raised as opposition private members' bills. Does she have any comment on the credibility the government has when it comes to standing up for workers?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, the credibility they have is zero. We see this with my private member's bill, Bill C-318. They voted against it and then they scooped it up and put it in the fall economic statement. It just proves that the Liberals are out of touch and out of ideas and that it is time for a Conservative government.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow the member for Labrador to finish her speech and Q and A, which were interrupted due to technical challenges.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs and to the Minister of National Defence**

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**(Northern Defence), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues in the House of Commons for their patience today. When technology works, it is great, and when it does not, we end up with problems like this.

It is very important that I have the opportunity to finish my thoughts on Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code. This legislation is so important for Canadian workers.

When contract negotiations are dragging on and, as we have all seen, have reached a stalemate, workers are ultimately faced with two decisions: they take the offer on the table, whether it is acceptable or not, or they go on strike. I have been on picket lines many times across my own riding, with Vale workers, Department of National Defence workers and steelworkers in Labrador West, Labrador City and Wabush. Many have had to walk the picket lines over and over, while others were called in to do their jobs. It not only affects the financial abilities within their families but affects them psychologically. It has a tremendous impact on all aspects of their lives.

This is something unions have been asking for for a long time. When people are out there on the picket lines supporting these workers, they feel a deep sense of frustration as they watch other people take their jobs. They are only there because they were not able to solidify the rights and rewards they felt entitled to.

Collective bargaining is hard work. We all know that. We all know that it takes time and very innovative ideas. It can be very tense. It can be messy. The minister said that when he was introducing this bill.

We know that workers want to work. They want to work for fair pay and fair benefits. They do not want to walk picket lines. That is always the last resort. We can never forget that.

We also know that labour instability means instability right across our supply chains. It has a ripple effect on the economy. It affects all of us in Canada. Anytime we can avoid this and allow for the collective bargaining process to work so workers can get good, solid agreements between unions and employers, it really benefits all Canadians. Anytime we can have these disputes settled and not prolonged, it is in the best interests of workers, their families and the overall economy in Canada.

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I know a number of Conservatives asked whether members had ever been on a picket line. I have been on many, because I have supported unionized workers all my life. I really believe they have worked hard to earn the rights and benefits they have and that they should be able to exercise them without the cost of losing their jobs or having others take their jobs.

One of the largest protester rallies I was ever involved in was when a Conservative government withdrew search and rescue services from Newfoundland and Labrador. Not only were employees laid off but the doors were closed in a province that has thousands of kilometres of seaway and is so dependent on search and rescue and the marine search and rescue centre. The Conservative government under Stephen Harper cancelled that particular program, and the doors at the search and rescue centres were closed and locked, putting workers out in the streets.

I know what it is like. I know how these workers are impacted. I have seen it first-hand. This legislation is there to protect workers, protect their jobs and allow for them to have the full collective bargaining rights they have worked hard to secure in settlements over decades in Canada.

I will be supporting this legislation, and I hope all my colleagues in the House of Commons will support it as well.

• (1720)

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just heard my hon. colleague mention the Canadian Coast Guard. I know folks in the area where she grew up would like an update on whether the people of southern Labrador are going to get the Coast Guard search and rescue centre they are asking for.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would question the relevance of that one to the bill, but perhaps the hon. member wants to answer it.

The hon. member for Labrador.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the marine search and rescue centre in St. John's that Stephen Harper and the Conservative government closed. We reopened it after we came to power in 2015.

Have we made upgrades in Labrador? Yes, and I am going to be very happy to talk about all of those very soon.

What I want to talk about today is workers and the rights of workers in the union movement. The member opposite just stood, but his government voted against wage increases for workers and fair benefits. It also tried to increase the retirement age for seniors in this country from 65 to 67.

It does not sound like a government that supported workers in any unionized movement in this country, so what I would like to know from the members opposite is whether Conservatives are prepared to support this legislation in the same way we are.

• (1725)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a lot of us have heard from constituents who are quite concerned about the cost of living increase and how hard it is for folks. She mentioned in her speech the necessity to ensure that workers have an ability to negotiate on an equal footing with their employ-

ers to have better wages. One of my concerns is the time that it takes to pass this legislation and that within the legislation the Liberals have put in an 18-month delay before implementation.

I want to ask the member why she thinks this is justified, considering people are struggling now and workers need the supports in Bill C-58 to ensure they have equal rights to that of their employers.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, is important to realize that Canadian workers need to trust that the unions are there and can do the best job possible to represent their best interests, but more importantly they need to know that they have the right to fair, honest and balanced negotiations where they do not have replacement workers waiting in the wings to do their jobs.

One of the things I want to flag for my colleague here is that this particular legislation was done in conversation with employers, workers, indigenous partners and the Canadian public. There were 71 submissions and a lot of round table discussions. As a result, we are here today to support legislation that can be rolled out in a way that is responsive to the needs of all who were able to participate in this process.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this was one of the commitments that the Liberal Party made in the last election. Of course, it is always good to be able to, in a minority Parliament like this, have other players who are willing to look for progressive ideas and policies as well.

I wonder if the member wants to talk about how important that was for workers in Canada, how they demonstrated that prior to the election and why, as a result, we put it into our campaign commitment.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, this was a huge issue in the Liberal platform going into the last election. We made a commitment to Canadians that we would honour and support workers, and that we would ensure that the focus was at the bargaining table and not at the picket lines.

This is allowing us to do that, to find the stability that workers need, and we did it in partnership with them. That is why we believe that this is the most transformative legislation in many decades in terms of benefits for workers and unions. We need to ensure that we get it right and we are getting it right with their input.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak in Parliament today in favour of Bill C-58, a historic piece of legislation. It is a piece of legislation that is in support of workers, and in support of their fundamental right to organize and to bargain collectively.

Fundamentally, this legislation is about fairness. By banning the use of replacement workers, also known as “scabs”, we are supporting fairness, and the right of workers to exercise their fundamental rights.

Before I go on, I want to make sure I mention I am splitting my time with the member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Many may wonder why this legislation is necessary. We know that, historically, there are employers who have done what they can to attack workers and to undermine their rights. We know that scabs are often brought in during lengthy strikes, and it is not about providing essential services or other excuses that employers might use. It is about breaking workers. It is about breaking unions. We are all worse off for it.

This legislation matters in my riding. I am proud to be from northern Manitoba. I am proud to be from Thompson, a working-class town, a mining town and a union town. I am proud to have been a union member before I got into politics. I am proud to represent communities like The Pas, Flin Flon, Churchill, Norway House and others where workers have a history of standing up and fighting back.

Manitoba has a long history of labour activism. We all know the general strike of 1919 where there was a violent repression against workers fighting for their rights. There have been many strikes and walkouts in the history of our province here in northern Manitoba. We know that workers have stood up with everything they had to fight for better wages, for safety in their workplaces, and for support for our communities and our region. They have fought for all of us.

Let us be clear about the fact that anti-scab legislation is a victory for working people everywhere. I am proud to be in the NDP, a political party that supports workers. We are part of a movement that was created, of course, in large part by workers and organized labour. We, in the NDP, are unequivocal in our support of workers and workers' rights, rather than the billionaire-class, corporate coalition the Liberals and Conservatives always fight for.

Workers, as represented by organized labour, have made this call for anti-scab legislation for years, and the NDP has been there to support them every step of the way. Eight times in 15 years the NDP has introduced anti-scab legislation. We know that the B.C. NDP government brought in anti-scab legislation years ago. I also acknowledge that Quebec has had anti-scab legislation for a long time. I hope the newly elected NDP government in Manitoba brings anti-scab legislation into force as well.

At the federal level, we must acknowledge that this is a historic moment. This is historic legislation. It feels like this time, the Liberals will finally pause their corporate, anti-worker coalition with the Conservatives for a brief enough time to pass this vital piece of legislation. It is legislation that, even through the negotiations with

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the Liberals, they had to be pulled kicking and screaming toward the finish line. Finally, we have it in sight.

What workers are used to from the Liberals and Conservatives is lip service and not a whole lot else. I, along with my colleagues, hope that we can strike down the 18-month implementation period that is far too long for Canadian workers.

We know that when not one billionaire tax cheat has been punished for parking their money in offshore tax havens, and when billionaires are given a free ride time and time again, we all see the power imbalance in this country for what it is. We see it when the Liberals let 123 corporations avoid paying \$30 billion in taxes, all while patting themselves on the back as the defenders of workers that they pretend to be.

We see it in the anti-worker, back-to-work legislation that both Liberals and Conservatives have consistently brought in and supported when workers collectively fight for their rights, like with postal workers, dock workers, Air Canada workers, PSAC workers and UFCW workers. Neither the Prime Minister nor the leader of the official opposition has seen a strike they are uncomfortable quashing. We now have the power to change that.

At this point, it is pretty clear that workers have seen a lot from the federal government that is anti-worker. They have seen billion-dollar contracts with Amazon, while workers rely on food banks. They have seen how hard it is to afford rent or buy a home when billionaires are making record profits.

● (1730)

It is also very important that we remind Canadians of the record of the Conservative Party and the leader of the official opposition who has reshaped himself into a so-called champion for workers, but when they look at his record, he is somebody who has made clear that he hates workers and the defence of workers' rights with the same zeal as the Prime Minister. In fact, when the leader of the official opposition was in government, he cut billions of dollars from health care that we all rely on, he cut EI benefits and he directly attacked workers. He attacked unions. He voted against raising the minimum wage and, of course, we know he supported back-to-work legislation. Simply told, he may talk a big game, but we have seen this before and workers will not buy it.

Because both the Liberals and the Conservatives will try to fool people and they do it any time they need a political boost, out comes the “aw shucks” defence of working people. If we are lucky, some may show up to a picket line, but if either the Liberals or the Conservatives cared for workers, they would not push for trade deals that actively harm them. and it would not have taken the eighth try in 15 years to actually pass anti-scab legislation. It would have happened by now.

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I am proud of the work that our federal NDP has done to push the Liberals to bring this piece of legislation forward. We know that this is legislation that would not just lift workers up but would lift Canadians up as well. It is sorely needed to restore the power imbalance between workers and the billionaire class, where workers have been forced to fight for scraps while the ultrarich in this country make record profits. There is hope. I think of workers at a Starbucks in Chicoutimi who just signed their first union card, or workers in Montreal at Amazon working to unionize their workplace. It is time we fixed this power imbalance and it starts with enshrining worker protections, like anti-scab legislation, so that every worker has a voice.

The reality is that billionaires and their enablers in the Liberal Party and Conservative Party are all too happy to quash the power of workers. However, with this legislation, fought for by the NDP, we have made it a bit harder. Any day we make it easier for workers and harder to be a billionaire is a good day for Canadians.

I am going to make a prediction that the Conservatives are going to talk a good talk, as we are hearing in the House with respect to how tough people have it, but I predict that they are not going to support anti-scab legislation which is fundamentally tied to the ability of workers to fight for fairness. We know that from the track record of their leader and we know that from the track record of many MPs who were part of the previous Harper government, which was a dark time for working people in this country.

I can pretty well guarantee that despite some of the verbal pronouncements of support for workers, we certainly will not hear them singing *Solidarity Forever* or see them standing up to vote for this legislation that would ban the use of replacement workers. The bottom line is that if they really support workers, if they really support their right to organize and their right to bargain collectively, and if they support the labour movement and believe that it is fundamentally tied to bettering the lives of workers and all Canadians, they will vote for this legislation. I hope all parties will do just that.

• (1735)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her interesting speech and for supporting the bill before us. We look forward to seeing what will be adopted in committee and what important elements will be added by members.

My colleague has acknowledged that Quebec has had this type of legislation for a long time. We have expertise in industrial relations.

Does she think that 18 months is a reasonable time frame for the other provinces to develop the same kind of expertise?

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Madam Speaker, I think that 18 months is an unacceptable delay. That was clearly said. We can move forward much more quickly than that. Obviously, we need this bill. From Quebec's and British Columbia's experience, we know that it can make a difference for workers. Workers in federally regulated sectors need this support as soon as possible. Eighteen months is an unacceptable delay.

[English]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I wonder whether the hon. member shares with me my confidence that the new bill would do a better job than those in both British Columbia and Quebec, in that it attempts to address the question that is important in areas where the federal government has jurisdiction of remote work, especially in telecommunications.

I wonder whether she shares the optimism that the bill would help address the use of replacement workers working from home.

• (1740)

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Madam Speaker, that is a critical point. We know that the legislation is historic in many ways. It has been fought for over the course of many years, but it is also legislation that is very current, recognizing that many workers in particular sectors, and I am thinking of telecommunications and others, are increasingly engaged in remote work and deserve the protections and should have the rights that any other worker does. Importantly, the legislation would look out for remote workers.

I think we all agree, certainly in the NDP, that we need to move ahead with this critical piece of legislation as soon as possible, much faster than the 18-month implementation period. Workers need the legislation now.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, the Bloc Québécois introduced 11 anti-scab bills before the government introduced this one. To give a little background, when the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, the dean of the House, introduced his bill in 1990, the Liberals voted overwhelmingly in favour of it, but the Conservatives voted against it. There were also 133 members of the House who abstained from voting, including a few New Democrats. Had the NDP caucus been united at that time, we would have had anti-scab legislation in 1990. It is rather surprising to see that the NDP has not always sided with workers, but I am glad to see that they have changed their position today.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Madam Speaker, I do not know the details of that situation, but we know that the NDP has introduced this type of bill in the past and has supported anti-scab bills introduced by other parties, including the Bloc Québécois. Our priority was to ensure that this was part of our work in collaboration with the other parties, including the Liberal Party. To us, it is obvious that we need to move as quickly as possible without waiting 18 months for this bill to become a reality because the workers need it now.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-58, which is being studied thanks to the NDP. It is thanks to the efforts of the member for Burnaby South, as well as our critic and deputy leader, the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, that we are here debating another anti-scab bill. This is the eighth time the NDP has introduced such a bill in Parliament, but we know that it will stick this time. For anyone from any party to claim the opposite would be absolutely false. The NDP has been championing this cause for years. Eight times we did not succeed. However, NDP members keep working until we do succeed. This bill is a win for all workers across the country.

I should also point out that we desperately need this NDP bill in the House of Commons. First and foremost, let us look at the gap between CEOs' annual pay and workers' annual pay across the country. Over the past 15 years or so, first under the Conservatives and then under the Liberals, the gap between what CEOs earn and what workers get has doubled. Seventeen years ago, before the Harper regime began, the ratio was 200 to 1, meaning CEOs earned \$200 for every dollar a worker earned. Today, after 17 years of this corporate coalition, we see that the gap has doubled. CEOs now earn around 400 times what workers earn.

It is extremely important to have a fair and level playing field for bargaining. That is what this NDP bill does. It ensures that workers who are negotiating in good faith can now improve their situation while doing their job. For example, they can vote in favour of a strike knowing that their employer cannot use scabs to take away their power to get fairer wages, a health plan and a safer, more secure workplace. These are all things that workers are seeking.

Magali Picard, the president of the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, said it like it is:

Finally! That is what we feel like saying. We must commend the...government for its courage in resisting the employer lobbies and recognizing all of the hard work that has been done by the NDP, not to mention the unions, including the affiliates of the FTQ, which have constantly exerted pressure over the years so that the governments in place would introduce a bill to protect workers. Too often, unscrupulous employers under federal jurisdiction have taken advantage of the lack of anti-scab legislation to continue operating during labour disputes by hiring scabs. This bill meets our expectations.

Let me repeat what Ms. Picard said: "recognizing all of the hard work that has been done by the NDP". That is important. That is why the NDP pushed so hard and worked so tirelessly to get this bill introduced. Now, of course, we are going to see to it that the bill is improved, because there are still elements in it that need to be improved.

• (1745)

[English]

When we talk about Bill C-58 and the NDP's long battle, over decades, to bring anti-scab legislation, anti-replacement-worker legislation, to the floor of the House of Commons, we have to understand the why of this. I can give no better illustration than just last weekend, when I was back in my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby. There are picket lines there that, of course, the member for Burnaby South, the leader of the NDP has visited. The members for Vancouver Kingsway, Vancouver East and Port Moody—Coquitlam, and, in fact, all members of the Lower Mainland caucus of

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the NDP, have been on the picket lines for the Shaw workers who were locked out by Rogers.

Rogers, with the rubber stamp of the federal Liberal government, took over Shaw cable, a company that worked for a long time with unionized workers. It locked them out immediately because the workers wanted to continue to have their jobs; to continue, in good faith, to negotiate adequate salaries; and to make sure that work was not contracted out and, in that sense, hurting the entire community. The workers expected to see a negotiation in good faith. That is not what Rogers did. Rogers locked them out and immediately hired replacement workers. I have been on the lockout lines, as have my colleagues from the Lower Mainland NDP caucus. We have not seen Liberals there. We have not seen Conservatives there. It has been New Democrats standing up for the workers, the hundreds who have been locked out.

The reality is, in an example like that, in federal jurisdiction, that the use of replacement workers is a benefit to the corporate executives who have decided to take the step. It is not in the interests of the community, of the public, nor even of the company. The executives took the decision out of pure greed.

Eighteen months would be ridiculously long. The NDP is going to change that. However, the reality is that once Bill C-58 is implemented, companies like Rogers would have to act responsibly. They would have to sit down. They would have to negotiate in good faith. They would have to ensure that what they are doing is negotiating an agreement with their workers in good faith and above board.

The bill is something that would level the playing field for workers. We have seen a massive concentration under the Harper regime and under the current government, where corporate executives have basically had all of the power. They have been able to take massive amounts of money overseas, as the Parliamentary Budgetary Officer tells us, \$30 billion of taxpayers' money every year. That is money that could be going to seniors, students and families. It is \$30 billion every year, as a result of the Harper tax haven treaties, that is taken offshore. Many of the corporate executives are the same ones who want to negotiate in bad faith with their workers and to lock out their workers, as we have seen in the Rogers-Shaw case, where the Shaw workers were locked out and are now seeing replacement workers stealing their jobs.

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The reality, and the important thing to note, is that levelling the playing field is in the interests of the entire community, because strikes and lockouts last a much shorter period of time. There are not the prolonged lockouts and strikes, because the use of replacement workers means that corporate executives do have to sit down and negotiate in good faith. They do have to negotiate in the interests of their business. They do need to negotiate in the interests of their community. It changes everything when the playing field is levelled. That is certainly what we have seen in British Columbia and in Quebec. The anti-scab legislation has actually led to fewer labour disputes, because management is finally compelled to actually negotiate in good faith with the workers in their jurisdiction.

I come from the shop floor. I worked in plastic factories. I worked in the Annacis Business Park. I worked in a unionized situation at the Shelburn oil refinery, which is now closed. My life was a working life, and I saw the difference between non-union and union work. The reality is that working people do better when unions are present and laws provide for a level playing field for negotiation. The middle class counts because of organized labour and people working together.

I am hoping the Liberals have finally been convinced to vote for the legislation. I salute that. I understand that the Bloc will be voting for it. That is important too.

• (1750)

Above all, if Conservative members really believe in the middle class, working families and working Canadians, they need to get off the fence and vote for this legislation. I know the member for Carleton is obsessed with the price on carbon. There is nothing about the price on carbon in this bill, so Conservatives can vote “yes” on Bill C-58.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am sure the Conservatives will find some rare excuse to link it to the price on pollution, as we have seen with other pieces of legislation.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will acknowledge the hon. member who just spoke out of turn. I would ask him to wait, because there is more time to ask questions and make comments.

The hon. deputy House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** To be fair, Madam Speaker, I did not even notice it; I am used to a lot of yelling on that side.

The Liberals ran on this idea, as did the NDP. I genuinely believe that, because of the partnership we have with the NDP, we have a better piece of legislation now that Canadians can feel very proud of. Could the member for New Westminster—Burnaby inform the House of what it is like to be an adult in the room?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. Other members seem to want to answer that question, but it is not their time to answer. If they want to ask questions, they should stand when it is time.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

• (1755)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Madam Speaker, I would remind my colleague and friend that the Liberals ran for 25 years on pharmacare and 20 years on dental care. They never did it. They ran for a decade on anti-scab legislation, but they voted against it when the NDP brought it forward. The difference is that, this time, because of a minority Parliament, New Democrats are forcing the Liberals to do what they said they would do and never do when they hold a majority government.

Yes, we are the adults in the room and the NDP is forcing the Liberals to do the right thing, from which all Canadians will benefit.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will remind the member that he had an opportunity to ask a question. If he wishes to continue to participate, he can stand at the appropriate time.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Calgary Centre.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his impassioned speech. I am used to that from him in the House.

I am going to ask the member a very serious question. He knows as well that the Liberal government previously voted against this same legislation before it was in partnership, as my colleague across the way calls it, with his party, the NDP. They are exposed now as being off to see the wizard together.

Will the member comment on how the Liberals have completely flip-flopped on this in order to buy the support of his party for who knows how long in the House of Commons?

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the member that it was not his turn to answer that either.

I would ask members, in order for the House to continue to function smoothly, that they wait until it is the appropriate time to ask a question, make comments or respond to a question.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Madam Speaker, I thought my colleague was going to congratulate the NDP for yet again forcing government to do the right thing. We saw under the dismal Harper regime how worker rights suffered. The Liberals came into power and did nothing for workers until the time the NDP started forcing them to do things such as dental care, which will help 11,000 of his constituents, anti-scab legislation and the grocery rebate that, again, helped thousands of his constituents. These are all things New Democrats did, not only for our own constituents but for all Canadians.

*Government Orders*

The Conservatives are welcome for New Democrats doing the work that they refuse to do in the House of Commons, so that thousands of constituents of Conservative MPs can benefit from the NDP working hard on their behalf and on behalf of all Canadians.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have heard the Conservatives talk a lot about more powerful paycheques. Could the member expand a bit on how workers got more powerful paycheques and the role of trade unions in getting health and safety requirements in the workplace, better leave requirements and a living wage for workers? How would the bill help them advance that work?

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Madam Speaker, the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke has been standing up for working people since he first came here to the House of Commons. He has done a remarkable job and made a real difference, and so have unions.

We can remember that, before the labour movement came along, there was nothing like a day off. There was not a weekend, there were no health and safety regulations and there was no overtime. We saw children working in mines and factories. All these things were because corporate overlords had decided to simply use working people, with no checks and balances.

The labour movement delivered the weekend, health and safety regulations, adequate salaries and a minimum wage. It ensured overtime and benefits, such as life insurance, dental benefits and a whole range of other things. All those things came because working people, together, working through their labour organizations, pushed the government.

Of course, the NDP and its predecessor party, the CCF, have fought hard in the House of Commons to make sure that those benefits were realized by all Canadians. This is another step, and it is an important one, but we know the labour movement is always watching Canadians' backs and fighting hard for working families and all working people.

• (1800)

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on Bill C-58, and I congratulate my colleague for his wonderful intervention. As well, I would like to recognize our labour critics, the members for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie and Hamilton Centre, who have worked actively on this for a number of generations as private citizens and now as members of Parliament. In fact, one member comes from a union background, and the other comes from a union town that has seen its share of scabs get in the way of good collective bargaining agreements and actually undermine workers.

When we talk about workers, these are the families in Canada that have traditionally bonded together in many ways. We can look at the reasons for co-operative movements that have taken place across this country. They were a way for individual collective families to get together to push back on greed, corporate malfeasance and some of the scandals and corruption in the private sector, the business sector and even in the political sector of the day, to ensure that they have the best opportunities to raise their families with dignity. They were also a way to show that there will be an opportunity for everyone to get ahead in this country.

As New Democrats, our predecessor is the CCF, and we have seen this many times in this chamber and looked towards trying to get anti-scab legislation passed.

The definition of a scab worker is a person who is hired after notice to bargain, including managers, employees or another employer, a contractor who is not already employed by the company; those already working can continue with any change to their responsibilities and are bargaining unit employees. They would be the people who would be a real problem with regard to the economic empowerment of citizens, and this is the working class.

We have to look back in history to see why the working class got together through the industrialization of not only Canada but also the globe. The fact is that they were taken advantage of in many ways. Workers are taken advantage of to this day. Over 1,000 Canadian workers per year die going to work.

The issues over labour have always been put on the back burner. I come from Windsor, Ontario, where we have had the Ford strike and a number of important issues that have taken place, such as the creation of the Rand formula. As well, other labour ingenuities that involve the environment came about because of the exploitation of workers. My own family has paid a high price by getting a number of industrial diseases, because it was okay for the workers to be exposed to asbestos, other chemicals or oil. There was no proper WHIMIS training or ventilation, and dangerous materials were not disposed of in the proper way. To this day, we still have some places that do not follow best practices.

We are asking for the disrespect for workers, which I have seen, sadly, in this chamber, to stop. I am not surprised that the Conservatives are not going to support this initiative, because it really comes from a grassroots base to understand that families collectively want to get together to push back against those who are in power and speak truth to power.

I have been in this chamber many times when the Liberals have actually even voted workers back to work, whether it be the postal workers or at the port of Montreal. These are all debates we have had where, basically, negotiations were actually active and going on, but members of the Liberal government brought in recommendations and closure to those strikes while the free market was trying to figure out what was going to happen next. However, it is good to see that they are going to come around on this.

We see in Quebec and British Columbia that there are models of this initiative, as well as in other countries across the globe. It is going to empower and strengthen collective bargaining for a real resolution.

### *Government Orders*

This is important, because it also affects the public purse. The interesting aspect of this that the Conservatives still do not understand is that collective bargaining actually brings wealth to the working class, the business class and the small business class across this country. When they collectively work together to bring in those corporate responsibilities for a cleaner, safer workplace, as well as better pensions and wages, small businesses boom with that type of response. These are the workers with the least amount of disposable income, but they spend it in their neighbourhoods and communities. They spend to send their kids to school or to invest in their pension later on, which takes pressure off the public purse, because the proper financing is done at that time. This is what the Conservatives do not understand, which is hard to believe. However, it is a simple element that is so consistent with the values of being Canadian, and it would make sure that our lives would get better day by day if we could get this done.

● (1805)

Getting that done means supporting workers who have decided to take a stand against poor conditions in the workplace or a stand when their wages have been out of sync with the profits of the companies.

Most recently, we have seen this collective bargaining bring enhancements to the country as a whole. I congratulate them. We have Unifor most recently and Dave Cassidy and Emile Nabbout. Also, a series of negotiations have taken place that actually bring stability to the workplace because they have been able to get better pensions, benefits and wages at a time when the companies that they represent are making record profits. It has not been easy for them at all, and that is one of the things that is important: that the workers collectively go and negotiate and elect their representatives who have to prove themselves time and time again.

I think of one of my mentors, Brian Hogan, a former Windsor and District Labour Council president and good friend; and Gary Parent, Ken Lewenza and others. There are so many of these people in Windsor whom we could stand on the shoulders of in terms of labour. Most recently we had the Charles Brooks Award representing labour and progressions. Tony Sisti was recommended this year. In the past, it has been people like Rolly Marentette, who fought for workers' health and safety. It goes on and on because their strength in being able to collectively bargain for these benefits is critical; not only for themselves in the private sector unions but also in the public sector unions.

On top of that, it also empowers and lifts up other workers who do not have a collective agreement. That is one of the things that gets missed, and why having scabs undermine those negotiations not only creates conflict, but it pits neighbours against neighbours. People can even be shipped in, which I have seen in the past. I have seen horrible things take place on the picket line, where people have been hit or run over and others have been forced, beaten up or abused. All those things have taken place and that is a bad way to run a community and a bad way to create social strife. When the benefit of the actual agreement takes place, it is often passed on to other workplaces.

More important, for that direct workplace, I can say it had an impact on the families of management because management often got

the reflective package of the workers, especially when it came to pensions and benefits. That is one thing that is not really discussed a lot: the white-collar part of a workforce that is not unionized can often benefit when it comes to the collective agreement and the improvements on it.

I look at the Ford-Nemak situation when, thank goodness, John D'Agnolo and the crew at local 200 fought like heck and were on the streets. All of us were, because Nemak at that time received money by Navdeep Bains, the former industry minister, in the province of Ontario, and they got money for a transmission innovation to research. Then, as soon as Nemak, a Mexican company, did that research and built the product, it shipped out to Mexico. Therefore, the workers with their collective agreement were able to sue. Despite the government turning its back on them for so many months and leaving it to the courts and leaving the workers out to dry, we had a number of pickets on line and rallies. On top of that, they went to court and John and the rest of the local 200 people were heroes. Those workers, because of our weak, lax labour standards, had already taken pay cuts just to hang onto their jobs. How insulting it was that taxpayers funded the innovation that went to Mexico and the workers could not follow with their jobs. They did not want to go, they were not invited and it should not have been necessary. That plant is idle today because of that.

As I wrap up, there are so many people we could actually acknowledge with regard to this fight. We have to get it through committee rather quickly because time is of the essence.

I will conclude with this again: This legislation is supportive not only for those men and women who are actually on the line; it benefits every other person in the workforce for public safety, security for themselves, health for their families and wages that need to be reflected in the free market economy that obviously needs correction from time to time by the workers who actually make the money.

#### **Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I wonder how the hon. member for Windsor West squares the rhetoric we keep hearing from the Conservatives about powerful paycheques with the fact that they oppose legislation like this and they have twice before voted against a federal minimum wage.

● (1810)

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Madam Speaker, it is hard to understand, because the vast majority of disposable income goes to investment in our local communities. It is not the workers who take their paycheques and invest outside this country for other things.



In fact, when we look at the United States, they tax on worldwide profits. When we give corporate subsidies or reductions without any terms and conditions, we actually lose taxpayers' money for that. The more we empower workers, the better for small business, the better for white-collar workers and the better for non-unionized workers. All those things are lifted up by the fact that we have strong collective agreements that are negotiated in a free market system that does not allow bullies to enter the free market system and undermine it.

I have been on the picket line many times where security companies had been hired. If we look at the Windsor Salt situation, some of the members were investigated and private investigators were hired. They have money for all that nonsense, but they do not have money for wages and benefits. It is nonsense, especially when these are Canadian natural resources. People deserve a good paycheck for that.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will ask my colleague, after his impassioned speech, the same question I asked his colleague, for which I did not receive an adequate answer. How does he feel about this legislation being put forward in this House of Commons by the Liberal government after it voted against this same legislation in a prior Parliament? The exact people who used to oppose it are now saying they are actually in favour of this now. How does he feel about this flip-flop on the part of the Liberal Party of Canada?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Madam Speaker, I really do not mind. I hope they will flip-flop too, make this unanimous, move it fast through committee and move it fast and furious through the Senate to make sure this becomes law. It is good for small business and it is good for the rest of the economy. It is good for everybody. I have been here before and I have seen hypocrisy and people changing positions. I have been here for a while, and I welcome change. There is history that we need to deal with, but if we could get everybody on side we could get this done, move on and be stronger as a country. I really encourage the Conservatives to give this a second thought because it is good for the economy, for non-union members and for small business.

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Madam Speaker, I will ask my colleague another question, because it is an important matter we are discussing here today. We talked about how the other side of the House has flip-flopped and gone forward with legislation it previously opposed, which shows there is very little principle in what it is doing. However, in addition to that, this legislation would apply to a small sliver of employees in Canada. It would apply only to federally regulated industries, not to Canadian federal workers or industry, including the employees my hon. colleague is speaking about having been on strike with. It does not apply to those workers at all.

How does he square the fact that this applies to a very small sliver of the people in Canada who might go on strike and yet does not apply to the very people the federal government oversees?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Madam Speaker, I am quite comfortable with that, because that is what I can control right now. That is what I can do. What I do know is that if we do this, we improve the situation and it gets better for everybody else. This is also what some of the private sector unions have asked for as part of their core principles of getting this beyond the labour market. For me, it is a welcome

first step, and I hope to see it pass before we finish this holiday season.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the things I am concerned about within this legislation is the 18-month delay in moving this legislation forward. Could the hon. member talk about how necessary it is to move this much faster than the 18-month delay within the legislation?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for London—Fanshawe for her work on the labour file. It is so important, because every job matters. We want to enhance a support for people to improve their working conditions. This is time lost that we cannot make up, so I would hope this would be done quicker.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code as well as the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations of 2012. In short, this legislation would prohibit the use of temporary replacement workers during work stoppages in federally regulated workplaces.

After eight long years of these Liberals, Canada is experiencing an unprecedented level of labour strife. Indeed, in the past few years, there have been nearly 300 major work stoppages, completely unprecedented. This is no accident. It is a direct result of the costly policies of these Liberals after eight years, costly policies that have resulted in 40-year high inflation, the fastest increase in interest rates in Canadian history and the cost of everything going up, in no small part as a result of the Liberals' punitive carbon tax.

After eight years of these Liberals, for everyday Canadian workers, work does not pay the way it used to. That is because everyday workers are seeing their purchasing power diminished in the face of 40-year high inflation. The cost of essentials, including for heat, fuel and groceries continues to go up. It will go up further if the Liberals get their way and quadruple their punitive carbon tax. After eight years of these Liberals, Canadian workers are struggling and they are hurting. In the face of these very real cost of living pressures that are a direct result of the costly policies of the Liberals, it is no wonder that we are seeing such a degree of labour unrest.

It is not only the costly policies of the Liberal government that are creating labour unrest, it is also eight years of Liberal mismanagement and incompetence, including with respect to industrial relations. That incompetence and mismanagement was on full display this past summer when there was a strike at the federally regulated B.C. ports that lasted several weeks. It was a strike that was foreseeable months ahead of time. It was a strike that could have been averted, had there been real federal leadership but, as usual, the incompetent Liberal government was asleep at the switch. Consequently, the strike happened, a strike that caused huge disruptions to critical supply chains, hurting both workers and businesses, and costing the Canadian economy half a trillion dollars. That is the cost of Liberal mismanagement and incompetence, further underscoring that after eight years, the Prime Minister just is not worth the cost.

*Government Orders*

Given the disastrous record of these Liberals when it comes to standing up for workers and helping them get by, we now have a desperate government that is plummeting in the polls, desperately trying to pretend that it actually cares about workers. It has trotted out Bill C-58. We know that the Liberals do not care about workers or at least they do not care about Canadian workers. They seem to care a lot about South Korean workers. Ironically, while the Liberals proclaim their opposition to temporary replacement workers, they voted against legislation produced by the NDP and the Bloc previously to do just that, but I digress.

• (1815)

Simultaneously, as the Liberals move this bill forward, they are bringing in 1,600 replacement workers from South Korea to displace Canadian workers and good-paying union jobs at the Stellantis plant in Windsor. Even worse, thanks to these Liberals, taxpayers are subsidizing the 1,600 South Korean replacement workers to the sum of a staggering \$15 billion.

The Minister of Industry said that the \$15 billion of taxpayers' money would create thousands of new jobs. What the minister conveniently neglected to say is that it would create thousands of new jobs for South Koreans and not Canadian auto workers in south-western Ontario.

Now onto the substance of this bill. This bill would apply to key sectors of the Canadian economy, including interprovincial and international railways, air transportation, maritime shipping, banking and other sectors. If this legislation were passed, it would create the possibility that key sectors of the Canadian economy could be ground to a halt. That is something that has to be weighed upon.

What would the implications be, for example, of a weeks-long rail strike? What would the consequences be if an airline, such as Air Canada, were grounded for weeks? These are questions that need to be addressed. There are other possibilities that are realistic, which could happen.

We know the cost of the port strike in British Columbia. It cost our economy half a trillion dollars. Moreover, there is no persuasive evidence to establish that this legislation would meaningfully benefit federally regulated workers or otherwise strengthen the system of federal labour relations.

The Minister of Labour, in his speech at second reading, claimed that this bill would provide greater certainty and predictability in the collective bargaining process, thereby reducing the number and duration of strikes. However, the evidence based upon the experience of jurisdictions that have adopted legislation of this kind is, in fact, that it is the opposite. In that regard, I would cite data from Statistics Canada, which examined work stoppages in Canada between 2008 and 2016. Statistics Canada found that the provinces with the highest number of lost work days due to work stoppages were in the provinces of Quebec and British Columbia, the only two provinces that have legislation of this kind on the books.

I would further note a study from the Department of Employment and Labour, in 2007, that found that legislation of this kind increases the length and number of strikes. There is a significant study from 1999 that looked at 4,000 labour contracts from 1967 to

1993. It found that legislation of this kind actually increases the length of strikes by as much as 50%.

The Canada Labour Code balances the rights of workers and the rights of employers. I have real concerns that this legislation would upend that balance in a way that is not good for employers and also not good for workers.

• (1820)

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on a \$66.7-million funding agreement that our government made with the City of Edmonton earlier this year to guarantee over 2,000 new and refurbished affordable housing units. That could not have been possible without the fantastic leadership of their amazing mayor, Amarjeet Sohi. Despite the fact that I have never heard the member stand up to talk about the importance of affordable, public housing in the House, we are moving forward with funding for the great City of Edmonton with their awesome mayor.

For the fifth or sixth time today, we have not heard whether or not the Conservatives are actually in favour of banning replacement workers, also known as “scab workers”. This legislation would advance labour rights and workers' rights to make sure that the best negotiations, which always happen at the table, can operate in a fair, open and transparent manner. Cut and dry, does the member agree that we should ban replacement workers in Canada?

• (1825)

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, if that useless parliamentary secretary bothered to listen to my speech—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. I want to remind the hon. member that this is exactly the issue we are having with keeping the House running smoothly. When parliamentarians use adjectives that are not proper to use when describing individuals, it creates havoc in the House.

I would remind members to please be respectful in the House when they are speaking of other parliamentarians.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I will at least acknowledge that the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of the Environment had at least some integrity when he stood up in the House and acknowledged that his government had betrayed Ukrainian farmers.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am not hearing the answer I was hoping I would hear in the member's response to my colleague's question. Is the member saying that he feels that replacement workers are a benefit to workers?

I am not understanding what his stance is, exactly, on this bill, or if he and his Conservative colleagues will be voting in favour of this bill to ensure that protections are in place to support workers, have fair working conditions and have a fair wage.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Mr. Speaker, I have concerns about this bill, particularly from the standpoint that it would prolong and increase the number of strikes. Very rarely are there winners when there are extended strikes. Workers lose out on paycheques. There is lost productivity. There is disruption to supply chains, and there is a loss of profit for employers, which often negatively impacts workers' wages.

There are problems, potentially, with this bill. We want a bill that gets it right for employers and businesses and strikes the appropriate balance. I am not sure this legislation does that.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the speech my colleague from Alberta gave. I would ask him to reflect on how it seems like the NDP has highlighted a number of challenges it sees with this bill, although it plans to support it. We recently saw media reports that, if the Liberals do not get pharmacare done this year, it is willing to amend their confidence and supply coalition agreement.

I wonder if my colleague from St. Albert—Edmonton would have any reflections on whether the NDP has any integrity left in standing up for the principles that it supposedly ran on in the last election. It certainly seems to me as though NDP members are nothing more than sellouts.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I would concur with the conclusion drawn by my colleague from Battle River—Crowfoot.

We have this costly coalition, which is making life less affordable for everyday Canadians, including Canadian workers. We have an NDP that has voted against the interests of everyday Canadians multiple times when it supported the Liberals' carbon tax increases. The NDP continues to prop up this costly government.

The NDP will have to answer at the next election for why it is that it has sold out and propped up this corrupt Prime Minister.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Again, I want to remind the member to be very careful with the words he uses to describe members in the House. It does not do well for the debates we are trying to have in the House of Commons.

• (1830)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the ruling that came from the Chair was very clear on the language that can be used and should not be used in the House.

For any member to use the term “corrupt Prime Minister”, or “corrupt” in reference to anybody in here, violates the rules the Chair has put forward in the House. I would suggest that the member needs to either retract the comment or be properly censured until he does.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have members who seem to be weighing in before I even recognize them.

The hon. member for London—Fanshawe is rising on the same point of order.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I would also advocate that, concerning the language used by parliamentarians in the

House, hon. members need to remember the ruling that came forward from the Chair earlier.

I know that I myself have a lot of adjectives in my head that I would like to use to describe some of the folks here, but I do not use them. I am very specific about it. I try to maintain decorum, and I would hope that they would do the same.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, I know one of the issues for some of my colleagues on this, and in light of the discussion that was had after question period today, is that, when it comes to the conduct and speech of members, there needs to be an equal application of the rules across party lines.

The accusations the government House leader made during question period certainly call into question whether or not those rules are being fairly applied. Therefore, when it comes to decorum in the House, it is absolutely incumbent upon all members. Certainly for my part, I will always be happy to defend the things I say and endeavour to speak the truth.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will recognize one more speaker on this point of order, and then I will make my comments.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre.

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Madam Speaker, I am rising in defence of my colleague as well, and I think there is a lot of evidence in the House of Commons that the Prime Minister has, we will say, misled the House. The member called somebody by a name that indicates they have misled, but he did not call any member of the House a liar, which of course is verboten in this House. Instead, he said that this person is corrupt, which means not following the rules. I appreciate where he is coming from in that respect.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** That specific word is a pretty strong word. It has caused disorder in the House. I would ask the member to please withdraw his comment.

Before I give my comments, I want to remind members that the Speaker of the House will be coming back to the House. I personally have witnessed what has been happening with parliamentarians on both sides of the House, and I would remind members that we need to be more respectful of each other for Parliament to function smoothly. As the Speaker said in his previous statement, it is incumbent upon all MPs to work together and be respectful of each other in the House for us to be able to make sure Parliament works smoothly.

The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I attempted to rise before you intervened to respond to the point of order.

I would submit that, by any objective standard, the Prime Minister is corrupt. He has been found guilty twice of violating the Conflict of Interest Act and intervened in an RCMP investigation into his potential criminal wrongdoing by—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There have been a number of individuals in other parties, not just the government party, who have had decisions rendered about conflicts of interest.

### *Orders of the Day*

I will ask the hon. member to rise in the House to withdraw his comment. It is causing disorder in the House. It is an issue with decorum, and it is not a proper word to use, so I would ask the member to please withdraw his comment.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I know the truth hurts for the cover-up coalition, but out of respect for you as the Chair, I withdraw it.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

● (1835)

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this concurrence debate, although I will note, of course, that it is within the usual tactics and games used by members of the official opposition. However, it is an important topic, so I am glad to speak to it tonight. I will be splitting my time with the member for Nunavut; I look forward to hearing her incredible contributions to this debate.

First of all, this was a really important report to put forward. I am so grateful to all the witnesses who came before us, the members of the armed forces who spoke to this report, the academics, the community leaders, the policy-makers, the analysts from the Library of Parliament, our committee clerk and the interpreters. We are truly lucky in this place to have such an incredible group of people to work with and whom we can hear from to create better legislation and better policy within the government. I appreciate those workers and all the evidence provided by the participants. After hearing the recommendations and reflections from the committee, we worked on the study to look into Russia's threat to Canada's Arctic, China's threat to Canada's Arctic, the security of the Canadian Arctic archipelago and the security of the Northwest Passage and NORAD modernization.

This report's recommendations strayed from the mandate a bit. Sadly, we ignored one of the largest points and most imminent threats to our Arctic, which is climate change. According to the report:

The committee was reminded by Dr. P. Whitney Lackenbauer that we must distinguish “between threats passing through or over the Arctic rather than threats to or in the Arctic”.

The committee did not quite get that in terms of the recommendations, which is a real shame.

The committee's recommendations focused heavily on “potential threats to North America passing through the Arctic, at the expense of centering threats to the Arctic itself.” The warming rate of the Arctic's oceans:

...is up to seven times faster than the global average. The United Nations estimates that by 2050, up to 70 percent of Arctic infrastructure will be at risk from loss of permafrost. This is a direct threat against both the Canadian Armed Forces and Arctic communities....

With climate change, we have already seen the number of voyages in Canadian Arctic waters triple in the last three decades. New sea lanes are being opened by melting ice, which will cause increased fishing, transportation, tourism and research activity in the area. Further, the loss of permafrost is also increasing the viability of access to the Arctic's massive oil reserves, natural gas and precious minerals.

This threat to Arctic security was discussed at length throughout the committee by top officials. We heard from the chief of the defence staff, General Wayne Eyre, who stated that there was a challenge in “making that infrastructure durable and sustainable into the future with the changing circumstances related to climate change.” Vice-Admiral Topshee, the commander of the Royal Canadian Navy, told us about the important holistic approach necessary to deal with the increase in traffic. He said that the CAF is working with territorial governments and indigenous partners to build Canada's capacity, from unauthorized vessel detection to search and rescue.

In the same study, we heard from the national security and intelligence adviser, Jody Thomas, that more than 40% of Canada's territory and over 75% of its national coastlines are Arctic. She stated:

The Arctic is fundamental to Canada's identity and its sovereignty....

Rapid and enduring climate change is making the region more accessible for navigation. New commercial and military technologies are connecting the North to the rest of the world and eroding the region's historical isolation from geopolitical affairs.

We took all this into account. We heard it as part of the testimony, which, of course, was rooted in the context that the increased activity caused by climate change is highly disruptive. It is a problem. It is the major threat.

It is very alarming that, within those recommendations, we did not actually see recommendations calling to address climate change. Certainly, I tried to bring that forward, to have the consideration of climate change as the existential threat to Arctic security be known. Sadly, we do not see those recommendations in the report. It is truly a mystery, but maybe not a mystery for anyone who has heard arguments from the official opposition's side. However, I will leave it there.

● (1840)

It is imperative that the federal government treats climate change as a national security threat, as outlined by all these officials and academics. This summer alone, 45.7 million acres of forest in Canada burned and released the equivalent of 1.7 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Additionally, indigenous peoples in Arctic communities need to be central to what we are talking about in terms of Arctic security. The impacts of climate change are felt first and foremost in the Arctic. Indigenous people are often on the front lines as first responders, and all government spending on the Arctic security question has to reflect this truth. As the report notes, “As part of Arctic security, we must see investments in the north help northerners access safe housing, clean drinking water, fresh food and healthcare.”

It is easy to fall into the escalating calls for the militarization of the Arctic, but I believe this is a disconnect from what the committee heard from witnesses. We heard that the best Arctic security policy is an investment in the communities themselves and in their people.

One clear message heard at committee was the need to invest in the Canadian Rangers to address the threats to the Arctic. We heard from Calvin Pedersen, a fourth-generation Canadian Ranger, about his work in monitoring vessel traffic in the northwest. The report notes, “The Canadian Rangers are essential to meeting the security needs to address the impact of climate change and increased economic activity in the Arctic.”

We also heard from Dr. Peter Kikkert, who said:

The Rangers wear lots of hats, so they're often volunteers on the ground search and rescue teams in their communities. They're often members of the Coast Guard auxiliary units that go out to do marine searches.... The training that is given to Rangers is not always just used in an official capacity, but is often used to bolster the search and rescue system on a voluntary basis.

The report goes on: “Investments in the Canadian Rangers will increase our domain awareness, increase the CAF's operational capabilities, and will bolster search and rescue capacity.” There were some good recommendations, especially recommendations 21 to 25, as part of this report, and I hope the government will act upon them very quickly. They include a change to the way rangers have faced mistreatment from successive governments. Often, rangers are expected to continue service while being undercompensated for equipment usage, and they are slowly and inadequately reimbursed for damaged equipment. They also lack funding for administrative supports.

Just last week, I questioned the Minister of National Defence about this, because in the study, witnesses clearly called for the equipment usage rate to be tied to inflation. I did not get the answer I wanted, but I never really do from the minister, unfortunately. I hope that will change. I hope he will take the recommendations from this report seriously.

In addition to that support, the defence ombudsman reported that rangers lack adequate access to the health care, housing and basic infrastructure needed to do that work. We keep hearing the same messages over and over again. We need the government to hear them.

The report notes, “As the need for Canadian Rangers increases, we must act immediately to solve these concerns.” In addition to the permanent Arctic search and rescue round table that has been called for, the committee received a written submission that called for the need to build up community resilience.

This brings me to recommendation 13 of the report. The report says:

[I] wish the language in the recommendations went further to mandate the Government to prioritize investments that serve Indigenous peoples and Arctic communities. As we expect more and more from Arctic communities, Canada's history of neglect and harm must be reconciled with meaningful investments. In prioritizing the backlog of NORAD modernization and the backlog of infrastructure gaps in the Arctic, we can address [a lot of the] shared needs.

The government has a clear opportunity here, and it needs to “use funding allocated for NORAD modernization to address the

infrastructure and service gaps in the Arctic. We must give greater attention to the water crisis, housing crisis, and health care crisis in Arctic communities”.

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I also want to address a recommendation that I agree with in this report, which is recommendation 3. In witness testimony for this study, General Wayne Eyre stated, “I think policies related to ballistic missile offence are becoming less and less relevant.” The recommendation reads, “That the Government of Canada reconsider its longstanding policy with respect to the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defence program.” I am 100% against that.

We heard from Dr. Adam Lajeunesse, who stated:

Arctic security and defence are very important, and we need to make serious investments, but we need to zero in on what exactly the threat environment is. What I have argued is that we are not seeing, and are not likely to see, a great power threat to the Arctic.... I'm arguing that it would be a waste of money and an inefficient use of our resources to build the Arctic defences in such a way as to gear them towards Russia or China.

● (1845)

Again, he pointed back to the existential threat. This all points back to the inappropriate and disappointing wedge in a conversation of our study that refused to put those recommendations forward, in terms of climate change. I—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, obviously, this is a very important topic that we are debating tonight. The member made a number of key observations. I thank her for her commitment on the committee.

Recommendation 5, in particular, talks about the risks from malign foreign actors, specifically in the Arctic. It can address the challenges as the Arctic opens up more. That scares me more than almost anything. I am less worried about Russian intrusions into the Arctic. I am more worried about Russian businesses, Chinese businesses and other foreign state actors challenging our natural resources, our critical minerals and, in particular, how it even impacts our indigenous population, our Inuit in the north.

Could the member expand a bit more on what the committee found out in terms of what actions need to be taken by the government to address this critical and important need?

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I would note that they are not “our” indigenous people. I warn the member about that language; it is very important.

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General Wayne Eyre specifically stated, right at the get-go of the study, “I see no real threat today to our territorial sovereignty; nor do I see one in the near future”. Yes, we have to be aware of what is going on in the world. Yes, we have to be concerned, but, critically, what gives access to critical minerals, to the Northwest Passage, to communities in the north and to all of that is climate change. The opening up of the passage and of the seaways is the existential threat, and we are not doing anything to address that adequately.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her terrific work on national defence, on sovereignty issues. She has been incredibly stellar in standing up, particularly, for women and men in the service, on behalf of the Canadian Forces. She has done a remarkable job of ensuring that we have policies and working hard to ensure that the women and men in uniform are actually respected by governments.

We have seen, of course, how badly the Conservative government treated veterans. We have seen some of that reflected in the current government.

What are the critical things that need to happen in order to ensure that, at all times, men and women in the service are treated with the respect they deserve?

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen:** Madam Speaker, ultimately, the men and women in uniform are a workforce that we rely upon with everything that we have, and they put themselves in the line of danger. They are there when people need them, domestically and internationally. We need to ensure that they are safe. We need to ensure that they have the best equipment. We need to ensure that they have the safest workplaces. That includes a lot of the things that were mentioned in the report but that I mention again, which people within the Arctic need as well. They need housing, health care and safe supports, and they need to know that the workplace they are going into is not one of disrespect.

There is a lot going on that the government needs to invest in. Again, it comes back to people. It always comes back to people.

• (1850)

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Madam Speaker, I am going to give the member another chance to really answer my question, which is about the recommendation and “developing a strategy for critical infrastructure investments and protecting Canadian interests from malign foreign actors” and whether the committee had additional information on that.

With respect to people, I just want to re-emphasize the importance of our rangers and our Canadian Forces personnel, currently 8,000 understrength in our reserves, 8,000 understrength in our regular force and 10,000 under in trained effective strength.

The government needs to do more for our personnel in the Canadian Armed Forces.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen:** Madam Speaker, absolutely, and I think that this ties in to a lot of the things that I just answered before with my hon. colleague for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Of course, the question of how we treat our people as workers, how we treat them on the front lines, how we treat the men and women who volunteer as Canadian rangers and our search and res-

cue, is all very important, and the investment in the people who are doing that incredible work is a key component of what I was trying to bring forward today.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am happy to speak on behalf of Nunavummiut on this important report that my colleague, the member for London—Fanshawe, worked on. I really want to acknowledge as well the great work that she does at this committee. I have had the great honour of working with her when the announcements were made regarding NORAD improvements, and her leadership on this file is so much appreciated. It is because of her work that I have started saying that Nunavut does not just have one Nunavut MP but 25 great NDP MPs advocating for Nunavummiut.

I also want to share very briefly that I remember when my dad was still alive in 1981 watching a movie, which was rare in Igloolik, because it did not get TV until much later. The community of Igloolik had chosen quite late compared to other Canadian communities to accept television, because it felt it would be a threat to Inuit culture and lifestyle. So, when we arrived in Igloolik we were quite lucky, or maybe unlucky, I do not know what the right word is, as we already had TV when we had been living in Resolute. When we arrived in Igloolik, one of the videos I remember watching vividly, because TV had not been allowed at the time, was *Mary Poppins*. At that time, *Mary Poppins* was very special to me, because it was the same year that my dad had died. However, before that, part of the reason that *Mary Poppins* was so special was because I was learning English and there was this foreign word “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”. I was like, “Whoa, what a crazy English word.” It was something I did not think would have an impact on my thoughts about Arctic security and Arctic sovereignty, but here we are with me thinking back to my childhood and the work that had already been done to secure the Arctic.

Before that, just to remind Canadians, Canada had the High Arctic relocatees where Inuit were forced from northern Quebec to two communities, Resolute and Grise Fiord. Actually, my dad's family helped train Inuit from northern Quebec. My dad, Joseph Idlout, is actually quite famous because he taught the Inuit from northern Quebec how to survive in the High Arctic by teaching them hunting skills. They were filmed by Doug Wilkinson, who was a famous photographer, and a lot of his photographs are in Archives Canada. One of his photos actually ended up on our currency. Members will remember the old two-dollar bill with the Inuit hunting scene. It was my grandfather and uncles on that two-dollar bill. The story behind that two-dollar bill is regarding Arctic sovereignty and security, which is why this topic is so important to me, because I have very direct personal experience with what Canada did in the name of Arctic sovereignty.

I also want to read what one of the witnesses said. I should say that I was not part of this study, and so I am not sure that I will be able to answer any direct questions regarding the study, but with my experience, I might be able to answer general questions if they are posed to me. However, I did read the report, and one witness, Dr. Lackenbauer, said that “climate change is the existential threat to humanity”. This goes to show what is real in the Arctic.

● (1855)

We know that Russia's invasion of Ukraine may have increased the level of threat in the Arctic, but I know from people I work with and people I have visited in all 25 communities that climate change is among the higher topics that are mentioned to me. They mention that elders are not able to teach as efficiently as they did regarding the environment, with the changes that they see on the snow, the ice conditions and even the wildlife and the migration patterns changing because of other external factors. For example, in Pond Inlet a couple of years ago, after Baffinland iron mines opened up Mary River Mine and increased its shipping, there was a huge decrease in narwhales, and many Inuit hunters were saying that they were robbed of their opportunity to teach their sons how to hunt narwhales because of the change in patterns that the shipping had created in the name of corporate profits.

I also want to mention very quickly that, having read through the report, the recommendations I thought were particularly important to the Arctic are numbers 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17, 21 and 22. The reason I highlight these recommendations specifically is that they speak directly to what my colleague, the MP for London—Fanshawe, was saying about ensuring that we are doing better capacity development for indigenous peoples and for northern residents who are always living in the Arctic. When it is their environment, if those residents are not given the investments and the resources, then it will be that much harder to fight for Arctic security if there are threats coming our way. My colleague was talking about investing in the north being so important, such as in housing, training, health care and education. If these investments were to the level that they should be, I know for a fact that Arctic northerners would be better able to help ensure that the Arctic is secure and that they are able to help fight against threats that are impacting their lives.

I also want to mention in my statement that as part of the work of the indigenous and northern affairs committee, we also studied Arctic security. The name of our report is “Arctic Security and Sovereignty, and the Emergency Preparedness of Indigenous Communities”. It is good to see other members of our committee here in the chamber. When we did our study on Arctic security and Arctic sovereignty, a huge portion of our conversation also related to some of what is in this report with respect to the Canadian Rangers. We also had Aivgak Pedersen as our witness, a fourth-generation Canadian Ranger and a great leader in Nunavut and Cambridge Bay. He lived in Kugluktuk at the time and has now moved to Cambridge Bay. He spoke about making sure that we actually invest in Canadian Rangers.

When I was in Iqaluit recently for Remembrance Day, I had the pleasure of visiting with some of the Canadian Rangers who were at the Remembrance Day ceremonies, and they reminded me right away that as a part of my advocacy, I must also advocate for improvements in investments in Canadian Rangers. They said to me

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that they get beautiful uniforms and relics for rifles, and they can get reimbursements from the Canadian Armed Forces, but those reimbursements take forever. Therefore, if Canada is going to do better with respect to investing in Arctic security, a huge portion of that must be to invest in Canadian Rangers, who know the land and the environment. Investing in them would help make sure that we are keeping the Arctic secure.

● (1900)

I want to end my statement with a quote from Mr. Aivgak Pedersen, who reported to our committee:

As Canadian Rangers, we're on the ground. We live here. We are from here. We know the land....

Having local knowledge and expertise makes a huge difference. It will make a difference in saving people's lives in a timely manner.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Nunavut for bringing to light the parts of this report that are very important to her.

My mother was born in Chesterfield Inlet and spent most of her childhood in the Arctic. She has great memories of her time there, with two different tours through Pangnirtung. Most of the time she was there, but she was also in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet, as they worked for the northern stores department of the Hudson's Bay Company.

I want to ask my colleague about recommendation 5 from the report. We heard from Madeleine Redfern, former mayor of Iqaluit, at committee about making sure we know what infrastructure is out there. How can we make dual use of infrastructure for communities and the Canadian Armed Forces as we modernize NORAD and continue to make sure we have a more positive posture in the Arctic, knowing the threats we are currently facing from Russia, the PRC and other nations that want to take advantage of the great outdoors we have in Canada's north?

**Ms. Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji,** I grew up for a portion of my life in Chesterfield Inlet as well. It is such a beautiful community. I have fond memories.

Regarding the member's question on dual use infrastructure, I completely agree. I know that if Arctic security was taken more seriously, the community of Cambridge Bay, for example, which is a regional hub in the Kitikmeot region, would have a paved airport. That could be dual use infrastructure to help make sure that fighter jets can land there, if need be. At the moment, because the airport is not paved, the main airline that goes there has decided to cease jet service, only relying on ATRs, which have less capacity, resulting in more cancellations of flights, impacting medical travel appointments and impacting the cost of food.

Dual use is a great way to make sure we are better investing in the Arctic.

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**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I knew the hon. member would not disappoint. I really appreciate her taking part in this debate tonight.

At the defence committee last week, we had the Minister of National Defence before us. When I was asking about following up on support for rangers, the chief of the defence staff said something I found quite disturbing. I would love the member's input on it. He said that when it comes rangers, "We've noticed that perhaps some of those traditional skills are eroding".

Could the member comment on why they believe that to be the case and how we can stop that from happening?

● (1905)

**Ms. Lori Idlout:** *Uqagtittiji*, that is definitely a concern, and part of the reason is climate change, as I mentioned in my statement.

Elders are telling us that it is harder to teach their children and grandchildren about ice conditions when winter is arriving sooner. It is harder to teach when not to go to certain ice areas because the ice is not as thick as it used to be.

All those things, which were very important to our survival up to this point and remained traditional expert knowledge, are eroding. We need to expedite ensuring that we regain that knowledge so we can make sure that Inuit today are able to adjust and that we are continually adapting to our changing environment.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to a concurrence motion. For those who are just tuning in, to understand the context of what we are doing right now, back on November 3, the government had on the Order Paper that we would continue to debate the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. However, as was becoming very consistent around that time, every time we brought forward that particular bill to be debated, Conservatives would put forward concurrence motions to basically prevent us from discussing the bill. The reason I am willing to go out on a limb to say that they were intentionally preventing us from debating that bill is not only that they had done it a number of times already, but also, and more importantly, that they were continually doing it with reports from committees that were unanimous. This was another unanimous report that came from committee.

Just so the public knows, when a report is tabled in the House by the chair of the committee, there is no obligation to debate it as it is considered received. As a matter of fact, the government responded to this particular report from the committee, so there was really no need to have a debate on it. The committee report was unanimous. The government, in its introductory reply, thanked the committee, said that the majority of the committee's recommendations were in line with work already being undertaken by the government, and went on to address each and every specific recommendation in the report.

On Friday, November 3, Conservatives put forward a motion to concur in this unanimous report from the committee, which had already been responded to by the government. It was just to delay and prevent us from talking about the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Of course, at the time, none of us really understood why. We could not fathom that Conservatives would be against that

piece of legislation, which was the result of a trade agreement that had been signed by President Zelenskyy and the Prime Minister. It also has the endorsement of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and had all of the important elements built within it to help Ukraine rebuild. This side of the House, and probably all parties but the Conservative Party, were under the impression that it was going to be a pretty easy debate. We thought that everybody would agree and then we would pass it.

However, very early on in the debate process, the member for Cumberland—Colchester rose and referred to the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement as being woke. That was the first sign for us on this side of the House. At that point, we started asking what was going on and if it were possible that the Conservative Party of Canada does not support this very important piece of legislation.

● (1910)

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I am wondering about the relevance of the member's speech. The report is about Arctic sovereignty, and he is talking about procedural processes in the House of Commons.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind members that there is a bit of flexibility in debates and that members need to make sure that their speeches are relevant to the motion or legislation before the House. I am sure the hon. member will bring it back to the concurrence motion being debated.

The hon. government deputy House leader has the floor.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** It is relevant, Madam Speaker, and I should remind the member across the way what we are actually debating is not the report. We are debating a motion to concur in the report. The report has already been established, the report has already been unanimously supported by committee and the motion was to concur in it.

My analysis and my reflections on why Conservatives chose to put forward that motion is extremely germane to the debate and specifically speaks to why I think they did this, which is very important. The member can get up and call a point of order as often as he wants. He probably does not want to hear the truth from me, and that is fine. He does not have to accept what I say and I am happy to answer his questions on the subject matter afterward.

However, I would remind him we just spent the whole afternoon talking about a bill on scab labour that the Conservatives never even mentioned in any of their speeches. They just talked about everything other than the bill, and would not even say whether they thought the bill was good or not. They were asked the question probably about half a dozen times and never even indicated whether they support the bill. It is very rich coming from a Conservative member right now, who is trying to call me out on relevance, when I have established how the relevance of my speech is related to this concurrence motion.



What we saw is Conservatives eventually vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade bill, after continually putting up concurrence motion after concurrence motion on various different issues. The reality is we started to hear them talk about it being woke. I know there has been a lot of buyer's remorse since we had that vote, and a lot of Conservatives have stood up in the House and talked about how much they supported Ukraine. I know four, five or six of them stood up right after question period today and said that.

My sense is they are probably feeling regretful for their decision. They are probably feeling a bit upset with their leader for forcing them to do that and now are trying to justify to their communities why they voted that same way.

However, it does not end there. I say this to my Conservative colleagues who are in the House and who stand up and say that they unequivocally support Ukraine at any cost, no matter what. The member for Provencher, in the remaining few speeches we had before we voted on this, actually said:

That said, the Prime Minister and the government have been consistent and unequivocal in saying, "We will...support Ukraine with whatever it takes, for as long as it takes."

Then he went on to say, "That concerns me a bit". That is in Hansard; one can go find that. That does not sound like somebody who is unequivocal and stands with Ukraine right until the very end.

When we talk about this report and we talk about Arctic sovereignty and who we are really concerned about maintaining our sovereignty from, it can only be our neighbours that share the Arctic region with us or that impede upon the Arctic region. I know this because I was on the Standing Committee for National Defence for three years, where at the time we studied Arctic sovereignty, and there were some real concerns over it. Of course, one of those is Russia.

I have a problem with listening to my Conservative colleagues talk about Russia, because we know Conservatives are also getting very close right now to Prime Minister Orban, who is the Prime Minister of Hungary, who is very close to Vladimir Putin. Recently, there is a story titled "Putin and Orban reaffirm Russian-Hungarian ties amid international strains."

• (1915)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There is a point of order by the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of conjecture back and forth this afternoon about things that were said on that side, and he straying into that territory again of getting into conspiracy theories and tinfoil hat commentary. This is about Arctic sovereignty and security. There are some in this place who actually want to get to that conversation and that debate. I wish the member would get back on to the topic instead of talking about tinfoil Liberal theories.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Again, I want to remind members. I am listening very closely, because certainly I am very well aware of the points of order that were raised today and I want to make sure members are being very respectful in

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the House. I do not think we do any favour to our allies and to the parliamentarians of this House if we are not careful with the wording we use.

I want to remind members again there is some leeway during the speeches but that the speeches need to be focused on the concurrence motion. The concurrence motion should be mentioned on a regular basis, or the content of it should be.

I will turn it back to the hon. government deputy House leader. Again, make sure we stay on track.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I had been quite relevant there and will draw the direct link for the member: Canada, Arctic; Arctic, Russia; Russia, Hungary. Vladimir Putin and the Hungarian prime minister are very close right now. Stephen Harper is very close with the Hungarian prime minister. One Conservative member travelled at the expense of the Danube Institute, a right-wing Hungarian think-tank, which paid for all of his expenses. Coincidentally, right around that time, Conservative members started talking about exactly what they have written about in their most recent report on what a Conservative world looks like in 2023. Right after Conservatives went on this trip to London, paid for the Danube Institute, they came back and started talking about a free trade agreement with Ukraine as though it is woke, which is a direct link.

This is my concern. There is a MAGA faction among the Conservatives, probably including their leader, who have stood up and said that they will not support Ukraine and have won over the more progressives in the Conservative Party. I know there are progressives in the party who care about Ukraine. I have travelled with them to Ukraine to study Operation Unifier and Operation Reassurance. I did that back in 2017. I know where their commitment is, but I do not believe the commitment is within the entire Conservative caucus. Those who are not committed just need to stand up and say so. Those members should, out of decency for their colleagues who do stand up for Ukraine, publicly say that they do not so their colleagues can say they do and then there would be no confusion among the Canadian population, because there is a lot of confusion right now. That is the reality of the situation.

When we talk about this concurrence report, which is about Arctic sovereignty, it is something we have debated and studied on a number of occasions. When I was on the defence committee, we studied it back in 2017-18, I believe. When we talk about our Arctic sovereignty and the importance of ensuring that we have everything in place to provide that security, we have to reflect on the fact that there are some who might be buying into Russian propaganda that suggests that Ukraine does not have the best intentions with respect to its sovereignty. That is what my concern is.

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When Conservatives brought forward this concurrence motion on this topic, it was very clear to me and everybody else that what they were doing was trying to prevent a debate on something else. It is not the first time we have seen that and we are witnessing it again right now. When it comes to scab labour, Conservatives will not stand up and say how they feel about a piece of legislation. They wait until it has gone well down the road, avoid talking about it, and then think they can just slip their vote in, get it on the record and then move on to the next subject. That did not happen with the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, but guess what? There is good news. There is still another opportunity because we only voted on it at second reading. They have another opportunity at report stage to do the right thing and stand up for Ukraine the way that every other member in this House is doing, so I would strongly encourage my Conservative colleagues to do that when we get to that point.

This goes to a larger point that I was talking about, which is that the Conservative Party of Canada today is not what it used to be. If we look back to Joe Clark, Brian Mulroney and Kim Campbell, they were Progressive Conservatives. They had important issues top of mind that genuinely meant something for Canada. They did not complain about what they thought would win them a couple of votes. It was Brian Mulroney who dealt with acid rain and the depletion of the ozone layer. He led the world literally in the Montreal accord. He brought 42 countries to Montreal to talk about how we could save our planet. That is not what we are seeing now.

I am not the only one who is saying that. This is what Joe Clark said, “I think it's a party that does not respect the progressive traditions of the Progressive Conservative Party and, consequently, does not reflect the country. ... My party is over. This was not just a change of decision about a policy; this was a change of decision about life or death, the party to which I had an obligation has been taken out of existence.”

● (1920)

Brian Mulroney said something very similar. He said, “I led a Progressive Conservative government. We were very progressive in areas like international affairs...and human rights, the creation of the...Francophonie and all of those things, and in social policy as well. We were more Conservative. Radio-Canada established last night, [with] privatization, deregulation, low inflation, cutting government expenditures, we were more Conservative than the Harper government. I thought that was a good mix.”

This is what Kim Campbell said. She said, “Well, I have never joined the Conservative Party of Canada. I think Joe Clark expressed that he did not leave the party, the party left him. It is not the Progressive Conservative Party, and our party was the party of the acid rain treaty, the Montreal Protocol. I am sorry. I have no time for climate deniers and anybody who is trying to pussyfoot around it.” Those are the words of Kim Campbell.

I guess what I am saying is that we have seen a huge shift in the Conservative Party of Canada. It is not what it used to be. I am very concerned that the shift is continuing further and further right. It is emulating what comes out of the United States and the Donald Trump politics of the MAGA movement. I find that to be very

alarming. I think that Canadians should be seriously reflecting on the path we are going down.

I do not believe Conservatives need to occupy that space. I believe they are choosing to occupy that space. I really encourage them to stop doing that, come back around and start looking at our country as a whole in a way we can genuinely improve it together.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will stay relevant to the topic at hand tonight.

The member said he did not feel that the Arctic sovereignty was that important. I think he should have listened to the NDP member who spoke just before him. She actually spoke on November 3 and got very upset at the complaints that were coming from the House. I am sure she will have an opportunity to speak.

I remember the member very well when he was on the national defence committee, and he was successfully filibustering the committee while it was looking into, during the previous Parliament, the sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces at the highest levels and the censorship of the previous minister of national defence.

I want to get to the point of this motion, which is Arctic sovereignty. He represents, or supposedly represents, a riding and its Canadian Armed Forces members. I want to ask specifically about the capabilities of signals. Recommendation 24 talks about “the expansion of Very High Frequency radio capabilities and other communications in the Arctic that support search and rescue efforts.”

Could the member elaborate on what needs to be done? How are the Canadian Armed Forces members he represents in Kingston crucial in making this happen and continuing our Arctic sovereignty?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I never said that Arctic sovereignty was not important. It is quite the contrary. I said it was important. I said my concern was that the Conservatives were just using this report as a way to block something that they did not want to talk about. It was something that they did not want to talk about so badly, the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal, that they ended up voting against it later on.

Arctic sovereignty is extremely important. I do not believe I was on the committee, and I do not believe I filibustered as he referenced. I will say that, when I was on the committee and we studied it, we looked into the different things we could recommend to the government. When it comes to recommendation 24, I would have him note that the Government of Canada agrees, in principle, with these recommendations. Nobody is disagreeing.

This is my point: Why is it so important that we talk about this report on the floor of the House of Commons when the reality is that the government agrees with the majority of the report?

• (1925)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the key recommendations I have a big problem with in this report is number 3, which states, “That the Government of Canada reconsider its long-standing policy with respect to the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defence program.” General Wayne Eyre specifically stated, “I think policies related to ballistic missile defence are becoming less and less relevant.”

As the member is a member of the government, I want to know what its stance is on that positioning? Is the government going to reconsider the long-standing policy it had for ballistic missile defence?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I cannot tell the member what the government's plans are specifically, other than to let her know that the government has noted the recommendation.

I can tell her, though, that when I was on the committee, and after I went with the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman to NORAD headquarters and was able to see the manner in which Canadians and Americans were working so closely together, I found it very confusing that there was a particular program in North America that impacted Canada but that Canada was not involved in. No one should quote me on this, but I believe it was Paul Martin who said that Canada would not be in the program, but, at the time, I questioned that. When I was on the committee as an independent member, not speaking on behalf of the government, I questioned why Canada was not in the program and challenged that perhaps we should be looking into whether or not that was a good decision.

I do not disagree with the recommendation. I know that the government does not disagree with the recommendation, because it said it would take note of it, and then went on to explain the basis behind it. Unlike the member from the NDP who asked me the question, I am a little more open to seeing what Canada's role should be in the program.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, who is the shadow minister for the Arctic and Northern Affairs for the Conservative Party.

I am glad to get the debate back on the report. We just listened to a bunch of bafflegab, but I am going to drill down on the issues at hand.

I am really pleased with the third report, which came from the national defence committee, on having a secure and sovereign Arctic. I like how the report was organized. It started off by talking about the threats in the Arctic, climate change and its impact, the great power struggles going on that also pull in the Arctic, like the Russian threat, the threat from Beijing and how we might be able to overcome that.

Then it talks about what we are doing there from the standpoint of domain awareness and surveillance. It talks about the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, as we call it, and its modernization, as well as missile defence, which is very important. That is not just about ballistic missile defence but also other threats, such as cruise missiles and hypersonics, and what types

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of air defence systems we should have in Canada to defend the Arctic, as well as our coasts.

I will talk about readiness in the Arctic: the equipment, the personnel, the search and rescue, and the infrastructure. I want to drill down on the threat environment; all too often, this is one thing that Canadians do not think is at risk at all in the Arctic. We know for a fact that the People's Republic of China now sees itself as a near-Arctic state or near-Arctic power. It has great interest in having a northern passage to move its goods from Asia to Europe and the other side of North America, for that matter, the Atlantic side, and making use of the Northwest Passage to do it.

The PRC has more icebreakers now than Canada and the United States combined that are employed by our coast guards and navy. When we start talking about the heavy Arctic polar icebreakers, the People's Republic of China and the People's Liberation Army Navy have more than the United States and Canada do. That is a very strong indication of their seriousness about accessing the international waters in the Arctic, as well as fulfilling their own belt and road initiative. We know that, within the belt and road initiative, there is a policy called the polar silk road and using the polar silk road as a way to move more of the goods they need to sell and export out of China, as well as to bring more imports back. That transit through the Arctic cuts off over two weeks of what it takes if it needs to go through the Panama Canal. That interest is something we have to take very seriously.

We also know that the People's Republic of China's navy has been there doing surveillance. We saw in a report by *The Globe and Mail* on February 21 that, in fall 2022, under Operation Limpid, the Canadian Armed Forces retrieved a number of surveillance buoys that were floating in the Arctic Ocean. Retired General Michael Day assumed that those buoys were there to watch over not just the transit of Canadian ships but submarines, etc., from our allies, especially the Americans, and monitoring their passage through the Northwest Passage and farther north through the Arctic. It has already been there dropping surveillance buoys, electronic surveillance with which it can collect all the data and send it back to Beijing.

In February, there were spy balloons over the Arctic from Beijing. One was shot down in Yukon. One went through Alaska to B.C. and across western Canada down to the United States, which was finally shot down. That one is still being completely analyzed to find out what information the PRC was picking up. Therefore, we really are concerned about what the interest is of the Chinese Communist Party in our Arctic.

• (1930)

Then there is the Russian Federation. We know about Putin's war in Ukraine and how bad it is. We all stand with Ukraine. Despite the rhetoric that comes from the other side, all of us in the Conservative Party stand with Ukraine. The only way this thing ends well is if Ukraine wins, so its sovereign territory has to be protected.

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However, as Canadians, we can never forget that we are a neighbour to Russia in the Arctic. We are sharing the Arctic Ocean with Russia, which has a great interest in it. As a matter of fact, we remember a stunt from about 10 years ago when the Russians sent a mini-submarine to the North Pole and dropped a Russian flag on the seabed to claim it as their own. They have put in claims under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea claiming the entire Arctic seabed as their own, coming right up to within 200 miles of the continental shelf in North America. Right up to where Canada's economic maritime zone ends is what they are trying to claim as a Russian interest and what they want to develop. Of course, we can never forget that the Russians continue to fly fighter jets and Bear bombers into our airspace.

We must look at those threats and combine them with North Korea and its aspirations to have nuclear warheads. It is estimated right now by the Arms Control Association that North Korea already has 30 nuclear warheads and has enough fissile material to build another 50 to 70 nuclear warheads. If it ever accomplishes its intercontinental ballistic missile program, it will be able to reach out and touch North America.

This is why we have to take a very serious look at how we protect our Arctic sovereignty and protect Canada and our allies. We have to project our power and protect our Arctic. This is our backyard. Canadians see themselves as an Arctic nation, yet 95% of Canadians have never been to the Arctic. They expect us to protect it, and we better protect it. "Use it or lose it" is the way we often talk about our sovereign territory.

We also have to deter and defend. We have to deter those who want to attack us and defend our continent, not just Canada. We have a responsibility to the United States and our other continental partners to ensure that we are secure here at home. Maintaining continental security, being a trusted ally and being a neighbour and friend are things we have to do, and that is why NORAD modernization is so critical.

However, as we are looking to put all these dollars into modernizing NORAD, the Liberals just cut \$1 billion from the defence budget. They have allowed \$10 billion to lapse. The question is, how do we rebuild the Canadian Armed Forces? We are short 16,000 troops right now and have another 10,000 troops who are undertrained and non-deployable. How do we do that if we do not have the budget and we do not have the kit? We have to do more.

If we look at the recommendations that came out of this report, there is so much the government should act upon. We came to an all-party decision on all of these recommendations; it was a unanimous report. We need to make sure we have underwater surveillance capabilities in the Canadian Arctic. As in recommendation 2, we need new submarines that are able to go under the ice. How are we going to pay for that when we have a government that continues to cut from national defence? The best way to surveil and deter submarines, which is one of the biggest proliferation weapon systems out there right now, is to have submarines, and our old Victoria-class submarines are at the end of their life and there is no plan to replace them.

We need a partnership with the U.S. ballistic missile defence system. BMD is the way we can protect against things like the North

Korean nuclear warhead threat. However, what about other air defences? How are we going to protect against cruise missiles and hypersonic missiles, which are now being proliferated around the world and could be used to attack Canada? We need to make sure we continue to have those discussions.

We have talked about upgrading NORAD with the over-the-horizon radar system, which has a big price tag. It is over \$25 billion to put a couple of those in place. At the same time, what about updating RADARSAT? What about getting drones? We were promised in "Strong, Secure, Engaged" that the Liberals would buy new drones by 2025, and that has been punted down the road to at least 2028. We also need low-earth orbit satellites.

All the equipment and personnel we need to defend North America, protect our Arctic and secure our own sovereignty costs money, and the Liberals are not serious about investing in the Canadian Armed Forces or the Arctic.

● (1935)

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's speech. I know he has followed defence matters very closely over the years and is a former parliamentary secretary of defence. I wanted to know his thoughts with respect to where climate change fits into all of this and whether or not he understands and recognizes climate change to be not only a matter of environmental concern but also a matter of national security. When ice melts, to be very simple about it, the Russians and the Chinese see that, and the Arctic becomes a focus for them. Is climate change a national security threat, from the member's perspective, yes or no?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, climate change was actually one of the key parts of the report we did at the national defence committee. We all recognized at committee that with the disappearing Arctic sea ice, the Arctic is opening up for greater transit by other nations. That is why we can see countries like the People's Republic of China showing more interest in making use of the transportation routes through our Northwest Passage and elsewhere.

That is why Canada has to be more prepared to make sure we are defending and using our Arctic. If we are not up there and actually capitalizing on the opportunities, supporting our northern communities and building infrastructure to do that, often in a dual-use circumstance, taking into consideration warming temperatures, then we are not going to address the real needs of the people who are up there or be able to defend our own Arctic sovereignty. However, Arctic sovereignty comes at a cost, and we do not see it in the budget by the current government. I do not think the Prime Minister really cares that much about the Arctic.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned recommendation number 2 in terms of the replacement of submarines. I agree that this is a big issue that will be coming forward. However, one of the big conversations, of course, is with respect to what kind of submarines Canada looks at. The under-ice capability is quite key, as is nuclear versus diesel-electric and all that.

However, one of the key components of all of that conversation, too, is the recruitment, retention and personnel crisis and how all that comes into play. Therefore, I would really love the member to go further into the recommendation because it is something that will be coming up in the future, and I know the government has not been talking about it as much as we need to.

● (1940)

**Mr. James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, we know that our current Victoria class submarines cannot go under the ice. We know that, right now, only two of our submarines have had any sea time, and even at that, the two of them combined were out at sea for fewer than 100 days in 2022. We have to get serious about having a conversation about having brand new submarines. My colleague from London—Fanshawe knows from testimony that we have heard at committee that there are no plans by the government to actually look at replacing our current Victoria class submarines. We know for a fact that a defence policy update should be addressing the issue, but it has been sitting in limbo now for over 16 months, and we are stilling waiting to see whether the government's defence policy update will actually contain some hard dollars and hard direction on replacing the submarines that we need in order to defend our Arctic and our coastlines at all three levels. That means that we have to be in the sea, on the sea and above the sea to actually be able to protect our country on the Atlantic, on the Pacific and in the Arctic.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague is a huge advocate for and defender of our military personnel and Ukraine. He mentioned drones; in particular, he mentioned the delay by the government of our medium-altitude drones. They have been delayed, it could argue, for a good reason, if it is to ensure that the development for Arctic capability is there. I am a bit surprised, considering that this is something the government promised within their defence policy years ago. Why would the government think it would develop drone capability in this country that would not be Arctic capable? Could the member just expand on why the government missed this obvious shortfall?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, we are all shocked to find out that the government spent the past eight years talking about drones and that it never, ever crossed the Liberals' minds that the drones would have to be capable of flying in the Arctic to do the

surveillance that we need to do. It is one thing to have RADARSAT, to have a north warning system and to have over-the-horizon radar systems, but having the drones flying up there, eyes on the ground at all times and doing surveillance, is one thing that has proven itself over and over again as being very effective. For the government not to even think that we had to fly in very cold temperatures in the Arctic just speaks to the incompetence of the current Liberal government.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the question I have to ask tonight, based on the report, and we are going to talk about the defence report in a few moments, is: has the Prime Minister compromised Canada in the Arctic? How bad is it?

We have heard from my colleague, the critic for defence. He did a great job going through some of the shortfalls of what really is not in the north and what needs to be in the north.

Tonight, I am going to go based on a few comments that I had heard from people in the Arctic, who voiced their concerns to me personally, and a little bit about the testimony in defence.

This is the report, "A Secure and Sovereign Arctic". Anybody can read it online. It is a great report. There are a lot of great recommendations.

As happens often with this government, there is a lot of talk but little action. I criticized the former minister of defence not long ago about promising billions of dollars; we found in the estimates that they had only spent \$45 million to modernize NORAD. That is just symbolic of a government that says one thing and does another.

I heard from people in the Arctic that we are not ready, Canada is abandoning the Arctic, Canada has retreated from the Arctic and Canada has vacated the Arctic.

Mayor Simon Kuliktana, the former Kugluktuk mayor, said to me, bluntly, and with a bit of fear in his voice, that we are not ready.

I must say that I was a little taken aback by his comment. I did not think he would be that blunt but these are folks who live right in the Arctic, right on the Northwest Passage. They are right on the water there and they see the traffic go by. They are very concerned about this.

Premier Cochrane, or soon-to-be former premier Cochrane, for the Northwest Territories, had comments: "The current invasion of Ukraine by Russia is a stark reminder of the importance of Arctic sovereignty. We share a unique border with Russia, the Arctic Ocean. As the Arctic takes a more predominant role on the international stage, we want to ensure that the needs of northerners remain a priority for Canada. It also means that the aspirations of northerners be given appropriate attention and that we eliminate the gaps between northern and southern Canadians."

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I asked her, personally, if she felt that northerners are a priority. Her comment back to me directly was, “We’re not ready.”

There are a few other comments. We had another professor who testified at the defence committee. I was privileged enough to ask him a question. Aurel Braun said, “If we don’t deter Russia, Canada...is going to be affected directly, materially, ecologically and strategically.”

That is one thing that we hear a lot about climate change. The critic for defence spoke to that, about the opening of the Northwest Passage, the more traffic that goes by there.

If we do not claim sovereignty and really spend resources and spend effort claiming sovereignty and being up there, guess who else will?

If we do not, we already have, as the critic for defence said, Russia already making counterclaims for the Arctic seabed that Canadians claim is our own. Do we trust that China, Russia and other countries are going to be as ecologically sacred to our own grounds as we will?

I think we can say no to that.

From another leader, a recent article, as of October 13: “CSIS warning Inuit leaders about covert foreign investment in Arctic, documents show”.

This is more of what I call “Trojan horsing” themselves into the Arctic and through our firewall or our safety fence in Canada. In the north, it is our Arctic sovereignty, of course.

Natan Obed “told CSIS that the ITK”, which is the group that he represents, “is working to find funding for infrastructure projects and needs to be warned in advance if its potential funding partners pose a threat. ‘Especially if the Canadian government is not investing in infrastructure development in the Arctic, then it pushes our pursuit for partners in investment into other places,’ he said.”

Whether it be a militarily straight-up threat from Russia, or China, perhaps, the other way that we are vulnerable is with foreign investment.

I spoke to the Yellowknife Geoscience Forum in Yellowknife a week ago. A critical mineral mine, a rare earth metal mine, where the Prime Minister cut a ribbon just months ago, has recently claimed bankruptcy.

● (1945)

Alarming, can members guess who has shown up as a partner to keep the project going? It is Chinese foreign investment. The critical mineral strategy was a head-scratcher, as said by a member who wrote a critical piece about what happened there. The critical mineral strategy is supposed to be to retain ownership, production and exploration within the borders of Canada, yet we are seeing the actions of the government push even investment, mining investment, out of our country.

I am going to refer to another document that I really relied on a lot when I went up to the north. It is an Auditor General report called “Arctic Waters Surveillance”. There is a lot of rhetoric in this place, but I like to quote people who actually have expertise in

these areas. I think we can all agree that the Auditor General gives a very fair perspective of what is going on up there.

I will start off with some of his criticisms. The report states, “Federal organizations’ actions did not address long-standing gaps in the surveillance of Arctic waters”.

The number one criticism is that “Insufficient action taken to address gaps” and “Lack of integration among organizations”. The report continues, “the lack of awareness about vessels in the Arctic creates vulnerabilities that, if left unaddressed, could lead to incidents that would affect Canada’s security, safety, environment, and economy.”

Number two is: “Weaknesses in satellite surveillance capabilities”. We have weaknesses now, and they are just going to get worse in the future. This statement is what probably shocked me the most of all the vulnerabilities that we have in the Arctic: “We also found that these radar imagery satellites are at or will reach the end of their expected service lives long before the planned launch dates of the replacement satellites”.

That means that the end of service life is 2026, and the launch will be in 2035. That means that we will have a nine-year gap in service, satellite-wise, for the Arctic. In this modern era, we will not be able to see what is going on in the north for almost 10 years.

Number three is “Icebreakers reaching the end of their useful lives” before new ones can be built, similar to the satellite problem. “The Canadian Coast Guard’s fleet includes 6 icebreakers that are suitable to operate in the Arctic. These icebreakers are between 35 and 53 years old and are becoming increasingly prone to breakdowns and expensive to maintain.”

I had the privilege of going out to one of these icebreakers and speaking with the head of the Coast Guard and many of its members there. Those folks do a great job. I will give a shout-out to all the men and women, whether they are in the Rangers, the Coast Guard, the military or the air force, who serve the Arctic. We appreciate what they do for us.

The report continues that there are further delays in procuring eight Arctic and offshore patrol ships. “They will allow the navy to exercise Canada’s sovereignty through northern maritime operations and to contribute to the wider efforts...in the North.” Again, as we have heard about so many other things, they are not on schedule and there is aircraft too.

I will read the conclusion in the Auditor General report:

We concluded that the federal organizations we audited—Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard, Environment and Climate Change Canada, National Defence, and Transport Canada—had not taken the action required to build the maritime domain awareness they collectively needed to respond to safety and security risks associated with increasing vessel traffic in Arctic waters. While these organizations had identified gaps in maritime domain awareness, they had not taken sufficient measures to address them. Moreover, some measures taken had progressed slowly and, in the case of the Marine Security Operations Centres, were not efficient. Furthermore, the existing satellite services and infrastructure did not provide the capacity that the federal organizations needed to perform surveillance of Arctic waters. Delays in the renewal of satellites, ships, and aircraft risks compromising the presence of these organizations in Arctic waters.

I started off by asking if the Prime Minister has compromised us in the Arctic. I think we can all agree that he has, not only from the Auditor General's report, but also from people on the ground. I would repeat something even stronger, which I heard from somebody in Inuvik, who said that the Prime Minister has not just compromised us in the Arctic. He has abandoned the Arctic.

• (1950)

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I do not know the hon. member that well, but I do know him to be someone focused on a range of different policy issues, and tonight is no different. He raised the matter of defence and looked at Arctic sovereignty, obviously relating to the concurrence debate here.

I wonder if he could tell us his view on the 2% ask of NATO and what his views are on that and, rather, what his party's views are. Would a future Conservative government commit to fulfilling that 2% ask?

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I have made my views very clear about NATO and NORAD tonight. The member has heard our views from this side about NORAD and the need to modernize in order to protect our northern front. It is unequivocal that it needs to happen.

The former defence minister made the announcement of modernizing NORAD. I think it was \$4.95 billion at the time. I applauded her for making that announcement. The sad part is what I referred to in my speech, which is that with that big promise made, only \$45 million has been spent to date. Again, actions speak louder than words. Let us see some action.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, recommendation 15 talks about the need to increase primary reserve capability in all three territories in order to upkeep our Arctic sovereignty and defence. In 2013, there was the master implementation directive to actually get a number of reserve units up from an infrastructure and equipment standpoint. When I talk to former colleagues of mine in the reserves, they tell me that they are sitting with snowmobiles that do not have the infrastructure to store them. They are rotting outside, and this is a decade later.

Does the member have any idea why the government has failed to actually provide the necessary support and resources to our primary reserves specifically when it comes to the Arctic?

• (1955)

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I must say I do not know. We talked to Canadian Rangers who go out with their own snowmobile equipment and their own gear, which gets damaged and

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takes months to get repaired. These are snowmobiles they use for their sustenance to go get caribou and the like. It is a sad story we have heard many times. I have been up there many times and spoken directly with Rangers, as well as some service members.

Again, it is not something we like to bring up. I am sure my colleague from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound would be pleased if he would not have had to ask that question. All we want to see is members in uniforms, our Canadian Rangers, given the resources they desperately need to keep us safe. I wish the government would just simply do what it promised.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Madam Speaker, what really scares me about the Arctic is not the territorial threat. It is not the threat from Russia or China coming across the Arctic Circle or coming into our north. It is actually about their investments and takeover of our natural resources or critical minerals. What more does this member think needs to be done, as outlined I believe in recommendation 18 of the report, to actually put a stop to this malign foreign takeover of critical capabilities and natural resources in the Arctic?

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, the article I quoted before was “CSIS warning Inuit leaders about covert foreign investment in Arctic, documents show”. What can we do about it? There is a lot we can do about it.

Again, the example I think about is one of those sad things I had to announce when I was up in Yellowknife speaking. A company the Prime Minister was at, the one rare earth minerals project he cut the ribbon at, was going into bankruptcy. Why? It is because we have a regulatory regime that is so burdensome it pushes those local investors out. Guess who has a way in? Foreign investment then comes in because of that desperation, as Natan Obed said in this article. We are just inviting this foreign investment in. We are in a sad state. Meanwhile, we have elements and materials we could be bringing to the world. We are one of the most green countries on the planet. Canada could be offering solutions around the globe, but yet here we are.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Since no other member wishes to speak, pursuant to order made earlier today, the question is deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 66, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 29, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni not being present to raise during the Adjournment Proceedings the matter for which notice has been given, the notice is deemed withdrawn.

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The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. It being 7:58 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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(The House adjourned at 7:58 p.m.)







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