



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

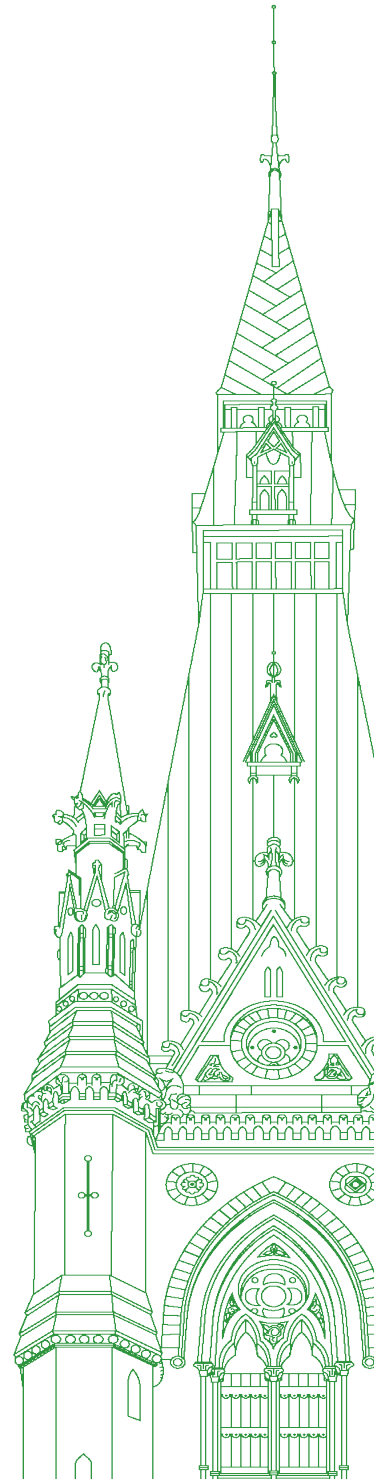
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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, January 31, 2024

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[English]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

TAMIL HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Tamil Heritage Month to recognize the invaluable contributions of Tamil Canadians to our great nation.

From the arts and sciences to business and community service, Tamils have played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural mosaic that defines Canada. Every January, Canadians are encouraged to learn about and appreciate the vibrant culture, histories and traditions of the Tamil diaspora.

Last Sunday, I enjoyed the sights and sounds of Indian classical dance at a Tamil Heritage Month celebration in my riding of Scarborough North. Organized by the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam and the Tamil Heritage Month Council, the event also highlighted the ongoing struggle for accountability and reconciliation for the Tamil people.

As Canadians, let us reaffirm our commitment to peace and justice, and stand together in solidarity with Tamil communities from coast to coast to coast.

Nandri vanakkam.

TAXATION

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, more than half of all Canadians are struggling just to cover their mortgage, rent, food, home heating and gasoline. Taxes and the inflation caused by taxes, wasteful spending and deficits are

crushing Canada's middle class and those desperately trying to cling to it.

For those Canadians who have even just a little bit left over at the end of the month after paying their bills, and who want to enjoy a basic middle-class indulgence like a night out for dinner and a bottle of wine with a loved one, or a beer with some buddies while watching a game, the NDP-Liberal government is going to raise the taxes on beer, wine and spirits again, for the eighth year in a row, on April 1.

I call on all MPs from all parties to support my private member's bill, Bill C-266, and let Parliament have the final say on taxes instead of letting the government raise them automatically. Let us bring happy hour back for working Canadians.

UKRAINE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, President Zelenskyy, the President of Ukraine, came to Canada last year and signed a Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. People around the world stand in solidarity in support of Ukraine. We all have a role to play. Every member in every political party has a role to play.

This Friday we are going to be debating the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement again. We are hoping that all members of all political parties can get behind the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. What we should be doing is saying no to the MAGA right and yes to trade. I am calling on all members of the chamber to vote in favour of the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement.

[Translation]

SANDRA BEAUREGARD

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to pay tribute to a distinguished citizen from the federal riding of Montarville. Sandra Beauregard is the founder, president and very soul of Jardins communautaires Saint-Basile-le-Grand, an organization that promotes not just gardening, but also the values of sharing and co-operation, respect for nature and healthy living, including healthy eating.

Statements by Members

A few weeks ago, Ms. Beauregard was honoured as a Garden Hero by Gardens Canada for her leadership, her role in promoting gardening and her valuable contribution to her community. To this day, she remains the only Quebecker to have received this honour.

I am therefore pleased to recognize Ms. Beauregard just a few days before the Jardins communautaires Saint-Basile-le-Grand kicks off a new season this Saturday with a seed swap.

Congratulations to Ms. Beauregard and all the best to Jardins communautaires Saint-Basile-le-Grand and its members.

* * *

● (1405)
[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been 116 days since the October 7 attacks: 116 days of hostilities, violence and an ever-escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

I continue to be in full support of a complete and sustainable ceasefire. Hamas must surrender and must release all hostages. More humanitarian aid must reach civilians, and innocent people must be protected, particularly children, who have suffered the worst consequences of this war.

I am grateful for our government's decision to increase the humanitarian assistance being provided to Gaza, now over \$100 million, with Canada providing an additional \$40 million in humanitarian aid and support to address the urgent needs of the Gaza Strip. We also have an obligation to ensure that Canadians can reunite with family members in the Middle East. In the case of journalist Mansour Shouman, I hope for his safe return to his family in Canada as quickly as possible.

I am proud that the Prime Minister has pushed back against Netanyahu's reckless rejection of a two-state solution. Indeed, the only way forward for Palestinians and Israelis is to have an internationally recognized Palestinian state that is safe and secure with borders. We believe in a two-state solution. We believe that peace is possible.

* * *

EMERGENCIES ACT

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Federal Court issued a damning indictment against the NDP-Liberal government. It ruled that it has violated the rights of Canadians by invoking the Emergencies Act to quell protests in Ottawa. In the words of the judge, there was “no national emergency justifying the use of the Emergencies Act”.

Canadians deserve answers. That is why tomorrow, at the public safety committee, Conservatives are demanding an investigation into the government for its fundamental breach of Canadians' basic human rights. After eight years of the Liberal government, Canadians have no trust that the Liberals will defend their rights. So much for being the party of the charter. The Prime Minister suspended civil liberties, froze the bank accounts of Canadians and demonized Canadians who oppose these Liberal policies. He needs to be held accountable.

Conservatives will fight for answers, transparency and accountability.

When will the NDP stop supporting the liberty-crushing Liberals and finally take a stand to hold the government accountable?

* * *

KATEY THOMPSON

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember a member of my community of Ottawa Centre who has tragically passed away after giving so much to this place as a member of the Parliamentary Translation Services team.

Katey Thompson was a Hansard translator who spent 16 years working diligently to provide us all with the expert-level translation services we have come to expect in the House. Over the course of her work, Katey contributed substantially to our Parliamentary record. While she may have left us at the too-young age of 41, her translations will live on forever in the historical record of our democracy.

Her family, her colleagues and her entire community here in Ottawa Centre and at home in Thunder Bay are so proud of her. While she was taken away from this world too soon, Katey had an incredible impact on the people she worked with. I would like to take this opportunity to say a final thanks to Katey and to celebrate the work she has done.

* * *

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to send best wishes to Mitzi Hodgson on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

Mitzi turned 100 on December 9. Born in Slovenia, Mitzi landed in Norman Wells in 1955. Without knowing a word of English, she began working in the Imperial Oil mess hall. It was here that Mitzi met the love of her life, Eddy Hodgson.

Mitzi has worn many hats over the years, from working in the hospital to owning a local hotel and doing countless hours of volunteering in the church. Mitzi is fluent in four languages and is an accomplished seamstress, dancer, gardener and baker. Her cherry cheesecake was once auctioned for \$1,400.

Mitzi is an unsung hero. Her selfless character and genuine kindness are why she has such a vast network of friends and admirers. Along with her two children, four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and many, many other friends and family members, I want to wish Mitzi a very happy 100th birthday.

*Statements by Members***LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, northern Canadians have learned the hard way that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

Northwest Territories Premier R. J. Simpson recently said, “The costs are already high—higher costs are not the solution up here.” Adam and Chris from Yellowknife handed me their monthly heating bills that were \$1,400, \$1,700 and \$2,100 because of the Prime Minister’s carbon tax.

Northerners have a choice next election. On one side, they have a costly coalition NDP-Liberal government that has driven up heating costs in the north because of its carbon tax, broken housing promises because there were zero homes built in Nunavut last year, doubled the national debt with little northern infrastructure to show for it and doubled the violent crimes across Canada.

On our side, we have a common-sense plan that we, along with our leader, will axe the tax, build better homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. We will bring it home.

* * *

● (1410)

NATIONAL RIBBON SKIRT DAY

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, January 4 in Canada is National Ribbon Skirt Day. This day is the culmination of the hard work of Bella the Brave of Cote First Nation and indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, Senator Mary Jane McCallum and both Houses of Parliament, which offered unanimous support for a day that celebrates and uplifts indigenous women, girls and two-spirit peoples from coast to coast to coast.

Each year, the movement grows bigger. Reconciliation is a complex and multi-faceted process. National ribbon skirt day is but one piece of this important puzzle. Let me quote from the legislation:

Whereas Indigenous women are life-givers and are entrusted with traditional knowledge to care for their families, their communities and the environment;

Whereas the ribbon skirt is a centuries-old spiritual symbol of womanhood, identity, adaptation and survival and is a way for women to honour themselves and their culture;

Whereas the ribbon skirt represents a direct connection to Mother Earth and its sacred medicines.

This recognition is enshrined in law. Canada has come a very long way. Keep rocking those ribbon skirts.

* * *

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, axe the tax. Build the homes. Fix the budget. Stop the crime. These are twelve words and four straightforward Conservative promises that have Liberal MPs in panic mode.

“It is sloganeering”, they protest, as though their own Prime Minister does not spew meaningless catchphrases like a pull-string doll: “We’ve got Canadians’ backs”, the laughable “We took on debt so Canadians wouldn’t have to”, and everyone’s favourite, “The budget will balance itself.”

In the real world, as JFK once said, “Things don’t happen, they are made to happen.” The Conservatives’ 12 words are about making things happen. Each short promise packs in an action toward a positive outcome on a critical issue for Canadians. Axe the tax. Build the homes. Fix the budget. Stop the crime. Whether it happens this spring, next winter or in the fall of 2025, a strong Conservative government will restore common sense to Ottawa, and with that common sense, hope for a better life for all Canadians.

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CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 40% of Nova Scotia households are struggling to pay their electricity bills, making Nova Scotians choose between eating and heating. We all know, sadly, that two million Canadians visit a food bank every month.

The NDP-Liberal coalition policies have also failed to provide affordable housing in Canada. In December, rents were at their highest level ever, skyrocketing to \$2,178. This has doubled under the Prime Minister.

Let us talk crime. Since this Prime Minister was first elected, car thefts across Canada have increased dramatically. They have doubled in Montreal and tripled in Toronto.

Canadians will have a very simple choice in the next election. On the one hand they will have the costly coalition of the New Democrats and Liberals, who will take their money, tax their food, punish their work, double their housing costs and unleash crime and chaos in their community, or they can have the common-sense Conservatives who would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. That is the choice.

*Statements by Members***CARBON PRICING**

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone should file their income tax before April 30 to receive the credits and benefits to which they are entitled. For example, the quarterly issued carbon rebate in Ontario is for all taxpayers and it is a tax-free benefit to offset the cost of federal pollution pricing. Experts around the world agree that pricing pollution works. It is just one way Canada is fighting pollution. The carbon rebate quarterly payment went out January 15 and the next is April 15. The 2024 payment for a family of four in Ontario is \$976; for a couple, it is \$732; and for an adult living alone, it is \$488.

[Translation]

I want to thank those who volunteer at the free tax clinics in Nickel Belt. They are a vital part of helping low- and modest-income Canadians access the important benefits they are entitled to.

Our future generations deserve a strong economy that attracts green investment and protects the environment.

* * *

• (1415)

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the legacy of Canadian policies designed to kill the Indian in the child still impacts our families. There are more indigenous kids in child welfare today than at the height of residential schools. In Manitoba, over 90% are indigenous.

That is why I was proud, along with my colleague Bonita Zarrillo and the NDP, to amend—

The Speaker: I will ask the member to start her statement again because I know that she should not be doing this. I will just remind members that it is tradition that we do not mention the names of members of Parliament, but we refer to them by their ridings.

I will ask the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre to start again.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, the legacy of Canadian policies designed to kill the Indian in the child still impacts our families. There are more indigenous kids in child welfare today than there were at the height of residential schools. In Manitoba, over 90% are indigenous. That is why I was proud, along with my colleague from Port Moody—Coquitlam and the NDP, to amend Bill C-318 to provide EI benefits for kinship and customary care. I was concerned that the Liberal members abstained from voting but not surprised, considering they voted against our amendment to affirm the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous parents in the national child care legislation.

If the current government is not ready to give our kids back, then its words of reconciliation are empty. The government must uphold Bill C-15, which mandates the government to take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou.

[Translation]

VICTIMS OF ATTACKS IN BURKINA FASO

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to six Quebecers who were tragically killed during the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou on January 15, 2016.

The attacks claimed the lives of four members of a Lac-Beauport family—Yves Carrier; his wife, Gladys Chamberland; their children, Charles-Élie and Maude Carrier—and two of their friends from the Quebec City area, Suzanne Bernier and Louis Chabot, all of whom were loved and cherished. They were planning on building a school.

After all these years, although the pain has not dissipated, it is important to remember that they were ambassadors of peace, committed to promoting both understanding and unity. Let us take inspiration from the love and tolerance they embodied. Let us defend the values that were so dear to their hearts. Let us fight against the darkness, as they did, using the light of solidarity, compassion and humanity. Let us find the strength to build a world where peace will prevail over hatred.

Gladys, Yves, Charles-Élie, Maude, Louis and Suzanne—

The Speaker: I am sorry to have to interrupt members during their statements, but it is very important for all members to limit their remarks to 60 seconds.

* * *

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has done untold damage during its eight years in power. An economic recession is looming, and we are in the middle of the worst housing crisis in Canadian history. The crime rate has risen by 40%, and government spending has skyrocketed. Canadians deserve better. They have a choice. The Liberals have a minority government. They are in a coalition with the NDP. To make matters worse, Quebecers have been duped by the Bloc Québécois, which supports wasteful Liberal spending and the second carbon tax, which it also thinks should be radically increased.

The people of our country will have two choices in the next election. They can choose to be stuck with this Liberal government, which is being propped up by the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, or they can choose the Conservative Party of Canada, which has a plan to axe the carbon tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. The choice is clear, and Canadians deserve a government that will work for them and restore our national pride. That is the true meaning of common sense.

[English]

FIREFIGHTER CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks the last day of Canada's first ever national Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. It was also on this very day two years ago that I introduced my private member's bill, which became law in June, to establish a national framework for the prevention and treatment of cancers linked to firefighting and to make every January Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month throughout Canada. Bringing increased public awareness to occupational cancers in the fire service, which account for over 85% of all duty-related deaths among Canada's firefighters, it is crucial to promote best practices that can help mitigate the risks.

• (1420)

[Translation]

Raising awareness is essential to ensure that the men and women who put their health and safety on the line get screened regularly and receive timely treatment if they are diagnosed with cancer. I thank the firefighters in my riding of Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne and across Canada for their work. I want them to know that we care about their health and well-being.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our priorities are clear. We are going to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop crime.

When it comes to stopping crime, the Prime Minister is throwing on a cape and claiming to be a big hero on auto theft, but since he brought in catch-and-release and Netflix sentences for car thieves, auto theft has risen by 30%, and that is not to mention the mismanagement of our ports.

Will he reverse the policies that caused the auto theft crisis instead of holding another meeting?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the former Conservative government made cuts to programs to protect civilians and prevent auto theft by cutting funding for police and ports.

We were there to invest, to do more to keep Canadians safe and to protect them from becoming victims of crime. We will continue our work and our investments. We will work with partners and take action.

The Conservative leader is presenting slogans and easy solutions that do not really solve anything. We will do the necessary work.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will say it again: His policies are more costly. Yes, he is a lot more costly.

The Conservatives spent less and had less auto theft. In fact, there were half as many car thefts in Montreal and two-thirds fewer

Oral Questions

in Toronto in 2015, the year that he took office. That is because he is releasing car thieves and mismanaging federal ports, which are plagued by incompetence.

Will he reverse the policies that caused the crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of getting everyone on board in combatting auto theft. The ministers have just announced a national summit on auto theft that will bring together leaders from several different jurisdictions and sectors to tackle this issue head-on.

We are already getting results. In 2023, our border officers intercepted more than 1,600 stolen vehicles. We continue to work hard, while the Conservatives prefer to engage in political attacks.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our priorities are clear. We are going to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, stop the crime and stop the auto theft that has run rampant under the Prime Minister. He is now throwing a cape over his back and claiming that he is the hero on auto theft, but it has actually tripled in Toronto, and it is up by 100% in Montreal after he brought in capture and release and house arrest for car thieves, and after his incompetence allowed our ports to spin out of control and our cars to be exported to overseas crime and terror networks.

Why does he not reverse his policies instead of having another meeting?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious situation. Canadians are concerned about this, and the Conservative leader just chooses to whip out his empty slogans and continue to blame everyone while we are getting to work.

We are pulling together stakeholders and leaders from across governments to look at what more we can do. We have seen successes. CBSA agents intercepted over 1,600 stolen cars last year, in 2023, but there is more to do. We are going to continue to do the steady work and to make investments necessary to keep Canadians safe and to keep crime down.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he says that he would keep crime down. Crime is way up. Violent crime is up 40% under the Prime Minister. Today, he had his ministers hold a big press conference as their solution. In it, they put out a press release that said, "In 2022, approximately 9,600 vehicles were stolen in the Toronto area alone, representing a 300% increase since 2015".

Oral Questions

What happened in 2015? I know; he happened. How can we make him unhappy and stop the crime?

● (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, Stephen Harper presented a budget that had slashed funds for policing, slashed funds for CBSA officers and slashed funding for Veterans Affairs services, and we were there to clean up the mess, to cut taxes for the wealthiest 1% and to lower them for the middle class, to support families and to start moving forward on gun control in real ways.

While the Conservatives cozy up to the American gun lobbyists, we have continued to step up in keeping Canadians safe. Let him bring assault weapons back to our streets; we will keep Canadians safe.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, wow, is the Prime Minister ever losing control of himself. My goodness, he is screaming and hollering like that.

It is his press release that says that, in Toronto, auto thefts are up 300% since he took office. His solution is to hold a summit. He held a summit on food prices, and food prices went up. He held a summit on housing, and housing costs doubled. How much is crime going to rise after all of the bigwigs go to his summit?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has trouble believing that we would actually include real facts in our press release, something he and the former Harper government never did, for years. Yes, there is a real challenge with auto theft in this country, and our solution is to roll up our sleeves, pull together partners from across the country and get to solving it. His solution is to throw his hands in the air and blame a raft of political attacks on us. We continue to see that he is not putting forward any real solutions.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, medical assistance in dying is profoundly influenced by a progressive idea in Quebec. Everyone agrees that a person who is suffering from a serious mental illness cannot make a decision on medical assistance in dying. There is a broad consensus about that idea, and a postponement is warranted. However, there are people who know ahead of time that their condition will deteriorate and who want to make the decision now. The government's bill could provide this option and reflect the will of Quebec.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to consider it now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague says, the choice to seek medical assistance in dying is an extremely difficult and personal one. As a society, as a Parliament, we have a responsibility to strike a sometimes difficult balance between respecting the rights, choices and freedoms of an individual and protecting the most vulnerable.

That is why, for years, we have been conducting studies and evaluations, putting measures in place, proposing debates and lis-

tening to experts. We will continue to be open to all suggestions as we work responsibly.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am simply asking the Prime Minister to recognize that these are two different situations. There are people who are already living with a mental health condition that does not enable them to make the decision, and there are people who are currently in full control of their faculties and who would like to make the decision in advance.

I think the Prime Minister may want to consider it. If he fears the religious conservative right, which may very well be the case, we will be there to support a major step forward on this issue.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware that the issue my colleague is pointing out is real. It is one issue that needs to be looked at, along with other difficult issues that are being examined and debated.

Yes, we will continue to consider advanced directives. We are going to continue to look at how we can ensure that people have the choices and freedoms that are important to them, while at the same time ensuring that we are protecting them and everyone else from the possibility of being vulnerable to unforeseen circumstances or negative situations.

* * *

● (1430)

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member of Parliament for Davenport claims that there is no housing crisis in Toronto. The rest of the Liberal MPs for Toronto would rather fight the City of Toronto than actually deal with the crisis of housing. Frontline workers are saying, "On the ground, we've seen a man recently arrived from Africa die in [an] encampment while trying to stay warm."

Will the Prime Minister listen to his out of touch Liberal MPs or to frontline workers trying to save people's lives?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been there investing in housing across the country, including with hundreds of millions of dollars directly to the City of Toronto for investing in housing, housing affordability and fighting homelessness. We know there is lots to do, and we are going to keep doing it.

Whether it is signing housing accelerator agreements across the country, introducing a suite of new measures to unlock the construction of 600,000 new apartments, cracking down on short-term rentals to unlock even more apartments, or introducing a mortgage charter to protect homeowners from the stress of elevated interest rates, we are taking action.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, an 83-year-old woman was evicted from the home she lived in for 30 years. Because of the Liberal-Conservative housing crisis, she does not know where she will end up. The Liberals have the resources, the power and the land to fix the housing crisis.

When will the Prime Minister stop putting real estate giants ahead of Ms. Bertrand?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are taking concrete steps to get hundreds of thousands of new homes built across the country by signing agreements directly with municipalities, provinces and territories, Quebec and all of Nunavut. We are working to cut red tape, expedite permits, increase density and improve zoning. We have put \$4 billion on the table to deliver results in terms of housing.

We will continue taking a serious and responsible approach to doing this work.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister needs a summit to find out about the problem of auto theft. We can help him. He is the problem. His policies caused the 300% increase in auto theft in Toronto. He has asked for solutions. Well, we have some of those, too.

Will the Prime Minister agree to reverse his catch-and-release bail policy for car thieves, end house arrest for those who steal cars and put an end to his incompetence at the Port of Montreal, from which so many of our vehicles are being shipped to organized crime and terrorist networks abroad?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is interesting about the Leader of the Opposition is that he does not actually care about auto theft. He cares about making a good political attack on the government because people are facing real challenges.

We are focused on solving the challenges. We are focused on initiatives, such as that we announced today of \$121 million to fight auto theft in Ontario. We have been working to bring together stakeholders and leaders from across the country to bring forward more positive solutions to build on the 1,600 recovered autos that we prevented from being stolen last year.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he claims to have stopped 1,600 car thefts. There were 100,000 car thefts in 2022, which is a 34% increase across Canada. He needs to host a summit to understand the problem. He is the problem.

Oral Questions

We have common-sense solutions. We need to put an end to the catch-and-release policy and Netflix sentences for car thieves and restore competent management to the Port of Montreal to prevent our cars from being exported.

● (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there he goes again accusing the people of Quebec of being incompetent. That is a real pattern for the Conservative leader.

We are here to work hand in hand with municipal leaders, with police chiefs and with the provinces on resolving this problem. We are here to work responsibly by making investments. For example, today we announced \$121 million to help Ontario. There is work to be done, but empty slogans and personal attacks are not going to fix this problem for Canadians. Our hard work will.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he is the one accusing Quebecers of incompetence when he says that they are in charge of managing the Port of Montreal.

That is not true. The Port of Montreal is a federal port. He is the incompetent one, and the one who caused the problem. The same thing is happening at every port in Canada. The federal ports are mismanaged because of him. That is one of the reasons why we have this crime rate. We have common-sense solutions.

Will he put a stop to automatic releases and Netflix sentences, and will he restore competent management to all our ports across the country to prevent the auto theft crisis that he caused?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already addressed auto theft concerns, but the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about common sense when it comes to crime and violence. Why, then, is he going along with the American gun lobby, which wants to put assault weapons back on our streets and in our communities? For eight years, he has tried to block our gun control measures at every turn, because he is a puppet of the American right. He does that instead of standing up to protect communities, control firearms and show that he really cares about the safety of Canadians.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only is he not worth the cost, but he is also not worth the crime, and now he is spreading disinformation. Years after he promised he would ban these so-called military assault rifles, they are still legal in Canada, and he is paying foreign hunters to get into helicopters and fly around over Vancouver Island to slaughter deer our hunters would have taken down for free for the meat.

Oral Questions

When will the Prime Minister stop his policy of targeting lawful Canadians and go after the real criminals who are terrorizing our streets?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the contortions the leader of the official opposition goes through to try to talk about gun control are quite impressive, but Canadians will not be fooled by him. The order in council that made assault-style weapons illegal to use, purchase, share or sell is still in place.

The Conservative Party of Canada has, as its official position, that it wants to restore the legality of assault-style weapons in this country. We—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he stumbles and bumbles when he does not know what he is talking about, and he does not know what he is talking about because he does not care about what he is talking about.

He has still not banned those guns years, after promising on the election trail that he would. They are still legally in the possession of their owners at this stage. He says he will not be able to do it until a week after the next election. Meanwhile, he tried to publish 300 pages of hunting rifles he wanted to ban, blaming first nations hunters for crime in downtown Toronto.

Why does he want to protect turkeys from hunters instead of Canadians from criminals?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as of a number of years ago, it is illegal to buy, sell, use or bequeath assault-style weapons in this country. We did that. We banned over 1,600 models of assault-style weapons. The Conservative Party wants to make those assault-style weapons legal again, and everything it does is focused on misinformation and disinformation, bringing in hunters who are not targeted by these measures to try to justify its anchoring on the NRA.

• (1440)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is more stumbling and bumbling. The guns he talked about are not banned, and he says they will not be banned until one week after the next election because he cannot figure how to ban them years after he announced it. Meanwhile, he is spending billions of dollars going after licensed, law-abiding, trained and tested people, who have proven they are statistically the least likely to commit crime, and what has been the consequence? In eight years, we have had a 100% increase in criminal shootings.

Why does he always go after the good guys instead of putting the bad guys in jail?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in May of 2020, we rendered it illegal to buy, sell, use or bequeath 1,600 different models of assault-style weapons in this country. That is still the case. In the coming year, we will be bringing in a legacy program, while we are extending the amnesty, to bring in a buyback for the owners of these weapons. We are moving forward on gun control when he wants to bring assault-style weapons back to Canadians.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us say that my neighbour comes by and I ask him to do me a favour and pay the people who are coming to install my heat pump. I promise that I will pay him back the next day. The next day, when my neighbour comes to see me and asks me to give him back his \$1,000, I tell him that I will not or that I will give him only a fraction of the amount. That is what is happening with immigration.

Quebec has been told to foot the bill for asylum seekers and reassured that it will be reimbursed later. Ottawa then says that it will not pay Quebec back or that it will maybe pay back only a fraction of the amount. Will the Prime Minister acknowledge his debt and commit to paying Quebec back?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have recognized from the very beginning that Quebecers are shouldering a heavy burden when it comes to supporting irregular arrivals. First, it was through Roxham Road, and now that we have worked with the Americans to resolve that issue, these immigrants are arriving via airports. We are here to help.

We are working hand in hand with the Government of Quebec. We are in discussions with that government to determine how we can support it properly. We have seen the Government of Quebec's request for funding and we are working with Quebec because we recognize that, yes, Quebecers are shouldering that burden, and we will be there to help.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, take a good look at his hand. The only hand he is holding belongs to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Does the Prime Minister really want to make that commitment in an election year? Does he want Canadians and Quebecers to think that when he gives his word, it cannot be believed? Does he want to make them question whether his word is worth anything, whether he is reliable or trustworthy?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at every step, we are always there to work respectfully with the provinces and territories, with Canadians and governments across this country.

It is true that, at times, we have to navigate differences of opinion and different perspectives, but, at every step, we know how to work respectfully, while keeping our word and focusing on what is in the best interests of citizens across this country. We will continue to do so.

Yes, we can be a trustworthy partner, and we have demonstrated time and again that we always will be.

*Oral Questions**[English]***CARBON PRICING**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has hit Canadian farmers with a carbon tax that drives up food prices at the grocery store, food prices that are rising again only months after he promised they would come down. I asked him late last year if he would talk to the Medeiros farm about their rising carbon tax bill. They just got their bill for December, and it is \$21,000 in carbon taxes alone.

I ask now, as I asked back then, how exactly will the Medeiros family pay this bill when it quadruples to over \$80,000 a year?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Conservative leader is asking the government to help out the Medeiros family farm now, because, back in 2014, when the Medeiros family came to him in government and asked him for some support as they were trying to make investments and trying to continue to move forward, he told them that their project needed to “stand on its own two feet”. That is what he told that farm.

We are there to support farmers right across the country, with \$1.5 billion over the past few years in investments and supports. We are going to continue to be there for farmers as they fight climate change.

• (1445)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, actually, when the Medeiros family asked me for help, I went to Enbridge and helped them to get lower-cost natural gas to power their operation. That is the real story.

Instead of reading the disinformation from the kids in short pants over in PMO, why does he not deal with the thing that is really hurting that family right now, a \$21,000 monthly carbon tax bill that is passed on to the trucker who ships the food and the grocer who sells the food?

Once again, how much will Canadians have to pay in higher food prices when he quadruples the carbon tax?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, back in 2014, he told that farm family to stand on their own two feet. We know what is making farmers vulnerable across this country. It is climate change. It is the fact that a changing climate causes droughts, floods and fires. Droughts, floods and fires end up hurting crops and end up hurting growers.

That is why we are stepping up on fighting climate change. Farmers across this country know how important it is to sustain and protect our land. That is exactly what we are doing. That is exactly what we are going to continue to do.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he mentions drugs. That is another crisis that he has caused.

Going back to the cost of food, heat and groceries, the Prime Minister plans to raise the carbon tax again on April 1: another hike to the gas, the heat, the grocery bills; another hit to the Nova Scotia families who cannot afford to pay their utility bills, and another hit

to working-class families while he jets around the world carbon tax-free.

If he cannot have the common sense to axe the tax, will he at least cancel his plan to hike the tax on April 1?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is the Leader of the Opposition proposing to cut for Canadians? It is the carbon rebate, the cheques that Canadians get while the price on pollution is in place, which they are relying on to enable them to both fight climate change and support their families. We are going to continue to be there to fight climate change and put more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families.

When he talks about cutting climate action, he is also talking about cutting those cheques that arrive in families' bank accounts four times a year.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, 60% of Canadians are paying more in carbon tax than they get back in rebates, and now we learn that 40% of Nova Scotia households are struggling to pay their electricity bills. The carbon tax, of course, applies on the share of electricity that is generated through traditional hydrocarbons and other fossil fuels. The Prime Minister is going to hit Canadians with yet another tax hike on April 1.

If he cannot summon the common sense to axe the tax, will he at least cap the tax so Canadians can afford to heat?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are fighting climate change and creating a stronger economy at the same time as we ensure affordability for Canadians. The carbon rebate cheques that go right across the country in areas where the federal price applies help out eight out of 10 families with more money than they pay for the price on pollution.

We will continue to be there to both invest in families and support them, while the Conservative leader proposes to cut rebate cheques to Canadians. We are going to keep doing it while we fight climate change.

*Oral Questions***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, millions of Gazans rely on UNRWA for food, water and shelter. People are starving. Children are eating grass just to survive. Yes, serious allegations need to be investigated and prosecuted. No, children should not pay for this.

Why is the Prime Minister fuelling this war with Canadian arms and punishing Palestinian children who did not commit a crime?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are, of course, deeply concerned with the devastating scale of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. We recognize UNRWA's essential role in providing life-saving assistance under dangerous conditions, so we will work with the agency and other donors to support the investigation into the serious allegations against its staff.

Let me be extremely clear: Our determination to provide relief to Palestinian civilians has not changed, and our work with our partners is constant. We are looking at ways to continue to provide additional support to those desperately in need, in addition to the \$40 million we just announced yesterday.

* * *

GROCERY INDUSTRY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister knows well that no other group can do this work.

I want to talk about Halifax. Halifax has the highest rate of poverty in Canada: One in five children live in poverty. Only once has a Liberal MP for Halifax raised the issue of skyrocketing food prices in the House. How out of touch is that? That is the problem with the Liberals. They pretend that everything is fine if everything is fine with their rich CEO friends.

When will the Prime Minister stop working for Galen Weston and start working for Haligonians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working closely with the Competition Bureau. We are making sure we are passing legislation that strengthens its ability to go after the large grocery chains in this country, which are making record profits while Canadians are struggling with food prices.

We will work with communities. We will work with individuals. We will work with the Competition Bureau to ensure that actually happens. We are continuing to be there for Canadians with initiatives like dental care, like increasing the Canada child benefit and like cutting child care costs in half across the country. We will continue to be there for people in Halifax and right—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister on our support for Ukraine. Ensuring Ukraine's victory is vital to Canada's security. Ukraine must win, otherwise Europe, the U.S. and Canada will be next in defending ourselves against Russia's aggression.

Every Ukrainian fighting today is one less Canadian who will have to fight in the future. Every dollar we spend today means millions of dollars less that we will have to spend in the future. We understand this, but Conservatives continue to vote against support for Ukraine and against support for Canada's national security.

Can the Prime Minister assure Canadians that this government will stand with the Ukrainian people until they win, until we all win?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Etobicoke Centre is right. Before the holidays, Canadians all witnessed the Leader of the Opposition forcing his caucus members to turn their backs on Ukraine. They turned their backs on fundamental Canadian principles and bowed down to the pro-Russian narrative.

I know the leader will not change his mind, but Ukrainian-Canadians across the Prairies are hoping that at least some brave Conservative MPs will do the right thing and vote with their conscience and their principles.

Let everyone in this House who stands with Ukraine stand up and be counted.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I know it is Wednesday; I know it is caucus day and I know that people are primed, but I am going to ask members to please restrain themselves so that we can hear the questions and we can hear the answers.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister has is a pro-Russia energy policy that forces Europeans to buy their energy from Russia by denying Canadians the ability to sell our own.

He prefers military equipment for Putin instead of paycheques for Canadians. He does want to export detonators and turbines to Putin, so he can pump his gas and power his landmines.

Why does the Prime Minister not stop using Ukraine as a political tool and actually do something to stand up and help win the war?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Volodymyr Zelenskyy came to the House and asked all of us to support Ukraine in its fight for freedom and its economic independence.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked us to support a renegotiation and a renewal of the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal. In this House, everyone except Conservative MPs stood up to support Volodymyr Zelenskyy—

• (1455)

The Speaker: The Prime Minister has 10 seconds left on the clock.

I am going to ask all members, and I am going to ask, in particular, the member for Dufferin—Caledon, please, to allow the answer to be heard. Not only is it important for all of us and for Canadians to hear that, but it is important for members, especially members who require translation. They cannot hear over the heckling.

Let us make sure that we have an opportunity to hear clearly the questions and the answers.

The right hon. Prime Minister has 10 seconds left on the clock.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, Ukrainian Canadians from across the Prairies are begging their MPs to please stand up for Ukraine. Will they do that in the upcoming Canada-Ukraine free trade vote?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this, like everything else, he is a fake and he is a phony.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition is a well-experienced man in Parliament. I would caution him to avoid using language like that, which could cause disruption and could be interpreted differently.

From the top, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, his carbon tax deal does not distract from the fact that he announced \$400 million in surface-to-air equipment that he has still not delivered.

What he did deliver is detonators to Putin, so that Putin could put them in landmines and blow up Ukrainians. He delivered a turbine that was refurbished in Montreal, so that Putin could put it in his pipelines to pump gas and make money off Europe that we should be bringing home to this country.

Why is it that the Prime Minister always stands up for the dirty dictators like Putin instead of the paycheques for our people?

The Speaker: Once again, I would caution all members to be very careful about how they impugn motivations to specific other members. This was the subject of a declaration that the Chair made back in October. I encourage all members to please refer to it again, to make sure that we keep on the right side of parliamentary language.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition refers to Ukraine as some “faraway foreign land”, when he continues to insist that all of his MPs, including Ukrainian Canadian MPs, vote against a free trade agreement that Volodymyr Zelenskyy is asking us to vote for, to support Ukraine, he cannot hide behind the kind of misinformation and disinformation that he regularly peddles.

It is very simple. Will the members of the Conservative Party—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: As I just made a statement to a member in this House, I will make it again. Please be—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I invite all members to be very careful about imputing motivations or associating members with governments that

we find to be disreputable, if not odious. I will ask the hon member for South Shore—St. Margarets to come and speak to me at the chair, and we will discuss this.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

● (1500)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister could not point to a single thing that I said that was untrue, because it was all factual. It is a fact that we already have an excellent trade agreement with Ukraine, that it does not include a carbon tax and that there is no need for a carbon tax to be in any free trade agreement. In fact, there never has been a need for a carbon tax in any other free trade agreement in history.

While we remember the carbon tax, the Prime Minister forgot to include in the deal a ban on his sending detonators and turbines over to Putin. Why is it that he is so determined to allow Putin to acquire weapons and money rather than having a real free trade deal with Ukraine?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the official opposition has an opportunity to correct the record of him having called Ukraine a faraway foreign land by allowing his Ukrainian Canadian MPs, at the very least, to vote in favour of the renewal of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, which is coming up for a vote in the coming days. For those who choose to stand with Ukraine, it is an opportunity to stand in this House and be counted. Why is he muzzling his Ukrainian Canadian MPs?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are 100% united in our support of Ukraine and in our opposition to the carbon tax. This is what the Prime Minister does. He divides. He wants to distract from the fact that he doubled housing costs, caused 30 homeless encampments in Halifax, and caused shootings to go up by 100% and drug overdoses to go up by 300%. It is no wonder that he would want to use fear and falsehoods to distract from his many failures, and that is exactly what he is doing.

Why will the Prime Minister not finally unite this country instead of trying to divide and conquer?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this House used to be united in its support of Ukraine and in its support of Volodymyr Zelenskyy, yet now we see—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to ask the Prime Minister to start again, and I am going to ask all members to please listen to the response without interruption so that we can have an orderly House.

The Prime Minister, from the top.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, this House used to be united in its unequivocal support for Ukraine, and then the Leader of the Opposition disparagingly referred to Ukraine as a faraway foreign land, something for which he has not yet apologized, and demanded that all his MPs, including MPs from the Prairies, where there are strong Ukrainian Canadian populations, vote against a free trade deal that Volodymyr Zelenskyy has deliberately and directly asked Canadians to support. When will he stand up for Ukraine?

* * *

[Translation]

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us talk more about CBC/Radio-Canada CEO Catherine Tait's appearance at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage yesterday. Nothing she said provided anyone with any reassurance about her vision for Quebec news and culture. She will not be reinstating the 600 jobs she cut, a disproportionate number of which were on the French-language side. At this morning's scrum, the government floated the possibility of additional financial assistance for CBC/Radio-Canada.

Will the Prime Minister commit to making any additional funding for Radio-Canada conditional on jobs being reinstated?

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this era of misinformation, disinformation and the transformation of our digital and media universe, we need a strong CBC/Radio-Canada to protect our culture, protect our democracy and tell our stories from one end of the country to the other.

We will always be there to stand up for CBC/Radio-Canada and we will try to make the necessary investments so it can continue to fulfill its mandate to inform, entertain and strengthen democracy here in Canada.

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois will support the Prime Minister provided that he offers assistance to CBC/Radio-Canada on the understanding that jobs will be maintained.

However, CBC/Radio-Canada is not the only one struggling. All of our electronic news media are asking for the same wage subsidy that the federal government is giving, and rightly so, to our newspapers. Huge cuts have been made at Bell and TVA. Weekly newspapers are losing their means of distribution, and the news black-out on Meta is hurting the entire sector.

Will the Prime Minister give all news media the same consideration that he has shown to the crown corporation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, supporting journalists and local journalism is extremely important to this government, especially in these challenging times. That is why we introduced Bill C-18, which will help our journalists operate at all levels.

We will continue to be there to defend an independent, free and professional press. We know that a lot of work remains to be done in these times of uncertainty. Unlike the Conservatives, we will be there to work with all parties interested in protecting journalism.

[English]

HOUSING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost of housing, which has doubled since he promised to lower it, but there is good news. Rent is down for the eighth consecutive month in the United States. Meanwhile, it has more than doubled under the Prime Minister. It is up 9% in the last year alone.

Can the Prime Minister explain why rent is going down in the States while it skyrockets under his leadership here at home?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the Leader of the Opposition another opportunity to apologize for referring to Ukraine disparagingly as a faraway foreign land.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the question was about rent in Canada. Rent prices have doubled after eight years under the Prime Minister. They have tripled in his home city of Montreal. Now, according to the homebuilders of Canada, they expect that construction numbers will actually plummet this year relative to prior years. They say that this will lead to higher prices, and they say we require "policy changes" to reverse it.

Will the Prime Minister finally accept a common-sense plan to build the homes so Canadians can afford the rent?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I did not hear an apology to Ukrainians. I encourage him to do that. People are waiting for it.

At the same time, I can remind this House that we have signed dozens of housing accelerator fund agreements across the country that are leading to the construction of hundreds of thousands of new homes in the coming years. We have eliminated GST from purpose-built rental apartments, and we are moving forward on an interest-free savings account for first-time homebuyers.

Again, I encourage the Leader of the Opposition to apologize for referring to Ukraine as some faraway foreign land.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it just proves what I said earlier. He is not interested in Ukraine. When I asked about rental prices, he started spreading disinformation about Ukraine. He could not care less about the war effort over there. He only cares about distracting from his failures at home.

[Translation]

One of his failures is that rents have tripled in Montreal. The builders association says that this year will be one of the worst.

Why has the price of housing gone down in the United States while it is ballooning here in Canada?

• (1510)

[English]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for well over 150 years, this House has been here to recognize the debates and follow what people have been doing. Hansard is the official record of this House. If the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that Hansard, in which he said that Ukraine is a faraway foreign land, is somehow misinformation or disinformation, then he should come right out and say so.

[Translation]

As far as housing is concerned, we continue to invest across the country, including in Quebec. Quebec is matching the \$900 million we proposed to help create housing—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Alfred-Pellan.

* * *

FINANCE

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, affordability is a major concern for all Canadians. To support them and ensure that help is available, the Minister of Finance presented the fall economic statement.

Can the Prime Minister remind the House of the important measures contained in the fall economic statement and why the House needs to adopt them quickly?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Alfred-Pellan for the question.

The Leader of the Opposition spends a lot of time talking about affordability, but we have not seen a hint of a proposal or a real plan. If the Conservative leader wants to help Canadians in a meaningful way, he can vote in favour of the fall economic statement, which cuts the GST and HST on psychotherapy, cuts the GST on the building of co-operative housing and creates a new employment insurance benefit for adoption. Either he supports Canadians by voting for the statement, or he continues to push for cuts and austerity.

* * *

HOUSING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, austerity is something Canadians are already very familiar with because rent has doubled everywhere in Canada under this Prime Minister's eight-year tenure. He promised to reduce costs, but he increased bureaucracy.

Yesterday, the builders' association reported that record low builder sentiment foreshadows troubling housing starts, underscoring the need for housing policy changes.

Oral Questions

The problem is getting worse by the year. Will the Prime Minister agree to our common-sense plan and cut red tape in order to increase housing starts?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative plan involves cutting dental care for Canadians, dental care that has already helped 400,000 children and that recently expanded to cover 400,000 seniors.

Their plan involves campaigning against cutting child care costs in half. It involves voting against our measures to provide concrete help to Canadians. Their plan offers cuts and austerity, not solutions.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the question was about rent and instead he turned and made false attacks against me. Apparently, I am living rent-free in his head.

Here is the reality. Rent is going down in the States while it is coming up in Canada. Housing costs have risen 40% faster compared with the incomes of Canadians. Canada has the worst record in the G7 and the second worst in the OECD. If the Prime Minister's plan were really working, why is it that housing costs have doubled and our housing is becoming less affordable than that in almost any developed country in the world?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am going to leave aside the question of where exactly he is living rent-free and focus on the supports we are giving to Canadians.

We are continuing to invest in meaningful ways in partnership with municipalities, with unions and building trades and with provinces across the country to solve this housing crisis that Canadians are feeling so acutely. Whether it is cutting the GST from purpose-built rentals, whether it is moving forward with the tax-free savings account for first-time homebuyers or whether it is putting \$4 billion in the pockets of municipalities across the country to increase density and cut red tape, we are taking action on housing.

• (1515)

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yes, he is taking a lot of measures to drive up the cost of housing. The cost of rent has doubled, as has the cost of a mortgage. I saw a headline today that said, "CMHC report on the rental market: Rent continues to rise at a staggering rate in Quebec".

Meanwhile, housing starts are in serious decline. Will the Prime Minister finally stop building bureaucracy so that we can start building housing?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader's housing plan mainly consists of accusing Quebec's elected representatives of being incompetent. The reality is that we are going to work with provincial and municipal elected officials in Quebec to make investments.

Orders of the Day

I also want to point out that the Government of Quebec doubled the \$900 million that we put toward accelerating the construction of housing in Quebec to ensure that municipalities can do even more to address this housing crisis. That is a real plan, not insults.

[English]

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the MP for Dufferin—Caledon applauded the housing minister for moving quickly on his file.

He said that there were new programs, new initiatives and new plans, despite the fact his own leader has obstructed every measure we brought forward to support Canadians.

Can the Prime Minister stand in support of the MP for Dufferin—Caledon and update Canadians on what new housing programs, initiatives and plans this government has announced this week?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thanks in part to the advocacy of the member for Halifax West, we announced the housing accelerator agreement of nearly \$80 million in Halifax to unlock 9,000 new homes.

While the Leader of the Opposition is picking fights with municipalities, we are working directly with them to reduce red tape and revolutionize the way homes get built in cities across the country. On this side, we are bringing forward real solutions to address housing affordability, while he spends his time attacking and insulting.

* * *

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, Nunavut athletes who earned their spot at the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska risk missing out because Service Canada does not process passports in Nunavut.

My office was helping until the government put up even more barriers.

Families are now forced to pay thousands of dollars to fly down south to get their passports expedited or not compete at all.

Can the minister ensure that Nunavut has access to the same services as the rest of Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *qujannamiik* to the member for the question. I know it is an important one for families across Nunavut. That is why we are committed to working to resolve this issue. I was just up in Nunavut for a historic announcement around devolution a few weeks ago, working directly with the premier to demonstrate how we build a stronger future together.

This is an issue that I know the minister is engaged with. We will look for solutions. We want to make sure that our young Nunavut athletes show what they are capable of at the Arctic Winter Games.

Go Canada go! Go Nunavut go!

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, in 2022, Canada sold more than \$20 million of military equipment to Israel. Last week, the ICJ ordered Israel to take steps to prevent acts of genocide.

As a signatory to the genocide convention, Canada is bound by this decision. Our own Export and Import Permits Act also forbids these sales if there is a substantial risk they could be used to violate international law.

Given Canada supports the ICJ, will the government put in place an embargo on military exports to Israel?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has one of the strongest export control regimes in the world that puts human rights and protection of human rights at the centre of all our decision-making. It has always been the case. We have been consistent in making sure that we are responsible in the way we do that and will continue to be so.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

● (1520)

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

The House resumed from December 14 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Speaker: It being 3:20, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion to concur in the first report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food.

Call in the members.

The Speaker: The question is as follows. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1535)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 615)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett

Orders of the Day

Berthold	Bezan	Boulerice	Bradford
Block	Brassard	Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Brock	Caputo	Cannings	Carr
Carrie	Chambers	Casey	Chabot
Chong	Cooper	Chagger	Chahal
Dalton	Dancho	Champagne	Champoux
Davidson	Deltell	Chatel	Chen
d'Entremont	Doherty	Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Collins (Victoria)	Cornier
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis	Coteau	Dabrusin
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Damoff	Davies
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Ferreri	Findlay	Desilets	Desjarlais
Gallant	Généreux	Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Genuis	Gladu	Diab	Dong
Godin	Goodridge	Drouin	Dubourg
Gourde	Gray	Duclos	Duguid
Hallan	Hoback	Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
Jeneroux	Kelly	El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Khanna	Kitchen	Fillmore	Fisher
Kmiec	Kram	Fonseca	Fortier
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Fortin	Fragiskatos
Kusie	Lake	Fraser	Freeland
Lantsman	Lawrence	Fry	Gaheer
Lehoux	Leslie	Gainey	Garon
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Garrison	Gaudreau
Liepert	Lloyd	Gazan	Gerretsen
Lobb	Maguire	Gill	Gould
Majumdar	Martel	Green	Guilbeault
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Hajdu	Hanley
McLean	Melillo	Hardie	Hepfner
Moore	Morantz	Holland	Housefather
Morrison	Motz	Hughes	Hussen
Muys	Nater	Hutchings	Iacono
Patzer	Paul-Hus	Idlout	Ien
Perkins	Poilievre	Jaczek	Johns
Redekopp	Reid	Jones	Jowhari
Rempel Garner	Richards	Julian	Kayabaga
Roberts	Rood	Kelloway	Khalid
Ruff	Scheer	Khera	Koutrakis
Schmale	Seeback	Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Shields	Shipley	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Small	Soroka	Lametti	Lamoureux
Steinley	Stewart	Lapointe	Larouche
Strahl	Stubbs	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Thomas	Tochor	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Tolmie	Uppal	Lemire	Lightbound
Van Popta	Vecchio	Long	Longfield
Vidal	Vien	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Viersen	Vis	MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
Vuong	Wagantall	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Warkentin	Waugh	Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Webber	Williams	Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Williamson	Zimmer — 116	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
		McGuinty	McKay
		McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
		McPherson	Mendès
		Mendicino	Miao
		Michaud	Miller
		Morrice	Morrissey
		Murray	Naqvi
		Ng	Noormohamed
		Normandin	O'Connell
		Oliphant	O'Regan
		Pauzé	Perron
		Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
		Powlowski	Qualtrough
		Rayes	Robillard
		Rodriguez	Rogers
		Romanado	Rota
		Sahota	Sajjan
		Saks	Samson
		Sarai	Savard-Tremblay

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault

Orders of the Day

Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh
Sousa
St-Onge
Tassi
Therrien
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi— 213

Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Carrie
Chabot
Chahal
Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper
Coteau
Dalton
Dancho
Davies
Deltell
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Doherty
Dowdall
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ehsassi
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Falk (Provencher)
Ferrerri
Findlay
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Garon
Gaudreau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Green
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfiner
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khanna
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Kwan
Lalonde
Lametti
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maguire

Casey
Chagger
Chambers
Champoux
Chen
Chong
Collins (Victoria)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Damoff
Davidson
DeBellefeuille
d'Entremont
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Dong
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Gallant
Garrison
Gazan
Genuis
Gill
Godin
Gould
Gray
Guilbeault
Hallan
Hardie
Hoback
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Jeneroux
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khalid
Khera
Kmiec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Majumdar

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon

Joly— 2

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[*English*]

The next question is on the main motion.

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

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

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 616*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barlow
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Berthold
Bezan
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Block
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo

Aitchison
Aldag
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerville
Brassard
Brook
Cannings
Carr

Aitchison
Aldag
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerville
Brassard
Brook
Cannings
Carr

Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Melillo
Mendicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrice
Morrisey
Murray
Naqvi
Ng
Normandin
Oliphant
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Plamondon
Powlowski
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Ruff
Saijan
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Scheer
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh
Sorbara
Sousa
Ste-Marie
St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Therrien
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Weiler
Williams
Yip
Zarrillo
Zuberi— 329

Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
McPherson
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morantz
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rota
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schieffe
Seebach
Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Soroka
Steinley
Stewart
Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

Orders of the Day

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon

July— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

● (1550)

FINANCE

The House resumed from January 29 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment of the member for Bay of Quinte to the motion to concur in the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

● (1600)

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

(Division No. 617)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Angus
Ashton
Baldinelli
Barrett
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Brassard
Cannings
Carrie
Chong
Cooper
Dancho
Davies
d'Entremont
Doherty
Dreesen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Garrison
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hallan
Hughes
Jeneroux
Julian
Khanna
Kmieć
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lake
Lawrence
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
MacGregor
Majumdar
Masse
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)

Aitchison
Allison
Arnold
Bachrach
Barlow
Barron
Bezan
Blaney
Boulerice
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Collins (Victoria)
Dalton
Davidson
Deltell
Desjarlais
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Ferrerri
Gallant
Gazan
Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Green
Hoback
Idlout
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Kwan
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Maguire
Martel
Mathysen
Mazier
McLean

Orders of the Day

McPherson	Melillo	Jowhari	Kayabaga
Moore	Morantz	Kelloway	Khalid
Morrice	Morrison	Khera	Koutrakis
Motz	Muys	Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Nater	Patzer	Lambropoulos	Lametti
Paul-Hus	Perkins	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Poillievre	Rayes	Larouche	Lattanzio
Redekopp	Reid	Lauzon	LeBlanc
Rempel Garner	Richards	Lebouthillier	Lemire
Roberts	Rood	Lightbound	Long
Ruff	Scheer	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Schmale	Seeback	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Shields	Shipley	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Singh	Small	Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
Soroka	Steinley	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Stewart	Strahl	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Stubbs	Thomas	McLeod	Mendès
Tochor	Tolmie	Mendicino	Miao
Uppal	Van Popta	Michaud	Miller
Vecchio	Vidal	Morrissey	Murray
Vien	Viersen	Naqvi	Noormohamed
Vis	Vuong	Normandin	O'Connell
Wagantall	Warkentin	Oliphant	O'Regan
Waugh	Webber	Pauzé	Perron
Williams	Williamson	Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Zarrillo	Zimmer— 144	Powlowski	Qualtrough
		Robillard	Rodriguez
		Rogers	Romanado
		Rota	Sahota
		Sajjan	Saks
		Samson	Sarai
		Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
		Schiefke	Serré
		Sgro	Shanahan
		Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
		Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
		Sinclair-Desgagné	Sorbara
		Sousa	Ste-Marie
		St-Onge	Sudds
		Tassi	Taylor Roy
		Therrien	Thompson
		Trudeau	Trudel
		Turnbull	Valdez
		Van Bynen	van Koeverden
		Vandal	Vandenbeld
		Vignola	Villemure
		Virani	Weiler
		Wilkinson	Yip
		Zahid	Zuberi— 184

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garon	Gaudreau
Gerretsen	Gill
Gould	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Ien
Jaczek	Jones

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon Joly— 2

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[*English*]

The next question is on the main motion.

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

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

● (1610)

[*Translation*]

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

(Division No. 618)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blaikie	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Boulerice
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Khanna	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kwan
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacGregor	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Masse	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
McPherson	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poileuvre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff

Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer— 175

Orders of the Day

Scheer
Seeback
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Gerretsen
Gould	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Ien
Jaczek	Jones
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty

Orders of the Day

McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Dalton	Dancho
McLeod	Mendès	Davidson	Deltell
Mendicino	Miao	d'Entremont	Doherty
Miller	Morrissey	Dowdall	Dreeshen
Murray	Naqvi	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Oliphant	O'Regan	Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski	Ferri	Findlay
Qualtrough	Robillard	Gallant	Généreux
Rodriguez	Rogers	Genuis	Gladu
Romanado	Rota	Godin	Goodridge
Sahota	Sajjan	Gourde	Gray
Saks	Samson	Hallan	Hoback
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Jeneroux	Kelly
Schiefke	Serré	Khanna	Kitchen
Sgro	Shanahan	Kmiec	Kram
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara	Kusie	Lake
Sousa	St-Onge	Lantsman	Lawrence
Sudds	Tassi	Lehoux	Leslie
Taylor Roy	Thompson	Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Trudeau	Turnbull	Liepert	Lloyd
Valdez	Van Bynen	Lobb	Maguire
van Koeverden	Vandal	Majumdar	Martel
Vandenbeld	Virani	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Weiler	Wilkinson	McLean	Melillo
Yip	Zahid	Moore	Morantz
Zuberi— 153		Morrison	Motz

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon Joly— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

• (1615)
[English]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The House resumed from January 29 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion to concur in the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The question is on the amendment. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

• (1625)
(The House divided on the amendment, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 619)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Brassard
Brock	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper

Dancho
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeshen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Maguire
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Shipley
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 116

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Angus
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr
Chabot
Chahal

Sorbara
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Aitchison
Aldag
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerice
Brassard
Brock
Cannings
Carr
Casey
Chagger
Chambers
Champoux
Chen
Chong
Collins (Victoria)
Cormier

Orders of the Day

Coteau	Dabrusin	Melillo	Mendès
Dalton	Damoff	Mendicino	Miao
Dancho	Davidson	Michaud	Miller
Davies	DeBellefeuille	Moore	Morantz
Deltell	d'Entremont	Morrice	Morrison
Desbiens	Desilets	Morrissey	Motz
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal	Murray	Muys
Dhillon	Diab	Naqvi	Nater
Doherty	Dong	Ng	Noormohamed
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Normandin	O'Connell
Drouin	Dubourg	Oliphant	O'Regan
Duclos	Duguid	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz	Pauzé	Perkins
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Ellis	Epp	Plamondon	Poilievre
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Rayes	Redekopp
Ferreri	Fillmore	Reid	Rempel Garner
Findlay	Fisher	Richards	Roberts
Fonseca	Fortier	Robillard	Rodriguez
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Rogers	Romanado
Fraser	Freeland	Rood	Rota
Fry	Gaheer	Ruff	Sahota
Gainey	Gallant	Sajjan	Saks
Garon	Garrison	Samson	Sarai
Gaudreau	Gazan	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Généreux	Genuis	Scheer	Schiefke
Gerretsen	Gill	Schmale	Seebach
Gladu	Godin	Serré	Sgro
Goodridge	Gould	Shanahan	Sheehan
Gourde	Gray	Shields	Shipley
Green	Guilbeault	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Hajdu	Hallan	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Hanley	Hardie	Singh	Small
Hepfner	Hoback	Sorbara	Soroka
Holland	Housefather	Sousa	Steinley
Hughes	Hussen	Ste-Marie	Stewart
Hutchings	Iacono	St-Onge	Strahl
Idlout	Ien	Stubbs	Sudds
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Johns	Jones	Therrien	Thomas
Jowhari	Julian	Thompson	Tochor
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Tolmie	Trudeau
Kelly	Khalid	Trudel	Turnbull
Khanna	Khera	Uppal	Valdez
Kitchen	Kmiec	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Koutrakis	Kram	Van Popta	Vandal
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Kusie	Kusmierczyk	Vidal	Vien
Kwan	Lake	Viersen	Vignola
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Villemure	Virani
Lametti	Lamoureux	Vis	Vuong
Lantsman	Lapointe	Wagantall	Warkentin
Larouche	Lattanzio	Waugh	Webber
Lauzon	Lawrence	Weiler	Wilkinson
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Williams	Williamson
Lehoux	Lemire	Yip	Zahid
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)	Zarrillo	Zimmer
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert	Zuberi — 329	
Lightbound	Lloyd		
Lobb	Long		
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)		
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)		
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Maguire	Majumdar		
Maloney	Martel		
Martinez Ferrada	Masse		
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)		
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier		
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)		
McGuinty	McKay		
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean		
McLeod	McPherson		

NAYS

PAIRED

Members

Joly— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY ACT

The House resumed from December 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-290, An Act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Conflict of Interest Act, be read the third time and passed.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-290 under Private Members' Business.

• (1650)

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

(Division No. 621)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith

Private Members' Business

Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Gray	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hallan	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Hoback	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khanna
Khera	Kitchen
Kniec	Koutrakis
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lake	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lantsman
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lawrence	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lehoux
Lemire	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Majumdar	Maloney
Martel	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Murray
Muys	Naqvi
Nater	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Poilevre	Powlowski

Private Members' Business

Qualtrough	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rood
Rota	Ruff
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Therrien
Thomas	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi— 328

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon

July— 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, Carbon Pricing; the hon. member for Spadina—Fort York, International Development; and the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, Carbon Pricing.

* * *

**PROHIBITION OF THE EXPORT OF HORSES BY AIR
FOR SLAUGHTER ACT**

The House resumed from December 14, 2023, consideration of the motion that Bill C-355, An Act to prohibit the export by air of horses for slaughter and to make related amendments to certain Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading of Bill C-355, under Private Members' Business.

• (1705)

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

(Division No. 622)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ersine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)

Private Members' Business

McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Lloyd	Lobb
McLeod	McPherson	Maguire	Majumdar
Mendès	Mendicino	Martel	Mazier
Miao	Miller	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Melillo
Morrice	Murray	Michaud	Moore
Naqvi	Ng	Morantz	Morrison
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Motz	Muys
Oliphant	O'Regan	Nater	Normandin
Petipras Taylor	Powlowski	Patzner	Paul-Hus
Qualtrough	Rayes	Pauzé	Perkins
Robillard	Rodriguez	Perron	Poillievre
Rogers	Romanado	Redekopp	Reid
Rota	Sahota	Richards	Roberts
Sajjan	Saks	Rood	Ruff
Samson	Sarai	Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Schmale	Shields
Serré	Sgro	Shipley	Simard
Shanahan	Sheehan	Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Soroka	Steinley
Singh	Sorbara	Ste-Marie	Strahl
Sousa	St-Onge	Stubbs	Therrien
Sudds	Tassi	Thomas	Tochor
Taylor Roy	Thompson	Tolmie	Trudel
Trudeau	Turnbull	Uppal	Van Popta
Valdez	Van Bynen	Vecchio	Vidal
van Koeverden	Vandal	Vien	Viersen
Vandenbeld	Virani	Vignola	Villemure
Vuong	Weiler	Vis	Wagantall
Wilkinson	Yip	Warkentin	Waugh
Zahid	Zarrillo	Williams	Williamson
Zuberi— 181		Zimmer— 137	

NAYS

Members

Aboultatif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmieciuk
Kram	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon Joly— 2

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

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

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for York South—Weston is rising on a point of order.

Hon. Ahmed Hussen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to change my vote to nay.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to change his vote to nay?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from December 15, 2023, consideration of the motion that Bill C-321, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (assaults against persons who provide health services and first responders), as reported (with amendments) from the committee, be concurred in.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-321, under Private Members' Business.

● (1720)

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

*Private Members' Business**(Division No. 623)*

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashion
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provéncher)	Fast
Ferreri	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Hoback
Holland	Housefather

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

Private Members' Business

St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Therrien
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williams
Yip
Zarrillo
Zuberi — 323

Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

Chahal
Champoux
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Davies
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Ehsassi
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Garrison
Gazan
Gill
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lemire
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Perron
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné

Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Victoria)
Coteau
Damoff
DeBellefeuille
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Gerretsen
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Larouche
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Michaud
Morrice
Murray
Ng
Normandin
Oliphant
Pauzé
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
Saks
Sara
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon

Joly — 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed from January 30 consideration of the motion that Bill S-202, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (Parliamentary Visual Artist Laureate), as reported (with amendments) from the committee, be concurred in.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in Bill S-202.

• (1730)

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

(Division No. 624)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Ali
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Bérubé
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Blois
Boulerice
Brière
Carr
Chabot

Alghabra
Anand
Angus
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Cannings
Casey
Chagger

Routine Proceedings

Sorbara	Sousa
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 210

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Brassard
Brock	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Gallant
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Lawrence	Lehoux
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson

Zimmer — 113

PAIRED

Members

Bragdon

Joly — 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 90 minutes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 23rd report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, entitled “Canada’s Sanctions Regime: Transparency, Accountability and Effectiveness.”

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

[Translation]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 57th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of the committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 57th report later this day.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if you seek it at this time, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That the membership of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be amended as follows: Ms. Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier) for Ms. Sahota (Brampton North).

● (1735)

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)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 57th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier today, be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

Routine Proceedings

FIRST RESPONDERS TAX CREDIT

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present e-petition 4701, the most-signed e-petition in Canadian history, with 387,487 signatures.

The petitioners state that they have lost confidence in the Prime Minister and that the current government is not acting in the best interest of all citizens.

The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to call for a vote of no confidence and for a federal election 45 days following the vote.

UKRAINE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from by Canadians that specifically addresses the fact that this House no longer unanimously supports Ukraine.

The petitioners call on all members of Parliament to immediately and swiftly pass Bill C-57, which is an important update to the Canada free trade—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, in all my time presenting petitions on behalf of Canadians, I have never been heckled by the Conservatives, but they are literally heckling me while I am trying to do so.

Canadians are asking that all parliamentarians immediately and swiftly pass Bill C-57, which would update the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement and assist Ukraine in rebuilding after it defeats the illegal invasion by Vladimir Putin.

I am happy to present this petition on behalf of Canadians. I am certain that many more will follow.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know employment insurance maternity and parental benefits provide parents with critical financial support while they care for and bond with their children. Adoptive and intended parents are at a disadvantage under the current EI system, whereas all parents deserve equal access to parental leave benefits.

Bill C-318 would deliver equitable access to parental leave for adoptive and intended parents. The Speaker of the House has said that the passage of Bill C-318 needs a royal recommendation. Therefore, the signatories of this petition call upon the Government of Canada to support adoptive and intended parents by providing a royal recommendation for Bill C-318.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of the amazing and hard-working volunteer fire departments in my riding, namely, those of Port Renfrew, Mesachie Lake, Honeymoon Bay, Lake Cowichan, Youbou, Sahtlam, North Cowichan, Duncan, Cowichan Bay, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Thetis Island, Malahat, Highlands and the City of Langford.

I am presenting this petition on their behalf because they recognize that volunteer firefighters account for 71% of Canada's total firefighting essential first responders. They also recognize that not only do these essential volunteers put their lives on the line and give their time, training and efforts to Canadians, but they also allow the cities and municipalities to keep property taxes lower than if paid services were required.

Therefore, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310 and enact amendments to the Income Tax Act in order to increase the amount of tax credits for volunteer firefighting and search and rescue volunteer services from \$3,000 to \$10,000.

● (1740)

OPIOIDS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to present a petition on behalf of many constituents who are deeply concerned about the opioid crisis and the unacceptably high number of deaths. It is almost unbelievable that nearly 14,000 people have had opioid-related deaths since 2016. In particular, British Columbians are very concerned. A number of the founders of Moms Stop the Harm come from British Columbia and, indeed, from my riding on Pender Island.

The petitioners call for the government to, at long last, declare a public health emergency because of overdose deaths, or poisoning deaths, in Canada; to treat this as what it is, which is a health crisis, not a criminal justice crisis; to address the crisis in a comprehensive, multi-faceted way as one that involves issues of addiction, poverty, housing, health care, racial discrimination, economic inequality and instability; and listen to the advice of many experts, who say that drugs should be decriminalized in Canada.

NATIONAL URBAN PARK

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents in Guelph to present petition e-4593, with 3,191 signatures.

This petition is calling on Parks Canada to work with appropriate landowners, stakeholders, governments and first nations, Métis and Inuit people to create a national urban park on the site of Guelph's proposed Ontario reformatory heritage conservation district.

Routine Proceedings

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting e-petition 4595, which has hundreds of signatures. The petition says that parental alienation is the process through which a child becomes estranged from one parent as a result of the psychological manipulation of another parent. Statistics show that up to 25% of parents nationwide engage in this behaviour. Based on current research, over 22 million adults have been targets of parental alienation, and 3.9 million children have been alienated from one of their parents.

The undersigned parents, fathers and mothers, call upon the Prime Minister to enact laws that would make parental alienation a form of child abuse that is punishable in a criminal court of law. By supporting this petition, the government would ensure that alienated parents' voices are heard and, most importantly, that children are removed from abusive parental care.

FIRST RESPONDERS TAX CREDIT

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by several dozen petitioners in British Columbia. They are raising concerns about the volunteer firefighter tax credit. As we know, with climate change, volunteer fire departments across the country are increasingly being called upon to intervene. That is over 70% of Canada's total firefighting essential first responders. The current tax code only gives the equivalent of just over \$2 per hour for those volunteer firefighters who give so amply of their time.

The petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310, which is in the name of my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni, and to enact amendments to subsections of the Income Tax Act, in order to increase the amount of the tax credit for volunteer firefighting and search and rescue volunteer services from the current \$3,000 to \$10,000. This will make a difference, and we certainly hope that the government will hear this petition and act accordingly.

HOUSING

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of folks who note that housing unaffordability and homelessness are twin national crises. They also note that the financialization of housing inflates Canadian real estate prices. They go on to note that corporations, a number of companies, pension funds and real estate investment trusts are rapidly buying up existing units and flipping them to market rate, renovicting folks. They call on the government to act to address these crises.

They have a number of recommendations. I will share just a few: prioritizing funding for non-profit and co-operative housing, redefining affordable housing using a formula that better reflects the economic reality of Canadians across the country, better regulating and controlling excess profiteering by corporate investors and RE-ITs, and creating national standards to establish rent and vacancy controls.

● (1745)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the armed conflict in Sudan has cost over 12,000 lives as of today.

Over three million Sudanese people are currently internally displaced persons. About one million have fled as refugees to neighbouring countries. Over 40% to 45% of the Sudanese population is on the verge of catastrophic famine, and 80% of the hospitals have been destroyed.

Canadians, including the citizens of the Nepean riding, request that the Government of Canada take a more active role and engage with United Nations agencies and other friends and allies to impose sanctions and to bring this conflict to a halt through any means possible.

They also request that the Government of Canada provide more humanitarian assistance through UN agencies and other NGOs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition on behalf of constituents for the first time in 2024.

I rise for the 28th time on behalf of the people of Swan River, Manitoba, to present a petition on the rising rate of crime. The people of Swan River are upset that the NDP-Liberal government has stood by while their community is overwhelmed by crime.

Unfortunately, the Liberals respond to the people of Swan River and their petitions with the same copy-and-paste statements, but nothing changes. Rural communities such as Swan River are demanding a tough-on-crime approach from this federal government. They are calling for jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders.

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

I support the good people of Swan River.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand at this time.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2023

The House resumed from January 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 21, 2023 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 28, 2023, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-59, an act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement and certain provisions of the 2023 budget.

The last two years have not only tested our resilience but have also set the stage for an economic transformation, one that is responsible and forward-thinking. One million more Canadians are employed now compared to when the pandemic started. This remarkable recovery is not just a number. It represents families sustaining themselves and a nation moving forward.

Our unemployment rate at 5.8% is quite low by historical standards. After peaking at 8.2% in June 2022, the inflation rate is trending downward and was at 3.4% in December 2023. Wages have consistently outpaced inflation for many months, which is a trend that speaks volumes about our economic health.

On January 24, the Bank of Canada announced it would hold the key interest rate at 5%.

Governor Tiff Macklem said:

With overall demand in the economy no longer running ahead of supply, Governing Council's discussion of monetary policy is shifting from whether our policy rate is restrictive enough to restore price stability, to how long it needs to stay at the current level.

With softer growth this year, inflation rates in most advanced economies are expected to come down slowly, reaching central bank targets in 2025. As I have been saying for a long time, we can see the possibility of interest rate reversal starting mid-2024.

At the macro level, we are on the cusp of a new era, an era defined by rapid global changes particularly in how we address climate change. Today we stand at the brink of a global economic transformation driven by the shift to a clean economy. This is not just a change; it is an unprecedented investment opportunity. The transition to renewable energy, sustainable practices and green tech-

Government Orders

nologies is reshaping markets worldwide and unlocking new avenues for economic growth and innovation.

By 2030, the global market for clean technologies is projected to exceed trillions of dollars, offering vast potential for countries and investors that are proactive in this space. This shift promises not only environmental benefits but also substantial economic gains, with millions of new jobs expected. Embracing this change means positioning ourselves at the forefront of a green economic revolution, attracting international investment and establishing global leadership in a rapidly evolving market. This is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

As we pivot toward renewable energy sources, electric vehicles and energy-efficient technologies, we are tapping into a market that is rapidly expanding globally. On renewable energy, as we look toward the next decade, the global economic potential of renewable energy is immense and transformative.

According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, renewable energy could account for around 60% of the world's power by 2030, which is up from about 25% in recent years. This shift represents an investment opportunity of up to \$10 trillion by 2050.

For Canada, the prospects are equally promising. The Canadian Renewable Energy Association predicts significant growth, with renewable energy potentially contributing up to 40% of Canada's electricity by 2030. This transition, which aligns with Canada's commitment to a net-zero economy by 2050, could stimulate billions in investment and create thousands of jobs, which would position Canada as a leader in the renewable energy sector.

• (1750)

This transition is expected to create millions of jobs worldwide, offering diverse opportunities in sectors like manufacturing, technology and services. Moreover, investing in a clean economy positions Canada as a leader in green technology, attracting global investment and fostering economic resilience.

As we embark on this journey, we are not just safeguarding our involvement but also fuelling a dynamic, future-oriented economy. Our economic plan is not just a response to this global shift but a proactive strategy to ensure that Canadian workers and businesses are not just participants but leaders in the clean economy.

Our plan is not just a blueprint; it is already yielding tangible results. In just over three years, we have initiated more than 90 clean-growth projects worth over \$40 billion, including private investments. These projects span across Canada, bringing economic growth to every region and offering quality jobs to the middle class.

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The world has taken notice of Canada's potential. The OECD ranking, which places Canada third globally for foreign direct investment in the first half of 2023, is a clear indicator of our competitive advantage. We have what it takes to thrive in the 21st century's clean economies from our rich natural resources, like critical minerals, to our competency in research and innovation, to our skilled and diverse workforce.

Our stable political and economic institutions further cement our position as a prime destination for global business. Canada's clean economy jobs plan is more than a policy. It is a commitment to leveraging our unique advantages. It is about attracting investment and creating jobs across the country, ensuring that every Canadian benefits from this economic shift.

I want to highlight a cornerstone of Canada's future: our critical minerals strategy. The demand for critical minerals, essential for low-carbon technologies, is set to skyrocket. Canada, a global leader in mining, is rich in these minerals. Our mining sector, with a presence in nearly 100 countries and a market capitalization of over \$500 billion, is not just an economic powerhouse; it is a testament to our sustainable and responsible approach to resource management. Our critical minerals strategy is more than just an economic plan. It is a vision for sustainable growth and innovation.

Canada is uniquely positioned with abundant resources in critical minerals like lithium, cobalt and nickel; elements essential for the clean energy transition. Our approach is twofold: sustainable extraction and global leadership in supply chains for technologies like electric vehicles and renewable energy. We are not just extracting minerals; we are building partnerships, ensuring environmental stewardship and creating high-quality jobs. This strategy is an integral part of Canada's commitment to a greener future and economic resilience.

We are leveraging our natural wealth responsibly, ensuring that Canada plays a pivotal role in the global low-carbon economy. One of our most ambitious goals is building Canada's electric vehicle battery supply chain. The next decade heralds a transformative era for electric vehicles, marking a significant shift in both global and Canadian economies. According to BloombergNEF, the electric vehicle market is projected to grow to 54 million vehicles globally by 2040, up from three million in 2020. This surge represents a potential market value of \$2 trillion.

In Canada, with government commitments to ban sales of new gasoline-powered cars by 2035, the electric vehicle market is expected to expand exponentially. As per Statistics Canada, the shift could generate over \$3 billion in electric vehicle sales by 2026, stimulating job creation and technological innovation.

• (1755)

This electrifying transition not only signals a green future but also an economic catalyst for sustainable growth. As the world moves toward electric vehicles, Canada is uniquely positioned to be a leader in this industry. Our skilled workforce and comprehensive supply chain, from mineral extraction to battery manufacturing, set us apart.

To support this growth, the federal government has secured significant investments in the electric vehicle and battery supply chain.

These investments, totalling over \$34 billion since 2020, are not just about economic growth, they are about securing the future for Canada's auto supply chain workers and their families.

Major projects like Volkswagen and Stellantis-LG Energy Solution in Ontario, and Northvolt in Quebec, represent a new era for Canada's electric vehicle industry.

• (1800)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the fall economic statement is a continuation of government budgets and policies from the past that reinforce the importance of Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it, and build in many support programs to assist individuals in many different ways, whether it is the Canada child benefit or the dental care benefit.

I am wondering if my colleague could provide his thoughts in regard to why it is so important that we move forward with a dental plan.

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, as government, we have taken so many measures over the last eight years and more to encourage more Canadians to participate in economic activity. For example, there is the Canada child benefit, the early learning and child care program. These help to improve women's participation in the economic workforce.

The recent dental care benefit ensures the health of many low-income Canadians and the senior citizens of our country. It contributes to the economic health of Canada.

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague spent most of his speech talking about the fact that Canada should be a world leader in building a low-carbon economy.

Unfortunately, this economic statement's proposed approach to reducing Canada's carbon emissions is very weak. Canada is the laughingstock of the G7 due to its low environmental ambitions and, worse, poor environmental performance.

The question I have for my colleague deals with housing. In the economic statement there is an entire chapter on housing, and yet it contains nothing of substance, except for the part on cutting the GST, but we know that is not going to do much to solve the housing crisis.

What can this economic statement do? When will the government understand that there is an urgency to build affordable and social housing?

[English]

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, one of the reasons I entered politics is one of the three objectives.

The first objective was affordable housing. I am so glad that our government has not only made the commitment but has actually put dollars behind that commitment. Housing is not just a federal issue. Basically, housing comes from the supply that is controlled by the city. The provinces have a very major role in housing.

Where possible and where applicable, the federal government has stepped in, backed by the funding that is available. When somebody asks me about affordable housing, I ask them, “Where is the proposal?” There is money in the bank to fund affordable housing units to be built across Canada.

Also, the federal government is sending agreements directly to the municipalities across Canada. We are providing incentives through funding to make changes at the local level that would enable an increase in the housing supply.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, related to the economic measures in this bill, it is no secret that the massive profits we are seeing in some corporate sectors and the high food price inflation Canadians are facing are directly linked. We have heard the Minister of Industry express many times in the House and out in the public that he is disappointed with grocery CEOs who have seen their profits and profit margins double since 2019.

I would just like to know when the Liberal Party is going to get serious on this, tackle the corporate greed and make sure that food prices start to go down for Canadians so they can afford to feed their families.

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, the inflation rate that peaked in June 2022 at 8.2% has come down to 3.4% as of December 2023. The grocery prices have started slowly coming down, but not to the extent that is comfortable for most Canadians. I expect that in the coming months, the general, overall inflation, including the prices at the grocery stores, will come down, and the pain being faced by Canadians will be addressed.

• (1805)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am glad to rise on behalf of the residents and businesses of Barrie—Innisfil to speak to Bill C-59, the fall economic statement.

When my four kids were growing up, there was a TV show with Barney, the purple dinosaur, and the lyrics of one of its famous songs went:

If all the raindrops were lemon drops and gumdrops
Oh, what a rain that would be!

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If we were to listen to the Liberals debating the fall economic statement, or anything to do with their economic policy, we would think that Canadians had never had it any better and that things are rosy across the land. I can tell members that, after spending the last six weeks in Barrie—Innisfil speaking to residents and businesses, things are dire right now. They are dire for many reasons for a lot of families, and I will focus on what I heard from my residents and the businesses of Barrie—Innisfil over the last six weeks. In fact, I have been hearing from them for a long time because many of the economic policies that the government has implemented have disproportionately affected Barrie—Innisfil residents and businesses in a way that many may never recover from.

The first thing I will focus on is the carbon tax. We live an hour north of Toronto and do not have access to mass transit like they do in the city of Toronto. We have a Barrie transit system and a GO transit system that gets us where we need to go for special events in Toronto, for example, or from point A to point B in Barrie. However, the difficulty for many people who live in Barrie is that they drive, so they are being impacted by the cost of the carbon tax on their gas bills as they go to work, visit family and take their kids to hockey.

In many cases, hockey does not just happen in Barrie, but all over Ontario. I know that first-hand from having two kids who played AAA hockey. My wife and I often talk about the circumstance where she would be in Belleville and I would be in Peterborough, separately, each with one of our kids playing hockey, and the impact the carbon tax would have had on us as a family at that time. We could barely afford to put our kids in hockey then. I cannot imagine what families are going through right now having to pay the carbon tax on their fuel and everything else, such as heating, whether that is residential or for a business.

I had a bill sent to me today from a local business owner, who runs a restaurant, and his carbon tax, just last month, was \$1,431. Members can assume for a second that this restaurant works off of 10% margins. They would have to sell an extra 14,000 dollars' worth of goods or services just to pay for the carbon tax. The fact is that the carbon tax is going to quadruple, so they would have to pay more. Certainly, the business would not get any of that back in a rebate.

Many families are showing me their gas bills, as I have asked them to, and they are saying the same thing, which is that they are not getting back in total what they are paying for gas, for natural gas or for groceries. They are not getting back from the carbon rebate, as the government claims, an equal amount to what they are paying in the carbon tax. In fact, the Parliamentary Budget Officer spoke about exactly that. Many more families are getting less back in the rebate than they are paying in carbon tax, and it is disproportionately affecting low-income Canadians. Many of them are in my riding of Barrie—Innisfil.

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I have, as we all have, sent out newsletters and mailers, and we have the ability to ask a question on the back of a mailer. There has been no other issue that I received more responses on than the issue of the carbon tax. The question was simple: Do you support the carbon tax?

I can say that, out of the hundreds of responses I got back from Barrie—Innisfil residents and businesses, 82.5% said that they do not support the carbon tax, 15% said they did, and 2.5% had no response. This was out of the hundreds of responses that were sent back. Also, there was an option to give comments, and here are some of the responses:

“What are they doing with the tax?” asked D.B. in Barrie. Another said, “I would be interested about what improvement our carbon tax collected has made on the climate change so far.”

● (1810)

We have already heard, through various reports, that our emissions have not been reduced significantly, save and except during COVID. That stands to reason because nobody was driving or doing anything at that time. The economy was effectively shut down.

We need to do much more to stop climate change, but I do not believe that the carbon tax in Canada is doing anything to change it.

H. H. in Innisfil wrote, “The carbon tax on home heating is unfair”, while another said, “Don't believe it effectively encourages less fuel consumption”.

D. Morrison from Barrie wrote, “The Government has no idea what goes on in the real country for the average person.” Another constituent wrote, “I pay 62% of my pension in tax. It is obvious to me that this money is not being spent in my best interest”.

Now we hear that the government, because it feels that it has a narrative problem with respect to the carbon tax, is effectively going to try to put lipstick on a pig. It is going to change that narrative. It is going to try to advertise it in a way that more people understand it.

I can tell members that people do understand. They understand when they see their gas bill, go to the grocery store and put gas in their car that the carbon tax is costing them more. When we tax the farmer who produces the food, the shipper who moves the food, the producers and wholesalers who look after the food for distribution and the grocery stores, who ends up paying more? It is the consumer. How bad is it in this country? There are two million people using food banks.

I had an opportunity last week to visit the Barrie Food Bank. It told me that its utilization was 150% greater in December than it was the December before. It is seeing people using the food bank like it has never seen before. It is multi-generational as well. Families are coming in utilizing the food bank as though it were a grocery store because they cannot afford to buy food.

I was also at the Innisfil food bank. What precipitated my visit, in addition to donating \$1,312.50 as a result of some fundraising that we did specifically for the food bank, was an email from its director, who wrote:

I finished the yearly report for the Innisfil Food Bank so am sharing some of the stats here. We have seen an overall increase of 29% over the course of the year. The majority (43%) of our visitors attended the food bank between 2 and 5 times this past year. 24% of our clients came 6-12 times/year. Our busiest months were October (our highest ever) and January (which is pretty standard). Over 55% of our people are supporting dependants.

The food bank's increase is consistent, or even less, than what we are seeing across the country, and there again is that multi-generational use. The email continues:

We are seeing an increase in multi-generational homes. This means that someone is supporting both children and parents or grandparents are supporting their own kids but also their grandkids.

This is in a G7 country where we are supposed to have abundance, where people are not just simply supposed to scrape by, but have the dignity of work, producing a paycheque and providing for their family. That is sadly not happening.

What we have seen with this fall economic statement is the government commit to another \$20 billion in spending with no fiscal guardrails. We have debt and deficit increasing like we have never seen before in this country. Interest rates are continually at a level where they become unaffordable.

The other thing I heard about was the impact of mortgage rates and how it is affecting Barrie—Innisfil homeowners.

I was doing the Salvation Army kettle in Stroud. I had a self-employed person come up to me who said their bank would not provide them with a mortgage. That person had to go to a secondary lender, not at 4% or 5%, but at 9%, and will be at risk of losing their home. Mortgages are up for renewal for 900,000 homes in this country over the next three years, and as a result of the fiscal policy of the government, many are at risk.

Conservatives are going to be focused on four things in this session of Parliament: axing the tax; building homes; making sure we help the government fix the budget, with suggestions that are going to do that; and stopping crime. There is only one alternative to govern in this country, and that is Canada's Conservatives, so we can have common sense for everyone and restore common sense and decency for people in this country.

● (1815)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to reinforce that the Conservatives used to say “triple, triple, triple”, and now they have the “four priorities” they are trying to sell Canadians on. It is the government expenditure one that really worries me. That is the hidden agenda item. We know one of the hidden agenda items is—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am going to stop the hon. member. There seem to be conversations going back and forth, and I actually heard somebody yelling as well. I ask members to please be respectful. If they want to have conversations, they should take them outside. If they want to make a comment, they should wait for questions and comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, one of the things we do know is that the Conservative Party is going to get rid of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Imagine; that is \$10 billion of government money, along with—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry; I just indicated that if individuals want to ask questions or make comments, they need to wait until the appropriate time. I am sure that if they were the ones who had the opportunity to ask a question right now, they would ask for that respect to be afforded to them.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am talking about the hidden Conservative agenda. One of the things that was leaked was to get rid of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. We are talking about billions of dollars across this country, and it would have a devastating impact in many communities. For example, in rural Manitoba, Internet hookup is actually being enhanced through the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

Could the member tell us why the Conservative Party is so determined to get rid of the Canada Infrastructure Bank?

Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, I think Canadians were sold a bill of goods with the Canada Infrastructure Bank. I do not believe it is \$10 billion; I believe it is much more than that, \$35 billion in fact. If the member wants the answer, I can give him the answer. It is \$35 billion, and I would question how many of those projects have actually been built and how much has gone towards executive bonuses.

It is no secret. The hon. parliamentary secretary makes it out to be some dark secret that we are going to cancel the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Maybe we will put in a better program, or, worse yet, maybe we will balance the budget, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition has said, with a dollar-for-dollar scenario. Every household does that. If I am going to spend a dollar here, I am going to find a dollar of savings there.

After all the consultants, all of the wasted spending and all of the corruption that has gone on with the government, I am sure we are going to be able to find many dollars to help fix the budget.

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, I respect my colleague who just made a speech, so I am going to appeal to his intelligence.

Quebec already has its cap and trade system, and it works. We know that, by 2015, Quebec had reduced its emissions by 8.8% over 1990 levels. That means it is working.

If my colleague believes, first, that climate change exists—which is not a given in his party—second, that climate change must be

fought, and third, that there are economic tools that work to lower carbon emissions, as demonstrated in Quebec, then why is he so opposed to economic tools that we know work?

[English]

Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, we are going to strongly disagree on this issue. There is no question that there will be strong disagreement between the way the Bloc feels and the ideology of the government. We happen to believe that clean Canadian energy and clean Canadian technology are the answer to reducing climate change, not just here at home but also around the world.

I happened to meet with a European Union representative whose primary focus is to source clean sources of energy. What they said to me was that Canada has become an unreliable partner in that because of ideology. We have the best environmental standards, the best human rights standards, the best labour standards and the best technology in the world to supply the world with clean Canadian energy. If we are not doing that, ideological attacks on our energy sector aside, if we are not supplying the world with clean energy, then who is supplying it? Russia, Iran, Venezuela and others are.

We are going to disagree on this. It may be an ideological thing, but the fact is that we have clean Canadian energy that could help reduce emissions not just here at home but also around the world.

• (1820)

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, one thing I never hear from the Conservatives is the importance of ensuring that the rich and CEOs are paying their fair share of taxes. This is something my NDP colleagues and I have been—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There seems to be some microphone feedback. We will try that again.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Madam Speaker, I am wondering whether the member could clarify why we are not hearing from the Conservatives on the subject of CEOs and the rich paying their fair share. Ultimately, I am not hearing a strong plan from the Conservatives. Specifically, I am wondering with the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There is some feedback again, with an echo. Let us try that again.

I will allow the hon. member to restart, and then I will allow the hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil to answer.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Madam Speaker, what are the Conservatives going to cut if they go forward with their proposed plan? What services, at a time when people are struggling, are they going to be cutting? Why are they not getting rich CEOs to pay their fair share?

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Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, I think I made it very clear in a previous answer, and Conservatives have made it clear, that we are going to do what every household does: If it looks to spend a dollar, it is going to find a dollar of savings. Think about single moms and families. What about those moms who are going to bed worried every night about keeping a roof over their head? What do people think they are doing? There is no reason the government should not be living in the same manner.

The Leader of the Opposition has made it very clear what our plan is. We know there is wastage. We are seeing it with the \$54-million arrive scam app. We are seeing it with billions of dollars being spent on consultants. Our focus is going to be on ensuring that working families have hope and opportunity for the future, not just for the next generation but also for generations to come. That is our focus. As I said earlier, we are determined and we are extremely focused on that task.

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-59, the fall economic statement implementation act, 2023.

This legislation, which would deliver on key measures from our fall economic statement, would advance our plan to make life more affordable, build more homes faster and develop a cleaner economy that works for everyone.

This is the next step in our economic plan that, since 2015, has supported people in Halifax West and across the country through the Canada child benefit, enhanced benefits and pensions for seniors, stronger public health care and a Canada-wide system of affordable early learning and child care. These investments have helped bring us to today, when we have seen a strong recovery with a million more jobs in Canada than before the pandemic, a record number of working-age women in our labour force and, just last month, wages growing at the fastest pace in three years. In fact, wage growth has outpaced inflation for 11 consecutive months now, but we are not out of the economic woods yet.

Inflation is still high, higher than where we would like it to be. Elevated prices continue to put pressure on Canadian families. I hear about that every day from my constituents.

[Translation]

Over the past year, the federal government has taken more steps to make life more affordable for people in this country who need it.

• (1825)

[English]

It is no secret that we need to do much more.

[Translation]

This bill is part of that work.

[English]

There are a number of things I can talk about that Bill C-59 would do for Canadians. It would remove the GST and HST on counselling and psychotherapy services to make mental health care more affordable. It would extend employment insurance benefits to parents who adopt, better supporting those families.

[Translation]

Right now, adoptive parents are entitled to EI parental benefits, but not to the 15 weeks of maternity benefits.

[English]

It would create new, paid leave for federally regulated workers to support families who experience pregnancy loss.

[Translation]

A truly strong economy and labour force are built upon compassion and an understanding of the difficult situations some families encounter.

[English]

Bill C-59 would also introduce new measures to further our economic plan and continue supporting a strong middle class. It would achieve that by enshrining our suite of clean investment tax credits in law, all while providing businesses with an incentive to pay a prevailing union wage. That is huge.

[Translation]

This is the first time in Canada's history that investment tax credits are contingent upon such labour requirements.

[English]

Let us bring this back to my own community in Halifax West. The two things I hear about most these days, especially since we signed our transformative health care deal with Nova Scotia, are affordability at the grocery store and the need for more housing. This bill would introduce both.

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On housing, Bill C-59 would remove the GST on new rental home construction for co-op housing, complementing the action we took in the fall and spurring new construction. Let us recall just how much we have done to increase housing supply over the last several months, because it is major. We are investing \$1 billion more in affordable units like non-profit, co-op and public housing. We are helping build 30,000 more rental units by extending \$15 billion in additional low-cost financing to builders. We are reforming the apartment construction loan program to offer low-cost loans to build more student housing on and off campus, a move that I know Dalhousie, Mount Saint Vincent and St. Mary's universities are all looking at closely.

We are launching a home design catalogue so pre-approved designs, including modulars, that can benefit Atlantic Canada specifically can be used to build more homes faster. We are funding 222 new units of public housing in Nova Scotia, the first expansion to our public housing stock in decades. We are unlocking 9,000 more units in HRM over the next decade by funding Halifax's housing action plan through our housing accelerator.

While Conservatives pick fights with elected mayors and councils, we work with them, providing the right incentives and getting major changes made so we can build homes faster in Canada. That is the way forward: collaboration.

We are going to get more homes built for Canadians, and we are also tackling the problem of high grocery prices head-on through a generational change to competition law in Canada. Bill C-59 is part of that. How is it? By amending the Competition Act and the Competition Tribunal Act, building on changes we have proposed in Bill C-56, we would help stabilize prices and improve consumer choice. This includes supporting Canadians' right to repair; further modernizing merger reviews; enhancing protections for consumers, workers and the environment, including improving the focus on worker impacts and competition analysis; empowering the commissioner of competition to review and crack down on a wide selection of anti-competitive collaborations; and broadening the reach of the law by enabling more private parties to bring cases before the Competition Tribunal and receive payment if they are successful.

I know I welcomed this week's news that the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry is calling on the Competition Bureau to use its new powers to take another look at the cost of groceries in Canada. This is how we crack down on tactics that big corporations use to raise costs for Canadians.

• (1830)

[Translation]

Is there more we need to do to act on these two top voter priorities? The answer is yes, absolutely.

[English]

On this side of the aisle, we are going to stay focused on them both, fully in solution mode.

[Translation]

All members will have the opportunity to take part in this work, and that starts by supporting Bill C-59.

[English]

Let us support the swift passage of Bill C-59, and let us keep working together on solutions to the challenges Canadians are facing at this time.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):

Madam Speaker, the member across talked about the government's investments in housing, and I am proud of the NDP's work to fight for significant investments in housing and, in particular, a focus on urban and northern housing for indigenous peoples. However, we know that the current Liberal government is failing first nations when it comes to housing, and I am talking about on-reserve housing. Some of the most acute housing crises in our country are on first nations with what many in the communities I represent refer to as third world living conditions.

If we go beyond housing, we know there is an estimated \$350-billion infrastructure gap in first nations, including the needs first nations have because of the disproportionate impacts they are facing with respect to climate change. Unfortunately, yet again, this fall economic statement is a missed opportunity for the Liberals to act on the priorities and the desperate needs of first nations on housing, on infrastructure and on climate change mitigation. I am wondering when the Liberals will finally act to make the investments on first nations that are desperately needed.

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, that is an important question. The cost of housing is top of mind for the residents in Halifax West, for renters, mortgage holders, prospective first-time buyers and of course the first nations community. In fact, I was proud to be part of an announcement in Hammonds Plains to announce the building of the Acadia First Nation indigenous shelter for women, specifically in the Hammonds Plains area. That is something this government has brought about, and that is in construction mode right now. It is something we are focused on, and we are very much engaged in that.

Again, there are many solutions we need to work on. This is not a one-solution-fits-all, and it is not one solution that is only for government. It is for all parliamentarians from all political parties. It is for different levels of provincial, municipal and federal governments and also for other stakeholders.

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Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberals like to blow the horn about their announcements regarding housing. However, the fact is that we have the lowest number of housing starts since the 1970s. People are struggling. I live in the Vancouver area, and unaffordability is just skyrocketing with respect to being able to get a home or rent a place. I wonder if the member would just agree with Conservatives that the Liberals' policy and what they are accomplishing is an unmitigated disaster.

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak again on housing.

Listen, since I have become a member of Parliament, not even two and a half years ago in September 2021, I can say that the work I have seen that this government has done on the ground in Halifax West and in the Halifax Regional Municipality has been unprecedented. People need to go to that area and see all the cranes, all the good construction and the work going on. A number of people have come to me in the last number of months since we introduced a number of changes with the accelerator fund. What we have done with the municipality and with the removal of the HST on new housing stock that is going to be built will be a game changer, I would say, across the country. It certainly is in my region and in my part of the country. I very much look forward to what the next year or year and a half will look like. I see a lot of positivism and a lot of good things coming.

• (1835)

[Translation]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened to my colleague carefully, and I commend her for her work.

There is something that she did not mention. We are going through one of the worst housing crises in 35 years. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC, told us today that Canada's vacancy rate is 1.5%. The rate has not been that low since 1988.

The budget mentions housing, but not homelessness. I would like to draw my colleague's attention to the fact that homelessness has increased in Quebec by 44% in the past five years. The housing crisis is wreaking havoc everywhere.

The Liberals' national housing strategy is not working. Today, CMHC gave us more proof of that.

I would like my colleague to tell us what her government is going to do in the next budget. Despite what we had hoped, the last economic update did not say that any funds were set aside for housing.

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague with whom I serve on the Standing Committee on Science and Research. We work together in a very collegial way.

I agree that Canada needs more housing. That is the truth. In that regard, the government is doing excellent work across the country to build more housing more quickly. I am seeing that every day where I live these days.

[English]

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, once again, I am rising in the House not only on behalf of the residents of Calgary Centre but also on behalf of Canada's finance industry and others who are lamenting the disastrous course our country is on as we dither away our national advantages.

Finding better economic solutions for Canadians is what I seek to do as a representative in the House. It is a focus. It builds on career expertise. It is part of my party's fundamental path forward to fix these budgets. However, in order to fix the budgets, the budgets have to want to be fixed, to put it lightly. Here I am again looking at a brick of legislative changes, along with a self-congratulating narrative about all the great outcomes Canada is experiencing, but not so much.

The bromides that came with the minister's speech on this latest tumble into economic irrelevance might play well for ostriches, but for anyone paying attention, there is actually very bad economic news. I do not want to spend a whole speech on the nonsense pats on the back the Minister of Finance delivers in her own performance review, but I would be remiss in not publicly rebuking at least some of the financial fiction that she uses to build a case that Canada is somehow doing well economically, all while real GDP is down and GDP per capita is down.

The minister seems to like the debt-to-GDP measure, and her target not to be exceeded over two years ago now was 40%. Although this number alone was much higher than it has been in years, that number becomes less relevant with each budget cycle that runs that ratio higher. Again in this fall economic statement, it will be up to 42.7% in the near future. That ratio, by the way, is irrelevant for anything but comparison purposes with other countries that are going broke.

The minister and her government colleagues seem to like to even change that metric so that it suits their ends and looks good comparatively. How do they do this? I am sure with ample support from a litany of bureaucrats, they add back the holdings in Canada's pension plans to their net debt numbers: the CPP, the Canada pension plan; and the QPP, the Québec pension plan. That is a total of about \$700 billion. None of that belongs to the government. It is managed at arm's length for the benefit of Canadians.

Taking a \$1.3-trillion debt, federal only, and taking away more than half that debt from the pockets of Canadian retirees is a nice trick calculation. There is always an offsetting rule in finance. If the government uses Canadians' retirement savings to offset its own debt, that leaves a liability owed to Canadians that would be unfilled. That \$700 billion is not a free pool of funds to address growing government debt. It belongs to Canadians who have contributed and who are counting on those funds for their retirement.

What we find out from Canadians very quickly is that, if they find out their governments are trying to mess with their retirement savings, they are offside. This year, the government is again increasing the amount that Canadians need to give from their paycheques to the CPP, an effective increase in a payroll tax.

This is not the only way the government is changing the availability of pensions. In this fall economic statement, the government is changing the way pensions are allowed to operate. There are a couple of very important changes to pension oversight. Pensions will now be overseen by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, or OSFI, as we call it. That is a federal regulatory body designed to ensure that Canada's banks are operating with the interests of the Canadian financial system and financial consumers in mind. Why? OSFI is overseeing a move to be the government's agency in charge of moving our country's financial system to a new norm of green finance, otherwise known as "sustainable finance".

I have seen a lot of finance in my career on both sides of transactions, investor and agent. All of these moves toward green finance and sustainable finance are just ways of altering who gets paid from whom, as in who the taxpayer is subsidizing to make money. The Minister of Finance openly states in this fall economic statement that Canada is a leader in green finance, a leader in subverting financial math, like the outcome changes if the math is just tweaked a bit.

• (1840)

There is no secret math that makes this work. There are only payers and payees; those who get the funds and those who give the funds. The government has been relentless in doling out funds for industrial strategy, but the equation does not change, and the irreversible law in finance is always "follow the money". The money flows right into the pockets of the government's friends. This needs to end. We need to fix these budgets. Our job here is to fix these budgets.

Let me give an example, because my colleagues across the way will want it, of what actual sustainable finance is. I will refer to a company in Calgary called Enbridge. It is a very good company on sustainable finance. It sets metrics for how it is actually going to perform for its investors' aims, and that allowed it to reduce its cost of capital by about 25 basis points. That means if it hit a number of metrics along the way, including DEI, which is diversity, equity and inclusion, in its board, in its makeup and in everything else the investors are looking for, the investors in that bond were willing to accept 25 basis points less than the market rate in order to be there. That is what we call sustainable finance.

Enbridge is a Canadian leader in that sustainable finance mechanism. It has nothing to do with equity. It has to do with market debt and getting a bit of a premium there, a bit of a discount to the investors, about how they can actually participate and move the needle, but those funds are few and far between. Enbridge has been very good at making sure it meets those requirements and serves that market well.

I want to talk about in this budget, as opposed to just criticisms, the Canada growth fund. It is an element, as we know, in the fall economic statement: \$15 billion new dollars. There is no organization, no way of actually saying what its mandate is, and nothing

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that compels it to do anything outside of pooling \$15 billion of funds and spending it on behalf of the government.

What will it do exactly? It will not do what the Canada Infrastructure Bank does. I heard my colleague across the way complaining about our position, that we are going to do away with the Canada Infrastructure Bank. It is not a secret; he called it a secret agenda.

It will not do what the strategic investment fund does, with billions of dollars going out to chosen industrial strategies that are accomplishing who knows what in the long run.

It will not do what the layers and layers of government support to fudge economic numbers do to push into new economic opportunities in which we have, as Canadians, no economic advantage and are following other countries that have much more expertise in this sector. Let us pretend Canada's economic advantage currently is not real and move to a fiction that we have a different economic advantage. Let us spend, so far, \$135 billion in the effort.

Let us go back to the Canada growth fund; \$7 billion of that \$15 billion is being allocated toward carbon contracts for difference, the new subsidy du jour. I do not know if any of the bodies on that side of the House even understand how that works, but let me try and explain.

Contracts for difference hail from the financial world. They help to hedge against volatile prices, e.g. for shares or commodities. The seller and the buyer agree on a strike price for a certain product at a certain time. If the agreed price is below the market price at that time, the buyer has to pay the seller the difference between the agreed price and the market price. If the market price is higher than the strike price, the opposite happens: the seller has to pay the difference to the buyer. So this instrument is a good way of alleviating [some of] the risks of investing.

Unfortunately, it has many risks associated with it as well, and those risks have been detailed in many jurisdictions. Such socialized subsidies could lead to short- and long-term distortions, reducing the effectiveness of the price signal as an operational and investment decision driver. In energy and emissions markets, market participants can already use the available short- and long-term trading patterns, but additional support for low-carbon technologies is already granted through several instruments aiming to mobilize funding.

I will reiterate that the government has numerous instruments along the way, all of which are failing Canadians and making it much more expensive to do things in Canada. What is the accomplishment? The accomplishment is moving our industries offshore and making Canada less competitive on the world stage.

• (1845)

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened attentively to the hon. member's speech and to his background in the financial sector.

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On inflation and interest rates, many people in Canada seem to think they are the responsibility or shortcomings of the federal government. Does he not appreciate that the inflation rate is a global inflation rate? All the G7 countries are experiencing that. Interest rates are high in every single G7 country. Compared to many other G7 countries, our economic growth, including the latest numbers that came out yesterday or today, in the GDP growth rate shows that we will not go into a recession but are going to manage a soft landing.

Does he not agree that Canada is doing pretty well compared to our G7 partners in all metrics of the inflation rate, the interest rates and the economic growth that we are witnessing?

Mr. Greg McLean: Madam Speaker, I do not know what economic data he is looking at. When I look at shrinking GDP in Canada, shrinking GDP per capita, shrinking GDP across the board, real GDP, I am saying that it is the worst in the world. It is the worst among our competitor countries. We actually are doing worse economically. We are trying to cover that up by bringing more people into Canada, which of course will increase our GDP, but our GDP per capita is sinking like a rock as a result.

We are not doing well economically, and it is part of the financial fiction the government keeps putting forward. It is not working well. Interest rates are high in Canada. Interest rates are high in many places. This is partly because of financially failed experiments the government continues to push toward. If it does not think the carbon tax, the carbon contracts for difference, and everything else it is throwing at the wall in order to make everything more expensive in Canada are not having their own unique effect on inflation, then it is not watching the ball. It needs to do away with all this excess tax it is putting on the backs of Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I really appreciate my colleague. I was listening to his speech and, by way of introduction, he told us how good the Conservatives are at fixing and balancing the budget. He also spoke at length about the carbon tax.

I see a real carbon tax. It is the one that all Canadians are paying to the oil industry: \$30 billion for a pipeline and \$12.5 billion to the oil industry for carbon capture and storage.

My colleague's leader often says that we have to find a dollar's worth of savings for every dollar spent. I am wondering how they will balance the budget by being so lenient with big oil.

Can my colleague enlighten us on that?

• (1850)

Mr. Greg McLean: Madam Speaker, it is interesting because the oil industry gets next to nothing in subsidies. There are many other Canadian industries that receive far more in subsidies. The electric car industry gets \$135 billion.

Who is going to pay for this? The natural resources industry is paying for it for now. It is primarily the oil industry that is paying a lot in taxes and a lot in royalties to the government. The natural resources industry is paying for the government's targets in other sectors.

We are going to be paying for this for many years, but I am not sure how much. The government is now giving \$4 million per worker to the electric vehicle industry. It is too much. We need to stop this from happening.

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have two questions for my colleague and friend. First off, Stephen Harper, in the dismal decade when he was in power, put in place a series of sweetheart tax haven treaties that the Parliamentary Budget Officer says cost us over \$30 billion a year. That is \$300 billion over the last decade. Are Conservatives prepared now to finally apologize for having gutted the federal budget in that way?

My second question is regarding all the votes we saw in December, where Conservatives voted to cut food safety, air safety, health care, affordable housing, national defence and the RCMP. There were 120 votes to slash and gut all the services Canadians depend on. Have Conservatives finally realized it was a mistake to make those proposals and to have those votes to gut all of those important Canadian programs?

Mr. Greg McLean: Madam Speaker, governments, like everything, like everybody, like every household, like every entity, need to balance their budgets. When governments get out of control and spend too much and rack up too much debt, it leads to too much interest. It leads to too much being paid for the cost of that interest, which comes out of the pockets of Canadians. This is excess funding.

Governments have to get back to a cycle whereby they are actually balancing their budgets by a five-year cycle or even year by year, but the ability to foist today's taxes onto tomorrow's taxpayers is wrong. It is going to continue to be wrong, and it is going to continue to mount under the current government. It needs to stop. We intend to stop it.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, happy new year. I appreciate the opportunity to rise today and to speak in the House on behalf of the good people of Waterloo to Bill C-56, the affordable housing and groceries act.

Since 2015, the federal government's economic plan has invested in the middle class, strengthened Canada's social safety net and worked to build an economy in which everyone has a real and fair chance at success. A key pillar of the government's plan has been a focus on making life more affordable for Canadians, because when people have the support they need to thrive, they can contribute to the economy, build a better life for themselves and their families, and play an active role in their communities.

Regardless of what the Conservative Party of Canada members say, our plan is having a positive impact on Canadians. I recognize that when Conservatives speak of Canadians, they speak of the people who are doing well financially and therefore would benefit from their typical non-refundable tax credits.

People ask, what does that mean? Conservatives are classic for their gimmicks. The people who benefit from their non-refundable tax credits are often the wealthiest. The most vulnerable do not benefit, and I have dozens of examples in the riding and region of Waterloo. They know that if they are not in the economic situation to be paying additional taxes, they do not benefit from Conservative gimmicks of non-refundable tax credits.

I have heard lots of stories and had lots of conversations. People speak about the sports credit and the textbook credit, and the list goes on. They did entertain what Conservatives had to say, and then tax time came and their financial situation did not allow them to benefit. They asked me, what is the difference? I said that the difference is really understanding the way the rules in our tax system work. When the Conservatives speak of non-refundable tax credits, they are speaking about their wealthy friends. They are speaking about the people who would benefit from their financial situation and often not the most vulnerable in our community.

Then people refer to the most recent issue that Conservatives are having. We all know Conservatives are riled up about the price on pollution, or the carbon tax, as they call it. The majority of Canadians agree that pollution should not be free, and the reality is that eight out of 10 families benefit from the climate action incentive that the Conservative Party of Canada wants to remove from Canadian purses.

The Conservatives continue on about this price on pollution, but they do not talk about the fact that 80% of Canadians, eight out of 10 families, are actually receiving more than they pay. They are concerned about the very people they will continue fighting for day in and day out. When they speak, they relate to the average person. The average person hears them, and they say, "Oh, they are talking to me." However, we all know that at the end of the day, they are not fighting for that average person. Therefore, let me repeat that 80% of Canadians receive more than they pay, and the wealthiest, who do not benefit, are the ones who would benefit from the Conservative plan on the backs of the most vulnerable.

Canadians want to undo the efforts that we have brought forward to make sure that we prioritize the environment, and I believe that the price on pollution is the reason we should continue recognizing the importance of fighting for the environment. The price on pollution is another excuse the Conservatives use as to why they have turned their backs on Ukrainians. Ukraine has had a price on pollution. Ukrainians recognize the importance of fighting for the environment. They know that the environment does not see borders, yet the Conservatives will take any opportunity for partisan gain.

When we have a world and a country where there are many people with a diversity of opinions, we need to recognize the importance of why we are here.

● (1855)

I think about why I ran in 2015. I ran in 2015 because of the government of the day under the leadership of Stephen Harper. Because I did not vote for his government, I was told that my voice did not matter, and I did not have a say. I remind Conservatives and I remind all Canadians that when people sacrificed their lives and fought for our rights and freedoms, they fought for our rights and freedoms regardless of whether they agreed with us or not.

Private Members' Business

Tough conversations are tough. Governing is tough. Every member of Parliament in this House has a really important role to play, and I recognize the value of it. Listening to people who are like-minded and who agree with us is really simple. Reaching out and listening to opinions and perspectives that do not match our own is tough, and that is something that I will continue to do in the riding of Waterloo.

When I ran in 2015, I committed to my constituents that I would represent their voices in Ottawa. I promised them and I reassured them that, regardless of my personal opinion, as their member of Parliament, their voices would be heard in this chamber, and I will continue to ensure that this is the case.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.) moved that Bill C-347, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (oath of office), be now read a second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to introduce my bill, Bill C-347. This bill proposes to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 regarding the oath to the monarch.

For Canadians who are listening, this bill is simply and more specifically intended to add an option for members elected to the House of Commons and all senators appointed to the Senate when they take their oath.

[*English*]

Let me reassure my colleagues here that Bill C-347 is not about whether or not someone is a monarchist or a republican; it is not about eliminating the monarchy in Canada. Even before I introduced this bill at first reading this past June, I made sure that we did not have to create a constitutional storm in this country in order to make this small but meaningful change.

It is simply about adding a second option to the oath of office that parliamentarians and senators are obliged to take before they take their seat and exercise their functions. That is all.

To those who think this is too complicated, I intend to demonstrate that the oath has never been static in Canada and has evolved over time.

[*Translation*]

Allow me to delve into the origins of the oath, which comes to us directly from the English Parliament. For transparency's sake, the historical overview I am about to share comes straight out of our very own manual, our bible, as it were, the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, 2017, by Bosc and Gagnon.

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For starters, such an oath did not exist in England until the 16th century. The oath arose as a result of the political and religious conflicts in England, in particular the separation of the Church of England and the struggle between Protestants and Catholics for power. That is the actual origin of the oath to the monarch. In response to these religious conflicts, England adopted the Act of Supremacy in 1563.

That was during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Her Act of Supremacy required elected members to swear an oath to the sovereign attesting that she held supreme power in the realm in both ecclesiastical and temporal matters. The oath was primarily directed at preventing Roman Catholics from holding public office.

In 1678, England added to this oath a declaration against transubstantiation to prevent Roman Catholics from sitting in Parliament. In 1701, the Jacobites tried to restore Catholicism in England. By all accounts, this did not please the Protestants at the time since they immediately brought in three oaths. I am talking about the Jacobites here because I am referring to James II, who I will talk about later.

I was saying that following this religious war, three new oaths were devised. There was the oath of allegiance to the monarch of England; the oath of supremacy, denouncing Catholicism and papal authority; and the oath of abjuration, which repudiated all rights of James II, a Catholic, and his descendants to the English throne.

● (1905)

[English]

Without going too deeply into historical weeds, Catholics were basically required to swear an oath to the monarch and denounce their own religion and papal authority. Since the oath of abjuration also had to be taken in the name of the Christian faith, it also prevented Jews from taking the oath.

I will spare members the genesis of what would eventually become the Canada of today. Suffice it to say that Nova Scotia was the province that had its first popular assembly elected in 1758. It agreed to adopt the same oath as that of England, thus preventing Catholics and Jews from voting or running for office.

[Translation]

Incidentally, it is through the oath of allegiance to the sovereign that England still bears, and always will bear, the shame of the heinous deportation of the Acadians, ancestors of mine and of many colleagues who sit here in this Parliament. It was a sad chapter in our history. England tried to deport an entire people and exterminate those who wanted to stay in Acadia.

Over the course of our pre-Confederation history, the oath of allegiance to the sovereign evolved in much the same way in each province. The objective was always to prevent Catholics and Jews from voting or entering prestigious occupations as lawyers, judges, mayors, government officials and so on.

However, the way that the oath was administered in each province before Confederation varied. One by one, between 1820 and 1850, the provinces relaxed the terms of the oath to finally allow Catholics to vote and run for election. These changes came later for Jews, between 1832 and 1846.

Then came the Canadian Confederation, on July 1, 1867, the same day that our Constitution Act took effect. Section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867 reads as follows:

Every Member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada shall before taking his Seat therein take and subscribe before the Governor General...the Oath of Allegiance contained in the Fifth Schedule to this Act;

Section 128 refers us to the fifth schedule, which reads as follows:

I A.B. do swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

Obviously, there is a note that tells us that the name of the monarch can change over time.

That is where the requirement for members of Parliament and senators to take the oath originates. I will not get into talking about the legislative amendments that were made to ensure that the name of the monarch changes to reflect the events of the time, but in this year of Canadian Confederation, members and senators still have to swear allegiance to the head of the Protestant Church, which still continues to offend the conscience of Canadians of other faiths, including French-speaking Catholics and Irish Catholics, among others.

[English]

If I am telling members about this history of the oath over time, it is to show it has never been static and that, on the contrary, it has adapted to the realities of the time and to the sensitivity of our society to make our country a place where everyone feels at home, notwithstanding his allegiances or profession of faith.

[Translation]

Following the Constitution Act, 1867, Canadian society continued to evolve, and the oath that members of Parliament and senators have been required to take since 1905 is no longer exactly mandatory as set out in our Constitution. I am sure most members are unaware of the fact that we can now make a solemn affirmation instead, without any constitutional amendment required. Instead of taking an oath to the Queen, we can make a solemn affirmation, which is what I did each of the three times I was elected. However, the 1867 Constitution has not yet been amended. How did that happen?

It is thanks to a 1905 law, which did not amend the Constitution and seems to have been unanimously approved, without any objections.

● (1910)

It occurred by royal instruction in the form provided by An Act to amend the law in relation to Promissory Notes, which was passed in England in the 31st and 32nd years of the reign of Queen Victoria.

The takeaway here is that, since 1905, our Parliament has never questioned the fact that, without a constitutional amendment, MPs and senators had the option to take an oath of allegiance to the monarch, as set out in the Constitution, or to make a solemn affirmation. This is the case even though section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and its fifth schedule have never changed and still refer to an oath of allegiance to the monarch.

More recently, in 2022, members of the 43rd legislature of the National Assembly of Quebec unilaterally amended section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867, to exempt Quebec MNAs from the requirement to swear an oath of allegiance to the monarch once elected. This is another sign that our society continues to evolve and become more inclusive for elected members in this country.

[English]

It is in this spirit of continuum, inclusiveness and, above all, as a proud Canadian that I propose to officially modify, with the flavour of the 21st century, section 128 of the Constitution Acts, 1867 and its fifth schedule.

[Translation]

My Bill C-347 would, for the first time in our history, allow MPs and senators to swear an oath of office that would be added to the fifth schedule. The oath would be as follows: “I, A.B., do swear that I will carry out my duties in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution.”

[English]

I will repeat it in English. This addition to the fifth schedule of the Constitution Act would read as follows: “I, A.B., do swear that I will carry out my duties in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution.”

● (1915)

[Translation]

Section 128 as we know it would remain unchanged but would become subsection 128(1), and subsection 128(2) would be added. It seems like section 128 has been lonely since 1867, so we are giving it a brother or sister that would say, “Notwithstanding subsection (1), every Member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada may take and subscribe the Oath of Office contained in the Fifth Schedule to this Act instead of the Oath of Allegiance or may take and subscribe both.”

What could be more inclusive for our future MPs or senators than to let them decide, before they fulfill their noble duty, whether or not to swear an oath of allegiance to the monarch, based on their choice, their conscience, their religion or their ethnic origin? At the same time, they could subscribe to an oath of office. For the first time in our history, when members arrive here, they would be able to take an oath of office, committing to work in the best interest of our country and in accordance with the Constitution.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, before introducing this bill at first reading, I made sure that we would not cause a constitutional storm in this country or have to seek the approval of every legislature in Canada, of Parliament and the Senate to make this change. We are able to do this through section 44 of our Constitution Act, 1982.

Private Members' Business

Section 44 states:

Subject to sections 41 and 42, Parliament may exclusively make laws amending the Constitution of Canada in relation to the executive government of Canada or the Senate and House of Commons.

On that note, I will end my speech and answer any questions.

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I must admit that I really enjoyed my colleague's speech. I liked the fact that he drew from history to support his argument.

It will come as no surprise to anyone that the Bloc Québécois is by no means opposed to eliminating the obligation to swear an oath to the British monarch. I have immense respect for my colleague's reasons for introducing this bill. Given his Acadian ancestry, it is entirely understandable that he is no less averse to swearing an oath to the monarch than we Quebec separatists are.

I was not entirely comfortable, however, with his proposed amendment concerning the best interest of Canada. I think it could be open to different interpretations. As far as the Bloc Québécois is concerned, for example, the best interest of Canada would be to become an excellent neighbour of Quebec, as two separate countries.

I wonder if my colleague would agree that, instead of swearing an oath in the best interest of Canada, we should be swearing an oath to the people in our ridings.

Mr. René Arseneault: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

The purpose of the oath is to give any future newly elected members of the House of Commons and newly appointed senators an option that respects all faiths, all historical baggage and all origins.

I also think that there is something very true and unequivocal about saying “in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution” when people come to serve here in Parliament, our country's centre of democracy.

I understand where the Bloc Québécois member is coming from and why he has reservations, but the fact that the Bloc Québécois is able to serve in this Parliament today is because of our Constitution, and that is why he should be happy to support this bill.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the very detailed history lesson that he gave about the oath of allegiance. I would have liked to hear even more about that.

I would say that section 128 of our Constitution needs a twin, rather than a son, a godfather or a sister. It needs a twin section. I like the way he approached this subject.

Could my colleague give us some examples of what is being done in other provinces in terms of oaths? Has he looked carefully at what the other provinces and territories are doing with regard to oaths or solemn affirmations?

Private Members' Business

Mr. René Arseneault: Madam Speaker, my colleague has asked an excellent question.

My thoughts turn to section 44 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Instead of opening up the Constitution and stirring up a storm, section 44 allows for constitutional amendments that affect only Parliament, the Senate or the executive branch.

I did not explore what the member asked about, but I can say that, as a lawyer at the New Brunswick Bar, I think I was the first in the country to be admitted to the bar without taking an oath to the Queen. It has been done. The world did not stop spinning in 1993. The preference was to leave the option open to everyone, and I know that law societies in Canada have made adjustments accordingly since 1993.

I am sorry I cannot answer the question, but this bill concerns the Parliament of Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on the excellent idea to provide parliamentarians the option of swearing allegiance to the monarch of a different country, which I think it should be said, or swearing to uphold the Constitution. I think it is responsive to the realities of today.

My question to the member is with respect to indigenous people. Indigenous people have, of course, a nation-to-nation relationship with the Crown. I wonder if the member could explain how he believes the bill would further respect for indigenous nations when indigenous people elected to the House of Commons, and we have several in the House, have to swear allegiance to a monarch, which indicates a subservience as opposed to a true nation-to-nation relationship.

• (1920)

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Arseneault: Madam Speaker, that too is an excellent question from my colleague.

Indeed, in order to respect the sensibilities, historical background, traditions and faiths of each and every person who is elected to this chamber or appointed to the Senate, I think that, to repeat what former justice minister David Lametti said to me yesterday, this bill is an elegant and practical way to resolve this problem.

Mr. Martin Champoux: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

When my NDP colleague rose to ask his question, he dropped some papers in front of him, probably without giving it much thought. I would like to remind my colleague that the little black circle at the front of our desk is a microphone and that the sounds we hear sound much louder to the interpreters. It is just a reminder.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I thank the member. I noticed that too. I did not want to intervene because it is something that happened and then was resolved immediately.

I think that this is very important. Earlier today, a member had his earpiece too close to the microphone. I would like to remind everyone that if they have papers, files or earpieces, they should keep

them clear of the microphones and make sure they do not touch the microphones.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to address Bill C-347, an act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 regarding the oath of office. The bill would, as its proposer said a moment ago, if enacted, amend section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867 to allow individuals who have been elected to the House of Commons or appointed to the Senate to select between three different oaths of office.

The first option would be, “I ... do swear that I will carry out my duties in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution”; the second option would be the oath of office that has been required since Confederation, which is, as the member noted, “I ... do swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to [His Majesty King Charles III]”; and the third option would be to take both oaths.

I have personal views on this subject, but I am going to put them on hold, because I think it is important to address the constitutional technicality of how the bill is being proposed.

Let me start by observing that a version of the current oath is contained in the fifth schedule to the Constitution Act, 1867, where it is written as follows: “I A.B. do swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.” The following wording is also contained in the fifth schedule: “The Name of the King or Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland for the Time being is to be substituted from Time to Time, with proper Terms of Reference thereto.”

The fifth schedule is referenced in section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867, which declares, “Every Member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada shall before taking his Seat therein take and subscribe before the Governor General or some Person authorized by him ... the Oath of Allegiance contained in the Fifth Schedule to this Act”.

The next legal technicality to remember is that the Constitution Act, 1867 is a part of the Constitution of Canada, and therefore any change to the act, including a change to section 128, to the fifth schedule or to both can only be made if it conforms to the amending formulae that govern how such constitutional amendments can be made. These amending formulae are contained in sections 38 to 49 of the Constitution Act, 1982. There are five different amending formulae.

The most restrictive amending formula applies to a narrow list of subjects that can be amended only by means of identical resolutions adopted in Parliament and in the legislatures of all the provinces. A second formula provides that in other cases the Constitution can be amended by means of identical resolutions adopted in Parliament and in the legislatures of at least seven provinces with at least, together, half the population of the country. A third formula provides that in the case of amendments that affect some provinces but not others, the Constitution may be amended by means of identical resolutions in Parliament and in the legislatures of the affected provinces, but not in the rest of the provinces.

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A fourth formula is of particular interest. Section 44 of the Constitution Act, 1982 states, "Subject to sections 41 and 42, Parliament may exclusively make laws amending the Constitution of Canada in relation to the executive government of Canada or the Senate and House of Commons." Finally, section 45 provides for the legislatures of each province to have the ability to "exclusively make laws amending the constitution of the province."

Although the assertion is nowhere made in Bill C-347, it is clear that a claim is implicitly being made that this amendment to the Constitution would be made under the authority of the section 44 amending formula, as the oath of office is, in essence, asserted to be an aspect of the Constitution in relation to the House of Commons and Senate of Canada, which, as we will recall, was specifically referenced in section 44. Thus, the claim is being made that the oath can be altered by means of a simple act of Parliament.

I can certainly understand why this is being asserted, but I am not certain that this assertion is accurate. I note that a similar claim was made only a little over a year ago, when on December 9, 2022, the National Assembly of Quebec enacted a bill that abolished the traditional oath of allegiance to the monarch, the wording of which was identical to the oath for MPs and senators. As with the federal oath, the oath for provincial legislatures is mandated in section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and is spelled out in the fifth schedule to the act. The Quebec law replaced this with something very similar to the federal oath proposed in Bill C-347: "I, (name of the Member), declare under oath that I will be loyal to the people of Québec and that I will perform the duties of Member honestly and justly in conformity with the constitution of Québec."

This was not an uncontroversial bill. Constitutional experts lined up on either side of a dispute as to whether or not the Quebec legislature could, under authority of section 45 of the Constitution Act, 1982, unilaterally amend the oath of office. Some experts said yes, some said "no, you cannot actually do that without resorting to one of the other amending formula" that require broader consent.

• (1925)

I note that in favour of Quebec having acted constitutionally, we see that, in the literature I was able to consult, Leonid Sirota, Patrick Taillon and Frédéric Bérard all think this was constitutionally warranted. Ian Peach, Emmett McFarlane, André Binette, Yan Campagnolo, Errol Mendes, Steve Chaplin and James Bowden feel differently. They think this was not, in fact, constitutionally done.

I recognize that the issues in the Quebec bill and Bill C-347 are not identical. They refer to similar but not identical sections of the Constitution Act, 1982. Nonetheless, they are obviously very similar, and it would be reasonable, in advance of approving this bill at third reading, for some of the experts who weighed in on Quebec's legislation, both for and against, to be invited to testify in committee on Bill C-347.

In the event that the resulting expert testimony does not produce a consensus that it is permissible to make such a change under authority of the unilateral section 44 amending formula, it might make sense to take the additional precaution of submitting a reference question to the Supreme Court of Canada. A reference question is a seeking out of an advisory opinion from the court as to whether a proposed law is in fact constitutionally permissible.

This would not be the first time that a government of the day has sought an advisory opinion from the court as to which amending formula is appropriate to use in this or that circumstance. For example, in 2014, when the government of the day was considering changing the Constitution with regard to how senators are selected, the Supreme Court ruled that in respect of some of the changes that were being proposed, the unilateral section 44 formula would work and in other cases, the formula that requires the consent of seven provinces would be required.

At that time, to be honest, I did not agree with all of the opinions offered by the court in its ruling, but that is not the point. The value of having a Supreme Court is not that the court is always right, it is that the court's opinion is always final. Having rules that are of indisputable authority is the key attribute of the rule of law.

To be sure, it may well be the case that all of this is only of technical importance. One could point out, quite accurately, the fact that some members of Quebec's National Assembly, right now, have been sworn in on the basis of an oath that may have been unconstitutionally adopted but that this does not keep them from carrying out their duties as MNAs and that nobody doubts they are legitimate officeholders. This would, presumably, also be true of MPs swearing the oath that is described in Bill C-347. That these MPs would be legitimate officeholders would remain true even if, at some future date after they are sworn in, the Supreme Court were to rule that Bill C-347 had been enacted by means of the wrong amending formula and therefore their oaths of office had been invalid all along.

How do I know this? Well, I know it because a version of this exact problem actually arose, once upon a time. In 1875, an embarrassed House of Commons discovered that George Turner Orton had been sitting for some time as the member for Wellington Centre, despite having never sworn the oath of office. According to the relevant footnote in the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* manual, Mr. Orton explained "that, because he had already sworn the oath, he did not realize that he had to be sworn in again upon his re-election."

The matter was submitted to a committee, and on March 8, 1875, the committee noted:

that, since neither the Constitution Act, 1867,...nor any other statute provided a penalty in the event a Member omitted to take and subscribe the oath, the Member's seat was not affected by the oversight. However, the Committee recommended that the votes taken by the Member before he took the oath be struck from the records.

I think life would probably go on as before, even if Bill C-347 were enacted and subsequently found to be invalid because it had been enacted in the wrong manner, and even if the oaths of some sitting MPs were thereby found to be likewise invalid.

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Canadians are sensible people and we are good at finding ways out of absurd legal conundrums, as we did in 1984 when the Supreme Court found that all laws passed in the Manitoba legislature in English only, for a full century, were invalid and that therefore it was necessary to re-enact them all in a bilingual format. Rather than simply saying there are no laws here, the proposal was made to allow for a staged reformulation of those laws and re-enactment of those laws.

• (1930)

There is a way out of this, but it would be best to actually find out what the law requires of us, what the Constitution requires, and for that reason, I will be urging all of us, if this gets through second reading, to make sure we get a clear indication of the legal authorities prior to going to third reading as to whether this is valid.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, what is the point of the monarchy? *Qu'ossa donne?*

I want to apologize to the interpreters. I doubt it is easy to translate those words from Yvon Deschamps, but, in all honesty, that pretty much sums up my thoughts.

In 2024, Canada's head of state is a king. In 2024, Canada's King is represented by the Governor General. In 2024, Canada has lieutenant governors. In 2024, new Canadian citizens must swear allegiance to His Majesty. In 2024, Canada has colonial institutions. Elected officials must swear allegiance to the King, except in Quebec.

Thanks to the stubbornness, determination and insubordination of Parti Québécois MNAs, the members of Quebec's National Assembly, elected by the people, no longer have to swear an oath to the King of England in order to take their seats. It was about time. It has been a year already.

The Canadian monarchy has existed since France took possession of the St. Lawrence lowlands in the name of King Francis I in 1534. It is now 2024. That was 490 years ago. The only thing that has changed since then is that, instead of swearing allegiance to the King of France, we now have to swear allegiance to the King of England. We are still talking about the same archaic system based on unequal, hereditary privileges.

Should we be proud of that? Should we be proud of an aristocratic system based on privilege, a system that classes citizens based on their birth? That does not make me proud. It does not make sense that this is still how the head of state is chosen in 2024. I cannot understand why this country celebrates and wants to continue with a system from the Middle Ages.

What we want—what we are fighting for—is greater equality, greater justice and an opportunity for people to rid themselves of the shackles of the past. Meanwhile, we still have a foreign head of state who holds office not because of merit, effort, competence or democratic choice. No, Canada's head of state is a man who was born lucky. That is the only reason we still give him special treatment. He will be on our stamps and our currency. Places and build-

ings will be named in his honour, even though, at the end of the day, what has he done besides being born?

As I said off the top, “*qu'ossa donne?*” What is the point of the monarchy? There is not much point at all, to be honest. It is fun when they come to Ottawa with the horses, the army, the carriages and all that jazz, but that is really just for show and a total waste of money, as I saw for myself last year. I was part of a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association mission, and His Majesty Charles III received us at Westminster Abbey. What the heck was a Bloc member doing there? It might have been good fodder for online platforms, but that is all.

Last year, I surveyed people in my riding about being part of a monarchy. My constituency office was flooded with responses from people in Laurentides—Labelle. It was incredible. People are dead set against it. I was really surprised, not to see that people are against it, but to see that this topic mobilized so many people in my riding. People no longer want it. As I see it, the monarchy serves very little purpose, except to mobilize people against it, as we are seeing tonight.

In a democracy, the power of elected representatives comes from the people, the citizens who vote for their representatives. Therefore, as elected officials, it is from these citizens that we derive our legitimacy.

• (1935)

In a democracy, elected officials serve the people, not His Majesty and not a colonialist, paternalistic and downright anti-democratic system.

In Bill C-347, the new oath would read as follows:

I, A. B., do swear that I will carry out my duties in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution.

This makes far more sense than swearing allegiance to a foreign monarch. Members of Parliament and senators could swear an oath to Canada and its Constitution. We also have to keep in mind that Quebec has still not signed the Constitution. A change like this would be a significant democratic improvement. We in the Bloc Québécois oppose all expressions of such an archaic system of government as monarchism and its underlying philosophy.

I mentioned earlier that I belong to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which is a genuine forum for nation-to-nation dialogue. Do my colleagues know how many Commonwealth countries are now republics that left the archaic monarchy behind? That would be 37 countries that are now republics and members of the Commonwealth. In other words, 66% of member states deliberately and democratically decided to sever ties with the British monarchy.

Madam Speaker, there is a loud noise, but I will try to focus and continue with my speech.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Could we ask the people in charge of security in the galleries to check whether the microphones are turned off? There seems to be a sound coming from the earpieces in the galleries.

● (1940)

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The newest, most recent republic is Barbados. It became a republic on November 30, 2021, so it is not too late to abandon this system, just like it is not too late for Quebec to become independent.

Quebec's independence would mean the creation of the Quebec republic. I have been speaking about Canada for the past little while and so I want to talk about Quebec, and I am proud to do so. The Quebec republic would be a system of government in which the people would be sovereign. It would be born from the will of its people to emancipate themselves from an archaic, colonial system. The Quebec republic would be founded on democratic principles, principles that are respectful of democracy and the people. Those are the principles that would underpin its legitimacy. The Quebec republic would not have an unelected Senate. The head of state would not be a symbol of the past or a citizen of another country. The Quebec republic is the only way for us to leave the monarchy.

Canada will never be able to sever its ties with its colonial past. Canada was not born of the will of the people. It was born of the will of a handful of men who decided the will and destiny of this land without consulting the people. Canada is a country that, since 1867, has been founded on guiding principles that do not take into account the will of the people.

When Quebec becomes independent, it will not trample on the people. Independence will be achieved by and with the people.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking our colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche for introducing this private member's bill.

Generally speaking, convention dictates that one should begin with compliments and then move on to criticisms. However, I am going to do the opposite. I am going to share my criticisms first and then my compliments.

I would like to say that this is an extremely interesting bill. However, I am somewhat uncomfortable with it, because it is a bill about us. I am not a big fan of that. I would rather debate a bill about people struggling to pay the rent and buy groceries, or about climate change, our children's future or education. This bill is focused on us, so it is not one of my favourite bills. That said, it touches on a crucial issue. That ends my criticism.

This is a crucial issue because it is kind of about who we are as an institution, as a people, as a democracy. This is an opportunity to look at how we can improve things, update and modernize ourselves. The idea is to give people who represent the Quebec nation, the Acadian nation, first nations and the Inuit nation, along with all the different people who come from different places around the world, whether they have been here for several generations or for just a short time, a chance to feel comfortable here, not trapped by archaic practices and outdated institutions that harken back to another time.

I am speaking on my own behalf because, today, the NDP caucus has decided that people can vote as they see fit on this issue. We

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believe that every member should be able to vote freely in accordance with their beliefs and their conscience, with how they see things, in whatever way they feel comfortable, whether they agree or disagree. I think it shows freedom and maturity on our part to be able to have frank and healthy discussions while airing what may be differing opinions.

I will therefore speak for myself. It is no secret and no surprise that I am not a fan of the monarchy. To me, swearing an oath to a sovereign, a monarch who, in theory, holds power by the will of God, is something out of the Middle Ages. The fact that it is the monarch of another country does not make it any better, nor any worse. If it were a monarch from Quebec, that would not be any better in my eyes. To me, the idea of inheriting such a title is completely at odds with democratic values. As the French revolutionaries said, men are born free and equal in rights. They did not mention women at the time, but that was in 1789. If what they said is true, then the idea that someone can benefit from such power through a stroke of fate that caused him to be born into that family makes no sense.

I want to point out right away that I am not a fan of New Labour. However, I remember when Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, did away with hereditary seats in the House of Lords. One British lord said that that made perfect sense because he did not see why he should inherit the title of lord, the equivalent of a senator in Canada, just because one of his ancestors had parted with the king. That is what it boiled down to. Friends of the king were appointed and were given the aristocratic titles of duke, baron or whatever it was, making them lords. Four hundred years later, that individual, who was in his early thirties or thereabouts, said that it did not make any sense for him to sit in Great Britain's upper chamber simply because he had inherited a title.

It is much the same thing with the monarchy. It goes against our democratic values.

● (1945)

I for one am very pleased that we are starting off the discussion, as the member for Madawaska—Restigouche very sensibly did, by saying that if some people want to keep swearing an oath to a monarch, they can go right ahead, but now they would have an alternative. They would have the option of swearing an oath to the Constitution, in this case, or maybe to the people or constituents or an institution. I think that is a good thing. I think it is entirely appropriate.

It is true that some colleagues in the National Assembly did the work and got the rules changed. I congratulate them and applaud their efforts. Maybe here in Ottawa, we could adjust the clock to 2024, or 1789, and stop the completely outdated and obsolete practice of swearing oaths to a sovereign, a monarch, a king or a queen. If we are true democrats, it seems obvious to me that we should swear an oath to the people, to constituents and to the Constitution. I think that my Liberal Party colleague brought this forward very skilfully. I thank him and congratulate him. I hope that all parliamentarians in this House will pass this bill.

Private Members' Business

There is something deeply offensive and profoundly unjust about the very system of the monarchy, a caste that awards itself privileges, rights, powers and absolutely staggering wealth on the backs of the working men and women. It goes against all democratic principles. If it were a meritocracy, if they at least had to work to achieve that status, that would be something else entirely.

At least the people here have worked to become a member of Parliament, Leader of the Opposition, minister or Prime Minister. What is more, we are held accountable every four years, or sometimes every two. We have to go back to our constituents and ask them if they will again give us a mandate to represent them. We must ask them if we did our job well, if we defended them well, if we voted in accordance with their values and principles. Monarchy is not like that at all. People are born into it, and it is theirs for life. It continues in perpetuity.

As a member of Parliament, it would be nice to have this option. I hope the bill passes. If I am re-elected to the House, I will be able to take advantage of the option that is presented to me.

I would like to say a few words about meritocracy because I talked about monarchy and democracy. We have to recognize that even meritocracy has its issues. Yes, we all worked very hard to be here, as did the people who lead us, but we must not forget that there are very few labourers in parliaments in western democracies. There are not many PSWs or plumbers. There are not many people who work with their hands or do manual labour because meritocracies have their own illusions, too. Generally, people born into families of means that also possess social and cultural capital, relationships, networks and contacts will have easier access to education, to good schools and to the opportunity to use their words to debate and present ideas. Clearly, even a meritocracy has its flaws.

I studied sociology, and I want to call my colleagues' attention to the magnum opus of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, which is entitled *The Inheritors*. It describes the French education system as a system that reproduces class dominance, with the dominant class consisting of people who are already in power, who already have access to knowledge and culture and who already have contacts in the right networks to be able to push and get people into the circles of power.

We must not be fooled. As a good socialist, I have a vision that includes working to prevent social reproduction in order to achieve true equality, not an illusion of equality that is merely theoretical, because inequality of various types of capital, as Pierre Bourdieu explained so well, does in fact still exist today.

I thank the member for his bill, because it gives us a chance to have this debate and to talk about Pierre Bourdieu in Canada's Parliament.

• (1950)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I wanted to raise a point of order at the earliest possible opportunity regarding the response I received to Question No. 2155, if you would allow me to briefly explain my concern about its accuracy and completeness.

My question was respecting development assistance projects in Israel and Palestinian territories and projects aimed at supporting Palestinian refugees in other countries. I asked for information about all projects since 2016. That includes all the organizations involved in delivering a project, with the clear implication of both implementing and sub-implementing partners. The initial response describes the fact that there are implementing and sub-implementing partners, which are screened. It says that all funding goes through trusted partner organizations.

Subsequently, in reviewing the list of projects, I found that none of the projects mentioned identify sub-implementing partners. They speak about the large organizations; for instance, they speak about \$100 million going to UNRWA. However, they do not identify sub-implementing partners. The implication is that either there are none or the government did not wish to provide that information, despite the clear ordering of that information as part of Question No. 2155. That makes the response inaccurate and incomplete.

I do not know if the government is intentionally trying to hide information about the development assistance in this regard. However, in accordance with the Standing Orders, the government needs to provide a complete and accurate response.

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

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Louis-Hébert.

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first of all, I also want to thank my colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche for this very simple, well designed and precise bill, which addresses a rather important concern. It is important because symbols are important, even though I agree with my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie that there are likely other issues that are of greater concern. There is the monetary system that puts wealth into the hands of a few, for instance, or inflation, which is affecting our constituents across the country.

We know, perhaps better than anyone, that here in politics symbols are very important. I think that oaths are important, that they should not be taken lightly and should not be taken grudgingly. I truly believe that no person duly elected by their constituents to represent them in the House should be reluctant to swear an oath to take their seat, reluctant to do it for various reasons. There may be various reasons to be reluctant to swear an oath to a foreign monarch, as one of my Bloc Québécois colleagues said. For various reasons, namely historic ones, there are some people here who will have a hard time swearing an oath to an institution that may leave a bad taste in their mouth. There are many different identities represented here in the House of Commons, much like the people we represent. I think that if we can find a way to take our seat by swearing an oath that respects the sensibilities of every individual while honouring the historic reality that my colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche described so well by giving the option, that would be a good thing.

That is exactly the purpose of Bill C-347. As I said, it offers a very elegant solution, the option to swear an oath of office that I will read as written in my colleague's bill, an oath that would be added to the one we swear now. It says that we will carry out our duties "in the best interest of Canada while upholding its Constitution". That, to me, is a much more inclusive oath.

There have been several attempts to change the oath of allegiance that members of Parliament must swear. As I was reading in Marc Bosc's green book, such attempts occurred in 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 2002 and 2003. I think that my colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche's Bill C-347 offers a very simple and effective way to do this. That is what I want to focus on in my speech.

If we were to look into the origins of this obligation to take an oath to assume office and take our seat in Parliament, we would see that it dates to the 16th century. This oath was originally intended to exclude Roman Catholics, among others. Initially, the aim was to bar them from Parliament. It evolved over time to include more people or exclude others, but it is clear that, today, section 128 of the Constitution sets out the obligation for members and senators to take an oath. That oath can be found in the fifth schedule and reads as follows: "I, *A.B.*, do swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to [His Majesty King Charles III]."

Bill C-347 simply adds to section 128 another section that would allow elected members to take another oath, a solemn declaration. This other section states, "Notwithstanding subsection (1), every Member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada may take and subscribe the Oath of Office contained in the Fifth Schedule to this Act instead of the Oath of Allegiance or may take and subscribe both." That oath I just read would be added to the fifth schedule.

I was listening to my Conservative Party colleague talk about constitutionality, and I think that is the crux of the problem for those who may oppose this bill. We are not preventing anyone from swearing an oath to the monarchy. We are just offering another option for those who, like me, as a member from Quebec, are uncomfortable or have reservations about swearing allegiance to a foreign monarch. However, when it comes to amending the Constitution, we must refer to section 44, among others, which states, "Subject to

sections 41 and 42, Parliament may exclusively make laws amending the Constitution of Canada in relation to the executive government of Canada or the Senate and House of Commons." That is exactly what this is about.

• (1955)

Now we have to check sections 41 and 42 to see if there is something there that could prevent this. I will spare my colleagues a reading of that long list. Bill C-347 has no impact on section 42. There may be something in section 41.

According to section 41 of the Constitution, anything affecting "the office of the Queen, the Governor General and the Lieutenant Governor of a province" would require the unanimous consent of the legislative assemblies of each province, the House of Commons and the Senate. Is the office of the Queen or the Governor General affected by Bill C-347? In my opinion, no. Nothing about the office of the Governor General will change. She must listen to an oath, and it is up to parliamentarians to decide which oath to swear. Oaths have certainly evolved over time to reflect society's values; that is key to our democracy. I think that Bill C-347 adapts the oath to reflect Canada's values.

• (2000)

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

* * *

[English]

PANDEMIC DAY ACT

The House resumed from March 22, 2023, consideration of Bill S-209, An Act respecting Pandemic Observance Day, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There being no motions at report stage, the House will now proceed, without debate, to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.) moved that the bill be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

The member for Kingston and the Islands.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I would ask that the motion be carried on division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I declare the motion carried on division.

Private Members' Business

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Hedy Fry moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

She said: Madam Speaker, this is a simple bill. Everyone has heard about it. In simple language, the bill states that throughout Canada, each and every year, March 11 would be known as “pandemic observance day”.

There are about three reasons to do this. The first is to remember that, to date, 57,000 people in Canada have actually died from COVID-19, to remember and honour those people, and to also remember that 57,000 is more than all the Canadians who died in the Second World War. This is a huge number of people who died from a pandemic. We also need to remember their suffering and try to find how we can support all the people who are the family members and other bereaved people from throughout this crisis.

The second part of what we need to do is continue recovering from COVID-19. I use the word “continue” because since the so-called pandemic was lifted, 7,000 more Canadians have died. Up to today, that is the number. Therefore, we know that COVID has not disappeared; COVID actually continues to be a variant. It continues to adapt and change, as we know all viruses have a tendency to do. Each time, we do not know what the variant will be.

The important thing for us to do is remember that we are continuing to recover and that we must continue, therefore, to apply solid and strong public health commitments to what we do. In other words, we must continue to recognize that while this virus continues, we must wear masks when we are in an unventilated place, continue to wash our hands and continue to do all of the things we did during the pandemic, because we do not want to have the pandemic recur in large numbers.

We need to therefore remember the day and learn of the evolution of the pandemic. We have tests and vaccines. Get the tests, vaccines and booster shots. People must make sure they are protected. They do not want to be counted and increase the number from 57,000 to 58,000. Please reflect on that and remember that viruses are totally unpredictable.

We have independent, trusted science that we must remember, think about and follow, and we must make sure that Canadians are informed. If we are not worried and we think we are invulnerable, will never get COVID and can walk around ignoring it, we must remember that we have a duty to the people around us who could get sick and who could in fact be impacted by it. Let us not forget that this is a duty to others as well in a pandemic.

With respect to recovering from COVID, we must also remember that COVID-19 was a pandemic, the first true pandemic we have had since the influenza after the war. Therefore, what we need to remember about this is that there will no longer be epidemics; we are going to have pandemics. Because of globalization, people who have never travelled before are travelling all around the world and bringing back viruses, diseases and illnesses. We are talking about people from every corner of the globe. The transmission of any illness or disease is quicker and easier in this world of globalization. We need to remember this if a pandemic begins and we feel we have not taken steps to prevent it from happening. Many countries

had six times the number of deaths that Canada had because they did not have the resources. Many countries suffered a great deal. Is that what we want for other countries in the world? This duty of care is ours to remember.

Our third duty is to be prepared for any other pandemic, be prepared for the recurrence of COVID-19, make sure we learn something from the COVID-19 pandemic and apply what we learned. Let us not repeat it. Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Let us not have a repetition of another COVID-19 in this country or anywhere.

We remember the people who lived in homes and institutions, the elderly people who died who did not have to and who died alone because they did not have family with them to look after them because of the isolation that was needed.

● (2005)

I am asking members to remember, for those reasons; to learn our lessons; to look at how we apply those lessons to preventing future pandemics; and to make sure we always mark this day.

This is a Senate bill. It was brought in by a senator who was previously a family physician, Dr. Mégie. As a physician, like I am, she understood the need to apply science to things like pandemics. Science is clear and evidence-based. Science will learn from the things we made mistakes on and from the things we learned how to do to deal with future occurrences. Let us be mindful of science. Let us not apply ideology to pandemics. Viruses do not particularly care whether one lives in Ontario or in Newfoundland. COVID-19 did not care; it did not understand or respect provincial boundaries. Let us remember that when we talk about how we deal with scientific evidence in order to protect ourselves and others.

Again, as parliamentarians, our own duty is to remember to be aware of science and our duty of care to all the people we represent in the House, all of Canada. We have a duty to care for them in the same way we care for them when they do not have good drinking water or when they are suffering from poverty and say that food prices are too high. Those are the ways we care. Let us continue to care.

When I hear of people who continue to debunk science and say that it is nonsense and that politicians make decisions, I say that politicians should make informed decisions based on good knowledge and good information. Therefore, they need to look at that information and what it tells them they should do, and look at whether they may get results from what they are doing because they are following good, evidence-based decision-making.

There is not too much else I can say about the bill, but I would ask members this: Why do we have Remembrance Day on November 11 every year? It is because we want to remember the wars. We want to remember the number of people who died. We want to remember the damage. We want to make sure it does not happen again. We want to commit ourselves to peace. We want to commit ourselves to preventing war.

Similarly, we want to commit ourselves to preventing pandemics that kill people. We need to be aware that the deaths of 57,000 Canadians could have been prevented if we had known and understood the pandemic when it first started. We now know what the pandemic did. We now know how to stop it. We now know the steps we need to take to remedy it. Let us remember this every year so we do not repeat the same mistakes we made and so we learn our lessons and use evidence-based, scientific methods to help protect the Canadian population.

It is a simple bill, and I hope all members will support it.

• (2010)

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank and commend my colleague for introducing this bill and initiating this discussion. In her speech, she mentioned the probable causes of a pandemic. She said that there were going to be other pandemics because people travel a lot between countries and they could bring back viruses.

I have another theory on that subject, which involves the loss of biodiversity and the fact that people are living in closer and closer proximity—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am sorry to interrupt the member. She will have to start again because the interpretation was not working.

Now that it is fixed, the hon. member has the floor.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Madam Speaker, I will start over.

In her speech, my colleague mentioned the possibility of other pandemics linked to the spread of viruses resulting from frequent travel to different countries. However, science tells us that many links could be made to the loss of biodiversity, because of human proximity to animal species that normally have no contact with humans.

What does my colleague think about the possibility that more epidemics could result from the loss of biodiversity?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, I think that is a very important point, and I think we know that zoonoses are on the rise. Once again, it is that people are in contact with the animal world more than we used to be in contact with them. We are visiting game farms. We have the ability to meet wild animals in the wild.

What we learned and must remember in this pandemic remembrance day is that zoonoses are very important. The transmission of viruses, bacteria and other diseases from animals to human beings is actually very possible.

Private Members' Business

I am glad the member asked that question because that is a reason for pandemic observance day. It is to remember that we have learned some things, and that is one of them.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for this bill. If we are remembering the pandemic, one particularly critical fact to remember is that Canada had the terrible distinction of having more deaths per capita than any other country on earth in long-term care homes. Part of the confidence-and-supply agreement between the New Democrats and the Liberals is for the government to introduce a long-term care act.

Does my hon. colleague agree with the New Democrats that it is time we have mandatory standards in long-term care homes in this country? Those would be to have minimum standard hours of care for people in those homes, to have set care aid-to-patient ratios and, more importantly, to make sure that the conditions of work and the conditions of care are much better and that we treat the workers in those homes much better so we can reduce infection rates.

Does she agree with the NDP that it is time to put those mandatory standards in law in this country?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, once again, I think that is a good question, and I want to thank the member for bringing it up.

We need to remember one very important thing. While it is very important to look at standards of care, with the huge death toll we saw in long-term care homes, in fact, it is not a federal jurisdiction to do those things. Long-term care is provincial jurisdiction. We are, at the moment, negotiating with provinces to look at how we could get that done so we do not trample on provincial jurisdiction.

At the same time, we can work on standards and research through the Canadian Standards Association to see what it could look like, as soon as provinces decide to set those standards and set the kinds of decision-making available to the provinces to be able to deal with long-term care.

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is a very important bill because this is also a wake-up call for policy-makers every single year. The next time a pandemic hits, we cannot say it was unexpected. It is a wake-up call for us once a year to check whether we have taken enough measures to secure Canadians by identifying the critical items that are affected when the supply chains are disrupted and to find out what things we have done for senior citizens.

On the second point, the pandemic remembrance day is also important for the next generation of Canadians. The current students in the elementary schools and the future students at elementary schools should be made aware of what their elder siblings, their parents and their grandparents went through so that they are aware that they, too, one day, may be affected by this.

I would like the hon. member's comments on that.

Private Members' Business

● (2015)

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, I am getting very good questions here.

I want to point out that we are talking about the COVID pandemic, but let us remember that measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria and small pox had all gone and died. They were not occurring anymore. They are coming back now because of vaccine deniers, people who are not vaccinating themselves. We are going to see polio once again, with children sitting in iron lungs because they have polio.

We must remember that we cannot deal with any disease unless we are bound by scientific knowledge. Right now, many people are walking away from the scientific knowledge that we got from learning about vaccines and—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are unfortunately out of time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Madam Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic, and its impact on our lives, was unprecedented.

In Canada and around much of the world, life as we knew it changed overnight because the pandemic was not just about the coronavirus. In many ways, it was also about how governments and health care systems responded to it. It was about the impact on our society, our relationships and our day-to-day activities.

The fallout of COVID-19 was not confined to a short period of time or just to some people. In fact, the reality is that the pandemic is barely in our rearview mirror. Its impact will be felt for years to come. We still have not fully assessed its impact on our society.

There are still lessons to be learned from the pandemic. Last week's landmark and historic ruling that the Liberal government's use of the Emergencies Act was unjustified is further proof that we have not fully moved beyond the pandemic and its fallout. The Prime Minister has yet to answer for his reckless abandonment of basic freedoms.

These are not historical events. These are current events. In that way, the proposal to designate March 11 as pandemic observance day would seem to be premature, but beyond that, it is not the response that Canadians are looking for. I have not talked to a single Canadian who has asked for this.

I have had the opportunity to talk to my constituents from Battlefords—Lloydminster about the impact of COVID-19 and the dysfunctions and the inefficiencies that it exposed. I have also had the opportunity to talk to health care workers, long-term care workers, seniors advocates, small business owners and countless others from across the country. What I can say with confidence, from those conversations, is that there is no outcry for a pandemic observance day. There are certainly, without a doubt, actions and responses that Canadians would like to see the federal government and other levels of government take in response to the pandemic, but this is not it.

The senator who introduced this bill in the other place has said that she proposed this bill with three objectives: to remember, to recover and to prepare. I have not heard any evidence that a national day of remembrance would help those who have experienced loss and grief as a result of the coronavirus.

While there may be commonalities among those who are grieving, each person's journey is unique. How each person copes with their grief will look different. For many, the proposed day may also remind them about the difficult circumstances around their loss. In their final days and moments, many were isolated and many were alone. Many died alone. Because of the policies and practices put in place, loved ones were separated at the most difficult of times.

Humans are relational beings. The importance of being present in the lives of one another was, in some ways, abandoned by these practices. That is a major tragedy.

It went well beyond those who just had COVID-19. The senator, in proposing this day of remembrance, has indicated that this would be honouring our health care workers and our essential workers. I may agree with the sentiment that, through the difficulties and challenges of the pandemic, arose countless examples of goodness and selflessness. There were individuals who went above and beyond to support their communities, individuals who, despite the risk to themselves, showed up to work every single day.

These Canadians are admirable, and they certainly deserve to know that they are appreciated. I believe the practice of honouring others is very important. It is my strong belief that a culture of honour promotes respect and unity. Honour encourages and uplifts. It is why there are already designations such as National Nursing Week and National Physicians' Day.

● (2020)

If we truly wanted to honour the sacrifices and work our health care workers and essential workers did during the pandemic, we would not respond with a national day of observance. We would respond by addressing the cracks and shortfalls that were exposed during the pandemic. We would work with different levels of government to ensure that they have the supports they need. We would not thank them for taking risks, then turn around and expect them to continue to take those same risks day in and day out. That is dishonouring.

In the same vein, the senator's intent to recover and prepare is not accomplished through a day of observance. As a society, we can only recover from the pandemic and prepare for any future health crisis by taking meaningful action. We need not simply put a bow on the pandemic and sweep the lessons to be learned under the rug. To recover and prepare we must do the hard work of learning lessons and then taking action. It is in that way that we will better honour those who were lost in the pandemic, those who experienced loss and every single Canadian who made countless sacrifices.

The pandemic fallout showed us that we lack manufacturing capabilities, as well as the devastating impacts of reliance and dependency on global supply chains. It highlighted a strain that exists in our health care sector and underscored massive labour shortages in health care. In fact, we are now seeing labour shortages in every sector across the country. It revealed the outdated infrastructure in our long-term care homes. It took a massive toll on the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. It forced so many small businesses to close their doors permanently. It also left countless others in a difficult state that will not be recovered overnight. It revealed the Prime Minister's willingness to divide Canadians and trample charter rights just to cling to power.

The pandemic exposed a lot of distrust in our institutions and a lot of the Liberal government's mismanagement. These are just some of the issues that arose out of the pandemic.

We all know that the COVID-19 pandemic's impact was far-reaching. Its impact will be felt for years to come. It is quite likely that, in the years ahead, we will come to better understand its widespread impact. The conversation we should be having as elected officials should be around those findings and those lessons being learned. If we want to remember, recover and prepare in a way that is meaningful and genuine, it is not going to be done through a pandemic observance day. That is not the response that Canadians want from the federal government or any other level of government.

Canadians want meaningful action that will ensure our infrastructure and systems are better prepared for a future crisis. Canadians want the Liberal government to be held accountable for its actions. They want to know that future governments will uphold their basic rights and freedoms. They want to see taxpayer dollars spent efficiently on supports and programs that will be there for them when they need it. The COVID-19 pandemic requires a response from the federal government, but the response needed is not a day of observance.

• (2025)

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, as I was saying earlier, I thank my colleague from Vancouver Centre for introducing Bill S-209, which designates March 11 as pandemic observance day. It has not been amended, and therefore the Bloc Québécois's position remains unchanged: We support the bill.

The Bloc Québécois stands with everyone in Quebec and Canada who was directly or indirectly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bloc Québécois would like to offer its condolences and sympathy to the families affected by the crisis, and to thank health care workers and all workers who could not work from home. They are many of them, and they are often forgotten. My speech will highlight their work and recall the many people who lost their lives to this pandemic.

Above all, I will approach the subject from an environmental perspective, which I am sure will surprise no one. I will talk about how pandemics are made. What I am going to say is not about the origins of COVID-19, not at all, but about the fact that a significant number of emerging diseases of the past 40 years are zoonotic. Everyone has heard of SARS, Ebola, the avian flu, rabies. There are a dozen on the government site.

Private Members' Business

Serge Morand, a French environmentalist and biologist explains it well when he talks about the “dilution effect caused by man, who by encroaching on wild natural habitats and thereby creating more interactions, is accelerating the spread of new viruses by disrupting the animal ecosystem”. The issue is deforestation, industrial livestock production and globalization.

According to the Institut de recherche pour le développement, or IRD, website in France, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Marie-Monique Robin, an investigative journalist, producer and writer, co-produced with the IRD the documentary called *La fabrique des pandémies*, “The Pandemic Factory”. The documentary's key moments appear on the IRD's website.

For this project, Ms. Robin travelled to eight countries to understand the factors driving the emergence of infectious diseases. For the scientists who were questioned, the answer is clear: Environmental upheaval is the major cause of epidemics and pandemics. Some 20 researchers were filmed while doing their research and during their interactions with local communities. In the field in Asia, Africa and the Americas, scientists and indigenous peoples seek to understand how and how closely health and biodiversity are linked. The documentary explains that the species most likely to transmit new pathogens to us are the same ones that thrive when diversity decreases. The more biodiversity we lose, the more epidemics we have.

Science has shown that epidemics are becoming more and more frequent. We should expect more of them. The documentary warns us that if we continue to destroy our planet, we will experience an epidemic of pandemics, because biodiversity plays a protective role for humans. We need to rethink the way we live, so that damage to the environment is kept to a minimum. The problem is us, not the animals.

Now let us talk about the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us talk about the most vulnerable members of our society. The leader of the Bloc Québécois, the member for Beloeil—Chambly, clearly expressed his thoughts when he said, “My thoughts go out to the most vulnerable, those whom the pandemic has made even more vulnerable, and to the people living in isolation, poverty and anxiety who are suffering even more and have become more fragile because of this disease.”

Private Members' Business

The Bloc Québécois leader's words bring to mind another film I want to talk about. It is not a documentary, but it is a fairly realistic portrayal of the isolation seniors may have experienced. *Tu ne sauras jamais* is a dramatic film directed by Robin Aubert and Julie Roy. The camera work is effective. The slow pace captivates us and shows us exactly what these seniors went through: isolation, cold meals, distress, staff shortages. Martin Naud, age 88, plays an isolated senior in his room in a long-term care home during the COVID-19 pandemic. He is an old man who does everything in his power to see the woman he loves one last time. Martin Naud is not an actor. He is not on IMDb. He lives in Repentigny and he is a member of the Bloc Québécois. He went to an audition and turned out to be the best person to really connect with audiences and convince them, even though he is not a professional. Take it from me: he did a great job.

● (2030)

There was so much suffering, particularly among seniors. Seniors who stayed in their homes or apartments experienced boredom, loneliness, anxiety, sickness and fear. There are those who died, those who lived in isolation and those who survived in fear.

I am thinking about health care workers, as I said at the beginning of this speech, and about others who did not have the option of protecting themselves by working from home, those who are too often forgotten because they are invisible to us, because our lives are moving too quickly and we are not paying attention to the people around us, to those essential workers. I will talk more about them in a few moments.

Of course, I want to start by talking about frontline staff, all types of health care workers: nurses, doctors and orderlies. They all put their lives at risk to care for COVID-19 patients. We are forever grateful to them. It was not easy for them either. Everyone in society was scared. Imagine how the people on the front lines felt, working directly with the sick.

Then there are young people. Of course, this age group was not as impacted by deaths. However, young people still made the collective sacrifice demanded by health restrictions. This meant many of them missed out on the opportunity to socialize at a pivotal moment in their lives. We must think of them and thank them for their courage and resilience at that time.

We must also acknowledge the work of the scientific community. Although imperfect by definition, our scientists' explanations informed our debates and answered our questions and concerns throughout the pandemic. We are fortunate to have been able to count on them and to still be able to count on them. My colleague from Vancouver Centre talked about how science helps us better understand.

Finally, let me go back to the invisible workers I mentioned earlier. Many of them are women and young people. They may be grocery store clerks, pharmacy cashiers or shelf stockers. They may be delivery people, cleaners, construction workers, subway drivers or bus drivers. They could not work from home. They were essential during the pandemic, and they are no less essential now to our society's ability to function effectively. Too often, however, they remain invisible and forgotten. The pandemic shone a light on them, as workers too often relegated to the shadows.

In conclusion, do we really want to go through something like this again? Do we want to mourn the many people who will die, relive the same fear and isolation?

To connect back to the start of my speech, without biodiversity, life is not possible. Our fates are inextricably linked. By preserving biodiversity, we reduce the risks and impact of global warming and its effects on our health. However, we must change now. Otherwise, we are treading the same path toward extinction as today's endangered wildlife.

Biodiversity is our home. We can still save it, but we must act quickly. That will require courage on the part of politicians.

Do we have that courage?

● (2035)

[English]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I stand on behalf of the residents of Port Moody—Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra to respect the reality of the losses they suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I want to take this time to honour the lives of their family members who were lost during the pandemic and recognize that many of them died alone in those early days. I want to acknowledge the family members who could not be with their loved ones and still have not been able to heal from that trauma. I see them, and I recognize how hard it was and how hard it remains.

At a National Pensioners Federation meeting recently, I heard from seniors from across the country that the hardest part of the pandemic was having friends and loved ones pass in hospitals or in long-term care homes. That is heartbreaking both for those who have passed and for those left behind, who could not say goodbye in person. These were the realities of the pandemic then, and they stay with us now.

I want to take a moment to follow up on something my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway said earlier. Although this is about the pandemic observance day bill, this is the time for the Liberals to step forward and make sure they do the work, take the responsibility for living up to the confidence and supply agreement and get those national standards for long-term care. No person in Canada should die in long-term care from a preventable disease.

The hurt people suffered during COVID-19 can be recognized with Bill S-209 by having a pandemic observance day each year, and that is why the NDP is supporting it.

I want to note that caregivers also suffered during the pandemic. For nurses and long-term care workers, their work was and is exceptional. I know they deserve better wages, better working conditions and much more respect. The NDP will continue to fight for them. I say this to caregivers watching my speech tonight: We will continue to fight for them.

The care economy, as well as the treatment of care workers in Canada, is an ongoing crisis. Care, paid and unpaid, is the backbone of Canada's economy, and it employs one in five Canadians. The physical, psychological and emotional care of people is essential work and needs to be recognized and compensated appropriately, yet this is not done in Canada, because of gender discrimination.

Women are overrepresented in care and in the care economy. According to Statistics Canada, they comprise 80% of workers in health occupations, 68% of teacher roles and professorships and more than 95% of child care workers. All are underpaid and undervalued by our society and economy. I should not say by our society. I should say by these governments, the Liberals and the Conservatives before them.

This needs to change; it is wrong. The pandemic has showed us that neglecting care workers as an underpinning of our economy, a hidden area that has not received the recognition it deserves, hurts society and our health care system. We especially see this in Conservative-led provinces, where child care and health care are fodder for private profiteers.

Along with gender discrimination, racism is intertwined with the care economy's systems. Immigration policies for care workers are designed to control access to status and citizenship. Newcomers, undocumented people and low-income women are especially vulnerable to the exploitation and precarious working conditions of care. Black and Filipino women are overrepresented within the care economy, and they are some of the most exploited workers in Canada. This needs to change, and the Liberal government can make that change today. The NDP supports status for all.

The pandemic has shown that care workers are essential. Immigrant care workers deserve their status; they should also be able to bring their families to Canada. The collective prejudice towards care workers has resulted in an unfounded belief that care work is unskilled work and, therefore, cannot receive better compensation. This too is wrong.

● (2040)

Now is the time for the Liberal government to step up and end discrimination of care work. It is time for the Liberals to do the work required to improve working conditions for nurses and other care economy workers, and to immediately fulfill their promise to make the Canada caregiver credit refundable for any family caring for loved ones at home, to compensate some of that unpaid work that all of our society relies on.

First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who passed recently, is quoted as saying that there are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who need caregivers. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly proved that.

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Caregivers have gone above and beyond to support our communities, but while many stepped up to help their community, partisan politicians used it as an opportunity to advance their ideologies. Easy public health measures, like masks, were politicized and weaponized in our community. As the disability critic, I can say that the rejection of that simple gesture to keep people safe left the most vulnerable at risk.

Persons with disabilities have spoken out about the reality of being socially isolated and experiencing worsening anxiety and depression during the pandemic, because even a trip to the grocery store was not safe due to the lack of masks. The isolation has been particularly acute for folks living with disabilities, who were medically advised to reduce their contacts with others, and for people living with mobility restrictions or who were and are immunocompromised.

Today we are seeing the effects of increased loneliness and that two years without socialization have had a profound impact on the mental health of society. At this time, the Liberals have continued to hold back national funding for mental health resources. This is unconscionable. To leave low-income individuals unable to connect to private counselling, which is all that is available to them, is leaving them behind.

I will echo my NDP colleague from Courtenay—Alberni by saying the Liberals need to live up to their promise and spend the billions they are holding back on for mental health funding. In addition, with the reality of long COVID, I must mention that the Liberals are also withholding implementing the Canada disability benefit. This, too, must change. It is unacceptable that in this time of rising costs of living, the Liberals would leave persons with disabilities behind and not recognize how the pandemic has exacerbated their lived reality.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible work that community members in the riding of Port Moody—Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra did during the pandemic to rescue and redirect good, healthy food. Organizations like the Tri-Cities Moms Group, United Way, the Immigrant Link Centre Society, CityReach and The People's Pantry all stepped up to ensure that food from restaurants that needed to close, airlines that cancelled flights and food suppliers that had excess food was redistributed and not wasted. That work continues today as, unfortunately, more and more Canadians are forced to the food bank because the Liberal government and the Conservatives before them have been cutting and gutting affordable housing for decades.

Private Members' Business

In this time of pandemic observance, I will close by saying that the NDP supports this bill, but the Liberal government needs to implement the standard of care that I mentioned; it needs to revisit extending that CEBA loan that we have asked for, and it needs to really get to work on improving working conditions for caregivers in this country. People in our communities deserve no less.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is wonderful to be here with all of my colleagues this evening as the House has returned for its first week back sitting.

Before I begin, I wanted to say one or two personal remarks. This morning I was able to return to my riding for a wonderful announcement with the Attorney General, the public safety minister, the Premier of Ontario and a number of his cabinet ministers in relation to an investment we are making to tackle gun and gang violence.

When I returned to my riding, I found out from very good family friends of my wife and mine, whom we have known for nearly 10 years in the riding, and who are family to us and vice versa, that the patriarch of the family had passed away, so I was able to go to the visitation this afternoon. I rearranged the schedule, just as we all do in the House, and I was able to pay my respects to the family, who are dear friends of mine.

The funeral is tomorrow morning, and I paid my respects this evening. However, I wanted to say to Domenico and Carm, as well as to their sons, Matthew and Michael, and their wives, Mia and Vanessa, along with the grandchildren and all the siblings, that their patriarch, the grandfather Serafino, much like millions of immigrants and newcomers who have come to this country, came to Canada for the opportunity that Canada has provided for all of us. They and their family are in my thoughts. He lived a full life, and he was one tough son of a gun from that generation. I send them my condolences.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill S-209, an act respecting pandemic observance day. I am also pleased to announce the government's support of the bill.

It is not often that bills are tabled in the House that we can all rally around, but I think this is one of those times. Bill S-209 proposes to designate March 11 as pandemic observance day throughout Canada. It was on March 11, 2020, that the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

What would this day be all about? First and foremost, it would be a day to honour the over 6.8 million people who have died of COVID-19 globally, more than 51,000 of whom were in Canada. I will take a moment to let those words and those numbers sink in. COVID-19 is now the deadliest disaster in Canadian history, excluding acts of war. It has surpassed the 1918 influenza pandemic, which led to nearly 50,000 deaths in Canada.

We can imagine if, in early March 2020, someone had suggested that 51,000 people living in Canada would be gone forever due to this terrible virus, it would have been unfathomable, but here we are, almost four years, and too many deaths, later. Collectively, we have lost friends, parents, grandparents and siblings. Nothing can change that, but a pandemic observance day could help us acknowl-

edge these profound losses. We should let this day forever be a formal recognition of our collective grief. This day would also be an opportunity for us to recognize all the frontline workers who experienced higher risks of COVID-19 exposure in their work environment while ensuring continuity of critical services.

The pandemic has placed unprecedented pressures and demands on Canada's health workforce and health care system. Since March 2020, health care professionals have extended themselves to meet the increased demands of COVID-19, but they are now stretched dangerously thin. Reports of burnout are increasing, and a significant number of health care professionals, particularly nurses, are considering leaving their profession altogether.

Studies have shown that frontline workers are more likely to screen positive for post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and/or major depressive disorder than those who are not frontline workers. The pandemic has contributed to labour shortages across Canada, most critically in the health care sector.

Without human health resources, there is simply no health care. Without those brave men and women who are nurses, emergency room workers and ambulance attendants, there is no health care. While this symbolic day of observance would not fix these problems, recognizing this outstanding group of Canadians would signal how grateful Canadians are for their work and dedication.

Finally, this day of observance would acknowledge the serious impact COVID-19 has had on the health of Canada's population, both on health in the traditional sense and on mental health. While deaths are the ultimate, irreversible consequences of the pandemic, millions of Canadians have contracted and continue to contract COVID-19.

● (2045)

Over 4.5 million cases have been confirmed in Canada, but we all know that this is a gross underestimate since the emergence of the omicron variant in December 2021, when we began increasingly to rely on at-home rapid testing. By now, we have all had personal connections with people who have contracted the virus, some more than once. While the majority of those infected will recover, some continue to experience ongoing physical and/or psychological symptoms. Based on the World Health Organization's estimate that at least 10% of those infected develop a post-COVID-19 condition, there could be thousands of Canadians who suffer from ongoing symptoms. Many consequences of this condition and its negative long-term impacts are yet to be understood.

In addition to the long-term physical impacts associated with contracting the virus, many Canadians also experienced worsening mental health during the pandemic. For some, the pandemic experience was coupled with the stress of a job loss, isolation from loved ones, restrictions on community, learning and recreational activities, and/or the need to balance work and caregiving responsibilities. The breadth and depth of these challenges negatively affected the feelings and perceptions of mental health and well-being of many Canadians, especially among women, younger Canadians and frontline workers. Social distancing restrictions strained social ties, causing feelings of isolation and damaging mental health. Many people across the country have faced hardships as a result of the pandemic, as we all know.

Again, while a national day of observance will not solve these issues, it would at least signal the importance of recognizing our losses while continuing to work towards understanding and addressing the health, socio-economic and broader consequences of COVID-19. I do hope that everyone here this evening can rally behind this bill.

Since the pandemic was declared, COVID-19 has had an immeasurable impact on every single Canadian and every single Canadian family. It has impacted the way we have all worked, learned, connected with friends and family, and lived our daily lives.

It is important to recognize that this national day of observance is not prescriptive. Everyone will be able to commemorate this day as they wish, leaving room for the imagination and creativity of individuals and communities, recognizing that there is a wide range of potential activities to memorialize this day.

Individuals and groups can recognize this day in a way that will reflect the nature and intensity of their suffering, their needs and their communities. For governments, this could be a day for reflection, a time for an assessment of what worked and what did not.

Every March 11, from here on, going forward, will serve to remind Canadians of the tragic events and the display of solidarity and empathy within communities. It will be a day to come together on what we have learned and how to collectively define a new way forward.

I am thankful to have had this time to speak to this bill this evening and to indicate the government's support for a pandemic observance day.

• (2050)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, what a striking piece of legislation we have in front of us from a Liberal member of Parliament. In the same period here that the government has had its hand slapped by the court for the way it acted during the pandemic, we have a Liberal member who wants us to be aware and have an awareness day for the pandemic. By the way, it is sort of a running joke here that the Liberals' solution to every problem, the go-to for every issue, is an awareness day.

It is very rare that members of Parliament have an opportunity to actually bring forward a private member's bill for debate and a vote. However, instead of putting forward substantive changes to the law, things that would impact people's lives, the member across

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the way, who is not a new member and who has had a long time to think about what kind of private member's bill to put forward, chose an awareness day, as if anybody was not aware of the pandemic. However, let us be aware of the pandemic while we are here and while the member opposite said that her biggest idea for a private member's bill is a day dedicated to awareness about the pandemic.

Let us be aware of what happened during the pandemic, and let us be aware of what the Federal Court said about what this government did during the pandemic. We have a ruling from the Federal Court that the decision of the government to use the Emergencies Act during the pandemic was unconstitutional and was a violation of the charter.

It is interesting because this government has, for a long time, tried to wrap itself in the charter. However, it has shown complete disdain for the charter when it gets in the way of its desire to demonize people who disagree with it and to divide Canadians. This has become clear. What typifies the value system of the Prime Minister is not the Charter of Rights and Freedoms but his admiration for the basic dictatorships that he sees in other countries. That has been clear from what he said, and that has been clear from what he did during the pandemic.

During the pandemic, we had very difficult situations. Governments around the world tried to grapple with how they could respond to the challenges and how they could adjust quickly to those realities. I recall standing here in this place and making a simple recommendation. I said that we should look to and learn from the countries that were the most successful at reducing transmission, and those tended to be our East Asian democratic partners, countries that put in place effective border measures at the beginning and that built up a stockpile of necessary equipment and that took a collaborative approach around things like masking and contact tracing.

I said very clearly at the beginning that we should be learning from countries like Taiwan and South Korea. Unfortunately, the World Health Organization failed to engage with Taiwan, in particular, and learn from what Taiwan was doing well. I asked questions in the House as well about the failure of the Liberal government to engage with Taiwan and to push the World Health Organization to engage with Taiwan.

If we look at those early months, when the government said that any limitations on what happens at the border would be unacceptable. Representatives of the government said that masks did not work. All kinds of things were said in the early weeks and months of the pandemic, on which the government subsequently reversed itself.

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On some level, I think Canadians would have some sympathy for leaders who made mistakes in the early days of the pandemic if they had the humility to acknowledge that they did not know everything, that they understood the challenges and that they were doing their best to learn as things went along. However, the government showed a complete lack of humility in relation to the differences of perspective that existed in the context of the pandemic. In fact, this government tried to marginalize and demonize those who had a different point of view.

• (2055)

That demonization escalated as the process went along. When vaccines became available, of course Canadians were reading what they could, trying to understand, trying to learn about the approach they wanted to take and evaluate personal health choices in the context of the information that was coming out. However, the Prime Minister tried to discriminate against and demonize people who chose not to get the vaccine.

Particularly bizarrely, the Prime Minister tried to enforce a requirement where, for people who were working alone in the cab of their truck and did not have interactions with other people, for the most part, in the course of their work, as their nature of their work was to sit behind the wheel by themselves and drive, the effect of the policy he imposed was that they could not engage in cross-border trucking if they were not vaccinated. That provoked a strong response from Canadians; it was not just the policy but also the rhetoric, the name-calling against Canadians who had made different choices.

I think there was an opportunity for the Prime Minister to try to show leadership and say, “Look, here is my view. Here is the approach we feel we have to take, but I understand this is difficult and I want to bring Canadians together.” He did not take that approach. He wanted to try to divide Canadians for political reasons.

He had an opportunity again, when protesters came to Ottawa, to try to defuse the situation and to try to listen to the conversations that were happening, but he persisted in trying to use the events politically, including through the draconian imposition of the Emergencies Act, measures, or measures like them, that had not been used since another Trudeau was prime minister. These draconian measures have since been determined by the court to be unconstitutional.

• (2100)

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

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, on December 14, 2023, the environment minister admitted at committee to having called at least five senators about Bill C-234, a Conservative bill that would remove the carbon tax for Canadian farmers. The minister promised to hand over a list of senators he called. It has been 48 days, yet the minister has not provided the list.

My question is very straightforward: Whom did the minister call, and how did they vote?

[Translation]

Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in tonight's debate and to once again explain to my colleagues why we need to put a price on pollution.

[English]

I appreciate the opportunity to explain why a price on pollution is the right thing to do, not only for ourselves but also for our children.

When we consider all of the extreme weather events that have impacted Canada recently, it appears quite clear that the time for action is now. Just last year, as a result of climate change, Canadians had to deal with the catastrophic impacts of historic tornadoes, ice storms, wildfires, floods, etc. We could see the smoke right here in the chamber.

Of course, these severe events that are becoming more and more frequent also take a toll on our infrastructure. The truth is that we have to act now to prevent the situation from getting even worse. The good news is that we know what to do and how to do it.

[Translation]

The experts also agree that our approach, putting a price on pollution, is the best solution. It sends a clear message that pollution is not free. Pollution has a cost. Without a price on pollution, what incentive would there be to pollute less?

[English]

The best part of our plan is that in provinces where the federal fuel charge applies, we return the bulk of the proceeds from the price on carbon to Canadians. In fact, eight out of 10 households in these provinces are getting more money back through their quarterly climate action incentive payments than they pay as a result of our price on pollution. Under the government's plan, this means that a family of four living in one of these provinces can receive up to \$1,500 while also fighting climate change.

At the same time, we understand that it continues to be a tough time financially for many Canadian families, as elevated global inflation is unfortunately still a reality. However, we can see that things are slowly getting better. Inflation is at 3.4%, down from its peak of 8.1%, and wage growth has now outpaced inflation for 11 months in a row.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[Translation]*

In addition, private sector economists now project that Canada will avoid the recession that many people were expecting. The International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development are both forecasting that Canada will post the strongest growth in the G7 in 2025. Nevertheless, many Canadians still need help to make ends meet. That is why we are implementing new measures to make life more affordable.

[English]

As we made clear in our fall economic statement, our government continues to deliver an economic plan that supports a strong middle class, from building more homes faster to taking concrete action to help stabilize prices, make life more affordable and protect Canadians with mortgages. Let me give an example.

The government understands that Canadians are getting really frustrated with the price of groceries, and we want to give them some relief at the checkout. That is why we amended the Competition Act to enhance competition in the grocery sector. This will help bring down costs and ensure that Canadians have more choice in where they buy their groceries.

We also amended the Competition Act to empower the Competition Bureau to block collaborations that stifle competition and consumer choice, particularly in situations where large grocers prevent smaller competitors from establishing operations nearby. This will help save money for Canadians for other priorities.

• (2105)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Madam Speaker, I do not know what to say. This is insane. I asked a very simple question about the carbon tax and Bill C-234, and I heard about the Competition Act, which has nothing to do with the carbon tax. I do not know how that is.

I asked about how pricing on pollution is making life more affordable. Bill C-234 is going to cost Canadian farmers \$1 billion. How is that making it more affordable? Why did the member choose not to answer the question?

Why did she read for the Prime Minister's Office? Why did the Prime Minister and the minister not come down and answer these questions?

Canadian farmers and Canadians want to know why this carbon tax is costing them so much. It is dragging our whole country down, and the member, I am sorry to say, chose to blow off Canadians and just ignore the whole process.

Therefore, I would ask—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: Madam Speaker, Canadians see around them every day the cost of not acting on climate change, with forest fires, violent storms and tornadoes.

[Translation]

Severe weather events are becoming more frequent as a result of climate change, and they have a significant impact on Canada's infrastructure and economy.

[English]

Experts all agree that putting a price on pollution is the right approach to fight climate change. The best part is that the bulk of the proceeds go back to Canadians.

However, we understand that many Canadians are struggling with elevated inflation. That is why we are moving forward also with measures to make life more affordable.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Madam Speaker, we are here this evening to try to understand why the Minister of International Development was such a stalwart defender of UNRWA and to get clarity for Canadians on how their hard-earned taxpayer dollars are being used.

When I asked the government last year, on December 14, 2023, about the \$10 million in additional taxpayer dollars it pledged to UNRWA in spite of evidence on the misuse of international aid by Hamas, instead of treating it with the seriousness that it deserves, the minister accused me of making “political points”. It is not political to want to ensure Canadian tax dollars are not being used to fund terrorism. It is the government's moral and legal duty. In the minister's response, he noted that he “had numerous meetings with the head of UNRWA, Mr. Lazzarini” and emphasized that he will continue to work with “trusted agencies, like UNRWA”.

Adjournment Proceedings

I would like to tell the minister and the federal government about their trusted agency. On October 7, 2023, six UNRWA workers were part of a wave of Hamas militants who killed 1,200 people. Two UNRWA workers also helped to kidnap Israelis. Just two days ago, The Wall Street Journal reported that intelligence estimates around 1,200 of UNRWA's roughly 12,000 employees in Gaza have links to Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad. That is one in 10 employees at the minister's trusted agency. About half have close relatives who belong to Islamist militant groups. The report also stated that 23%, or nearly one in four, of UNRWA male employees had ties to Hamas. An Arabic teacher at UNRWA is said to be a Hamas militant commander who took part in a terrorist attack on Kibbutz Be'eri where 97 people were killed and about 26 were kidnapped and taken as hostages. In 2017, the former head of UNRWA's union was fired after he was elected to Hamas' top political leadership. An UNRWA math teacher, belonging to Hamas, was close enough to a female hostage in Gaza that he took a picture of her. Another teacher was carrying an anti-tank missile the night before the invasion. Is that part of the trusted agency curriculum?

Since October 7, 2023, Hamas has stolen more than \$1 million worth of UNRWA supplies, including fuel and trucks; and an intelligence assessment claims Hamas operatives are so deeply enmeshed within the UNRWA aid delivery enterprise that they coordinate transfers for the organization. Does any of this sound like an agency to be trusted?

UNRWA is an organization full of hate and it has been indoctrinating generations of innocent Palestinians to hate Jews. I have been reading excerpts of UNRWA's textbooks and I cannot believe what it has been teaching. Did members know that teachers are required to punish students who do not directly connect Judaism to murder? Did they know terrorists are glorified as role models, and that suicide bombings and cutting the necks of the enemy are glorified?

Therefore, I would like to ask the government if it still believes UNRWA is a trusted agency and why Canadian taxpayers are footing the bill to support UNRWA when this so-called humanitarian agency participates in the operations and murderous actions of Hamas, a listed terrorist organization.

• (2110)

Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canada mourns the loss of innocent Israeli and Palestinian lives in this conflict. We express our condolences to all families and communities affected by this violence. Canada unequivocally condemns the brutal terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas against Israel on October 7. Nothing can justify these acts of terror and the killing, maiming and abduction of civilians.

At the same time, we are horrified by the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and its impact on civilians. All parties to the conflict have an obligation to allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded access of humanitarian relief for civilians. Canada calls for a resumption of humanitarian pauses, and it supports urgent international efforts toward a sustainable ceasefire. Throughout, we have based our decisions on the innocent civilians involved in this conflict. As the situation continues, it is vital that life-saving humanitarian relief can reach Palestinian civilians in need.

We have demonstrated Canada's commitment to helping support the agencies that are working hard to help people in Gaza. To date, Canada has announced \$100 million in humanitarian assistance to address the urgent needs of vulnerable civilians impacted by this crisis. We were the first western country to announce an increase in our aid to Palestinian civilians.

With regard to UNRWA, Canada is deeply alarmed by the allegations that some staff members were involved in Hamas's brutal terrorist attacks against Israel on October 7. As a result, we announced an immediate pause of any additional funding to UNRWA. These allegations are extremely serious, and we look forward to the investigation into them. In addition, UNRWA has committed to an independent review of the organization.

We will continue to work with the agency and other donors to support the investigation into these serious and deeply concerning allegations, while maintaining our commitment to helping the most vulnerable Palestinian civilians in the region. We recognize that civilians' need for humanitarian assistance is growing by the hour.

[Translation]

Since the start of the crisis, our position has always been, and continues to be, centred on the firm conviction that Gaza needs more aid, not less. As UNRWA moves forward with this review, Canada will not reduce its support for the people of Gaza.

[English]

Yesterday, we announced an additional \$40 million in humanitarian assistance to help the most vulnerable Palestinian civilians. This funding will help Canada's partners to provide food, water, emergency medical assistance, protection services and other life-saving assistance. As is the case for all humanitarian and development funding to Palestinians, our additional assistance will be subject to our robust, enhanced due diligence process to ensure that no funding gets into the hands of terrorist groups, such as Hamas.

Mr. Kevin Vuong: Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary said key words that the minister said, which is "no additional funding". The question that Canadians have is this: How much funding has been extended to date, and had funding been accelerated until that announcement was made?

Furthermore, what steps will the government take to ensure that money does not make its way to aiding and abetting terrorists? UNRWA is Hamas, and Hamas is UNRWA. If we want to help people in need, as I think everyone would, money should be going to dedicated agencies that have not been infiltrated by Hamas, as UNRWA has.

Again, on the additional funding, when was funding extended and how much more has been given in advance of the alleged pause?

• (2115)

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: Madam Speaker, this is a very serious situation. The minister acted immediately last week to pause funding to UNRWA. A pause means a pause. It means that, going forward, no Canadian funding will flow to UNRWA as the investigation unfolds.

In the meantime, our humanitarian commitment to helping the most vulnerable Palestinian civilians in the region remains unwavering. We are going to continue working with partners in the region to ensure that life-saving aid gets to those vulnerable civilians, and I encourage the member to support us in this.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, back in November I asked the Minister of Employment if he was going to stand up for his constituents in Edmonton Centre and vote with the opposition on its motion to carve out the carbon tax for home heating for his constituents in Alberta and all other Canadians.

The answer I got was very disappointing. It was a bizarre sort of pivot to a defence of their corporate welfare system, wherein it looks like the Government of Canada is being fleeced by profitable companies through its subsidy system. It had nothing to do with my question. My question was not even remotely answered, so here we are tonight with a chance to have a redo on this question.

I asked if the member would stand up for Canadians and vote with the opposition to axe the tax and relieve Canadians of the carbon tax on home heating. The same day, or certainly the same week, I do not remember if it was the same day or not, I also raised a question about the member for Calgary Skyview, asking whether or not he would be given a free vote and be permitted to represent his constituents, who so plainly and obviously need relief from the carbon tax.

We had a bitter cold snap in Alberta. We had temperatures in Calgary get close to -40. I am told it was even a little colder at one point in Edmonton. People need to heat their homes. The carbon tax makes this more expensive for Canadians. We all know this. The Liberal caucus knows this, and the Atlantic Canadian members know this, so that is why they demanded of their own government that they have a carve-out for home heating for Atlantic Canadians.

We know now that the government has explicitly admitted that the exemption for Atlantic Canadians was pure politics. It had nothing to do with the relative cost or carbon efficiency of an oil-heated furnace. It had to do with politics. We know this because the Minister of Rural Economic Development told a national television audience that the government had heard from the Atlantic Liberal caucus, and that if other Canadians, prairie Canadians for example, wanted a carbon tax carve-out, they would have to elect more Liberals.

She said the quiet part out loud and told all Canadians that it is all about politics and that, because they have an Atlantic caucus facing the prospect of massive defeat in the next election, which

will be fought on issues of affordability, the carbon tax and the extent to which the carbon tax makes life unaffordable for Canadians, they gave Atlantic Canadians this carve-out.

Adjournment Proceedings

As it turned out, the members for Edmonton Centre and Calgary Skyview did not stand up for their constituents. They, in fact, voted against the Conservative opposition motion, which would have given carbon tax relief to all Canadians, regardless of where they live and regardless of what kind of furnace they happen to have in their home.

We have been clear on this side, right from the beginning, that the carbon tax is not an environmental plan; it is a tax plan—

• (2120)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure this evening to be answering a question from the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, who is a former classmate of mine from the University of Calgary.

I also very much welcome the opportunity to once again clarify how having a price on carbon and making sure that it is no longer free to pollute is the most effective way of addressing climate change, curtailing its devastating effects on both the health and safety of Canadians, and preserving Canada's natural beauty.

[*Translation*]

Canadians deserve measures that address the significant cost of climate change while making life more affordable for Canadians and that is exactly what our government is putting forward.

[*English*]

We know from experts and research that the most effective and efficient way to address climate change is to put a price on carbon pollution emissions, which are the chief cause of man-made climate change. It encourages savings across the economy while giving households and businesses the flexibility to decide when and how to make changes. It creates incentives for Canadian business to develop and adopt new low-carbon products, processes and services, and it is both effective and affordable for consumers. That is because the bulk of proceeds from the price on carbon pollution goes straight back into the pockets of Canadians in provinces where the fuel charge applies, with eight out of 10 households in these provinces continuing to get more money back through their quarterly climate action incentive payments than they pay as a result of the federal pollution pricing system. In provinces where the federal system applies, a family of four can receive up to \$1,500 a year under our plan.

Adjournment Proceedings

Our government understands that we need to maintain the price signal that is necessary over the long term for carbon pricing to work and bring emissions down. However, at the same time, we have also shown that we are willing to be flexible and innovative in supporting options that will go even further to cut down on climate pollution in the long run.

[Translation]

We have taken temporary, targeted measures to suspend the tax on home heating oil to encourage consumers to switch from using home heating oil to using a cleaner, much more affordable solution that will allow them to save thousands of dollars and reduce carbon emissions in the long term.

[English]

Measures such as this will make life more affordable in the right way while supporting the goal of achieving a prosperous, low-carbon future for all Canadians.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, yes, indeed, this parliamentary secretary and I did go to university together. As a former Calgarian, she is in a unique position to know, if she has any connection left to the city, just how extraordinarily unpopular her government and its carbon tax policy are in that community, which goes to why I asked about the members for Edmonton Centre and Calgary Skyview and their responsibility to represent their constituents.

If this carbon tax were so effective and so affordable, and thus acceptable to Canadians, and if the member is correct about the numbers, then why has the PBO completely undermined the arguments she has made about its affordability for Canadians. More so, why the carve-out?

The carve-out for Atlantic Canadians was pure politics, and the absence of one for Albertans is also politics.

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld: Madam Speaker, I know that Calgarians, like most Canadians, care deeply about the future for our children and about our natural environment. We know that we can make life more affordable for Canadians without destroying our environment.

[Translation]

We are providing this support where it is the most effective and to those who need it most. We have taken measures to temporarily suspend the federal tax on home heating oil.

● (2125)

[English]

It includes strengthening the oil to heat pump affordability program to increase the amount of federal funding that eligible homeowners can receive for installing a heat pump from \$10,000 to \$15,000, and it includes doubling the climate action incentive payment rural top-up rate, increasing it from 10% to 20% of the baseline amount starting in April.

We will continue to implement our pollution pricing system while ensuring that we continue to put more money into the pockets of Canadian households.

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

(The House adjourned at 9:25 p.m.)

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