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Monday, February 26, 2024

Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 26, 2024

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1105)

[*English*]

## POINTS OF ORDER

AMENDMENTS TO BILL C-318 AT COMMITTEE STAGE—SPEAKER'S  
RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised February 8, 2024, by the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader concerning the admissibility of amendments made to Bill C-318, an act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Labour Code, adoptive and intended parents, by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

In his intervention, the parliamentary secretary stated that the four amendments adopted by the committee during its clause-by-clause consideration of the bill not only exceeded the scope of the bill as adopted by the House at second reading, but also required a royal recommendation, since they seek to authorize new and distinct spending not authorized by the Employment Insurance Act or any other statute or appropriation.

In response, the member for Winnipeg Centre noted that since the adoption in the previous session of Bill C-15, An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, all federal legislation must be compatible with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a goal her amendments sought to achieve. She also indicated that the government had the power to provide the royal recommendation required for these amendments.

[*Translation*]

The House will recall that on May 4, 2023, the Chair ruled that Bill C-318 required a royal recommendation when it stated at page 14043 of Debates, and I quote:

...clause 5 adds new section 22.1 to the Employment Insurance Act to create a new type of special benefit, namely, a 15-week attachment benefit for adoptive parents and parents of children conceived through surrogacy. The bill also provides for the duration of this new benefit to be extended for various reasons. Implementing Bill C-318 would create a new type of benefit, and therefore, lead to increasing public expenditures for purposes not currently authorized by the act. As a result, a new royal recommendation is required for the bill to receive a final vote in the House at third reading.

During the clause-by-clause study of the bill by the committee, four amendments moved by the member for Winnipeg Centre were adopted. The amendments to clause 1 and clause 8 apply to the Employment Insurance Act and the amendments to clause 14 and clause 17 apply to the Canada Labour Code.

[*English*]

The amendments to clauses 1 and 8 modify the bill to include, for the purposes of the new benefit created by the bill, a situation where one or more indigenous children could be placed with a claimant, other than the child's parents, in accordance with the customs or traditions of the indigenous group, community or people to which they belong. With the new provisions, the claimant could be entitled to obtain a 15-week benefit drawn from the treasury, a notion which is not currently provided for in the bill as adopted at second reading.

Both amendments had been ruled inadmissible by the chair of the committee since they would create a new and distinct charge on the public treasury and as such would require a royal recommendation. As indicated in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 772:

Since an amendment may not infringe upon the financial initiative of the Crown, it is inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury, or if it extends the objects or purposes or relaxes the conditions and qualifications specified in the royal recommendation.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Bill C-318 also proposes amendments to the Canada Labour Code to extend parental leave in the case of the transfer of a child through adoption or a child born through surrogacy. The amendments to clauses 14 and 17 create a new corresponding extended leave of absence to match the benefit established by the first two amendments to clauses 1 and 8. Here, the committee chair deemed both amendments to be beyond the scope of the bill and thus also ruled them inadmissible.

In the case of all four amendments, the committee chair's rulings were challenged and overturned, and the amendments ultimately adopted.

*Private Members' Business*

[English]

As the House knows, the Speaker does not normally intervene on matters upon which committees are competent to take decisions. However, the admissibility of any amendments adopted by a committee may be challenged on procedural grounds in the House after a bill is reported back. As indicated in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 779:

The admissibility of the amendments is then determined by the Speaker of the House, whether in response to a point of order or on the Speaker's own initiative.

[Translation]

When called upon to deal with such matters, the Chair is guided by Speaker Fraser's explanation of April 28, 1992, at page 9801 of the Debates, and I quote:

When a bill is referred to a standing or legislative committee of the House, that committee is only empowered to adopt, amend or negative the clauses found in that piece of legislation and to report the bill to the House with or without amendments. The committee is restricted in its examination in a number of ways. It cannot infringe on the financial initiative of the Crown, it cannot go beyond the scope of the bill as passed at second reading, and it cannot reach back to the parent act to make further amendments not contemplated in the bill no matter how tempting that may be.

[English]

In light of the arguments presented by both the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader and the member for Winnipeg Centre, the Chair has examined the four amendments at issue. The amendments to clause 1 and clause 8 do indeed propose a charge upon the public revenue and therefore infringe on the financial initiative of the Crown.

While the Chair recognizes that challenges may arise when a committee must examine a bill where the Speaker has previously determined that a royal recommendation will be required before putting the question at third reading, a committee must still carry out its mandate without exceeding its powers. As explained by Speaker Milliken in his ruling from November 19, 2009, at page 6939 of the Debates:

In my view, by adopting an amendment that infringes on the financial initiative of the Crown, even when it is directed at a clause itself needing a royal recommendation, a committee ventures beyond its mandate.

[Translation]

As previously stated, the bill aims to create a new benefit and corresponding extended leave for adoptive parents and parents of children conceived through surrogacy. The amendments to clauses 8 and 14 provide that one or more indigenous children could be placed, in accordance with the customs or traditions of the indigenous group, community or people to which they belong, with a person other than the child's parents. This person could be entitled to an extended leave, which introduces a new concept not found in the bill as adopted at second reading. Thus, these amendments do go beyond the scope of Bill C-318.

• (1115)

[English]

Consequently, I must order that all four amendments adopted by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social

Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities be declared null and void and no longer form part of the bill as reported to the House.

In addition, I am ordering that the reprint of Bill C-318, as ordered by the committee, be cancelled. The text of the bill as adopted at second reading will stand as the official version of the bill for consideration at report stage.

Given that the bill is now reported back from committee without amendment, the requirement for a royal recommendation, as explained in the Chair's ruling from May 4, 2023, stands. Consequently, I will decline to put the question on third reading unless a royal recommendation is received.

I thank all members for their attention.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS****CRIMINAL CODE**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to another Act (interim release and domestic violence recognition orders), as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

[English]

**SPEAKER'S RULING**

**The Speaker:** There are 12 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill S-205.

Motions Nos. 1 to 12 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

[Translation]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1 to 12 to the House.

[English]

**MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT**

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC)** moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill S-205, in Clause 1, be amended

(a) by replacing lines 4 to 17 on page 1 with the following:

"1 (1) Section 515 of the Act is amended by adding the following after subsection (3):

(3.1) Before making an order under subsection (2) in respect of an accused who is charged with an offence in the commission of which violence was used, threatened or attempted against the accused's intimate partner, the justice must ask the prosecutor whether the intimate partner of the accused has been consulted about their safety and security needs.

(2) Subsection 515(4) of the Act is amended by adding the following after paragraph (e):

(e.1) wear an electronic monitoring device, if the Attorney General makes the request;

(2.1) Subsection 515(4.2) of the Act is amended by adding “or” at the end of paragraph (a.1) and by repealing paragraph (a.2).

(3) Paragraph 515(6)(b.1) of the Act is replaced by”; and

(b) by replacing line 1 on page 2 with the following:

“(4) The Act is amended by adding the following”

Motion No. 2

That Bill S-205, in Clause 2, be amended

(a) by replacing lines 9 to 12 on page 2 with the following:

“810.03 (1) A person who fears on reasonable grounds that their intimate partner will commit an offence that will cause personal injury to them, to their child or to a child of that intimate partner may lay an information”;

(b) by replacing lines 32 and 33 on page 2 with the following:

“(5) An order under either subsection (3) or (4) must be made in a timely manner.

(6) The provincial court judge may commit the defen-”;

(c) by replacing line 1 on page 3 with the following:

“(7) The provincial court judge may add any reasonable”;

(d) by replacing lines 4 and 5 on page 3 with the following:

“or to secure the safety and security of the informant, their child or a child of the defendant, including condi-”;

(e) by replacing line 20 on page 3 with the following:

“rectly, with the informant, a child of the informant or”;

(f) by replacing lines 1 to 5 on page 4 with the following:

“(8) The informant may provide submissions in writing on the conditions that the judge may add to the recognizance under subsection (7).

(9) The provincial court judge shall consider whether it is desirable, in the interests of the informant’s safety or”;

(g) by replacing lines 14 and 15 on page 4 with the following:

“(10) If the provincial court judge adds a condition described in subsection (9) to a recognizance, the judge”;

(h) by replacing lines 22 and 23 on page 4 with the following:

“(11) If the provincial court judge does not add a condition described in subsection (9) to a recognizance, the”;

(i) by replacing lines 26 and 27 on page 4 with the following:

“(12) A provincial court judge may, on application of the informant or the defendant, vary the conditions fixed in”;

(j) by replacing lines 29 to 31 on page 4 with the following:

“(13) When the defendant makes an application under subsection (12), the provincial court judge must, before varying any conditions, consult the informant about their”; and

(k) by replacing line 33 on page 4 with the following:

“(14) A warrant of committal to prison for failure or re-”

Motion No. 3

That Bill S-205, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing, in the English version, lines 15 and 16 on page 2 with the following:

“under subsection (1) may cause the informant and the person who is the subject of the information to appear”

Motion No. 4

That Bill S-205, in Clause 2, be amended

(a) by replacing line 23 on page 2 with the following:

“not more than two years.”;

(b) by replacing line 30 on page 2 with the following:

“into the recognizance for a period of not more than three”; and

### *Private Members' Business*

(c) by replacing line 35 on page 2 with the following:

“dant to prison for a term not exceeding two years if the”

Motion No. 5

That Bill S-205, in Clause 2, be amended

(a) by replacing lines 24 and 25 on page 3 with the following:

“(f) to refrain from using social media;

(g) to abstain from the consumption of drugs — ex-”;

(b) by replacing line 28 on page 3 with the following:

“(h) to provide, for the purpose of analysis, a sample of”;

c) by replacing line 38 on page 3 with the following:

“(i) to provide, for the purpose of analysis, a sample of”

Motion No. 6

That Bill S-205, in Clause 3, be amended

(a) by replacing line 10 on page 5 with the following:

“810.01(4.1)(f), 810.011(6)(e), 810.03(7)(h),”;

(b) by replacing line 15 on page 5 with the following:

“810.01(4.1)(g), 810.011(6)(f), 810.03(7)(i), 810.1(3.02)(i)”;

(c) by replacing line 2 on page 6 with the following:

“810.01(4.1)(g), 810.011(6)(f), 810.03(7)(i), 810.1(3.02)(i) or”

Motion No. 7

That Bill S-205, in Clause 6, be amended by replacing lines 34 and 35 on page 7 with the following:

“directly, with the informant, the informant’s child or any relative or close friend of the informant,”

Motion No. 8

That Bill S-205, in Clause 6, be amended by replacing lines 39 and 40 on page 7 with the following:

“(e.3) refrains from using social media (section 801.03 of the Criminal Code);”

Motion No. 9

That Bill S-205, in Clause 7, be amended by replacing line 13 on page 8 with the following:

“810.01(4.1)(g), 810.03(7)(i), 810.011(6)(f), 810.1(3.02)(i) and”

Motion No. 10

That Bill S-205, in Clause 8, be amended by replacing lines 18 to 21 on page 8 with the following:

“fears on reasonable grounds that their intimate partner will commit an offence that will cause personal injury to them, to their child or to a child of that intimate partner, and a provincial”

Motion No. 11

That Bill S-205, in Clause 10.1, be amended by replacing, in subclause (2), the word “810.03(7)” with the following:

“810.03(9)”

Motion No. 12

That Bill S-205, in Clause 10.1, be amended by replacing, in subclause (2), the words “the intimate partner’s safety” with the following:

“the informant’s safety”

● (1130)

She said: Mr. Speaker, people watching at home may think that these are just so many amendments. That is the essence of what I am going to talk about today.

I must also always thank the people from Peterborough—Kawartha, my riding. It is always an honour to stand here and speak on something so critical that affects Canadians and families across this country.

*Private Members' Business*

We are speaking today about domestic violence in particular. This is a bill, Bill S-205, that was put forward by Senator Boisvenu. I will be talking a lot about him in this speech today because it is a very personal story of what he did to put forward this bill. We had the chance to study this bill in my committee, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, also known as FEWO.

Before we go into this and the amendments that we have put forward to this bill, I want to provide some stats for people watching at home, many of whom are living these stats.

Domestic violence in this country is an epidemic, and 94 Ontario municipalities have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic. In Ontario, 30 women were killed in a 30-week window between 2022 and 2023. Compared to 2014, intimate partner sexual assault was 163% higher. There has been an increase of 72% in domestic violence in this country.

I think, right now, people really have on their minds, especially my Albertan colleagues, a tragic story that happened just weeks ago in front of a elementary school. The headline reads, "Man who killed his estranged wife outside Calgary school was facing domestic violence charges".

The man who killed his estranged wife outside of a Calgary elementary school was facing criminal charges for domestic violence and was charged with twice violating a no-contact order. This woman was murdered in front of an elementary school. Her three children no longer have either parent. This bill that we are talking about today, Bill S-205, could have prevented that tragedy. Let us break it down, and let us talk about why these amendments are critical and why I am asking every member in this House to support these amendments and to strengthen the bill that was originally created.

The senator who put forward this bill, Senator Boisvenu, is an incredible human. His daughter was murdered in 2002. She was 27 years old. She was randomly kidnapped and killed, because she was in the wrong place at the wrong time, by a repeat violent offender.

The senator said, "Changing the system takes a lot of energy. But I had no right to miss the mission that Julie had given me...."

One day I will return to Julie, it will be her, my judge. And I'm sure she'll tell me that we've done great things together, the two of us."

I think it is very important that members in the House, people at home and constituents recognize that the intention behind this bill comes from a very personal place of the lived experience of a man who lost his daughter to domestic violence. He did his due diligence. He spoke with stakeholders and did all the legal correspondence that was necessary to ensure this bill was done properly. When it went to the status of women committee, FEWO, it was watered down beyond belief. The whole purpose of the bill was removed by the amendments put forward by the Liberals and the NDP.

Today, we are asking them to reconsider what they are doing to this watered-down bill and to approve the amendments we have put forward, to leave the bill as it was and to put victims first. I want to give us some victim testimony from the committee that verifies

what we are saying here today. This is from Ms. Diane Tremblay. She testified at FEWO on November 20, 2023, about Bill S-205 and said:

If my abuser had been required to wear an electronic bracelet under a recognizance order pursuant to section 810 of the Criminal Code, as proposed in Senator Boisvenu's bill, my children and I would have been safer and I wouldn't have had to go through these attempted murders. Believe me, you don't emerge unhurt from an attempted murder. You suffer the after-effects for life.

I am asking the House of Commons, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Minister of Justice, the judges, all the provinces of Canada and the members to pass and enforce this new bill. It should be adopted immediately, without any amendments.

• (1135)

This is victim testimony.

It's very urgent. To conclude, I'd like to add that we have a right to live peacefully and safely under the law in our country.

For those watching at home and looking at these amendments, I will say that the Liberals removed the clause asking for the electronic bracelet to be worn by the attacker. That is the whole weight of the bill, the whole point of it. During the period of time between when a victim is strong enough and courageous enough to even report it, which is another issue, they are in a very dangerous position to be attacked or killed by their attacker, as are their children.

I think it is also really important for people at home to recognize something if we really want to think of the big picture and help prevent domestic violence. How many of those attackers grew up in a home where they witnessed domestic violence as children? We have to break the cycle. The impacts on children witnessing domestic violence are profound.

I want to go on to another victim's testimony. It is by Martine Jeanson, president, founder and frontline worker of La Maison des Guerrières. She testified November 23, 2023, giving powerful testimony in the status of women committee. She said:

Over the past 20 years, I've worked with hundreds of women who needed help. There is no way to hide them. Men can track them down at their place of work or through their family. They can follow children to school or to their friends' homes. The man will never stop stalking them, following them, harassing them and harming them. Until an electronic bracelet is required, women and their children will never be protected. Electronic bracelets may not be perfect, but that's all we have for the time being. We have no protection. That's why we are asking you, on behalf of all women, to pass the bill [unamended].

This is victim testimony.

I will reiterate this over and over again: We were elected to the House to elevate the voices of the people outside the House; we were not elected to push our own agenda and our own ideology. We were elected to make life better and safer, and right now, this country is not safe. There are serial killers who are eligible for day parole, retraumatizing their victims. There are children and mothers, people from all socio-economic classes, who are afraid to go to school. The men, the attackers, will find them wherever they are; they are stalkers. They control them and their lives, and they ruin children's lives. They ruin the lives of all the people around them.

*Private Members' Business*

The bill before us should be the most simple bill. We have an opportunity in the House to fix it. In committee, one of the members on the Liberals' side said they are just trying to keep it in line with how the current justice system works. The current justice system is broken, full stop. All we have to do is listen to the stats and read the paper. A CTV reporter tweeted this past weekend that she had someone criminally charged for harassing her. She was told to contact the police the minute he contacted her again. He is supposed to be in jail, but he is out. That is the danger, and that is why the bill and the amendments were put forward.

The bill would amend the Criminal Code with respect to bail pending trial and with respect to peace bonds, to provide that a judge, and in some cases a peace officer, may impose, as a condition of release, an electronic bracelet on an accused who is released pending trial or on a defendant who has entered into a section 810 peace bond. Electronic monitoring creates a security perimeter between the two intimate partners. The victim can carry a transmitter with them at all times, allowing them to maintain the safety perimeter even if they are away from home, giving the power to the victim.

I am asking every member of the House to please vote in support of the amendments. Let us strengthen our justice system and protect victims from domestic violence.

• (1140)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to what the member said, and I think it goes without saying that every member of the House of Commons, of every political stripe, recognizes the gravity and importance of the issue.

With respect to domestic violence, I like to think we have seen significant investments, both from budgetary measures of investments into shelters and transitional homes and through government and private member legislation. I would remind the member about Bill C-233, introduced by the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, which recognizes the importance of electronic monitoring and which looks at specific cases dealing with domestic violence.

These types of issues are very touching. Just a week or so ago a great tragedy took place in Manitoba, where a man killed his entire family: his wife and three children. Our hearts and prayers go out to the family, friends and members of the community.

Recently, the Prime Minister made an announcement on health care with the premier. The premier, as the Prime Minister has done, emphasized the importance of getting to some of the root causes. Let us find out what is taking place and what we can do. I think that as legislators, whether at the provincial or national level, we all have a role to play, as the member pointed out. In the past we have seen a great deal of co-operation among members that crosses party lines. In particular I would cite the private member's bill of the former Conservative leader Rona Ambrose that was an attempt to provide education through our judicial system. The support for the legislation crossed party lines, and the bill passed virtually unanimously. There was a bit of a hiccup because of a Senate issue, so the government ultimately had to bring it forward in order for it to pass.

I say that because, at the very beginning of her comments, the member pointed out that Bill S-205 received quite a few amendments. She is right. Although I was not at the committee, but I believe she was, that shows me that there was likely a great deal of dialogue with respect to the different amendments, and I suspect a number of them passed. I have had the opportunity to look at a couple of them, and I believe that the legislation was enhanced by the passing of some of the amendments. When we look at the work the committee has done and how we continue to advance the issue, we see that there is a great deal of merit in voting for the legislation.

The member spent a lot of her time talking about electronic monitoring. I first looked into electronic monitoring in, I guess, the nineties. I argued then, when I was the justice critic in the province of Manitoba, how that technology could enable us to improve the quality of our judicial system. I believe that today it is a very effective tool that could in fact make a difference in a very real and tangible way. However, I think we have to be careful about electronic monitoring or ankle bracelets. Often they are of great value, but they are not necessarily the answer in all situations. They do not necessarily prevent a crime from happening, but I acknowledge that they can be an effective tool, if not directly then indirectly, in preventing crimes from happening.

• (1145)

That is one of the reasons why, when it came time for us to talk about Bill C-233, there was support for the legislation from all political parties. I believe that legislators at that time recognized the true value of bringing in that sort of technology and encouraging our courts and the judicial system to better utilize, in certain situations, ankle bracelets. I saw that as a very strong positive.

I am not too sure exactly why the member feels the legislation before us would be stronger than what Bill C-233 has actually done. Maybe members who follow her would be able to provide further explanation as to how Bill C-233 would be complemented by what the Conservatives are currently talking about.

When we look at the seriousness of the issue, it is important for us to highlight that victims of sexual assault are to be treated with dignity and respect throughout the entire process. It is one of the reasons we brought forward government legislation in the past to support victims. I can recall debates on the floor of the House about public disclosure and ensuring that we protect the identity of the victims. At the same time, what we found was that there was a bit of a catch in the sense that there were a number of victims who wanted to be able to share their stories in certain situations, and how the law made that complicated. The government brought in the legislation to enable victims to share their stories in certain situations.

*Private Members' Business*

There is an educational component that is very real. The member made reference to breaking the chain. At the end of the day, the federal government needs to demonstrate leadership through actions, and we have done that with legislative changes as well as budgetary measures. We also need provinces, and even school divisions, to look at how they could contribute to the debate.

I have always thought that in certain areas of public policy, there is great value in incorporating things into our educational system through our public curriculum. I think the potential of dealing with this specific issue is underestimated, whether through family, course-based curricula or looking at different ways that education could be elevated to a higher priority to deal with this very serious issue. It is important.

From a provincial perspective, we need to look at resources and to ensure that we have proper supports in place. Far too often, victims are put in a situation, out of fear, that may lead to a peace bond's not being issued, and legislation has enabled family members or others to be able to look at getting a peace bond issued.

These are types of issues that the Crown and others have to deal with on a daily basis. We can look at how advocacy groups could further enhance the safety of women in their homes. This is critically important. I look forward to the ongoing debate. Suffice it to say, all of us are concerned about intimate partner violence. We have to ensure that the victims of sexual assault are treated with respect and dignity.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois's position has not changed since the bill was introduced. Obviously, we are in favour of it, since it is consistent with initiatives aimed at strengthening the justice and police systems in their fight against all forms of violence, including repeat violence. Our thoughts go out to victims of domestic violence, women who are victims of domestic violence. Gender-based violence is a scourge on our society. Obviously, we need to do more to prevent it.

I would like to begin by commending the sponsor of this bill, Senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu. We are all familiar with his story. His daughter was murdered by a sexual predator in 2002. Following that event, he chose to dedicate his life to protecting crime victims and strengthening the rights of all victims of violence, and especially women, who make up the majority of victims. It is in a way his legacy to our institution.

I hope that, with the contribution of all members of Parliament, this legislative measure will take effect very soon. I sincerely believe that it will help many people become more involved in the entire judicial process, which can be extremely trying for obvious reasons. Despite our differences of opinion on various topics, the senator and I agree on this one.

Protecting crime victims' rights is a priority for the Bloc Québécois. I am very pleased to speak today on this extremely important subject.

In Quebec and Canada, criminal and penal law must punish crime and ensure public safety. With the rise in the number of femicides and cases of domestic violence, it is important that we reinforce our mechanisms for protecting crime victims, as well as their children and other loved ones. This requires an amendment to the Criminal Code.

Bill S-205 is a firm step in that direction. It essentially seeks to get victims more involved in the judicial process by, for example, forcing the judge to consult them before issuing a release order with conditions.

The conditions that justify detaining an accused awaiting trial are set out in the Criminal Code. Let us take a closer look at what subsection 515(10) has to say:

For the purposes of this section, the detention of an accused in custody is justified only on one or more of the following grounds:

- (a) where the detention is necessary to ensure his or her attendance in court in order to be dealt with according to law;
- (b) where the detention is necessary for the protection or safety of the public, including any victim of or witness to the offence, or any person under the age of 18 years, having regard to all the circumstances including any substantial likelihood that the accused will, if released from custody, commit a criminal offence or interfere with the administration of justice; and
- (c) if the detention is necessary to maintain confidence in the administration of justice, having regard to all the circumstances, including
  - (i) the apparent strength of the prosecution's case,
  - (ii) the gravity of the offence,
  - (iii) the circumstances surrounding the commission of the offence, including whether a firearm was used, and
  - (iv) the fact that the accused is liable, on conviction, for a potentially lengthy term of imprisonment or, in the case of an offence that involves, or whose subject-matter is, a firearm, a minimum punishment of imprisonment for a term of three years or more.

Consequently, the decision to detain someone awaiting trial depends on multiple factors specific to each situation. When the public interest justifies keeping the accused in detention, it must be recognized that they are being deprived of their basic rights, including the presumption of innocence, and the right to life, liberty and security.

Allowing more victim involvement in the legal process that concerns them is a praiseworthy step that we can support without reservation. Victims do not have to fight every day for justice to be served. The bill helps lower the barriers victims potentially face that could dissuade them from pursuing the courageous process of filing a complaint against their attacker.

The Bloc Québécois has always strived to defend victims of crime. As I stated earlier, our thoughts are with women and victims of domestic violence. Every victim is one too many.

Quebec is a world leader in protecting the victims of domestic and family violence.



• (1155)

Quebec's public safety department has launched an electronic monitoring device project province-wide. It is used to prevent femicides and to protect the victims of domestic violence or sexual exploitation.

According to an article in *Le Devoir*, “this protective measure was offered for the first time in the Quebec City area in 2022. It was then deployed [across Quebec].” The Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine and northern Quebec regions have had this service since last September. Simply put, it prevents offenders from approaching their victim.

The article goes on to say, “the system consists of two interconnected GPS tracking devices, a bracelet permanently affixed to the ankle of the accused...and a mobile application installed on a smartphone held by the person to be protected. If the offender enters defined restricted areas around the victim, a notification is sent to a monitoring centre, which can then view the location of each of the two parties on a screen. An agent will ask the wearer of the bracelet to move away. If they refuse or continue to approach, the agent will request police intervention. Sometimes, the police are deployed immediately, without waiting for the offender's reaction”.

In the article, Isabelle Mailloux, director general of security at Quebec's correctional services, said that the idea behind this measure is to give victims some peace of mind and ensure their safety.

She also said, and I quote, “The bracelet may be imposed on offenders who are serving their sentence in the community, who are released pending trial, who are released on parole, or who have to meet certain conditions upon their release from prison. In all cases, the victim must consent before the order for the bracelet to be worn is issued”.

Isabelle Mailloux also pointed out that Quebec was a trailblazer when it implemented this protection system, and that it remains to this day the only Canadian province to use it.

She also explained the following to *Le Devoir*: “Whenever I hear from a victim who tells me that she has regained some peace of mind, that she has started sleeping again at night, that, to me, is the best indicator of success”. She said that it can have a deterrent effect on offenders when they realize that they really are being monitored and authorities will actually call them.

As reported in the article later on, she hopes that, if the program becomes well known, more women will be tempted to take part in it if they ever need to.

Personally, I hope that the rest of Canada will follow Quebec's example. I think it is time to come full circle and make inmates released from prison subject to the same restrictions across the country. Measures like those proposed in Bill S-205 could have a very positive impact on the safety of our communities.

These legislative changes are obviously an added value for victims. The justice system needs to be more effective and more transparent. We must also make the judicial process easier for victims, their families and their loved ones when the fateful decision is made to release the offender.

### *Private Members' Business*

The bill could help build the public's trust in the justice system so that victims do not hesitate to report the crimes against them. We know that is far too often the case. The statistics are troubling and show how important it is to have the right legislative measures. Between 2009 and 2019, we saw a 7.5% rise in femicide and domestic violence. That number peaked in 2021: As many as 18,571 female victims were reported in Quebec, or 1,788 more than in 2020. I think that as parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to contribute to reversing this very troubling trend.

I want to come back to the key components of the bill. I mentioned the requirement to consult the victim ahead of a release order with conditions. There is also the introduction of the concept of domestic violence, in which case a victim can apply to have the defendant enter into a recognizance to keep the peace. There is also the preponderance of the victim's version of events, which could influence the choice of conditions the defendant will be subject to under the recognizance.

The Bloc Québécois promised to help improve this bill. That is what we did in committee. We agreed with most of the amendments that were made to this bill, which mainly sought to strengthen it and provide more support for victims. There is just one thing that we did not support, and that was the amendment to decrease the maximum time for good behaviour from two years to 12 months. As we saw in the news recently, abusive partners can act out years later. It is therefore important to be vigilant when it comes to those with a violent past. As for the rest, we will continue to support this bill, which I think will help keep our communities safe.

• (1200)

[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today in support of this bill, Bill S-205, which was first introduced by Senator Boisvenu in 2021. First, I want to acknowledge his hard work and effort in putting this bill forward, as well as his courage in sharing his story about how gender-based violence impacted his own family. With that in mind, I think it was critical for him to ensure this bill passed through the House.

*Private Members' Business*

In general, this bill sets out to protect survivors of intimate partner violence through various amendments to the Criminal Code. These include ensuring judges consult the accused's intimate partner about their safety and security needs; allowing judges to consider the use of an electronic monitor for interim release; and establishing a new type of recognizance order, or peace bond, for survivors of intimate partner violence. If granted, the peace bond would allow the judge to impose conditions that could include electronic monitoring and a treatment or domestic violence counselling program.

Given that this bill is of great importance, especially because we know that rates of gender-based violence have increased since the pandemic, I can affirm the committee worked very hard to ensure that this bill was reviewed promptly so it could be passed into law. I am very excited to be here for the debate today and to keep this bill moving along. The committee also worked to make necessary amendments to address concerns expressed by the study's witnesses.

While discussing the bill, it is important to emphasize that intimate partner violence is a national crisis. We certainly know, as I indicated, that rates of violence within the home have increased since the pandemic. We also see a connection between intimate partner violence and the mental health crisis we are currently witnessing in Canada.

In fact, every six days, a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner. Given the severity of intimate partner violence, some Canadian cities, including Ottawa, Toronto and Kitchener, have gone so far as to declare it an epidemic. Therefore, we know that we need to address this crisis of violence. It is critical to put in place laws to ensure the safety of those who are experiencing violence.

Rates of intimate partner violence have been on the rise in recent years, especially, as I said, since the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2014 and 2022, intimate partner violence rates increased by an alarming 20%. Intimate partner violence overwhelmingly impacts women, particularly young women. Forty-four per cent of women, or 6.2 million women aged 15 and older, have reported some kind of abuse in their intimate partner relationship. We often think about intimate partner violence in terms of those who are cohabiting, but even when we look at the impact on youth, the rates of intimate partner violence are alarming.

Women are similarly overrepresented in intimate partner homicides, which make up nearly one-fifth of all solved homicides in Canada. We also know that intimate partner violence disproportionately impacts low-income and indigenous women, as well as women who are visible minorities, disabled or 2SLGBTQ+. Particularly, there has been a rise of anti-trans hate happening in the country. We saw the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Carleton, fuelling the fires of anti-trans rhetoric last week when talking about safe places that will now exclude trans women.

● (1205)

We need to be vigilant in all areas of society to protect women. We know that the consequences of intimate partner violence are also very costly. The Department of Justice, for example, estimated the cost of intimate partner violence to be roughly \$7.4 billion. It

not only costs dignity and safety, it also costs us financially by turning a blind eye to the crisis of intimate partner violence.

One of the biggest concerns I had with this bill was the impact it might have on indigenous peoples. We know that the Liberal government throwing out the amendments to Bill C-318, as we heard this morning, is certainly not committed, but in the last Parliament, we did pass Bill C-15, which includes clause 5. It states, "The Government of Canada must, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration."

Today, for example, it could have taken all the measures necessary to pass Bill C-13 and provide royal assent with the amendments to make sure it was consistent with the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It did not, but we know the Liberal government is not a champion of indigenous rights in this country as it continues to willfully violate our rights.

When we were amending Bill S-205, one of the concerns I had was related to indigenous peoples due to the ongoing legacy of colonial-state policies and laws. Indigenous people, as a result, are overrepresented in Canada's criminal justice system. We must make sure that our criminal justice system is consistent with Bill C-15, which affirms all legislation going forward. I know that this is a Senate bill, but, just as a matter of principle, it should be consistent with the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In 2018, indigenous adults made up 30% of admissions to provincial and territorial custody and 29% of admissions to federal custody, while representing 4% of the population. Indigenous women made up an even greater share of those admitted into custody, at 42%. I moved an amendment in committee to add cases involving indigenous people to enable judges to consider alternative, culturally appropriate indigenous support services rather than imprisonment. This type of amendment is not only morally necessary, but also legally necessary as well. Again, Bill C-15 requires all Canadian government legislation to be consistent with the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes requirements to prevent discrimination against indigenous people and respect the integrity of indigenous cultures and traditions.

The Gladue principles in Canadian law compel judges to recognize the unique experiences of indigenous peoples, including prevent discrimination against indigenous people and respect the integrity of indigenous cultures and traditions. Given these considerations, judges must consider alternatives to prisons while sentencing, such as, for example, alternative restorative justice.

I would like to thank everybody and congratulate Senator Boisvenu. I am looking forward to seeing this bill move quickly through the House. I would also like to thank the committee for the hard discussions we had getting this bill through committee.

• (1210)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House today on Bill S-205, a bill that comes from a Conservative senator and a Conservative member of Parliament. It is a Conservative initiative aimed at combatting domestic violence.

Before I speak specifically about this bill, I do want to pay particular tribute to Senator Boisvenu, who is responsible for putting this bill forward. Senator Boisvenu has seen the impacts of this kind of violence on his family. He has turned personal tragedy into public advocacy, standing up for victims of crime. He has devoted his energies in the Senate and outside of the Senate to standing for justice and for the inclusion of victims' voices in various processes.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize his incredible work on this bill and on so many other different areas. He is now retiring, and I think all members from all sides in the other place and in this place would pay tribute to him, his commitment to public service and his work. Bill S-205 is one of many proposals he has put forward for combatting domestic violence and other forms of violence, as well as standing up for victims.

Bill S-205 seeks to deal with orders that go against perpetrators of domestic violence, which a judge would issue in order to protect victims and control the perpetrators' activities. In particular, it would create a mechanism where a judge can mandate that a perpetrator would wear an electronic monitoring device and also that victims would be consulted in the process of judges making decisions about the kinds of orders that apply to perpetrators.

These initiatives make sense. They are common sense. They would give victims of domestic violence a greater sense of security, and I believe they would reduce subsequent violence and would save lives.

Unfortunately, what we have seen in the process of this bill making its way through Parliament is that members of the Liberal government supported amendments at committee that would weaken the bill, so here we are in the House at report stage, which is when this bill comes out of committee, and Conservatives are working to add back in some of those critical sections that were removed at committee. There is a lot of discussion in this place about combatting domestic violence, but when the rubber hits the road, we have Liberals voting against critical measures that would actually protect victims of crime.

Victims of crime are not primarily concerned about words of solidarity from politicians. There are a lot of politicians who say they have had enough, that enough is enough and that it must stop, but

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the rubber hits the road with the concrete legislative initiatives we put forward that punish perpetrators of this horrible crime and that create the kinds of mechanisms, such as electronic monitoring, that will allow victims of these crimes to feel safer.

It is disappointing that, while having words to say about the problem of domestic violence, Liberal members have not actually supported the constructive initiatives that Conservatives in the other place and in this place have put forward.

As well, I wanted to mention an issue I have been working on and advocating for, and that is more bystander intervention training. I think one of the ways we can combat crime, domestic violence and other forms of violence, is by empowering bystanders, people who may be outside of a situation and see things that are going on, to know how to respond, how to intervene and what kinds of tools are available to them. I have been to a number of bystander training events, including in my own community, and I think these are very powerful tools for combatting this kind of violence. We have focused a lot, as we should, on punishing the perpetrator and protecting the victim, but I think we can also look at other people, bystanders and potential bystanders, in terms of how to engage them. I have put forward Motion No. 57 in the House that deals with promoting more bystander intervention, awareness and training, which I think is another step we should be talking more about in terms of combatting domestic violence.

• (1215)

Fundamentally, this is a phenomenal bill, a great bill, and I want to again recognize the excellent work of Senator Boisvenu throughout his life and career standing for and with victims of crime. However, it is unfortunate to see efforts by Liberals and others to water down these kinds of initiatives. Words of solidarity are not enough. We need action, we need policy, to punish perpetrators and protect victims. Those concrete initiatives are going to really make a difference to vulnerable people in our society. I hope that the House will support Conservative efforts to reverse the watering-down amendments at committee and to strengthen this bill again so that we can do the work that everybody talks about, which is to protect victims of domestic violence.

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

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 35—EXTENSION OF SITTING HOURS AND CONDUCT OF EXTENDED PROCEEDINGS

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

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That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, for the duration of the session,

(a)

(i) a minister of the Crown may, with the agreement of the House leader of another recognized party, at any time during a sitting, but no later than 6:30 p.m., request that the ordinary hour of daily adjournment for a subsequent sitting be 12:00 a.m., provided that it be 10:00 p.m. on a day when a debate pursuant to Standing Order 52 or 53.1 is to take place, and that such a request shall be deemed adopted,

(ii) a minister of the Crown may request, at any time during a sitting, that a decision to extend a subsequent sitting, made pursuant to subparagraph (a)(i), be rescinded and such request shall be deemed adopted;

(b) on a sitting day extended pursuant to subparagraph (a)(i),

(i) proceedings on any opposition motion pursuant to Standing Order 81(16) shall conclude no later than 5:30 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday, 6:30 p.m. on a Monday or 1:30 p.m. on a Friday, on an allotted day for the business of supply, except pursuant to Standing Order 81(18)(c),

(ii) after 6:30 p.m., the Speaker shall not receive any quorum calls or dilatory motions, and shall only accept a request for unanimous consent after receiving a notice from the House leaders or whips of all recognized parties stating that they are in agreement with such a request,

(iii) motions to proceed to the orders of the day, and to adjourn the debate or the House may be moved after 6:30 p.m. by a minister of the Crown, including on a point of order, and such motions be deemed adopted,

(iv) the time provided for Government Orders shall not be extended pursuant to Standing Orders 33(2), 45(9) or 67.1(2);

(c) during consideration of the estimates on the last allotted day of each supply period, pursuant to Standing Orders 81(17) and 81(18),

(i) when the Speaker interrupts the proceedings for the purpose of putting forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the estimates, all remaining motions to concur in the votes for which a notice of opposition was filed shall be deemed to have been moved and seconded, the questions deemed put and recorded divisions deemed requested,

(ii) when a supply bill is considered in a committee of the whole, if a recorded division is requested to any bill elements or motions required to dispose of that stage of the said bill, the results of the vote shall apply to the remaining bill elements and motions required to dispose of that stage and report the bill to the House;

(d) a motion for third reading of a government bill may be made in the same sitting during which the said bill has been concurred in at report stage;

(e) on the last three sitting days set forth in the House of Commons Calendar for the periods ending in June, as well as the last two sitting days of the periods ending in December, a minister of the Crown may move, without notice, a motion to adjourn the House, provided that,

(i) the said motion shall be decided immediately without debate or amendment, and that the House shall be deemed adjourned pursuant to Standing Order 28,

(ii) notwithstanding Standing Order 45, no recorded division requested between 2 p.m. on the third to last scheduled sitting day and the adjournment on the last scheduled sitting day of the periods ending in June, respectively, and between 2 p.m. on the second to last scheduled sitting day and the adjournment on the last scheduled sitting day of the periods ending in December shall be deferred, except for any recorded division requested in regard to a Private Member's Business item, for which the provisions of Standing Orders 93 and 98 shall continue to apply; and

(f) on any day, at midnight or thereafter, if the House has not completed a series of recorded divisions related to the business of supply or on any bill, a minister of the Crown may move, at any time, the suspension of the sitting of the House, which shall be deemed adopted, and the sitting of the House shall be suspended until 9:00 a.m., later that calendar day.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a motion being put forward by our government to improve the work of the House.

We are at an important point in this parliamentary session. Our government has an ambitious agenda to improve the lives of Canadians.

This means working hard here in the House of Commons to advance legislation for the people we represent. It means working with all parties in the House to get things done co-operatively, without partisanship or political games.

Members from all parties in this minority government are here to represent their constituents and to get things done on behalf of the people they represent. Unfortunately, one party is preventing that from happening.

The Conservatives, led by the Leader of the Opposition have been behaving irresponsibly. They oppose for the sake of opposing, and they fail to propose responsible solutions. They are obstructing the work of every member of the House, all its committees, bodies and parties, solely for their own partisan interests. They are using political delay tactics to prevent a number of bills from being voted on. We are all witnesses to this, even when it comes to bills they actually support. They impose all-night voting marathons and, in the process, vote against the very investments Canadians are counting on.

● (1220)

[English]

That is the agenda of the leader of the official opposition of the Conservative Party of Canada for the House. It is to delay, obstruct and create chaos. By doing so, he hopes that Canadians will tune all of this out and not become invested in the work that we do here, the work that has positive impacts on Canadians every day. I will get to that in a moment.

Before that, I would like to talk about how the Conservatives have prevented the House of Commons from doing its work and how their leader will never admit to Canadians what he and his MPs are doing. All his claims about who he is working for are nothing but a ruse. The leader of the official opposition is working for himself, for no one else, and the House of Commons is paying the price.

The motion we are debating today is designed to address the unfortunate place we now find ourselves because of the Conservatives' political agenda of chaos and obstruction. The motion is designed to allow the House to do its work. It is designed to provide extensive time to debate bills in the chamber, something that the Conservatives claim they want. It is designed to turn this place into a healthier workplace. No one, whether one is a member of Parliament or an employee working in the House of Commons, should be forced to work throughout the night simply because the Leader of the Opposition wants to bully others into participating in his political games.

Indeed, this motion reflects our government's view of what we should all want Parliament to be, which is a place for constructive debate, testing ideas, and reasoned and civil discussions. It should be a place where things get done. Simply put, it should be a place that Canadians are proud of, not a place that Canadians look at and recoil in horror because of the games played, through the night, by the official opposition. Unfortunately, the Conservative leader wants to prevent all of this from happening. He wants to turn the House into a place of dysfunction.

On our side of the aisle, and I believe this is true for other MPs in the chamber, we have a different view. We have a much greater respect for this place, for Parliament. We are here every day, working hard to help Canadians in a wide range of areas that touch their lives—

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will interrupt the hon. member for a moment. We might not agree with what is being said today, but we all have to give respect to the person who is speaking.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, that makes the point quite eloquently. Does it not?

This includes making life more affordable so Canadians can pay for their groceries and their housing. It includes protecting our environment from the catastrophic consequences of climate change. It also includes ensuring Canadian families have access to quality, affordable child care, which is something these Conservatives say they want, and have voted for, but they have refused to allow it to come to a vote so the House could pass child care for Canadian families from coast to coast to coast and start enjoying that now.

This includes having access to sustainable jobs and dental care, and having a strong armed forces that is helping to protect the people of Ukraine by sending equipment, supplies and trainers so the people of Ukraine can resist the illegal Russian invasion.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

Unfortunately, the Conservatives are playing partisan games in the House, standing in the way of progress for all Canadians. They refuse to work with the other parties. They constantly obstruct the passage of laws. This behaviour has been going on since the beginning of this Parliament. They blocked the budget, the fall economic statement, sustainable jobs for workers, child care services for Canadian families, the free trade agreement with Ukraine and a national council for reconciliation. Those are but six examples. This is parliamentary obstruction by stealth. Canadians deserve better.

The Conservatives' actions are unhealthy for this Parliament as well as for democracy. We cannot allow members of all parties of this minority Parliament to be taken hostage by the egotistical political agenda of one party. We do not expect the Conservatives to change their stripes. They will continue to play their parliamentary game to delay passing bills and adopting legislation. We have therefore prepared a response.

The government is putting forward a motion aiming to guarantee that Canadians obtain results from their members. Our motion will make it possible to have evening sessions so we have more time to

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debate legislation, something my friends on the other side say they want.

This motion is not without precedent. It is the third time we have deemed it necessary to propose a motion to extend the sitting hours of the House so members can do their work. In the two previous cases, the House adopted motions to extend hours for a specified period. It is time to do it again.

If this motion is adopted, the possibility of extending hours will remain in force until the House wraps up. The Conservatives say they want more time to debate before voting. This motion will allow that.

Our motion therefore reinforces democracy. It will make it possible to better guarantee that one party, the Conservative Party, does not block the work of all the other parties in the House. Parliament works better when we work together, and not when one party obstructs progress.

This motion allows more time so members can debate in the evening, until midnight. This does not mean every sitting will be extended across the board. The extension will only take place when necessary, and will take place on a given day only if the government receives the support of another party for it to take place that day. This support would therefore constitute a majority of members in the House.

[*English*]

Moreover, this motion clearly indicates that the government could not surprise the House one day by stating that it will sit late that night. The government has no intention of using this motion at a moment's notice to extend the sitting hours. Indeed, the motion we are debating today clearly states that advance notice for a late sitting is to be given the day prior. The motion would also provide for early adjournment of the House.

Before we start hearing the Conservatives claim we are trying to shut down the House in the days and weeks ahead, let us put the facts on the table. Such an assertion from the Conservatives would be patently false. The motion says that, in the last two sitting days of a fall sitting, the government could put forward a motion to adjourn the House early for the Christmas break. Similarly, it says that, in the last three days of a spring sitting, the government could put forward a motion to adjourn the House early for the summer break.

In both instances, if this were to happen, adjourning early would not be something the government could do on its own. It would be a votable motion. The House would vote on whether to adjourn. It would only pass if a majority of MPs decided that the business of the fall or spring sitting were substantively complete.

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Let us put aside any ludicrous claims from the Conservatives about adjourning early. We have too much work to do. If they make that claim, it is because they do not want to talk about the overarching intent of the motion, which is to extend the daily hours of the House so that MPs could debate bills and come to a vote. We want more time, not less, for MPs to do their work in the House. If Conservatives have a problem with this, then they need to explain why.

Finally, I would like to address another significant part of this motion. Last December, and we all remember this, in the final days of sitting, the Conservatives tried to turn the House of Commons into a sad spectacle to fulfill their leader's basic impulses as a political bully. The House was scheduled to vote on the budgetary estimates. This is a routine part of the parliamentary cycle and should have been dealt with through a handful of votes. Instead, the Conservatives decided to vote against the investments our government is making.

They forced more than 130 consecutive votes, which took place throughout the night, so they could vote against funds in a wide variety of areas. I would note for my friends that all of those votes are recorded for posterity. We know exactly who voted against what in the House. Let me give some examples: constructing new homes; cracking down on terrorism financing; supporting communities recovering from hurricane Fiona, which is something the Speaker knows well; cracking down on firearms from illegally entering Canada; ending gender-based violence; supporting Canada's dairy, poultry and egg farmers; supporting the Montreal Holocaust Museum; training Ukrainian soldiers through Operation Unifier; and supporting our border guards to keep the Canadian border secure.

The Conservatives stayed up all night, at least some of them did, to vote against all of these things. Who did not stay up all night? The very person who said he was going to keep us here until Christmas to block all progress for Canadians, all measures for Canadians, all vital supports across the board—

• (1230)

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I know that we are not supposed to say when someone is not in the House, and it should be fair. The leader of the Conservative Party did show up in time to vote against Ukraine. Then he went home.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would suggest to everyone, as we dance on that line, that we are not supposed to say whether someone is here or not, whether that is in the future, in the past or even right now.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, the point is well taken. However, I would point out that votes are recorded. We will be paying close attention to that, as we always have.

What we went through was standing up for the kinds of things that Canadians expect Parliament to do. We were standing up for the kinds of things they expect their government to do, and standing up, yes, for the very essence of the democracy that happens in the chamber. We were determined to stay here all night to demonstrate to Canadians that we are standing on guard for the things they cherish. We are standing on guard for the programs that they depend on the government for, and we are standing on guard for those things, despite the trickery and the maliciousness demonstrated by the official opposition.

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

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, they joke about these things because it is all part of the plan. It is just a big joke for these Conservatives on the other side of the House. There is all this chaos and dysfunction they are bringing here on a daily basis, which is preventing us from voting on serious matters that Canadians are looking to us to provide. That is just a part of the long list of investments through which the Conservatives showed their true colours. The Conservatives have voted no, over and over again.

• (1235)

[Translation]

The Conservatives showed us their true colours. The unfortunate outcome was a marathon voting session that lasted 30 hours straight. What does that mean? It means that members, their staff and House staff had to work all night to cater to the Leader of the Opposition's whim. Not only was his attitude childish and politically irresponsible, but it also jeopardized the health of many of the people who use these corridors. This kind of thing must never happen again.

Our motion proposes that, if another voting marathon were to occur in the future, it would proceed as follows: votes could take place throughout the day and even late into the evening. However, as soon as the bells ring at midnight, the voting would stop. Members and staff would then be given time for a health break lasting several hours. They deserve the right to sleep. That is a perfectly reasonable request considering that we make decisions and allocate billions of dollars in support of Canadians. At 9 a.m. the next morning, the House would resume and the voting would continue. This would not prevent the Conservatives from chasing after their wild partisan objectives by launching another voting marathon. It would simply spread it over a longer period of time to avoid compromising the health of members and other people who work here and who support us.

I see no reason why the Conservatives would object to this proposal. We need to set politics aside and put the personal health of each and every one of us in this House ahead of partisan gains. The purpose of this motion is to make this democratic chamber work better.

[English]

This motion is put forward in the spirit of making this place work better, to make this place more productive and to allow members from all sides of the House to vote, as we are sent here to do in the most democratic of ways on things we feel are important for the people we represent.

[Translation]

I will conclude my remarks there, and I look forward to questions from my colleagues.

[English]

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would argue that type of revisionist history is why the Liberal polling numbers are so flaccid. Debate on legislation is why we are here. We are here to hold the government to account, and we are not here to make this easier for Liberal cabinet ministers because they failed to work plan.

For example, responses to Supreme Court rulings, such as the one on MAID, have been introduced into the House at the last minute. The government then attempts to ram these things through without intervention, and that is because of its failure to work plan. It is often the Liberals who are holding up legislation. It is often they who are delaying Parliament. For example, last week, a Liberal on the government operations committee filibustered to block a Conservative motion to compel the owners of GC Strategies, a company at the centre of the “arrive scam” debacle, to be questioned by parliamentarians.

Is the real reason the Liberals are putting this motion forward that their cabinet has failed to work plan due to the legions of scandals the government is facing?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, here is what I can say: Every time we bring a bill to this House for debate at second reading, it does not really matter what it is. It could be called the “the sky is blue act”. The Conservatives would pose dilatory motions. For Canadians who are watching this, what the Conservatives do is they move concurrence on a committee report from six months ago that no one has talked about since. They bring aimless and pointless questions of privilege to the floor, things that prevent us from getting to the work we have to do.

The member voted for child care. I will put it to her right now: Will she go to her leader and ask that we be able to put Bill C-35 to a vote today, at all stages, so that Albertans can have access to the child care they deserve?

• (1240)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, New Democratic Party MPs come to the House of Commons to work, as you have seen, for pharmacare, for dental care, for anti-scab legislation, for the grocery rebates and fighting back against food price gouging with enhancements to the Competition Act, for supports for clean energy and for affordable housing. All of those things have come through the NDP's being the effective opposition in the House and pushing the government to simply put in place programs that will actually help people.

As we know, Conservatives have done the opposite of that and voted instead to gut health care funding, housing and even things like CBSA, prisons and correctional services. They have voted to cut all of those things. What this motion represents is working smarter and working harder, having evening sessions that the NDP has long been a proponent of, but stopping the all-night voting marathons that have led to health issues with a number of members of Parliament and with staff. The NDP will be supporting this motion.

Why have the Conservatives been so obstructionist during the course of this Parliament?

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**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, my friend from the New Democratic Party asks why Conservatives have done this. We have seen this around the world. They think that if they come in and make these places, these precious chambers of democracy, so toxic, so laden with invective, so dripping with insult, Canadians will turn away and simply say that they do not want any part of it. That is how they come to suppress voting and try to get Canadians disillusioned with their politics rather than interested in the results that politics and government can have on their daily life.

My friend from New Westminster—Burnaby outlined many of them, such as dental care, lower grocery prices and child care. These are all things that we work in earnest every day to pass through this House in a democratic way but the Conservatives spend all of their time trying to tie up in procedure and nonsense.

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the Greens, like the members of the NDP, are certainly here to work. We are happy to stay late to move forward with the business of Canadians and their priorities.

I would like to put to the government House leader two examples of those.

First, the member knows, as do all members, that Canadians with disabilities across the country continue to live in legislated poverty. The government has committed to the Canada disability benefit for many years. With this extra time, does that mean we are going to see the Canada disability benefit funded with expediency?

Second, as the member spoke about protecting our environment from the catastrophic effects of climate change, he likely knows that a climate no-brainer starting point is to give folks an incentive to retrofit their homes. There is a program that has been in place for 20 years in Ontario, called the greener homes grant. Ontarians are no longer eligible to apply for it right now.

As a result of the extra time we are going to have here, will we be moving forward with significant measures to address the climate crisis, with the replenishment and expansion of the greener homes grant being an example of that?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, debating things that help and have positive impacts for Canadians wherever they may live, in Ontario or elsewhere, on climate change, for disabled Canadians or in any other matter is precisely why we are making this place more open for debate, so that we can have greater productivity. We can debate more things and pass more measures that will help everyday Canadians.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague would agree that the motion we are debating today is an admission of failure.

In his speech, my colleague criticized all opposition members, insinuating that the opposition parties are to blame for the fact that we cannot seem to deal with the major problems that currently exist in Canada.

However, it is the Liberals who are in government. They also have a strong ally who supports them at every turn, even when they are not asked to do so. The reality is that this is a majority government that still cannot deal with the problems.

We are grappling with a housing crisis, a climate crisis and a language crisis. The Liberals are telling us here this morning that the Conservatives and the opposition parties are to blame.

Is this motion not inevitably an admission of failure?

• (1245)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I salute my friend and the members from the Bloc Québécois for their constructive contribution. They are here to oppose. Sometimes they support our proposals, sometimes they reject them.

However, they do not do what I criticize my friends in the official opposition of, namely using dilatory tactics that only create chaos and prevent my friend and all parliamentarians from expressing their point of view, taking a position and taking action in favour of Canadians or against something.

Bills are introduced in the House so that we can debate them and vote on them. Then, we have to take positions and defend them. The fact is that this motion is being moved for this member and for all members in the House, so that this seat of democracy can work better.

*[English]*

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that we are having this debate and this discussion today. I believe that every member of Parliament is elected to represent their constituents. I am really honoured and privileged to represent the good people of the riding of Waterloo.

What I have noticed, whether in the House or within committees, is that each party has priorities. Each has areas of focus. Whether it is the Bloc, the NDP, the Greens or the independents, there are areas of interest in which each party is trying to work with the government to ask how they can deliver for their constituents.

I echo the comments of the government House leader, that there is one party that believes that the role of the official opposition is to always oppose rather than actually constructively work with.

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

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, they find it funny, and that is fine. We notice that when there are certain people speaking in the House, the volume in the House is a lot louder than when other people are speaking.

I think that when it comes to this motion, what is important for us to actually focus on is how we deliver for Canadians. The leader of the official opposition lives in government-funded housing. Every member of Parliament is paid by the public purse. How do we ensure that we are delivering for Canadians?

Government does have a role to play. I would like to hear the government House leader's comments on how this motion might actually be able to make us more productive if members of Parliament chose to come here actually to work constructively together rather than blindly oppose.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, that is a point that makes itself. We are sent here to make sure we get results for our constituents, that we participate positively in debates and that we put forward proposals and bills that help the people we represent. When we are blocked from doing that, systematically, by an opposition that consistently puts up procedural roadblocks to that, of course, any responsible government has to act in the way we are doing today.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives are focused on axing the tax, building the homes, fixing the budget and stopping the crime, while the Liberal Prime Minister proves day in and day out that he is not worth the cost or the corruption.

What we are seeing today is a perfect example of how the government is focused on the wrong things. While the Conservatives are putting forward tangible and practical measures that will lower costs, bring interest rates down, get homes built around the country and put dangerous criminals behind bars, the Liberal government is focused on the Standing Orders of the House of Commons.

Canadians are going to food banks in record numbers. People have moved away from home and have found jobs. They are now finding themselves having to renew their mortgages and are being forced to move back with their parents. Communities once safe and secure, where people would go to bed at night without locking their doors, are now investing in security cameras and other measures because their neighbourhoods have become so dangerous. All of this is going on in Canada, while the Prime Minister continues to break so many aspects of Canadian society. While the Liberals come in with a programming motion, using a valuable day of House time debating how bills are going to be debated and how many hours the House will sit, the Conservatives will continue to raise the important issues that Canadians face. The Liberals want to debate and delay, have a day-or-two-long debate arguing about how the process should be handled in the House of Commons.

We are not going to let them off the hook. Let us go through these points one by one.



The government is saying that it has to do this to get its agenda through. We in the official opposition would happily help advance an agenda that would actually accomplish these priority items. If the Liberals were to bring in a bill to cancel the carbon tax or at least cancel the increase that they have scheduled for April 1, we would support that. If they brought in tangible measures that would actually get homes built, we would support that.

We found out just a couple of weeks ago that the current housing minister launched a brutal and devastating personal attack on the previous immigration minister, who, by the way, are the same people. The former immigration minister is now the current housing minister. The current housing minister attacked the former immigration minister, blaming himself for mismanaging the immigration system in our country, which has caused terrible consequences on the housing side of things. After eight years of the Prime Minister, Canada builds fewer homes than the number of new Canadians added every year.

The minister admitted at committee that all of the Liberals' billions of dollars, their fancy photo-ops and their repackaged announcements did not build specific homes. The vaunted and much-celebrated, in Liberal circles, housing accelerator fund sounds active. It is one of those buzzwords. I wonder how many consultants they had to hire to come up with a name like the housing accelerator fund. That sounds exciting. It sounds like it will really pick up the pace of home building. We asked him a simple question. How many homes had this housing accelerator actually built? He said that it did not actually build any homes. Pardon the official opposition members if we come to this place to defend taxpayer dollars and if we oppose billions of dollars of spending that does not build new homes.

One of my Conservative colleagues, and I believe it was my colleague, the member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, asked a very simple question of the government when it came to the carbon tax. He asked whether the government could tell Canadians how many greenhouse gas emissions were reduced by the carbon tax. We would think that if the signature economic policy of the government is the carbon tax that it might measure that, that it might actually count how many greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by its signature policy. However, the answer that came back was that it did not keep track of it. It does not know; it does not measure that.

• (1250)

The Liberals have imposed this carbon tax on Canadians and have hiked it year after year, after promising not to, by the way. Remember that promise going into the 2019 election when former Liberal environment minister, Catherine McKenna, promised that they were never going to raise the carbon tax? The Liberals attacked me for telling Canadians not to believe the Liberals, that once the election was over, when the Prime Minister did not need the votes of Canadians but still needed their money, he would absolutely raise the carbon tax.

Catherine McKenna's other famous comment was that if we repeated a lie louder and over and over again, eventually people would believe us. That certainly bears out how Liberals have communicated about the carbon tax. They promised not to raise it and now they are forcing a hike on everyone year after year.

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In the fiscal update in the fall of 2022, the Liberals promised that they would stop pouring inflationary fuel on the fire. The current Liberal finance minister said that in order to fight inflation, they had to get a grip on government spending, and there was that glimmer of hope. After telling Canadians that the Prime Minister did not think about monetary policy, in the few days after the fall economic update in 2022, there was that brief moment of hope when Conservatives thought that maybe he finally got it, that maybe someone finally read that part of macroeconomics textbooks to the Prime Minister and explained to him how, when governments go deep into deficits and force central banks to create brand new money out of thin air to bankroll government spending, that caused inflation. We thought maybe he finally got that and that the Liberals would work toward getting back to balanced budgets.

Of course, that hope was very short-lived. Just a few weeks after that, they went right back to their Liberal ways, borrowing and spending, plunging the country deeper into deficit. Immediately afterward, inflation started going up again. That is why so many Canadians cringe every time interest rates go up, because the Bank of Canada has to raise interest rates to fight the inflation that it caused in the first place by bankrolling the government deficit spending.

The Conservatives want to stop the crime. After eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians are less safe. In fact, many areas in Canada are experiencing a dramatic spike in violent crime, which we have not seen in decades, hitting all-time highs in many areas and for many different types of crime.

Crime, like inflation, does not just happen. It is not like the weather. It is not like we can read the Farmers' Almanac one year and say that we will probably have an early frost or that inflation might hit 3.5%. Inflation and crime are directly linked to the government's policy decisions.

The previous Conservative government brought in tougher penalties for dangerous and repeat offenders. We are not talking about young people making a mistake for the first time in their lives. We are talking about hardened criminals, people who use dangerous weapons to commit their crimes, people who commit the same crime over and over again or people who cause grave bodily harm or even death in the commission of their crimes. We toughened those penalties. What did the Liberal Prime Minister do early on in his mandate? He started repealing those common-sense Conservative tough-on-crime bills and made bail much easier to get.

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It used to be that if people had prior convictions, had proven to society and the courts that they were dangerous offenders and were accused of committing new crimes, it would be harder to get bail. In other words, it would be harder for them to be released before their trials. The Prime Minister's ideological obsession with putting the rights of criminals ahead of the rights of law-abiding Canadians decided to make bail easier to get. He actually mandated judges to err on the side of granting bail, even for dangerous and repeat offenders.

Again, we are not talking about a young offender being picked up for the first time for shoplifting or someone who has lost their temper for the first time and maybe lashed out at someone in a restaurant or a park. We are talking about people who commit the same crime over and over again. The government decided to put them back on the streets as early as possible. It is no surprise that crime started ticking up. Now we are in the midst of a crime wave that we have not seen in over a generation, and it is all directly linked to the government's agenda.

• (1255)

The Conservatives offer practical solutions. We offer many different ways of providing Canadians tax relief when it comes to the carbon tax. Obviously, we would like the government to acknowledge the failure of its signature economic policy. It does nothing to reduce emissions. The government does not even count how many emissions are affected by the carbon tax. It increases the cost of literally everything. Everything that needs to be produced, shipped, refrigerated, heated or sold in a store that has to have lights or any type of refrigerator or freezer has to pay the carbon tax, and that is built into the price that consumers pay.

We are going to hear Liberals saying throughout the day, and we hear it all the time, that Canadians are better off with it, because of the rebate they cooked up. What they do not tell Canadians is that the budget watchdog, the person the government appointed to scour through all the data and to go into a room, read all the reports and measure everything, account for everything and model everything, the non-partisan independent Parliamentary Budget Officer, has concluded that the vast majority of Canadians pay far more in the carbon tax than they hope to get back in any rebate.

The reason for that is that when the Liberals designed it, they deliberately excluded the knock-on effects of the carbon tax. Therefore, the only thing the rebate even contemplates, when it is being calculated, is the actual line item we might see on our bill when we fuel up or when we pay our utility. What we do not see, and what the calculation does not take into account, are all the price increases that go from farm to plate and from forest to Home Depot. All the aspects of the supply chain where costs are added on, the carbon tax applies every single step of the way and increases that price.

We offered a common-sense plan to scrap the tax, and it was rejected. Then we proposed to at the very least stop raising the carbon tax in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis. When we are in a hole, we stop digging. Homer Simpson has the idea that when we are in a hole, we can try to dig up, but that does not work, and it certainly does not work to keep digging, to add on those costs.

The government is hiking the carbon tax. It is due to go up again on April 1 by 23%. Media reports say that the rebate is only going

to go up 17%. Even with the fact that the rebate does not cover all the costs, as the government hikes the carbon tax, the rebate does not keep up with it. Canadians are falling further and further behind.

We proposed to at the very least stop hiking the tax, and that was rejected. Then we talked about grocery prices going up. There is that heart-breaking scene that so many of us see when we go to the grocery stores in our communities. We see well-dressed men and women, often with children, going through the grocery aisle. They pick up a package of beef and they stare at it for sometimes a full minute or maybe even a minute and a half. Maybe they pick up something else to compare with it. Then they put both of them back because they cannot afford them. Grocery prices have gone up so quickly and so dramatically because of the inflation and the carbon tax.

What is the government's answer? It is to keep hiking it. We proposed to at least take the carbon tax off groceries and farmers, to remove the carbon tax off farm production so that we do not tax the farmer who grows the food and we do not tax the trucker who trucks the food or the retailer who sells the food. That was rejected too. The government does not want the carbon tax to be lifted off our agricultural producers. That is a tangible practical way we could bring costs down. The government rejected that.

We have proposed a common-sense approach to tackle car thefts. Our leader announced a signature policy to deal with this scourge that is now plaguing Canadians from coast to coast. Stolen cars are becoming one of Canada's fastest-growing exports after the Liberal government weakened penalties and made it easier to get bail. It also diverted much-needed resources from frontline border service agents, who have the responsibility to inspect and track things leaving the country, and it spent those resources on the arrive scam.

An app that should have cost \$80,000 ballooned to over \$60 million because of phony invoices, work that was never done and all kinds of corruption that we are uncovering. The government paid billions to consultants instead of investing in the frontline resources that would actually bring that crime down.

● (1300)

We offered to fast-track that bill too. We could have easily had those types of things passed. Instead, the government is doubling down on its failed agenda and using the coalition it has with the NDP to ram through more of the same agenda, the very same policies, the very same ideology that caused the cost of living crisis, the inflation, the massive interest rate hikes, the crime wave plaguing our cities and the housing shortage that has driven the dream of home ownership out of the reach of so many Canadians. The government wants to double, triple and quadruple down on that and ram its agenda through. While Canadians are going through this cost of living crisis, as they have to pay more because of the Liberal Prime Minister, he has decided to put everything on pause and to use this valuable House time to effectively try to make changes to the Standing Orders.

If one went door knocking in their constituency and hit 100 doors this evening, how many Canadians does one think would say they are really concerned about how the House of Commons manages its time and to please go back to Ottawa to sort that out? The government is wasting the valuable time of the House and of members of Parliament because the government cannot admit its failures. The Liberals cannot put their egos aside. The Liberal Prime Minister cannot put his ego aside and admit he is the reason so many Canadians are suffering right now.

The Liberals also have a coalition partner in the NDP. It used to be that the NDP and the Conservatives could agree on a few things. We disagreed on many policies. I live in Saskatchewan, and we know what NDP economic policies can do to a province over time. NDP members promised in the last election that they would not enter into a coalition with the government. They broke that promise. Canadians believed them when they said they would not enter into a coalition. As soon as the election was over, they started hatching their scheme.

One thing Liberals and Conservatives used to agree on is transparency and accountability. The NDP members have decided to protect the Prime Minister personally against political embarrassment and to help him cover up his corruption. Time and time again at committee, we see the NDP vote against Conservative motions to investigate corruption and scandals, vote against our attempts to summon witnesses and vote, in essence, to protect the Prime Minister from his corruption being exposed. Their policy agenda is not working. That is why Conservatives are holding them to account.

I will make one final point about how Liberals are handling the proposed changes to the way the House operates. These are substantive changes that would fundamentally alter the timeline for bills to be debated and moved through the House. It would give the government incredible new powers that are not in the Standing Orders and that have not been contemplated by any of our procedural books. Normally, those types of major changes require all-party support and go through the proper process of procedure and House affairs examining the proposal, studying it and allowing all recognized parties to have some kind of say in it.

The government is establishing a precedent today by using this type of motion. I want to point out to the government that it is now doing, through government motions, what used to be done through

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consensus and through all-party support. If its members want to talk about protecting democracy, one of the most fundamental ways to protect a democracy is to ensure that even when there is a working majority, because of the NDP support, they still hold that tradition of not making major changes without all-party support. That would mean any party could work with the government, in a minority parliament, and could ram through massive changes to the Standing Orders over the objections of other recognized parties. That has consequences.

However, they are choosing to do it this way, and they are establishing a precedent for future governments. They cannot come to this place and start talking about the rights of members of Parliament and the ability of opposition parties to hold the government to account if they are going outside the normal process to make major changes in the House.

That being said, we are going to continue to oppose their agenda because it has failed. Their economic agenda continues to drive up inflation and interest rates. Their housing agenda continues to drive up home prices by rewarding local gatekeepers and by preventing new homes from entering the market. Their crime and justice agenda continues to let dangerous and repeat offenders back out into the streets where they terrorize law-abiding Canadians. For those reasons, we are going to oppose this motion, and we are going to oppose the rest of the government's agenda.

● (1305)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was an interesting speech by the opposition House leader. He alluded to the fact that somehow the Conservatives did not win the last election or that he was not the party leader anymore because of something that the Liberals did. In fact, the reason that member is not the leader of the Conservative Party anymore is that it came out that he actually misused party funds to pay for private schooling for his children and to pay for clothing for himself and his children. I wonder if the member thinks it is common-sense economics to misuse funds to pay for private schooling for his children.

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**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague reminded me of something that her House leader said during his speech when he talked about the toxicity in this place. This is from the Liberal Party whose leader violently elbowed a female MP in the chest because he did not get his own way. He threw a temper tantrum. This is the same leader who used the pandemic. Canadians were going through incredible hardship. Loved ones were dying alone because they were not allowed to receive visitors. Businesses were forced to close. People were going bankrupt. While that was going on, what did the Liberal Prime Minister do? He took the time to reward his friends. Let us remember the WE scandal. He chose to use the pandemic as an excuse to funnel hundreds of millions of dollars to his friends at an organization that had paid his personal family members massive speaking fees.

How about the former Liberal member of Parliament who got a contract? He had never ran a business in the medical field at all, but when the pandemic rolled around, he got a sole-source contract from the current Liberal government. We are in the middle of the arrive scam hearings where we are hearing about more sordid affairs about how a company got paid \$20 million for doing IT even though it did not do any IT work. There are too many examples, in the short amount of time I have in this debate, to go over all the list of the ways the current Liberal government has wasted taxpayer money and has tried to cover up its corruption.

• (1310)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to see Liberals and Conservatives pointing fingers at each other. They are both bad, in our book, and we believe what we really need is a government of New Democrats that actually puts into place the kinds of practices most Canadians want to see. We have certainly proven that in the House by pushing for pharmacare, dental care, anti-scab legislation, grocery rebates and affordable housing, and I could go on and on, while Conservatives are fighting to cut all of those things.

My friend was mentioning in his speech, which really did not touch on the motion before us, the fact that he opposes the government's agenda, which is his right, and that is why he is opposing the motion. However, the motion calls for extended hours, which the NDP has always called for. I would remind the member, my colleague, that under the Harper regime, the Harper Conservatives extended the hours in the evening for week after week, unilaterally. This motion would require the consent of at least two parties in the House to do that. However, there is also the issue of the health impacts of voting marathons. His leader, the member for Carleton, did not even show up for the 30-hour marathon. He showed up for one hour out of 30 hours.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member is an experienced member of the House. He has done it repeatedly, and there should be more than an apology for this because the New Democrats have done it twice in just two hours. He knows that members cannot talk about whether a member is present or not. This is beyond the pale.

**The Deputy Speaker:** This also does extend to previous sittings of the House, with respect to whether somebody was here or not. Of course, we can see voting records because that is online, but whether someone is here is a whole other issue.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has the floor.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, the voting record speaks for itself.

I want to come back to my colleague and the idea that we would force employees and all members to be in the House over a 30-hour period with all the health impacts that we know to be true. Does the member actually oppose the idea that we could have a health break so that when we go through those marathon votes, employees are respected and all members are respected, and that we could do the business of the House in a way that does not have a negative health impact? In the end, why is the member opposing a motion that makes good sense, that makes us work harder and that is also smart?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP House leader talks about how the Liberal government is bad. If only there were a political party that could do something about that. If only there were someone in the House who could put an end to bad government.

It is the NDP, but of course, it will not because its leader has not quite come to that point. Who knows what their motivation is for propping up the Liberal government? It used to be that they were interested in finding corruption and unearthing Liberal mismanagement and waste, but they have completely parked all that for their own personal and political gains. They have never been so close to the reins of power, and I think that is their motivation. They actually enjoy the personal trappings of getting to sit down with Liberal ministers. Maybe they are impressed by Liberal cabinet ministers, and they are dazzled by things like that. Maybe it is because the NDP leader has not hit his six years yet, and he wants to get his pension vested before he goes back to the Canadian people.

I am not going to speculate on why the NDP continues to prop up a corrupt and tired Liberal government, a government that has imposed higher costs, more inflation, higher interest rates and a crime wave on Canadians and that has failed to get enough homes built to meet the demands of Canadians. We will continue to put forward the types of common-sense ideas that will help lower costs for Canadians and bring interest rates down as well.

He talked about previous governments extending sittings. Those late-night extensions in June are actually in the Standing Orders. Those are things that all political parties have agreed on over the years and are completely apples to oranges with what the government is doing here today, unilaterally, making major changes to the Standing Orders, over the objections of other opposition parties, because it has a trusted partner to help cover up its costs and its corruption.

• (1315)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he was talking about the point of axing the tax. The Province of Saskatchewan, starting in January, told the Crown corporations to no longer collect the tax. The inflation in Saskatchewan has actually dropped almost a full point in the month of January. I am just wondering what his thoughts on that are.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague makes another great point, again, about how the carbon tax adds to inflation. We heard the Bank of Canada governor come to committee and explain that the carbon tax was responsible for about a third of the extra inflation that Canadians are suffering under.

In Saskatchewan, we saw our premier, Scott Moe, have some compassion for the people of Saskatchewan. He saw the unfairness about how this Liberal government gave a carve-out to one particular region in Canada and ignored the concerns of people in the Prairies, in British Columbia and in Ontario. Our premier decided that he is not going to do the Prime Minister's dirty work. He is not going to collect the carbon tax. As a result, when the Government of Saskatchewan stopped collecting the carbon tax on behalf of the Liberal Prime Minister, guess what happened? Inflation went down in Saskatchewan.

Not only the Bank of Canada admitted that it helps cause inflation in the first place, but also we now know, with empirical evidence, that when one removes the carbon tax, one lowers inflation.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, was the reference the member opposite made about the Prime Minister appropriate in the House?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I do not know what reference the hon. member is referring to.

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

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is amazing to watch the former speaker, the former leader of the opposition, talk about how the Conservative Party tries to play a positive role inside the chamber when, in fact, we have witnessed a destructive force coming from the Conservative Party on the institution of the House of Commons. I do not quite understand why the Conservative Party does not want to work late into the evenings. Millions of Canadians across every region of the country recognize that, at times, one needs to work a little past 6:30 p.m.. The Conservative Party does not want to work late into the evenings. The Conservative Party wants to be able to continue to filibuster.

Will the member commit to not bringing forward, let us say, silly motions, like "the House now adjourn for the day" or "so and so now be heard to speak", even though another Conservative was trying to speak, so that there is a competition between Conservatives, or like concurrence report after concurrence report to prevent government legislation from passing? Will he commit to getting serious and to starting to debate issues here in the House of Commons?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, this is what Liberals do. They attack others for the very things that they are guilty of themselves. If this member wants to talk about respecting this institution, we can talk about how the access to information commissioner has said that it has never been harder to get information from a government than it has under the current Prime Minister.

How about the fact that the government decided not to fund the Auditor General appropriately to do her important work of uncovering Liberal waste and mismanagement? How about all the times

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the government has shut down debate before many members have even had a chance to speak on behalf of their constituents? The Liberals then come in and blame the opposition for all that.

They are the ones who have the power to be more forthcoming with information. They fight and they redact. They try to keep documents hidden. They have to be dragged kicking and screaming, at committees and here in the House, just to provide factual information and copies of correspondence. They do everything they can to block that, then they try to have some debate about when the House should adjourn, whether it should be 6:30 p.m. or midnight. They say that this is how they are protecting a democratic institution.

That is baloney. The real way we can protect our institutions is to be open and accountable. Independent officers of Parliament have denounced the Liberal Prime Minister for the assault that he has launched against information accountability and transparency.

• (1320)

[Translation]

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the last election, Canadians clearly indicated that they wanted a minority government like the one they had between 2019 and 2021. They wanted to keep an eye on the government. That is the message they sent. That was the will of the Canadian and Quebec electorate. Unfortunately, that is not what happened. The government thumbed its nose at the will of Quebecers and Canadians and chose to disregard its minority status and form a majority with another party. The result was the marriage of the Liberal Party with the New Democratic Party.

This marriage comes at a huge cost, both financially and democratically. Usually, when people get married, they pay for their own wedding. Sometimes their parents pay. It depends on the culture. In any case, we expect the happy couple to pay for the wedding. However, that is not what is happening here: Canadians and Quebecers are paying for the huge cost of the wedding. That is what we are seeing now. We are paying for the two lovebirds. At some point the government needs to explain itself, and the Liberals claim that they need the NDP with them, that it is important. Earlier, the government leader said that there was obstruction, that this was chaos. It does not take much to throw him off if he thinks this is chaos.

I have been the opposition House leader for over four years. I can say that I have seen many things, but I have never seen chaos. I am concerned for the government leader. It does not take much to throw him off. I do not know if he watched *The Walking Dead* but, if he did, it must have given him a heart attack.

On top of that, he says it is chaos because the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois ask too many questions. Of course, the NDP does not do that. The Conservatives and the Bloc take too much time debating issues in the House.

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If we were spending 50 days debating a bill, I might agree, but representatives of the government would sometimes come to me to say they were imposing a gag order because they were tired and we had been debating a bill for too long. I answered that we had been debating the bill for five hours. They said they could not take it any more. Oh, brother.

The bills we were debating were not small bills. They were big bills, some of them economic updates, and the government quickly put a stop to the debate because they knew very well that there was no chance of my agreeing with them. Yet they knew that the New Democrats eat at the same trough. They knew that the NDP would be there for them. So it often happens that, after three, four or five hours of debate, the discussion is closed. Is that good for democracy? Is that good for members of Parliament? The only weapon we have to defend our constituents, our fellow citizens, is time. It is the time we take to explain our position, propose changes, solutions, amendments, discuss better ways of improving life in our communities. That is what the government is always stopping us from doing here in the House.

Since 2021 alone, the NDP has supported 14 closure motions and eight super closure motions. They have also supported 23 time allocation motions. Never in the history of Canada have members of the opposition been subjected to so many gag orders. It is as if we had nothing important to say and they decided to gag us. That is what it looks like.

Today we are discussing motion No. 35 aimed at extending sitting hours. We usually work by consensus. When we change parliamentary rules, we seek consensus. All four parties have to agree and give their reasoning. That is not, however, what is happening here. With a majority, the government is constantly changing parliamentary rules.

Earlier, the government leader even boasted about it. He said that the Liberals had done so three times in two years, and boasted about it. I want to circle back to something terrible. The two parties did something terrible when they decided on the hybrid Parliament rules. That was unprecedented. They changed the parliamentary rules, knowing full well that some parties did not agree. It is not because we were freaks. The Bloc Québécois never said that it was a ludicrous idea, but we were not even consulted.

• (1325)

Those parties just came along and said that, from now on, this is how the hybrid Parliament works.

The House leader of the official opposition correctly said earlier that, if that is how they change the rules, that means that any majority government will be able to change the rules of Parliament.

I do not know if my colleagues have seen the polls, but I have. There is a small chance that a Conservative government will be elected, and there is a small chance that it will be a majority government. Let us say Canadians elect a majority Conservative government. That means that the Conservatives will be able to say, "These are the rules from now on". When that happens, the NDP will get up and say that that is not right, yet they did it themselves in 2022. The Liberals will also get up and say that that is not right, yet they and the NDP did it themselves. The only party that will be

able to stand up in the House and credibly tell the Conservatives that what they are doing is not right is our party, the Bloc Québécois.

There is now a problem with the way we operate, because the government has created a fake majority. That is what we are faced with again: procedural changes that reduce the opposition parties' speaking time and steamroll discussions, because they are going to limit the opposition's ability to stand up and defend their position. That is unacceptable.

They want to change the rules, but I think we have a perfect example here of a government that is incapable of respecting Parliament. It seems unwilling to discuss its own bills. The bills are not always good, of course, but discussion is the way to improve them.

That has always been the Bloc Québécois's goal. Our goal is to be a constructive opposition and to tell the House that we are always thinking of Quebec and only Quebec. Oftentimes, Canada feels the same way Quebec does, so everyone is happy. Other times, we may disagree on a bill for whatever reason, so then we work to amend it in good faith. The only two tools we have for convincing the government are time and the parliamentary process. If our only tools are damaged, it diminishes the power of democracy in Parliament. It is a little strange that Parliament is working to reduce the power of democracy within its own walls.

I always feel a bit uneasy when it comes to the NDP. When members of the NDP rise in the House after question period, they wag their fingers and talk about how appalling ArriveCAN is. They rant and rave. It is not a pretty sight. They also say that this government is focused on oil production and that it is the worst government in history when it comes to Canadian oil production. They claim to be environmentalists and so on. When there are Liberal scandals and when the Prime Minister is caught red-handed, they rise to express their outrage. However, when the lights go out, what we see is that the NDP always supports the Liberal Party. In all honesty, I would feel really uncomfortable with that, if I were a member of the NDP.

The Bloc Québécois will therefore vote against the motion. We are simply going to do what it takes to defend the interests of Quebecers, even though our right to speak is being undermined.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member started his speech by talking about the minority situation.

Canadians elected a minority government. In a minority government, the government has the responsibility to consider what the opposition has to say; however, the opposition also has a responsibility. We have witnessed that the official opposition's primary objective is to be a destructive force. It is destructive of this institution, preventing legislation and other measures from ultimately being able to pass or, at the very least, slowing them down. It does not take much to make that occur.

If the government is unable to work with an opposition party, then it would not be able to get anything done. At times there is a need to work with the NDP or even an opportunity to work with the Bloc. Would the member not agree that, if there is one opposition party, such as the Conservatives today, then the government has no choice but to work with other opposition parties in order to get things done for Canadians?

• (1330)

[Translation]

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I made a mistake. I wanted to table an amendment, but I forgot to do so. Do I have the unanimous consent of the House to table it?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member does not have unanimous consent. However, he can respond to the parliamentary secretary's question.

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank my colleague for supporting my initiative because he did not, but I thank him for at least asking a question that is very easy to answer.

He spoke of the official opposition, which we are not. He refers to our neighbours in the official opposition, who engage in filibustering. I would say that, most of the time, gag orders are imposed after very few hours of debate. Based on my limited experience, there was nothing here to justify that. I do not have my colleague's experience. I have been here for four and a half years. I have rarely seen a situation where the opposition party caused the Liberal government to lose control of its legislative agenda. I have not seen that happen very often. Most of the time, it is because the Liberals poorly manage their legislative agenda. They should look in the mirror.

[English]

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the Liberal government House leader on how the Liberals believe that they are so righteous, yet they continue to vote against common-sense bills and common-sense motions. One example was the private member's bill, the end the revolving door act, which is aimed at getting mental health supports, and addiction treatment and recovery. It was actually something the Bloc voted for, yet most of the Liberals and NDP voted against.

When the Liberals talk about being so righteous and wanting to vote for good legislation, there are so many examples where, in fact, they do not. The member spoke about how the NDP members continually rise in this place and outside of this place, speaking

### *Government Orders*

against the government, yet the NDP members continue to support it.

Can the member comment on how what the government is saying is the opposite of what it is doing? It is being supported by the NDP members, who continue to support it regardless of what it does.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I honestly do not think that this government will go down in history for how well it manages the House. Consider the strategy it used to create an artificial majority government and how it manages its legislative agenda. I honestly do not think it deserves a medal. It should focus more on how to effectively manage its legislative agenda than on ways of muzzling Parliament. That would be better for everyone.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as always, I enjoyed the speech by my friend and colleague from La Prairie.

My colleague wondered what he would say to his constituents if he were a member of the NDP. I think that what he should be wondering is what he would say to his constituents if he were an NDP MP.

Of course, he would tell his constituents in La Prairie that it was the NDP that proposed the pharmacare plan. It is a better plan than the one currently in force in Quebec, since there are holes in Quebec's plan. It was also the NDP that proposed a dental care plan, and it is thanks to the NDP that the extremely important anti-scab bill was introduced. There are also the legislative measures to crack down on grocery chains' price gouging. My colleague would be proud to tell his constituents about all of these measures. The fact is that the NDP is an effective opposition party and has made far more gains than any other opposition party in the House of Commons since our country was founded.

My colleague also mentioned the issue of time allocation motions. The member for La Prairie was not here during the Harper regime, so I would simply like to remind him that the Conservatives imposed more than 100 gag orders in Parliament from 2011 to 2015. They did it more than a hundred times. The Liberal government has done it eight times. Compare that to the Conservative number and it is clear that Parliament can work when an opposition party is willing to do its job in Parliament.

I would now like to ask my friend a very simple question. There are two aspects to this motion. On the one hand, we are going to work in the evening, a principle that the NDP has always supported, but on the other hand, this motion aims to put an end to the possibility of working all night, like the time we voted for 30 hours. We experienced that in December. The Leader of the Opposition was not actually here, but we voted for 30 hours straight. Interpreters and House employees are then forced to work for 30 consecutive hours.

I would just like to know why the Bloc is not standing up for interpreters, House employees and all those people who are subject to the disrespect shown by the Conservatives when they impose votes for 30 hours to make cuts to all government programs.

*Government Orders*

• (1335)

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his many questions. I will answer a few of them, but first I want to point out that the member for Salaberry—Suroît is certainly the biggest champion in this place for the interpreters. I think any interpreter, if asked, would say that the person who works the hardest to protect the health of interpreters is the member for Salaberry—Suroît, a Bloc Québécois member.

If I tell my constituents that we are going to have dental coverage, someone will stand up and point out that we already have it. My constituents are not stupid. I will reply that, thanks to the NDP, they will have two dental insurance plans, but with the same service, and they will pay twice as much.

If I tell them that we are going to have pharmacare, someone will stand up and say that we already have it. I will reply that we may end up having to pay for Canadians to get it, without getting any more for ourselves.

If I tell them that we are going to have anti-scab legislation, someone will ask me when it is going to come into force. I will reply that it will take a year and a half to get any confirmation, but since we see the Conservatives closing in, the anti-scab legislation might never see the light of day.

This means that the folks back home might not vote for the NDP.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said that we have a minority government, but that is not true. We have a majority government since the NDP and the Liberals got hitched.

The Liberals keep trying to change the rules in the House. This is not the first time. They tried to do it in 2015, at the time of the infamous “elbowgate” incident. Now they are trying again.

I think that the government wants total control. What does the member think?

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague. Her French is excellent. I tip my hat to her.

This comes back to what I was saying earlier. They created a majority government by combining two parties. Their marriage is so tight, they are not even bickering. They get along very well. It is unheard of.

The government is acting like a majority government because it has a partner that allows it to do that. I think that is a shame because Quebecers and Canadians did not vote for that.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to this motion.

I see the Conservatives and the Bloc getting all worked up and saying that this is a terrible motion. As adults in the House, NDP members always look at what is in a bill or motion before the House.

In the motion before us, there are two things we need to vote on. The first is that evening sittings can only be held with the approval of another recognized party. It is not something that can be done unilaterally. The motion must be supported by the Conservative Party, the Bloc Québécois or the NDP. The second is that the next

day's sitting can be extended until midnight. That way, more work can be done in the House.

I would like to come back to what was said earlier. Since the beginning of this Parliament, we have seen the Conservative Party systematically block everything, with one exception. The only time we really saw the Conservatives looking out for the national interest was for the debate on conversion therapy. All parties reached an agreement and it passed. Afterwards, Erin O'Toole, the leader of the Conservative Party, was stripped of his leadership position. Apart from that, they have blocked everything.

We will therefore work harder to implement all of the things that the NDP, especially, has pushed the government to do, such as pharmacare, dental care, the federal anti-scab bill, the clean energy program, and increased consumer protections. Let us remember that, under both the Liberals and the Conservatives, major grocery chains and large corporations were able to set whatever prices they wanted, regardless of how that would impact ordinary Canadians. There is also affordable housing, the grocery rebate and more. All of these initiatives came from the NDP.

That is what the NDP wants to move forward on. We need to push the government to implement these things. There are bills that are put in place to help people. The Conservatives claim that they want to help people, but they blocked all of those bills.

This motion gives us the ability to sit during the evening so that more members can debate bills and so that it does not take days and days for these measures to be adopted.

Obviously, no one in the House could object to a measure that makes so much sense. The Conservatives seem interested in blocking legislation, but if we work evenings, they will get more chances to speak.

• (1340)

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I am very wary in doing this. I do not think I have ever made a point of order while interrupting a colleague's speech, whose speech is very important, but it is important to raise my concern. This is about a motion instructing the House to be able to get legislation finished, particularly Bill C-50, which has seen a lot of obstruction.

In the previous exchange between the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle and the Liberal member, the Liberal member accused him of getting his children's private school funding covered by the Conservative Party, which I do not think is part of the motion, but I—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I need to know what the point of order is and what standing order it is under.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.



**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative member then made personal attacks against the Prime Minister. We need to focus on the motion at hand—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That falls into debate.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate hearing from my colleague from Timmins—James Bay. He was elected a few hours before me. We are like twins as we were both elected the same year. The member won first and I won a few hours later. I always appreciate hearing from him with his experience in the House, and I thank him for that.

[Translation]

There are two aspects to the motion. First of all, we are going to work harder and work evenings. I get fed up when I hear the objections from the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois on the other aspect, on the House sitting for a series of recorded divisions.

We saw how the Conservatives voted to block and cut funding from a whole range of items having to do with food security, like ensuring that we have a good food system and that inspections get done. The Conservatives wanted to cut back on these things, on affordable housing, and on the whole air transportation safety system.

We saw the Conservatives vote against each of these items, one after another. It took 30 hours. The Leader of the Opposition was there for one hour of those 30 hours. We had 30 hours of votes, and the leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Carleton, was only present for one of the 30 hours. He made—

● (1345)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will do my best.

It is possible to go on the Internet and see how everyone voted in the House. However, it is not possible to check whether a member stayed in the House for an hour, 30 hours or not at all. This gives us an idea of whether or not someone is in the House. The hon. member can make comments on the number of votes he did or did not cast, but he cannot say who was in the House or not.

The member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for you.

You are saying that the fact that he voted only six times in person and 124 times virtually shows—

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member knows for sure that it does not show online whether one voted virtually or voted in the chamber. That is another issue: we need to find the line on whether we are underlining who is here and who is not here, so it does not show.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on the quality of his French. I hear him using typically Quebec expressions such as “j’ai mon voyage”. It proves that the member has spent time in Quebec.

### *Government Orders*

On the substance of the issue, he is totally wrong. We do not have the right to make a distinction between a vote in the House and a virtual vote. A vote is a vote, period.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I said exactly the same thing.

The hon. member for Hamilton Centre.

[English]

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Mr. Speaker, I have an observation: When folks are tuned into ParlVU, it is very clear who is voting here and who shows up as a little picture. However, I am seeking advice and direction. It is already public and broadcasting; does that then not make it fair play for us to reference things that are already made available to the public in that space?

We certainly look to you and to the Table for wisdom, but given the hybrid nature of the way in which we engage with the voting, I should state for the record that it is very clear that indeed people can see who rises from their seat and who is presented as a little profile picture on the television.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, on that same point of order, and it is a point I have also raised on a couple of occasions, if the app is a representation of the chamber, and if a vote is a vote, as the member has just stated, then it is interesting that on the virtual app we have the choice of voting for or against, yes or no, or abstaining. However, in the House a person would not have the option of abstaining, because they would either rise to vote for or they would rise to vote against, but they would not get to abstain. Therefore I think it might be important to look at how we do make sure that the app actually reflects how the chamber operates, and then maybe there would be more of a—

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

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know why I am being chirped at. I am just trying to raise a part of the same point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I appreciate the input.

The app was designed so as to show a yea or a nay, but the abstention issue was built in for the lobby so they can understand who has voted or not. Of course here in the chamber if a member wants to abstain from something, they just do not show up or do not rise when the time comes.

The official record does not distinguish between whether a member voted in the chamber or via the app. If members are saying that we should actually underline that, then I would suggest they bring it back to PROC, which can make that determination when the time comes.

● (1350)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order.

### *Government Orders*

It was the current government that put into place the virtual application and voted with the NDP to keep it. Is it trying to create two classes of citizens, those who voted electronically and those who voted in person? I do not think that is appropriate; both are valid and we should not be calling out the difference.

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order to add to the conversation on procedure, I think there are some instances where MPs do in fact want to be shown on the record as abstaining. Some people may not have the information to make one decision or the other.

I have seen anecdotal information that on the government side a few of its mavericks every now and again, 0.5% of the time, rather than taking the parliamentary walk or having the flu, will go ahead and click “abstain” officially. Therefore I wonder whether abstention is not an official position within the Standing Orders, the rules of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Abstentions might show on the screens and on the video, but they are not shown in the official record of the House of Commons.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. If members want to show that they are in the House and choose not to vote, they simply do not rise in their seat. There is a video record of them not rising in their seat either for or against, thus showing an abstention visually.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will look at this, but I think I was pretty clear as to what is on the official record and what is not. If we are debating something that would be new to the chamber, if we want to pursue that, then we would ask PROC to look at it. Maybe we can think about that.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member for Sarnia—Lambton that two-thirds of Conservatives voted virtually with the app to vote against a virtual Parliament. It is unbelievable that two-thirds of Conservatives said they do not like the virtual Parliament, but voted virtually to end it. I think it is really important to raise that point. Sometimes we really have to wonder why they think they can pull the wool over the eyes of their constituents by acting that way.

If Conservatives want to raise a point of order, they are welcome to do that.

[*Translation*]

The second part of this motion deals with the fact that we voted all night one night. We saw how that affected the staff. We saw how that affected the interpreters, who work so hard and who had to work all night.

As the member for La Prairie said earlier, the member for Salaberry—Suroît is a strong advocate for the interpreters' health and safety in the workplace. If the Bloc Québécois truly believes in that, then they should vote in favour of this motion, because requiring House employees and interpreters to work all night jeopardizes their health and safety. That is the reality.

There are two aspects of the motion that should be supported. Apart from the Conservative Party, there should be a consensus

among the parties in the House to vote in favour of this motion, which gives us more hours to work and more hours to debate, which is good, while also protecting employees, interpreters and everyone who is subject to the decisions made by the Conservatives, who are clearly showing a complete lack of respect for the employees of the House.

● (1355)

[*English*]

The two aspects of the motion that we are talking about have to do with working harder and working evenings, but that is not something the government can impose. There has to be the support of another recognized party in the House to have the evening sessions. What evening sessions mean is more members of Parliament being able to speak out with respect to legislation. This is something that should be a no-brainer. This is something that should pass by consensus: that we believe that we need more time to debate pieces of legislation. Then the idea of having evening sessions makes a great deal of sense.

Second, there is the issue of all-night voting sessions. We have had a discussion, which I know the Speaker will be bringing back to the House, about the member for Carleton's triggering votes, six of them in person and 124 of them virtual. I know we cannot question whether a member has been in the House, but the reality is that there is a caveat that says somebody can stand up—

[*Translation*]

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

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, with all his experience, the hon. member should know that he cannot make the same mistake twice. He cannot make a distinction between votes cast here in the House and those cast electronically. A vote is a vote. When will he understand that?

[*English*]

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, my Conservative colleague is correct, and it is unfair to make these comparisons. The leader of the Conservatives was in the House to vote against Ukraine.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I think it would be useful to make a distinction with reflecting on the presence of members virtually or in person in the past. I do not think that precludes a member from speculating as to whether a member may, in the future, choose to participate virtually or in person. It seems like an odd thing not to be able to talk about at all. Although I respect the rule that says we cannot talk about what has in fact happened, it is not supposed to be a prohibition on speaking about the future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I appreciate that it is hard for us to envision what someone would be doing in the future. At the same time, we really need to watch whether we are underlining whether someone is here or not, whether they are virtual or not, because that is not shown in the record of the House of Commons.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I do want to leave the House, and those people who are interested in the debate that is taking place today, with this: I mentioned the 101 time allocations, or closures, imposed by the Harper regime over four years. That is a record that no other government or Parliament has ever come close to, but I actually neglected to give the full weight of the Harper regime in its imposition and in its ripping apart of our democratic structure. It actually moved 111 motions of closure in four years. It moved closure every week, on average, over four years before it was thrown out because of its bad governance and corruption, its incredibly bad financial mismanagement, its mean-spiritedness in forcing seniors to work longer and in ripping away affordable housing.

We lived through that. The member for Timmins—James Bay and I lived through every week of the Harper regime, the most dismal decade in Canadian history, so I think it is fair to say that Conservatives have no lessons to give to anyone.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

### ANTI-SEMITISM

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, since October 7, hatred has been marching on the streets of Toronto and within our city's post-secondary institutions. Rather than fight hatred, some institutions have turned a blind eye or pretended it falls under the rubric of freedom of expression. Hatred and violent threats have no place in any freedom.

The failure of OCAD University to combat the surge in anti-Semitism is unacceptable. OCAD has become a cesspool of hate. Jewish students feel so unsafe that one, Samantha, had OCAD donors fund private security just so she could go to school. She has had to deal with death threats, her name etched into stairwell walls, and threats of sexual violence toward her mother.

The Ontario government will be providing post-secondary funding to compensate for lost revenue due to the federal government's cap on student visas. As OCAD has failed to address hate, it should not receive funding from any government until its campus is safe for everyone and Canadian law is respected.

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### AFRICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF OTTAWA

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this Black History Month I would like to recognize the African Canadian Association of Ottawa, which serves about 115,000 Canadians of African heritage in Ottawa-Gatineau. It is the flagship for 53 organizations representing the African diaspora from countries spanning Morocco to South Africa and Guinea to Somalia.

In addition to its affordable housing initiative, other programs extend to food security, community development, mental health, senior care, youth engagement through hockey and the innovative ACAA Radio, which underscores its comprehensive approach to community support.

### Statements by Members

I would like to recognize and thank the current leadership team, including its president, John Adeyefa, and board members Hector Addison, Sahada Alolo, Valérie Assoi, Serge Banyongen, Franklin Epape, Catherine Kizito, Dorris Ngaiza and Godlove Ngwafusi.

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### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for over two weeks, millions of litres of raw sewage ran unimpeded from Winnipeg into the north Red River and Lake Winnipeg, and the Liberal government was missing in action. The sewage is polluting our iconic Lake Winnipeg, which is home to Manitoba's thriving inland commercial fishery and beautiful beaches and is a source of drinking water for many communities. The Liberals failed to support the province and the City of Winnipeg in mitigating this environmental catastrophe.

Canada's Conservatives have long fought to keep our waterways, lakes and oceans free from untreated sewage. As a government, we brought in stringent guidelines for municipal effluent. In opposition, we brought forward a bill to prohibit the discharge of raw sewage into our waterways by municipalities. Meanwhile, within days of forming government, the Prime Minister approved a dump of eight billion litres of raw sewage to be discharged by the City of Montreal into the St. Lawrence River.

It is disappointing to see the lack of urgency demonstrated by Liberal MPs in Winnipeg to this prolonged spill of untreated sewage. This is unacceptable. The Liberal government must stand up now to protect the Red River and Lake Winnipeg from future breaches.

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### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Happy Black History Month, Mr. Speaker.

This February, Canadians across the nation have joined together to celebrate Black Canadians and their countless contributions to Canadian society. In my riding of Surrey Centre, there are several Black-led organizations that focus on fostering a safe, inclusive and equitable community.

*Statements by Members*

Just last week, the Minister of Small Business and I met with the Black Business Association of BC to discuss ways to grow its entrepreneurial and enterprising spirits. Others, like the Solid State Community Society, will be bringing Black youth together to discuss anti-Black racism in high schools and examine possible solutions.

Nuru Training Association has long-standing roots in Surrey Centre. This month, the organization is creating opportunities for our community to learn about the history and contributions of Black Canadians.

There are so many incredible organizations like these in Surrey Centre, including the Kingdom Acts Foundation, Umoja, Great Light Healing Community Services Society and the African Women's Empowerment Society. Services like these continue to show Canadians that diversity is our greatest strength.

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[Translation]

**150TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
SALABERRY-DE-VALLEYFIELD**

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to draw attention to the 150th anniversary of the City of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield.

Salaberry-de-Valleyfield is marking 150 years of history, 150 years of pride, 150 years of generations of locals enjoying life on the shores of Baie Saint-François. They are good people who know the secret to the famous Valleyfield grill seasoning. They are hard-working people who never pass up an opportunity to celebrate.

Salaberry-de-Valleyfield is also marking 150 years of solidarity, a legacy handed down by the workers of Montreal Cotton, the Sisters of Bon-Conseil and all the others.

This 150th anniversary is an opportunity to remember how great it is to live on our island.

I would like to thank the organizing committee, co-chaired by Denis Lapointe and Renée Demers, and all municipal employees for putting together a diverse program to honour our city and its talents. This year, we are eating, exploring, playing, dancing and celebrating Salaberry-de-Valleyfield.

I encourage the good people of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield to enjoy the festivities, and I wish them a happy 150th anniversary.

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● (1405)

[English]

**FLORENCE WONG**

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Markham—Stouffville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care provides high-quality and culturally appropriate services to enable seniors of different backgrounds and needs to live their lives to the fullest. Recently, a very special person, the former CEO of Yee Hong, Florence Wong, passed away.

Arriving in Canada in 1987 from Hong Kong, Florence discovered her executive experience was not valued here, but that did not deter her. Hired by Yee Hong in 1994, she led the expansion from one site to a network of long-term care centres and support services across the GTA, including one in my riding of Markham—Stouffville. I sat on their board for a number of years and feel part of the Yee Hong extended family.

As Yee Hong's founder, Dr. Joseph Wong, said, “[H]er impact on the senior-care sector [was] unmatched”. I was always impressed by her hard work, resilience and positive attitude.

I give my sincere condolences to her family and all her many friends.

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**LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight long years of the Prime Minister, everything feels broken, and Canadians are struggling. Rent is up and housing costs have doubled, resulting in the rise of tent cities, and crime runs rampant on streets across the country. The Prime Minister is not worth the cost or the chaos, and there is no end in sight. Just last week, the leader of the NDP signed on to prop up the Liberals for another 16 months. While the NDP-Liberal coalition continues to thrive, Canadians are struggling to survive.

New scandals continue to break about government spending and Liberal insiders getting rich. Glaring mismanagement, the gross waste of taxpayers' money, reprisals and cover-ups all speak to corruption. The buck stops with the Liberal Prime Minister. He is not worth the cost of the corruption.

It is time for him to be held accountable to Canadians.

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**COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR**

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Coldest Night of the Year events that happened in 190 communities across Canada on Saturday.

Each year, thousands of Canadians walk in February to support local charities that serve people experiencing hurt, hunger and homelessness. My family, my constituency team and my friends walked together to raise money for Lionhearts in Kingston this year.

It was truly heartwarming to see over 150 walkers, 30 teams, hundreds of donors and dozens of volunteers contribute locally. Thanks to their collective efforts, over \$70,000 has been raised to date, and that number continues to grow.

I give a huge shout-out to the team at Lionhearts for their outstanding work in what they do, in partnership with other organizations, to support the most vulnerable in our community, and congratulations to all participants for stepping outside of the warmth and comfort of their homes to help charities that serve our communities with compassion every single day.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this government, the Bloc-Liberal coalition is costly for Quebecers.

The Bloc is in cahoots with this government that is not worth the cost. It pretends to be outraged by the ArriveCAN scandal, yet it voted in favour of cost overruns to fund ArriveCAN eight times. Then, it defended its actions by saying that it was not going to scrutinize everything the government spends. The Bloc told the government to go ahead and hand out the money.

Voting for the Bloc is costly. Even the Premier of Quebec is wondering what the point of the Bloc Québécois is. That is saying something.

The ArriveCAN app cost an arm and a leg, made a company very rich and made things difficult for Canadians. ArriveCAN joins this worn-out government's long list of bad decisions, mismanagement, lack of ethics and lack of transparency.

While the Liberals are mocking Canadians, common-sense Conservatives continue to fight for their interests. We are going to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[English]

#### TOURISM IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

**Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, tourism in my province of Newfoundland and Labrador exceeds \$1 billion in annual expenditures, fuelling employment and prosperity across all communities. It embodies our identity, our traditions and the stunning natural wonders around us. Moreover, tourism fosters environmental stewardship, preserving our ecological treasures for future generations.

This past week, alongside the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, I attended the 2024 Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador conference. Together we celebrated the economic success of the province's tourism industry and its profound impact on our cultural vibrancy and environmental well-being.

I thank the event organizers. Let us continue to welcome visitors from around the world to experience Newfoundland and Labrador's magic and be part of its legacy.

#### Statements by Members

#### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in celebrating Black History Month, we honour Black Canadians' rich heritage and achievements.

We spotlight individuals like Rosemary Sadlier, an advocate for Black history and women's issues, and Dr. Jeffrey K. O. Thompson, a leader in technology and community services. Their contributions enrich our nation's tapestry.

From Richmond Hill, we recognize Aneal Swaratsingh, Marsha Simone Cadogan and Pamela Harakh for their local impacts. Aneal's leadership in community initiatives, Pamela's in philanthropy and Marsha's in legal IP exemplify the spirit of Black excellence we celebrate this month.

To thank Richmond Hill contributors, we have invited local stakeholders to a Black caucus networking event. This gathering is a testament to our collective efforts toward inclusivity and the recognition of Black excellence. As we continue to combat anti-Black racism, let us support Black communities and entrepreneurship, working towards a just and equitable future for all of us.

Happy Black History Month. Here is to building a better future for everyone.

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[Translation]

#### BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, amid the ongoing saga of the ArriveCAN scandal, I can tell you that the Bloc Québécois leader has hit a new low.

The Bloc Québécois leader candidly admits that he gave the 2021-22 estimates the green light without even examining them. He said, and I quote, "we are not going to scrutinize everything the government spends. We just tell it to go ahead and hand out the money".

When the government lacked the votes it needed to fund ArriveCAN, the leader of the Bloc Québécois came to the rescue. Eight times now, the Bloc Québécois has voted to give the government millions of dollars to fund crooks.

As everyone knows, the Bloc Québécois is also spending the hard-earned money of Quebecers like there is no tomorrow. It is unbelievable that the Bloc thinks it has what it takes to manage a country.

I may not know what the point of the Bloc Québécois is, but I do know that voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly.

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[English]

#### LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we continue to see unbelievable hypocrisy from the leader of the NDP.

*Statements by Members*

Yet again, he is pretending to be outraged by the actions of his Liberal coalition partner while expecting Canadians to ignore the fact that he is the Prime Minister's chief enabler. The NDP say they are angered by the waste and corruption behind the “arrive scam” app, yet it would never have happened without their support.

The Prime Minister needed his coalition cohort to have enough votes to get the money through Parliament. The leader of the NDP was more than happy to vote yes, at least eight times, to give tens of millions for cost overruns and money-for-nothing contracts to shell companies.

Clearly this NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost, crime or corruption. The disregard for taxpayer money is appallingly consistent, and the leader of the NDP should be ashamed for not admitting his role in this boondoggle and apologize to Canadians for grandstanding on social media.

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[Translation]

**VALENTINES FOR VETS**

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on February 12, I had the privilege of visiting students in grades five and six at the Maple Ridge French immersion elementary school in Orléans along with the Minister of Veterans Affairs for Valentine's Day.

It was quite touching to talk to the students who took part in the Valentines for Vets program by making Valentine's Day cards. It was an opportunity for them to send our veterans a special message to thank them for their service and for what they have done and sacrificed for our freedom.

I would like to thank their teacher, Sophie Labrosse, and the school principal, Mireille Filion, for welcoming us and for their interest in this program, which dates to 1996 and teaches our young people to never forget.

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● (1415)

[English]

**SHANNEN KOOSTACHIN**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are on the 12th anniversary of Parliament's passing the “Shannen's Dream” motion, named in honour of the young Cree leader Shannen Koostachin, who stood up to challenge the systemic denial of rights for indigenous children. Shannen had never seen a real school. Children in Attawapiskat were being educated in squalid and dangerous conditions.

The government knew this. It just did not give a damn.

Thirteen-year-old Shannen launched the largest youth-driven civil rights movement in Canadian history. Shannen never lived long enough to see the beautiful school that was built because of her work. She died in a horrific car accident at 15.

Following her death, youth, activists and educators from across Canada launched “Shannen's Dream” to end the systemic underfunding of first nations schools. We have so much farther to go.

Children in Eabametoong have no school right now. Children in Kashechewan have no proper gym.

Shannen reminded us that the greatest resource in this country is not oil or diamonds; it is in the potential of this young generation. We thank her. The fight for justice continues.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**LAC SAINT-PIERRE BIOSPHERE RESERVE**

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to highlight that UNESCO has renewed the Lac Saint-Pierre region's prestigious designation as a “world biosphere reserve”.

It is a great honour for Berthier—Maskinongé and for Quebec as a whole to see the rich biodiversity of our region recognized in this way for 24 years now. By raising awareness and mobilizing communities to adopt healthy and sustainable practices, the Lac Saint-Pierre Biosphere Reserve is working to reconcile human activity with the protection of our natural and cultural heritage.

In the face of environmental challenges, we have a responsibility to adjust our policies, regulations and practices to ensure the vitality of the ecosystems that sustain our prosperity and quality of life.

I want to congratulate Henri-Paul Normandin and his team at the Lac Saint-Pierre Area of Prime Concern Committee. They can count on my support as they carry out their important mission.

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[English]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption. The details and cost of the arrive scam app, at \$60 million and counting, get worse by the day.

Now the NDP is pretending to be outraged by the facts being uncovered. However, when the Prime Minister needed to approve the millions of dollars he funnelled to companies such as GC Strategies, the truth is that his costly coalition partners in the NDP and the Bloc voted to prop him up and allow this spending to take place, further enabling all this corruption and incompetence. GC Strategies did no actual work and got \$20 million of taxpayers' money.

The record shows that the NDP voted with the Liberals to allow the arrive scam spending to continue, with all these money-for-nothing contracts, at least eight times. It gets worse the more we know. The truth is this: The NDP refused to block this spending and is complicit in it. After eight years, the Prime Minister and his NDP buddies are not worth the cost or the corruption.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### UKRAINE

**Ms. Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago, Russia massively expanded its illegal and unprovoked attack on Ukraine.

Two years on, we remember those who have died defending their homeland. These brave and fearless Ukrainians are fighting for their identity, their democracy, their history and their language.

[English]

Canada will always stand with Ukraine. Besides taking in 200,000 refugees, we have provided \$13 billion of military and humanitarian aid. Let us not repeat the mistakes we made before World War II. Ukrainians are fighting and dying against tyranny for all of us.

To quote Churchill, the goal “is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival.” We and our allies will continue to provide aid until that victory is achieved.

*Slava Ukraini.*

### ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1420)

[Translation]

#### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while the common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime, after eight years, this Liberal Prime Minister, with the support of the Bloc Québécois, is not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption.

The Bloc Québécois voted eight times to give the Liberal Prime Minister tens of millions of dollars for the “arrive scam” cost overruns and contracts that gave money for nothing.

The leader of the Bloc Québécois knew that the “arrive scam” app should have cost only \$80,000, but his party still went ahead and voted in favour of at least \$24 million more for the app.

What is the point of the Bloc Québécois?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question has already been answered several times. We once again thank the Auditor General of Canada for her important report and her solid recommendations regarding the review of the ArriveCAN app. The findings are troubling.

#### Oral Questions

The good news is that most of those recommendations have already been implemented. We will continue to do that for as long as it takes.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the cost of ArriveCAN did not balloon all at once. The government needed votes to fund their corrupt \$60-million app. The leader of the Bloc Québécois came to their rescue and voted with them not just once, but eight times.

The Bloc Québécois continued to vote in favour of allocating millions of dollars more for ArriveCAN. It is costly to vote for the Bloc Québécois.

In his defence, the leader of the Bloc Québécois said, “We are not going to scrutinize everything the government spends.”

How can an opposition party not scrutinize spending? What is the point of voting for the Bloc Québécois?

**The Speaker:** I see that the Minister of Public Services and Procurement is already standing to answer the question. I would like to remind all members that questions must pertain to government administration or else they should be directed to a committee chair.

The hon. Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed, I do not feel I can properly answer questions directed to the Bloc Québécois. I am sure our hon. colleague, the House leader of the Conservative Party, knows to whom he should be directing his questions and will find the appropriate setting to do so.

That being said, my responsibility and that of the government during the pandemic was to strive to protect the health and safety of Canadians in a dire emergency. We had not seen this type of situation since 1919. However, even in a crisis, all the rules must be followed.

[English]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, fix the budget, build the homes and stop the crime. The NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is proving that he is not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption.

The NDP is pretending to be outraged by the arrive scam scandal, but the Liberals did not have enough votes to get the funding through Parliament. Therefore, the NDP came to the rescue and, eight times, voted to keep funding no-show jobs and IT work that was never done.

Common-sense Conservatives voted no. Had the NDP and the Bloc done the same, the arrive scam would never have happened.

Does the NDP-Liberal coalition deal require the NDP to fund Liberal corruption?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this question has already received multiple answers. The fact that it is coming from the former speaker of the House is obviously a bit strange.

He would know that, if he needs to ask questions of the NDP, we are not, on this side, the right people to answer those questions. I would invite our hon. colleague to ask the right people.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is his government's deal with the NDP.

While common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, fix the budget, build the homes and stop the crime, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is proving that he is not worth the cost or the corruption.

The Prime Minister managed to find \$60 million for his arrive scam app. Now, he is going to reach into the pockets of Canadians yet again and hike the carbon tax on April 1.

Canadians are struggling with out-of-control costs, and millions of Canadians are visiting the food bank for the first time.

Will the Prime Minister just show some compassion and cancel his plan to hike the carbon tax?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, who deny that climate change exists and want to take money away from the Conservatives, we have a question for the Conservatives.

In particular, what are they going to cut? Are they going to cut \$1,100 from Ontario families, \$1,800 from Alberta families or \$1,200 from Manitoba families?

Conservatives deny climate change. They are planning to take away hundreds of dollars from families. That is not common sense.

• (1425)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are going to axe the tax and not take the money out of Canadians' pockets in the first place. The Liberals' own non-partisan, independent Parliamentary Budget Officer has concluded that Canadians pay far more in the carbon tax than anything they hope to get back in the rebate. On April 1, the Liberals are going to hike it again.

Something devastating is happening in Canada: People are starting networks on social media to coordinate efforts to go dumpster diving. There is actually one in Toronto, and the founder said, "The most common answer we get to the question of 'why do you want to join this network?' is 'too broke to afford food'".

Why are they hiking the carbon tax?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we should note that the opposition does not rebut the claim that they deny climate change exists. We should note that they are not standing up for future generations of Canadians by protecting sustainability and acting on climate change.

The inflation numbers have come down below 3%. Our government is continuing to put money back in the pockets of Canadians. We will be there for Canadians, offering supports to the most vulnerable Canadians, while the Conservatives vote against them every single time.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, anyone worried about the relationship between the NDP and the Liberals can rest assured that this courtship will keep going strong until 2025, even if it is costly. The top priority is making Canadians happy. It is not about Quebec's priorities.

Quebeckers did not ask for day care, they already have it. Quebeckers did not ask for dental insurance, they already have it. Quebeckers did not ask for drug coverage, they already have it.

How much will the "majority insurance" of these two lovebirds cost Quebeckers, even though it ignores our priorities?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to my colleague that if Quebec is a leader in social matters, so much the better. Yes, we draw inspiration from Quebec when it comes to day care. Yes, we draw inspiration from Quebec when it comes to dental care. Yes, we draw inspiration from Quebec every time we implement initiatives that will push Canada to offer more services for Canadians.

What has surprised me this morning is that the Bloc Québécois is not talking about investments, particularly Moderna's investment in Laval this week. Canada will have the first Moderna plant in the world. It will be in Quebec. We will be able to ensure the health and safety of Canadians.

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**HEALTH**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if only the Liberal-NDP "majority insurance" could improve care. A year after the forced deal on health transfers, Quebec has not received a single penny. Ottawa keeps imposing its conditions.

Eleven months have passed since Quebec demanded the right to opt out of federal dental coverage, and still nothing. Today, our lovebirds are having their third long-term spat, this one on pharmaceuticals. In the meantime, not a single Quebecker is getting better care.

Instead of playing games just to stay in power, why not give Quebec the money it needs to take care of our people?



**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is clearly trying to pick a fight. We are seeking solutions. That is why we are having good conversations with Minister Dubé and the Government of Quebec about improving the quality of health care.

It is essential that all Quebecers have access to dental care and a good health care system. That can be achieved through co-operation, not through bickering or this sort of debate.

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[English]

#### NORTHERN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, people are getting ripped off by corporate grocery stores in this country; in the north, it is on another level. One litre of olive oil costs \$36. The federal government subsidizes corporations working in the north with a program called nutrition north. Nutrition north gives millions of dollars in subsidies to these companies; the companies take a third of it and do not pass it on to consumers.

Will the Liberal government reform nutrition north so the benefit goes to the people, not to the CEOs of corporations working in the north?

• (1430)

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is absolutely committed to ensuring that 100% of the retail subsidy is passed directly to northerners. We know that prices are too high in the north. We have worked and will continue to work with territorial governments, indigenous partners and, more importantly, people who live in the north and the Arctic to make progress. Progress has been made, but there is a lot of work to do.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister knows the program is an abject failure.

[Translation]

There is no denying that grocery retailers in the north are gouging people and that the Liberal government is giving subsidies to these companies. Instead of helping ordinary people, these companies are giving massive handouts to the CEOs of big grocery retailers.

The question is simple. When will the Liberal government fix the program so that it works for the people and not for CEOs?

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that important question.

Our government is committed to ensuring that 100% of the retail subsidy goes directly to northerners. We know that prices are too high in the north. We are working with the territorial government, our indigenous partners and the people who live in the north and

#### Oral Questions

the Arctic to make progress on this issue. This is such an important issue, and there is so much work to do. We will get it done.

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[English]

#### CARBON PRICING

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Liberal-NDP Prime Minister is not worth the crime, the corruption or the cost.

Common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax because the NDP-Liberal carbon tax coalition has failed. It has not hit a single emissions target.

Do members know who has succeeded? Farmers. According to the Global Institute for Food Security, the carbon footprint for canola grown in Saskatchewan is 67% lower than the rest of the world.

Why is the Prime Minister punishing Canadian farmers for this incredible accomplishment? Instead of blaming farmers for his carbon tax failures, will he not axe his plan to increase the tax on April 1?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, being a farmer, I fully understand the importance and the effects of climate change. I understand how important it is to take care of the land. That is why we, as a government, have invested \$1.5 million to help farmers and processors reduce their environmental footprint and stay on the cutting edge. We will continue to fight climate change and work with farmers and ranchers right across this country.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that farmers are succeeding where the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition is failing. What is the farmers' reward for this? A 23% increase in the carbon tax on April 1.

Common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax and reward farmers for those accomplishments. Do members know that wheat grown in Canada can travel around the world three and a half times before it has the same carbon footprint as wheat grown in Europe? Canadian farmers have accomplished this through innovation, not carbon taxes.

Will the Liberals finally admit they were wrong, pass Bill C-234 unamended and axe their plan to increase the carbon tax on April 1?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just last week, in fact, I was visiting a farmer in Peterborough who is working on regenerative agriculture, but I find it—

*Oral Questions*

**The Speaker:** The Chair is having great difficulty hearing the response from the minister due to other folks taking the floor. I also see that the member who asked the question is having difficulty hearing it with his earpiece. Therefore, I would ask all members to please keep it down.

The hon. minister from the top.

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault:** Mr. Speaker, I find it quite ironic to be lectured by the Conservatives on support to farmers when at the end of last year they voted against the on-farm climate action fund to support sustainable agriculture. They voted against the dairy innovation and investment fund for farmers. They voted against funding in support of dairy, poultry and egg supply management producers.

On this side of the House, we believe in our farmers, we support our farmers and we help them fight climate change.

• (1435)

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, stop the crime and fix the budget. That is our commitment to Canadians.

Meanwhile, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister cannot help but skyrocket the crime and increase the corruption. Of course, he is just not worth the cost because he is causing it to go through the roof. He is incredibly hypocritical because for him pollution is free. He can jet-set around the world while Canadians continue to pay. On April 1, they will see an increase of 23% on the carbon tax.

My question is simple: Will the Liberals finally side with Conservatives and scrap the tax?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the most appropriate question is: Will the Conservatives actually look at the data?

The data will tell us that eight out of ten Canadian families get more money back, and that it is actually an affordability measure. If the hon. member would actually look at the research done by the University of Calgary she would know that.

However, I think Canadians really need to understand that the Conservative approach to climate change is to let the planet burn. It is to leave an impoverished environment and an impoverished economy for the future of our children. Shame, shame, shame.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the contrast could not be more stark when it comes to the Liberals versus the Conservatives and their opposition to the Canadian people—

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

**The Speaker:** Once again, colleagues, the Chair could not hear the question being asked by the hon. member, and that hon. member is actually close to the Chair.

The hon. member for Lethbridge, from the top.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that my colleagues across the way would clap for a 23% increase in the carbon tax when Canadians are lining up at food banks in insurmountable numbers. Millions of Canadians cannot afford to put food on their

table and these folks over here stand and clap. That is shameful. When will they grow—

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

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, you can call them to account.

**The Speaker:** The time has come awfully close to the end of the hon. member's question. I would like to assure the hon. member that neither the Chair nor the table had heard a comment that was unparliamentary. This is why it is very important for all members—

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

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, it is very important for members to not comment while a recognized member has the floor. That way—

**Mr. Chris Warkentin:** Mr. Speaker, look over there.

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask the hon. member to restrain himself while I try to give an explanation to all members.

As I was saying to colleagues, it is so important for us to keep our voices down and to restrain ourselves—

• (1440)

**Mr. Chris Warkentin:** Look over there.

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask the hon. member once again to please follow the good example of his whip and restrain himself while the Chair is talking.

It is so important for colleagues to be quiet so that the Chair can hear the question and if, on occasion, members say something that is untoward or unparliamentary, the Chair or the table could hear that comment to make sure that things happen with an appropriate parliamentary tone.

I am going to give the hon. member for Lethbridge 10 seconds to put her question if she chooses. Would the hon. member for Lethbridge like to have those 10 seconds?

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, the minister across the way had something to say to me before and perhaps would say it on the record.

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we agree that the contrast could not be more stark. Because of the Canada carbon rebate, we are putting money back in the pockets of Canadians. In the hon. member's own province, \$1,800 will go back to Canadian and Al-bertan families. Because of the Canada carbon rebate, \$1,200 for Manitobans—

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

**The Speaker:** I want to remind members to be very judicious, if they are going to quote from something. Otherwise, it could be perceived as a prop. I will ask the hon. minister to continue. She has six seconds left on the clock.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Anita Anand:** Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying that the Leader of the Opposition's climate denial would axe all of the rebates that we are giving—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest.

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption after eight years.

Canadians are paying higher prices because of sky-high taxes. Today in New Brunswick, we pay almost 60¢ more for gasoline per litre than they do in neighbouring Maine. On April 1, the carbon tax is going to go up again, 23%.

Will the Liberals axe the carbon tax and give Canadians a break?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what do we call someone who says one thing and does the other?

We would say they are acting hypocritically.

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

**The Speaker:** Order, order.

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Mr. Speaker, we would say that they are acting hypocritically.

The Conservative Party says it has principles, and if we do not like them, it has other principles.

In the 2021 Conservative platform, on which every one of those members of Parliament was elected, the platform said:

We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms.

The Conservatives' position is not only devoid of facts, but their position is the height of hypocrisy. How can Canadians believe anything these folks say?

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us remember, these Liberals promised they would never increase the carbon tax by more than \$50 a tonne. It is skyrocketing, up to \$270 a tonne. It is going to go up again on April 1.

Voters in my district see that every day when they cross the line to buy gas in Maine. It is 50¢ a litre cheaper. On top of that, the Liberals are now collecting the HST and the GST on gasoline and energy, another \$5 billion.

When are these Liberals going to stop punishing Canadians and give Canadians a break?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources just asked this minister, the member a question.

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. government House leader.

• (1445)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, in the category of “God forbid”. The member, like all of his colleagues, every single person who has asked a question in Question Period today, went to their constituents' doorsteps with a brochure that said, “Elect us, we will have a price on carbon.”

How do those members now stand up, with a serious face, in front of Canadians, and say that they are not misleading them today?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government already owed Quebec \$470 million for services rendered to asylum seekers. Its debt has just climbed to \$1 billion. These are not projections, these are the bills incurred for guaranteeing the asylum seekers quick access to social assistance, temporary housing, health care and schooling. Ottawa's refusal to pay Quebec what it owes is sabotaging our capacity to not only integrate these asylum seekers, but also serve the entire population.

When will the government reimburse Quebecers?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member knows full well, since 2015, we have paid Quebec \$5.2 billion under the arrangement we have with the Government of Quebec, the Canada-Quebec accord.

We are prepared to do more. We are prepared to sit down and work with Quebec. Ideally, we do not do that in public. It should be known that we have a good relationship with Quebec. We are currently working with our officials to determine what is our responsibility and what is Quebec's responsibility.

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** It is a great relationship, Mr. Speaker.

For months, the minister has been repeating that he is at the negotiating table with Quebec, but there are no negotiations going on. The Quebec immigration minister confirmed that on Thursday, when she said that the federal government has been wasting Quebec's time for two years.

Fortunately, we know that the premiers will be meeting in the coming weeks. I would like to remind the House that Quebec's budget will be tabled on March 12 and that we are talking about \$1 billion here.

Will the government announce today that it will pay back Quebecers?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, guess who is not at the negotiating table and never will be? It is the Bloc Québécois.

*Oral Questions*

It is strange to hear such a statement. We met with officials from Quebec the very Monday that this statement was made. We are talking. We are discussing. We are negotiating. It is important that both sides work together to know who is doing what. We will do that with Quebec. We have a good relationship and we will maintain it.

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that just goes to show that just because a person is six foot, three inches tall does not mean they are able to take the high road.

The federal government also needs to ensure that asylum seekers are spread out among the provinces. Everyone has to put in their share of the efforts. The federal government finally started spreading out the influx last year. However, the last time we asked it to start doing this again, the minister accused us of wanting to deport people, which is a crime against humanity.

Were the Liberals guilty of a crime against humanity when they were spreading out asylum seekers last year? Obviously not, so why are they not getting to work now, before Quebec's public services collapse?

**The Speaker:** Before the minister responds, I would like to ask every member to choose their words carefully, to ensure that their comments do not target the individual.

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very nice of the member to say I am six feet, three inches tall when I am actually only six feet, one inch and a hair.

Given his line of questioning, it seems to me that the Bloc Québécois is still looking to pick a fight with the federal government. However, that is not enough for it. Now it is looking for a fight with the Quebec government, and it has found one.

It is clear that the Bloc Québécois is not looking for relevant answers or reasonable solutions. It is just looking to pick fights.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. After eight years, this Prime Minister is not worth the cost or the crime of corruption.

The leader of the Bloc Québécois has just shown his true colours. Not only does he want to keep this Prime Minister in office for a long time to come, but he voted eight times to send more money to corrupt arrive scam companies for an app that he knew should only have cost \$80,000. Even so, he and the Bloc Québécois voted for \$24 million in additional spending. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly.

Will the Prime Minister admit that he and the Bloc Québécois are just not worth the cost?

• (1450)

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, we appreciate the question, which has already been answered several times.

I would add this: If my Conservative colleagues are running out of ideas, they could ask why Canada had the highest vaccination rate of all comparable countries; why Canada emerged with one of the strongest economies in the G7; why Canada has added more than one million new jobs since the COVID-19 pandemic ended; or why the child poverty rate in Canada drops by 40% every month because of the Canada child benefit.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell me why this Prime Minister, with the support of the leader of the Bloc Québécois, has put the country deeper into debt than all the other prime ministers before him combined?

The leader of the Bloc Québécois chose to vote in favour of spending \$24 million on the Prime Minister's arrive scam. I am not the one saying so. It was the leader of the Bloc Québécois who said, "We are not going to scrutinize everything the government spends". They told the government to go ahead and spend the money.

It is like listening to the Liberal Minister of Finance. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is very, very costly.

Does the Prime Minister realize that he and the Bloc Québécois are costing Quebecers too much and that they are not worth the cost or the corruption?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when Quebecers and Canadians across the country watch us on television, they surely realize what the Conservatives are up to. The Conservative attitude is to dismiss the investments that this government has delivered to make Canada the envy of the world.

Just last Friday, I was at the opening of Moderna's first plant in Canada. This plant will manufacture 100 million vaccines to ensure the health and safety of Canadians for generations to come.

Canada is making a name for itself internationally. Our workers are doing an outstanding job, and we will continue to invest in this country.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we knew that, unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois wanted to drastically increase the carbon tax.

Now, we have learned that it does not want to do its job as an opposition party. It voted eight times to increase the ArriveCAN budget. When caught in the act, the leader of the Bloc Québécois said that they were not going to scrutinize everything the government spends. That is exactly the opposite of what an opposition party should do.

The Premier of Quebec asked what the point of the Bloc Québécois is. I am putting the question to the Liberal Prime Minister or the immigration minister. What is the point of the Bloc Québécois?

**The Speaker:** As I have already said twice, questions must pertain to the administration of government or committee business. The Chair is having a very hard time seeing how that question deals with the administration of government, but I see that the Minister of Public Services and Procurement is willing to answer it. I would like all members to keep their questions focused on the administration of government.

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that you are confused, since my very experienced colleague seems to be having a little trouble finding the right person to answer the right question.

However, I have a question for my colleague from the Quebec City area.

We know that people in the Quebec City area do not care for the politics of hate, harassment and insult. Will he come to the city council meeting next week to explain to Quebec City and all its partners why his Conservative leader insulted everyone by calling them incompetent?

\* \* \*

[English]

#### LABOUR

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, everyone deserves fair pay and to be treated with respect by their employer, yet flight attendants have to work up to 40 hours a month with no pay. That is three months a year. All of this is while the CEOs of Canada's biggest airlines rake in millions of dollars, plus bonuses. The Liberals are doing nothing about it, letting CEOs get rich off the backs of unpaid work.

Will the government stop the exploitation of workers and address unpaid work in the airline industry?

**Mr. Terry Sheehan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been there from the get-go for Canada's workers. In fact, we have introduced legislation, in concert with the NDP, on replacement workers. We will continue to be there for workers every single step of the way.

We have continued to change the legislation to make sure there is a level playing field, and we will continue to address the issues the member just brought up, as well as a whole slew of other issues.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

#### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for almost three years, the Liberals have let a ship-breaking company in Union Bay bend the rules, and it is putting locals at risk. A boat filled with asbestos is being broken apart in sensitive fish and shellfish habitats, which could cause irrevocable harm and cost 500 people their jobs. The B.C. government, local first nations and residents say that the Liberals are failing to protect Union Bay.

#### Oral Questions

When will the Liberals finally stop allowing this dangerous activity and further develop ship-breaking regulations to protect our local jobs and our environment?

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is something we have been working on for quite some time with the NDP through committee, as well as with certain members. We will continue to work on this issue and ensure that a lot of the concerns the member has will be addressed shortly.

\* \* \*

#### DENTAL CARE

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, global inflation disproportionately impacts low-income seniors living on fixed incomes. That is why it was so important that we reversed the Conservatives' plan that would have raised the OAS eligibility from age 65 to 67 that would have abandoned seniors. We went further to increase OAS benefits for those once they reach age 75.

To show how else we are there for Canadians, we launched our new Canadian dental care plan, which will support dental care for up to nine million low-income Canadians, including seniors. I guess we should not be surprised that the Conservatives are against this support too.

Could the Minister of Citizens' Services update Canadians on how many seniors have applied for this and would lose their dental care plan if the Conservatives got their way?

**Hon. Terry Beech (Minister of Citizens' Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to advise my colleague from the north shore that, as of yesterday, more than one million Canadians have successfully enrolled in our dental care program. In four days, applications will open up to seniors aged 70 and older, and in the coming months, we will open up eligibility for all Canadians. This is a life-changing program. It is not only an essential part of oral health, but also of overall health and economic productivity. I expect that children getting checkups and seniors getting dentures will put a smile on everyone's faces.

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on one hand, common-sense Conservatives would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. On the other hand, after eight years, we have an NDP-Liberal Prime Minister who is not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption, but he needed support for his \$60-million arrive scam. Where did he get it from? It was from the costly cover-up coalition NDP.

Canadians want to know, in this scandal that cost them millions, what the Liberals promised the NDP in exchange for its vote to support the corruption of the government.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to allegations of misconduct in the procurement process, we take them very seriously. On the other hand, we see the Conservatives contorting themselves to come up with catchy slogans.

While they do so, we are doing the work to get to the bottom of what happened here because, for anyone who acted inappropriately, there will be consequences, and we have already committed to that. The president of the CBSA has already implemented changes, but the Conservatives can stick to their slogans.

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it would not fit on a bumper sticker, but that member and everyone over there voted against the common-sense Conservative motion calling for the Auditor General to investigate corruption, and corruption is exactly what they found. That is what they get on that side of the House. On this side of the House, we have common-sense Conservatives who would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Why did the NDP support the Liberals with the \$60-million arrive scam, which saw Liberal insiders working in their basement and getting paid millions while Canadians lined up at food banks? What did the Liberals promise the NDP?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we support the work being done by the Auditor General, including that of the Information Commissioner. We want to get to the bottom of what happened here. The CBSA president has been very forthright in sharing information with the committee. The minister has spoken with her as well, ensuring that information is being shared because we welcome this work, and, as I have said many times in the House, any misconduct in the procurement process will come with consequences.

• (1500)

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while common-sense Conservatives would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost, crime or corruption after eight years. Canadians are sick and tired of seeing the NDP leader pretending to be outraged over the arrive scam. Let me remind the House that the Prime Minister needed votes to keep funding his \$60-million arrive

scam, and the NDP came to the rescue. Joining Conservatives and voting no would have saved Canadians tens of millions of dollars.

Does the coalition between the Prime Minister and the NDP require them to fund the arrive scam?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it would be useful if we just moved on from the slogans written in the leader's office for one moment while I address another issue that would actually help Canadians. On the Order Paper is Bill C-35, which would guarantee lower child care costs for every single mother and father in this country. That could pass on a voice vote today.

Will that member, instead of taking his orders from the leader, walk down to the leader's office and tell him to pass Bill C-35 to bring down child care costs for Canadians?

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the previous member stands for the rights of Canadians and getting to the heart of the \$60-million arrive scam. The NDP voted yes at least eight times to give tens of millions of cost overruns and money-for-nothing contracts to shell companies, including a \$20-million contract to a two-person basement business that wrote the terms for its own contract. The Prime Minister is worth neither the cost nor the corruption.

I will ask this again: What did the Liberals have to do to require the NDP to fund the arrive scam?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I see that answer had little effect. I would again encourage my hon. colleague to, instead of taking all the inbound invective and all the rage farming from the leader's office, trudge back down that long hallway to his leader's office and tell him that what the Conservatives can do today is bring down dental costs for Canadians by passing the bill on the fall economic statement that will help seniors, poor families and children in our country. We can have an impact today on the lives of Canadians. They should stand up and vote for Canadians.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let us go back to ArriveCAN. The government developed an app worth a few thousand dollars to make it easier for travellers returning home. There was nothing to alert the Prime Minister or cabinet to. It was a small, inconsequential expense that could be summarized in the department's actions. Then it went up to \$10 million, \$30 million and \$59 million. It seems to me that the Prime Minister and cabinet should have been told at that point.

When exactly were the Prime Minister and cabinet informed of the cost overruns associated with ArriveCAN?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is asking a very good question.

She probably knows and remembers that we recently went through a pandemic, the worst pandemic since 1919, combined with the worst economic crisis since 1930. She knows that public servants had two main directives or instructions. The first was to act quickly and effectively to save hundreds of thousands of lives and millions of jobs, and the second was to act properly by following the rules in place, which unfortunately was not done. The Auditor General observed that. Fortunately, most of her recommendations have already been implemented.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals seem intent on pointing fingers at public servants, but it is inconceivable that a cost overrun of this magnitude was not flagged. It is inconceivable that no one warned the government of the potential embarrassment. The Prime Minister and cabinet must have been alerted to this situation, yet they continued to spend Quebecers' and Canadians' money like compulsive shoppers.

Was there no reasonable person in this government who said, "Wait a minute, enough already", or were they all hoping that no one would notice?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I basically answered that question before. What I would add, however, is the importance and value of the Auditor General's work. She deserves not only our thanks, but also our encouragement in performing her work. She plays an essential role in our democracy, because Parliament and parliamentarians rely on her efforts to force governments to do the right thing and ensure that all public servants follow the rules.

• (1505)

[English]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, Canadians know that the NDP-Liberal government is not worth the cost or the corruption. With the help of the NDP, the Liberals gave at least \$20 million to a two-person company during the arrive scam scandal for no work done, and Canadians want their money back.

Meanwhile, the Auditor General found a stark absence of documentation. Reports now show that tens of thousands of emails were illegally deleted.

Will the Prime Minister and his NDP partners who are responsible for this scandal stand up and tell us when they will release the documents that are missing?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives want to pretend that this is an issue that the government does not take seriously, we do. We are very concerned about these documents. That is precisely why we support the Information Commissioner's decision to review this matter. CBSA has already

indicated that it will work with the Information Commissioner on providing any information it has.

As I have said before, we want to get to the bottom of this and any wrongdoing will come with consequences.

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## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question. When will the government release the Winnipeg lab documents to the House?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the short answer is imminently. It is going to happen right away.

I want to thank all parties, because it is through co-operation and working together, the mechanism that we set forth. Remember that it is the Public Health Agency of Canada that makes decisions around redactions. We set forward a collaborative process that all parties participated in. As a result of that, this is exactly why additional information will be deposited before the House, and that additional information was exactly the intention in setting up that committee. That means Canadians will have additional views on the information therein.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the four MPs on the Winnipeg lab committee found that most of the information the government withheld from Parliament was withheld to shield the Prime Minister and ministers from embarrassment rather than to protect national security. These four MPs, including a Liberal member, recommended that the majority of the information withheld by the government be made public.

Will the government finally admit that its decision to withhold documents from Parliament was not to protect national security, but rather to protect itself from political embarrassment?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member across knows very well that it is the Public Health Agency of Canada, not the Government of Canada, that makes the decision with respect to redactions. Those decisions have to do with national security and also with the protection of employees. What we said, and, by the way, what was initiated by this government, was that there were questions that parliamentarians had, wishing to see additional information.

I would remind us that the Conservatives did not want to participate in this process. They actually were against participating in the process that produced the documents. It was the NDP, then the Bloc and then the Conservatives who all participated. That is exactly why this information is—

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

*Oral Questions*

**The Speaker:** Order. I would ask the member for Ajax and the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to please take their conversation outside of the chamber or ask questions and receive responses.

The hon. member for Laval—Les Îles.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the pandemic, we reached a historic agreement with Moderna to create life-saving vaccines in Laval.

Can the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry tell us how the work on this facility is progressing and what it means for jobs, growth and the success of Canada's biomanufacturing sector?

• (1510)

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Laval—Les Îles and all my colleagues from Laval.

On Friday, I joined my colleagues to celebrate the completion of construction on Moderna's state-of-the-art plant. It is located here in Canada and will be able to manufacture 100 million vaccines to protect the health and safety of Canadians. I was joined there by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

This is great news for Laval and the Montreal area, great news for research and great news for maintaining Canada's position as a world leader in life sciences.

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**JUSTICE**

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the Chaudière-Appalaches region, a violent crime wave is stirring up strong emotions and feelings of insecurity.

These crimes confirm the alarming increase in violence in this country, which, under this government, has seen a 39% increase in violent crime and a 61% increase in assaults with a weapon or causing bodily harm. That is the sorry track record after eight years of this Prime Minister.

When will he reverse his soft-on-crime policies and send criminals to prison where they belong?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague across the way.

I want all Canadians watching us right now to know that crime in our communities is a priority for every parliamentarian in the House.

That being said, with Bill C-48, which was just enacted two months ago and deals with bail, we focused specifically on the most violent offenders who used a firearm in the commission of their

crime. We are aiming for a situation where these individuals will stay in prison.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's policies let violent criminals serve their sentences in the comfort of their living rooms, thanks to Bill C-5, which the Bloc Québécois supported.

Another consequence of this slipshod legislation has made the news: A former police officer who lured a teenage girl is serving his sentence at home. That is unacceptable given that sexual violence is up 71%.

What does the Prime Minister have to say to the victim who had the courage to speak out and is seeing her attacker get a slap on the wrist?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, violent and sexual crimes have been a top priority for our government since we came to power.

We have addressed intimate partner violence a number of times in our own bills in terms of bail and other sentences.

When it comes to mandatory minimum sentences, however, we are at the complete opposite end of the spectrum from the Conservative Party. To deal with indigenous and Black overrepresentation in our prisons, in our justice systems, we have to focus on the actual sentences.

[English]

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives will stop the crime that the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister has unleashed on our streets for eight years. Instead of enforcing the law and stopping crime, he is going after law-abiding sport shooters and hunters.

Machine guns have been illegal in Canada since the 1970s, but last week, caught on video, violent attackers with machine guns opened fire at a home in small city White Rock.

Why does the Prime Minister prioritize billions of dollars going after hunters and lawful gun owners instead of the real criminals?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has been steadfast and focused when it comes to going after serious criminals, something the Conservatives cannot actually talk about. As they yell out, it would be interesting for Canadians to know that during their time in office, they cut 600 RCMP employees from being able to operate across the country.

The so-called "common-sense Conservatives" means cuts to policing. We are cleaning up the mess they created.



*Oral Questions***ORDER AND DECORUM**

• (1515)

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, investments in infrastructure like roads, highways and bridges are crucial for our supply chains, local economies and traditional industries, commuters and all Canadians.

Last week, our government, along with the Province of Prince Edward Island, invested over \$21 million to improve local roads, benefiting islanders and building on significant infrastructure investments.

Could the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities share with the House the government's policy on projects like this and how they benefit rural communities?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his advocacy to get roads built in his community.

This announcement, worth more than \$21 million, is going to help build or improve 149 kilometres of road on the island. We continue to fund different road supports across programs, whether it is the Canada community-building fund, the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund, the national trade corridors fund or the investing in Canada infrastructure plan, which included specifically eligibility for rural roads.

We have programs in Calgary, in my own constituency in Nova Scotia and on the island. We are going to keep doing what it takes to put people to work in good-paying jobs that build communities.

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**NORTHERN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country are struggling with the rising cost of food, and it is even worse in northern and indigenous communities, where the lack of competition has allowed NorthMart, often the only option, to jack up the cost of food without consequence.

The Liberals are choosing to stand with wealthy CEOs instead of helping families afford food. In addition to competition, first nations like Garden Hill need reliable all-weather roads to be able to bring in food and supplies.

When will the Liberals stop subsidizing CEO profits, take on the grocery giants and stand up for northerners?

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are working with provincial governments, territorial governments, indigenous governments and communities in the north to address the very real challenges that are in the north: isolation, lack of infrastructure, the high price of food and the high price of absolutely everything.

With the partnerships we have, I am confident that progress is being made, but there is so much more to do, and we will get it done.

**The Speaker:** I have a statement I would like to make.

*[Translation]*

The Chair would like to take a few minutes to share with the House some brief reflections on our proceedings since the resumption of the session at the end of January. This is quite relevant today.

Since my election as your Speaker, I have made it my main goal to work toward improving the decorum of this place. I have received feedback and support from whips, which led to some improvements. I am grateful for their efforts.

*[English]*

In my observations, I have also noticed the vast majority of exchanges during the sitting day are productive and are worthy of our institution, and for this, I express my gratitude to all as it is incumbent on all of us to elevate the quality of our proceedings. That being said, there has been a slow but steady increase in language and expressions that have been perceived to be inflammatory. The Chair wishes to address this as we move toward the spring session.

• (1520)

During key moments, remarks have, at times, gotten too close to the limit of what is considered respectful and courteous, or even in good taste. Other interventions have clearly crossed the line of unparliamentary language. As a result, proceedings were often interrupted by a Chair's interventions or by points of order generated by the conduct of members from all sides of the House.

*[Translation]*

In some cases, the use of certain expressions or language was determined by the Chair to be unparliamentary and resulted in the withdrawal of the offending term or an apology from the member. In those instances, the Chair considered the matter closed and we moved on. There are other times when the Chair has issued warnings, encouraging members to stay away from certain terms. While not finding them unparliamentary, they do contribute to disorder and we would all be best served by avoiding this sort of language.

*Speaker's Ruling**[English]*

On other occasions, the Chair has ruled that something was considered “a matter of debate”. When a Chair rules that a particular statement is a matter of debate, the Chair is saying that there is a debatable point in the balance as opposed to a personal attack, the use of an easily identifiable unparliamentary term or an exchange that results in disorder. Insofar as debate can, on occasion, be sharp and tense, even sometimes causing some members to take offence, it can still fall within the realm of an acceptable discourse in the House. The Chair will continue to make these distinctions when necessary.

*[Translation]*

Even when there was no finding of the actions or language in question being unparliamentary in a strict sense, it is evident to the Chair and to those watching our debates that the accumulation of this sort of behaviour has had a negative lingering effect on our proceedings. Since January, the Chair has heard statements that were excessively provocative and insulting.

These sorts of comments have proven to be disruptive to our proceedings, hurtful to members, detrimental to moving our work forward, and beneath the high office we hold as members of parliament.

*[English]*

On December 12, 2012, one of my predecessors had observed, at page 13,215 of Debates:

The House is also an inherently adversarial forum that tends to foster conflict. As a result, sometimes emotions get the better of us and we quickly find ourselves in situations marked by disorderly conduct. Tone and gestures can cause as much of a reaction as the words used in debate. Lately, it appears that at different times the mood of the House has strayed quite far from the flexibility, accommodation and balance that ideally ought to exist in this place.

*[Translation]*

Regardless of whether the Chair finds language unparliamentary, it is incumbent upon all members to judiciously consider their remarks. As I stated on October 18, 2023, at page 17584 of the Debates, and I quote:

The House is a place where freedom of speech is primordial and where views are strongly held and vigorously defended. While the Chair must allow the widest possible range of individual expression possible, members are expected to be mindful of their words and behaviours within the realm of what would be considered parliamentary.

*[English]*

The Chair, and by this I mean myself and my fellow presiding officers, therefore, encourages all members to take part in our proceedings, even vigorously and passionately, as the case may be, but to do so in a civilized and respectful manner in accordance with our own rules.

The Chair will continue applying the rules, fairly and forcefully when required, but in the end, it is every member's responsibility to exercise a reasonable degree of self-discipline and restraint while exercising their privilege of freedom of speech.

I thank all members for their attention and for their continued efforts in improving decorum in the House.

● (1525)

**PRIVILEGE**

ALLEGEDLY MISLEADING STATEMENTS MADE IN THE HOUSE—  
SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am also now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised on February 8, by the member for Regina—Lewvan concerning allegedly misleading statements made in the House by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

In raising his question of privilege, the member alleged that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change had misled the House during Oral Questions on February 7 and 8, when they implied that he said there is no link between the carbon tax and food prices. The member quoted one of the statements he made in the House on February 6, to assert that, in fact, he had made such a link. In the member's view, this misrepresentation rose to the level of a *prima facie* question of privilege.

*[Translation]*

The question of privilege the Chair is being asked to rule on can be summarized as follows: determining whether the statements of the Prime Minister and the minister contain inaccuracies that would show that they knowingly misled the House.

When the member raised his question of privilege in the House, he rightly referred to the three conditions that must be met for the Chair to find a *prima facie* case of privilege. In my ruling of February 15, 2024, I laid out those three conditions. I would encourage members to review that ruling.

*[English]*

In a similar situation, one of my predecessors said, in a ruling on April 30, 2014, which can be found on page 4,753 of Debates:

Thus, it is not sufficient for members to simply make allegations based on their perceptions of what is or is not factually correct. Members must recognize and accept the existence of differences of fact and interpretation, which have always been a part of the normal cut and thrust of debate and question period.

*[Translation]*

As for the question of privilege before us, I reviewed the statements of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change during oral questions on February 7 and 8, 2024. The Chair could not find in those statements any grounds to conclude that those members knew their answers were misleading or that they intended to mislead the House.

*[English]*

The member for Regina—Lewvan was able to correct the record by explaining his intent and his point of view. In my opinion, we are therefore dealing with a matter of debate. Consequently, the Chair cannot find a *prima facie* case of privilege here.

I thank all members for their attention.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### ONLINE HARMS ACT

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-63, An Act to enact the online harms act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act and an act respecting the mandatory reporting of Internet child pornography by persons who provide an Internet service, and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts.

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

\* \* \*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### 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 60th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 60th report later this day.

#### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, also known as the mighty OGGO, in relation to the motion adopted on Wednesday, February 21, regarding a question of privilege.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in this report later this day.

● (1530)

#### FINANCE

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Finance, entitled “Shaping our Economic Future: Canadian Priorities”.

I want to thank the finance committee clerk, Alexandre Roger; the analysts, Joëlle Malo, Michaël Lambert-Racine; Brett Capwell and Mehrab Kiarsi; the committee assistant, Lynda Gaudreault; the whole team of interpreters, technologists and staff of the committee; and, of course, all the members of the committee, witnesses and department officials for their hard work in completing this report.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are presenting a dissenting report. The committee report does not recommend reducing the out-of-control deficit spending by the Liberal-NDP government, which has driven up inflation and interest rates. It does not address Canada's GDP, which has been declining since September 2022 and is lower than it was in 2018. It also does not recommend axing the carbon tax scam or reversing any of the Liberals' other tax increases.

### Routine Proceedings

Canadians are in a cost of living crisis and are getting poorer. After eight years of the Liberal-NDP government, the Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

We would like to thank the committee staff, clerk, analysts and witnesses for their work on the pre-budget consultations.

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the three following reports of the Standing Committee on National Defence: the eighth report, entitled “Increase in Rental Housing Costs for Canadian Military Personnel”, in relation to a motion adopted Wednesday, February 7; the ninth report, entitled “Donation of Surplus CRV7 Rockets to Ukraine”, also in relation to a motion adopted on February 7; and, finally, the tenth report, entitled “On the Frontlines of Democracy: Canada and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Responding to Russia's Aggression in Europe”.

The last report takes note that we are two days past the recognition of the Ukrainian war on February 24. There is nothing like going there to see the contributions of Canadians to this war effort and to the other allies. I recommend that report, in particular, for the reading of my colleagues.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INTERPRETATION ACT

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice, Lib.)** moved that Bill S-13, An Act to amend the Interpretation Act and to make related amendments to other Acts be now read the first time and printed.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

\* \* \*

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the good people of Waterloo; I would also just note that the procedure and House affairs committee is on its 60th report.

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 60th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier today, be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

It is agreed.

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

*Routine Proceedings*

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, I note that all parties to the government operations and estimates committee have agreed to this motion so we can get to the bottom of the ArriveCAN scandal. Therefore, I ask that the House gives its consent. I move that the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, presented earlier in the day, be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Is there consent?

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

\* \* \*

● (1535)

## PETITIONS

### CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present to the House today.

The first petition is in support of parents being able to make decisions about their own families without the interference of the federal government. The petitioners call attention to how the Liberal government is trying to involve itself in decisions that should properly be made by parents and by provinces. These petitioners particularly reference the policy in New Brunswick of having parental consent involved in the changing of names and pronouns for students under 16.

The petitioners note that, in the vast majority of cases, parents care about the well-being of their children and love them much more than any state-run institutions do. They note that the role of government is to support families and respect parents, not dictate how they should make decisions for their children. The petitioners therefore call on the Government of Canada to butt out and let parents raise their own children.

### FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the next petition is in support of a private member's bill, Bill C-257, which would add political belief and activity as prohibited grounds of discrimination to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The petitioners note that Canadians should be free from political discrimination. This reflects a broad opposition to Canadians facing arbitrary discrimination; protection from political discrimination also ensures that Canadians will be able to express themselves on important issues of the day without fear of employment or other reprisals. Therefore, the petitioners call on the House to support Bill C-257.

### NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the next petition responds to a government policy that would restrict access to natural health products, which Canadians rely on every day for their health and safety.

The petitioners note that Liberals are threatening access to natural health products through new rules that would mean higher cost and fewer products available on the shelf. They note that so-called cost-recovery provisions would impose massive costs on all consumers of natural health products and undermine Canadians' access to these products. The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to reverse the changes made in the last Liberal budget regarding natural health products.

### FALUN GONG

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the fourth and final petition that I will be presenting today is regarding the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in the PRC.

The petitioners draw attention to a decades-long campaign of persecution targeting Falun Gong practitioners and call on the Government of Canada to do more to support Falun Gong practitioners and all those facing persecution, violence and human rights violations within the PRC.

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, there is a crisis of domestic violence and violent crimes right across Canada. These petitioners indicate that it is well established within the House that, when women are pregnant, the risk of violence against women increases.

Currently, the injury or death of a preborn child as a victim of crime is not considered an aggravating circumstance for sentencing purposes in our Criminal Code. Canada, they say, is one of the only countries in the world that has no abortion laws; this legal void is so extreme that the House does not recognize preborn children as victims of violent crimes. However, justice requires that an attacker who abuses a pregnant woman and her preborn child must be sentenced accordingly, and the sentence should match the crime.

The petitioners are calling on the House of Commons to legislate the abuse of a pregnant woman and/or the infliction of harm on a preborn child as aggravating circumstances for sentencing purposes in the Criminal Code.

### PORNOGRAPHY

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, also, individuals are very concerned about sexually explicit and demeaning material, depicting sexual violence, that can easily be accessed on the Internet by people as young as eight, sitting at a computer. A significant proportion of this sexually explicit material is made available for commercial purposes, and it is not protected by any effective age verification method. Anyone who makes sexually explicit material available on the Internet for commercial purposes has a responsibility to ensure that it is not accessed by young persons.

Online age verification was a primary recommendation made by stakeholders during a 2017 study by the Standing Committee on Health. The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to adopt Bill S-210, the protecting young persons from exposure to pornography act.

● (1540)

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

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

I rise for the 33rd time on behalf of the people of Swan River, Manitoba, to present a petition on the rising rate of crime. The community of Swan River is overwhelmed with alarming levels of crime because of the Liberal government's soft-on-crime laws, such as Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

Jail has become a revolving door for repeat offenders. With Bill C-75, violent offenders could be in jail in the morning and back on the street the same day. With Bill C-5, criminals could serve their sentences from home.

The people of Swan River are calling for jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders. They 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.

#### FIRST RESPONDERS TAX CREDIT

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions.

The first one is geared towards assisting in the recruitment of volunteer firefighters. It is from undersigned citizens and residents of Canada calling on the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310 and enact amendments to the Income Tax Act, subsections 118.06(2) and 118.07(2), in order to increase the amount of tax credits available for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per year.

#### ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the second petition I rise on today is from 69 residents of North Okanagan—Shuswap calling on the Government of Canada and the House of Commons to give citizens a voice on the subject of electoral reform and the right to make recommendations and to support Motion No. 86 calling for a citizens' assembly on electoral reform.

#### HOUSING

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I rise today with a petition of deep concern to residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands, and I dare say of all our ridings across Canada, regarding the crisis of home affordability. The petitioners point out the key problems that have caused the problem. The rise in home costs has to do with the financialization of homes; treating housing as an investment and, worse than that, as a matter of some speculation and gambling; and the use of Canada's housing market to launder money and evade taxes.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to redefine affordable housing, to have an updated formula to better reflect the

#### Routine Proceedings

current economic conditions; to ensure that corporate interests and real estate investment trusts are brought to heel when it comes to excess profiteering; and to require restrictive covenants on affordable housing, which are units built with taxpayer support, to ensure that they are not flipped for personal gain.

The petitioners call for a number of very sensible measures to prioritize the funding for non-profit and co-op housing.

#### BASIC INCOME GUARANTEE PROGRAM

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Halifax, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is my honour to present, in both official languages, a petition signed by the advocates of a basic income guarantee. The petition calls upon the Government of Canada to begin immediate negotiations with the Government of Prince Edward Island to develop and implement a basic income guarantee demonstration program in the province of P.E.I. that would be administered, monitored and evaluated for at least five years.

The petitioners note that the 2020 final report of the Special Committee on Poverty in PEI recommended initiating these negotiations. The report has the support of all political parties in P.E.I. The demonstration program would benefit all of Canada, as poverty is the primary social determinant of health and requires bold and creative approaches to understand and address its root causes and consequences in Canada.

#### JUSTICE

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to present a petition signed by Canadians.

The petitioners observe that, for the past eight years, the Liberal government has consistently put the rights of criminals ahead of the rights of victims. This includes when it failed to respond to the Supreme Court's unjust Bissonnette decision. This decision struck down a common-sense Harper law that gave judges the discretion to apply consecutive parole ineligibility periods to murderers convicted of multiple murders, to take into account each life lost.

The petitioners call on Parliament, as a modest response to the Bissonnette decision, to pass Bill S-281. This would prevent convicted murderers from applying for parole year after year once they complete their minimum sentence.

● (1545)

#### AIR SERVICE TO INDIA

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as members know, one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada is our Indo-Canadian community. Through that, along with the wonderful trade, economic ties and personal ties between Canada and India, there has been an increase in demand for direct flights between Canada and India.

### Government Orders

I am presenting a petition from many constituents who would like to be able to see a direct flight from Winnipeg to India. At the end of the day, I think it is fairly well established that, through that wonderful relationship between the two countries and the airliners, and the idea of competition, we will hopefully see more direct flights.

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise to present a petition on behalf of folks across Waterloo Region, who are calling upon the House of Commons to demand an immediate ceasefire in what they call the Israel-Palestine conflict. They also call for Israel to lift the blockade of the Gaza Strip and authorize the creation of a humanitarian corridor and emergency humanitarian intervention. They want the House to call for Israel to meet its commitments under the Geneva Convention and international humanitarian law. They want the House to call for all measures necessary to protect civilian life, both Israeli and Palestinian, and to help foster a climate conducive to building a lasting peace.

\* \* \*

### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, if a revised response to Question No. 2064, originally tabled on January 29, 2024, could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the aforementioned question be deemed to have been made an order for return and that it be tabled immediately?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2064—**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:**

With regard to Global Affairs Canada's funding to the West Bank and Gaza: (a) does the Representative Office of Canada to the Palestinian Authority receive a budget for spending on aid related projects, and, if so, how much is this budget in (i) 2023-24, (ii) 2024-25; (b) what oversight, if any, does Global Affairs Canada (GAC) in Ottawa exercise over the Representative Office of Canada to the Palestinian Authority in terms of (i) vetting grantees, (ii) approving projects, (iii) auditing projects; (c) how does GAC ensure that funds are not misappropriated by terrorist organizations, including Hamas and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; (d) what are the details of Canada's "enhanced oversight policies" regarding international aid to the West Bank and Gaza; (e) what are the details of all grants Canada is currently providing to organizations in the West Bank and Gaza, including, for each, the (i) funding recipient organization, (ii) amount, (iii) purpose of the funding or the project description, (iv) local implementing partners; (f) is the government providing funding to World Vision for its work in Gaza via the Humanitarian Coalition, and, if so, how much funding is it providing; and (g) what action is being taken in response to intelligence reports detailing Hamas' use of Gaza hospitals for terror, including what kind of reviews GAC is taking to examine funding provided to humanitarian organizations that were active in Gaza hospitals?

(Return tabled)

[English]

### 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. Alexandra Mendès):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed from December 14, 2023, consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, workers coming together in solidarity, negotiating collectively and at times making the very difficult decision to withhold their labour is something that has raised the material condition of working people in this country for generations and generations. This is not a tactic or a strategy; this is something that is defined in our Constitution.

It is a constitutionally protected right, and yet we have seen again and again consecutive Liberal and Conservative governments undermine the rights of workers in many ways. One of those ways is back-to-work legislation, which we have seen repeatedly in this place. Another of the most pernicious ways workers' rights are undermined is the use of replacement workers, and that is the topic of Bill C-58, which I rise to speak about today on behalf of the good people of Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Replacement workers are workers who are brought in by the employer during times of work stoppage, during lockouts and strikes. They are brought in to do the work of unionized workers. When employers use replacement workers, or as they are colloquially referred to, "scabs", it undermines the ability of unionized workers to negotiate and to secure improvements with their employer through the collective bargaining process.

The use of replacement workers also has a profound impact on communities, especially small communities like the ones I represent. It increases the risk of violence on picket lines. Most significantly of course, it removes the incentive on the part of the employer to bargain in good faith with the employees. The use of replacement workers has been documented as lengthening the duration of labour disputes.

*Government Orders*

All of these are reasons we need to pass the historic legislation before us. It would be a very significant contribution to the long legacy of codifying workers' rights in Canadian law. It is one that would allow workers to improve their lot at a time when working people in this country are falling farther and farther behind. People are having trouble putting food on the table. People are having trouble accessing the services they need, like pharmacare or dental care, which are things we are also fighting for in this place.

I am exceptionally proud that it is the NDP that once again has forced this historic legislation before us. In fact the NDP has brought forward legislation to ban the use of replacement workers not once, not twice, but eight times over the past 15 years. Each time it has come forward for a vote, both the Liberals and the Conservatives have voted against it, most recently in 2016. Now we have managed, as a party born of and founded by labour, to create the conditions whereby the government has had a change of heart. It has seen the value of banning replacement workers and has chosen, rightly, to work with us to make sure this historic legislation passes through this place.

I cannot say the same for my Conservative colleagues. They are at a very important juncture when it comes to the legislation; the Conservative Party wants the support of working people, and there is a bill before us that is supported by all of the unions in Canada, by the vast majority of working people working under collective agreements.

Conservatives have a choice to make, which is whether they stand with those people to give them an important tool for ensuring that their collective bargaining rights are upheld and their constitutional rights are protected during times of labour dispute, or whether they side with the employers who wish to continue with the status quo and a situation whereby they are able to bring in non-union workers in order to continue production at their facilities. If production is allowed to proceed with the use of replacement workers, the leverage, the negotiating power, of unions is greatly undermined.

● (1555)

This, of course, is legislation that has already been put in place in my home province of British Columbia. I am very proud that we have a progressive provincial government that has seen the value of banning replacement workers. The reality is that the sky has not fallen. The legislation has been in place for some time, and we have seen collective bargaining proceed. We have seen workers manage to negotiate in good faith with their employers and secure benefits they so rightly deserve.

I had a chance to attend the press conference right in the foyer of the House of Commons on the day that the bill was tabled in the House. Standing there listening to labour leaders who have been working on this for decades, hearing them say that it is legislation that working people have been trying to secure for almost as long as Canada has existed, was an emotional moment. It really underlined the historic significance of the bill that is before us.

I will end by recognizing the hard work of my colleague, the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, who worked hard with the Minister of Labour to hammer out the bill we have before us.

We want to see it brought into force as quickly as possible, and I sincerely hope that it passes through this place unanimously.

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to correct the hon. member on one point. In 2021, the Liberal election platform did specifically mention that we would bring in legislation to prohibit replacement workers. The mandate letter issued to the Minister of Labour in December 2021 also included this specific thing.

I am glad that British Columbia and Quebec have similar legislation in place. Does the member agree with me that it is time for all provinces to bring in similar legislation to protect the interests of workers?

● (1555)

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, on the member's second point, I very much agree that every province should bring in similar bans on the use of replacement workers for provincially regulated workplaces. British Columbia and Quebec have led the way, and it is time for other provinces to follow suit.

On his first point, I am always open to being corrected, but usually more when I am wrong. The point I was making was that his party has voted against anti-scab legislation again and again. He mentioned the Liberal platform, and I recognize that there was a commitment in the Liberals' platform. His party commits to a lot of things in its election platform; that does not always result in their moving those things forward when they form government. I will leave it at that. The key difference here is that the legislation before us would apply to both strikes and lockouts, while the election platform of the Liberal Party did not.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is clear that the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley is passionate about the legislation. He talked about how he was able to talk his coalition partners, the Liberals, into it, but I am interested to know why the Liberals did not include in the scope of the bill the federal PSAC workers. There were 120,000 of them who went on strike, and one would think that if the Liberals thought it was such a terrific idea, they would want to extend the bill to cover not replacing those workers.

Does the member have any thoughts on that?

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, I think it is a good question and a fair one, and it is a good question to pose to the party across the way when they speak on this topic. It is absolutely something we support.

When we drag the governing party, kicking and screaming, to see the value of the legislation we have been fighting for, for decades and decades, that is a negotiation. When the negotiation does not go as far as we would like it to go, we are still going to secure wins for working people. The question of why it does not go as far as it should really rests with the folks across the way.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as my colleague mentioned, civilian employees of the armed forces are currently locked out and scab workers are replacing them.

The government does not seem to be acting, despite the bill that is on the table. Port of Québec workers have also been locked out for many months. It will soon be two years, if that is not already the case.

However, the bill does not include people who are currently locked out or on strike. Does my colleague agree that this is a loophole that needs to be addressed as soon as possible?

*[English]*

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, my colleague from the Bloc raises an important point, which is that this legislation, which is still being debated and still has to make its way through the other place, does nothing for workers who are, right now, facing conditions that could be alleviated by it.

I think that underlines the importance of passing this bill through this place as quickly as possible. Rather than waiting 18 months after the time it is brought into force for its terms to take effect, we must ensure that workers are protected by its provisions as soon as possible, as quickly as possible. That is something I believe we share as a priority, and I hope it is something that we can see strengthened in the legislation before us.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, given the history of trade unions in this country, can the member make the case, quickly, for how passing Bill C-58 is good for economic stability in Canada?

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, the question from my friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands was about economic stability. The fact is that in provinces without replacement worker legislation, work stoppages have been longer than they have been in provinces that have legislation like this in place.

Bargaining in good faith with unionized employees who have the protection of legislation like this would create stability. That is what the evidence suggests. When workers do better, everyone in our country does better. That is what stability looks like.

• (1600)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the House to speak. Today, we are speaking to Bill C-58, which is the legislation that would ban replacement workers. I have some relevant experience on all sides of this issue, being the daughter of someone whose mother was a teacher who went on strike and whose father was a member of the Canadian Auto Workers union who went on strike. My daughter is a nurse. My other daughter is a teacher. I was married to a union welder, a proud member of local 663 and one of the 5,000 union members in Sarnia—Lambton. We are well known worldwide for our high-quality and high-safety performance, and it is certainly considered to be a union town.

At the same time, I worked for many years with Dow Chemical. In the late 1980s, there was a strike, and I was a scab in the strike. I

did security and lab testing and had to cross the picket line. I had the experience of how things can escalate during those strike experiences. I bring all of that to my speech today.

I will start out by saying that I am very surprised to see the Liberal government come forward with this legislation. I think about how the Liberals handle their own business. They have increased the use of contractors and consultants by over 60%; it is in the billions of dollars. Is that not really replacement workers from the PSAC union workers who do the work? I think about the arrive scam situation. There is a whole IT department in the government that is full of federal union-sector employees, yet the government decided to get two guys in a basement from GC Strategies and give them \$20 million so that they could outsource from other replacement workers. I think the ArriveCAN is to the tune of north of \$60 million in costs, but the two guys in the basement, who did no work on it, got \$20 million. Certainly, there are lots of people who can outsource and procure within the government; again, are they not replacement workers?

Further, I would note that the government has failed to include federal-sector employees as part of the scope of this legislation. There were 120,000 PSAC workers who went on strike. Therefore, if the government thinks this is a terrific idea, in conjunction with its NDP coalition partners, should it not have said that, if it is great for everybody else, we should put that in place here? Those are just some of the considerations that went through my mind when I started to think about what we needed to do here.

The other example that I would talk about would be the government's taking \$40 billion of taxpayer money to put into the Stellantis plant and the battery plant in St. Thomas to create 3,000 jobs and then turning around and, as we found out in the contract, saying there are going to be 1,600 Korean replacement workers. Again, the hypocrisy of the government in the way it acts versus the way it brings this legislation forward makes me really ask the question of whether the government really does support this concept or just has to do something to pacify its NDP marriage partners.

One of the things that are missing in terms of what is in the legislation is something to do with essential workers. We have had a lot of strikes in Canada. There were 147 work stoppages in 2023 alone. It is to the point that we get rail strikes, port strikes and all these different strikes, and our partners in the U.S. are starting to consider that Canada is not a reliable supply chain. Therefore, something needs to be done to address that.



I am fully behind the right to collective bargaining. I am fully behind people having the ability to negotiate fairly, but what is happening is that people are not negotiating, and then, all of a sudden, at the eleventh hour, the impact is felt by everyone. It is felt by CN Rail, where strikes happened. It is thousands and thousands of dollars to businesses. It is inconvenience to travellers, in many cases. We have all seen empty shelves as a result of port strikes. The United States has legislation for essential workers. The way it works is it defines what is considered an essential service or an essential worker, including essential infrastructure for the supply chain and nurses and medical professionals.

● (1605)

What the Americans put in place is this. They have, say, four years between every negotiation. One month before they would go into a strike action place, they have to go to binding arbitration. That causes people to get more serious about negotiating early on and not waiting until the eleventh hour. Think of the parents who every year are threatened with strikes by teachers. All of a sudden there is no child care. It is fine to say we have \$10-a-day child care, but if the spaces do not exist, that does not help them, and if the kids cannot go to school, that does not help them either. There are huge impacts that we are missing, and I would have liked to see something in this legislation to address them in a similar way to how they are addressed in the U.S.

The second thing I would say is that there are a couple of technical things I do not think have been well considered. I have worked at chemical and petrochemical facilities and with nuclear and the mining sector. These facilities cannot be shut down on a dime. When it comes to the strike date and time to shut them down, it is not safe to do that. The language in the bill talks about how the only time replacement workers could be used in the case of a strike would be if a specific harm was identified that would occur. The problem with chemical plants, nuclear facilities and whatnot when there is a strike is that we do not know exactly what is going to leak, catch fire, impact the environment or whatever. Something will go wrong; we just do not know specifically what that is, so it would be impossible, then, with the current phraseology, to justify any replacement workers. I think that is something that will definitely need to be addressed.

I would say, as an improvement to the bill, that there are ways of carving out the manufacturing and transfer of substances that are covered under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act. That would really take care of this whole area where what it is going to go wrong or what the impacts would be cannot be defined exactly. If exemptions could exist if there was a harm related to the manufacture or transfer of substances covered under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, that might be a reasonable amendment to see.

Hopefully, when this bill gets looked at, people will weigh the balance of things and try to come to a place where we are protecting workers' right to collective bargaining, but I think we need to make sure that we are protecting society and the public from undue harm. The supply chain issue is a real and present danger, with the number of disruptions that we have had. We already lack capacity at our ports. We are lacking rail connectivity in this country. It is not getting better; it is getting worse. With all of those kinds of dis-

ruptions, we need to find a way to incorporate "essential worker" and "essential service" as part of this legislation.

Hopefully, at the end of the day, what we would find is that people are bargaining in good faith and bargaining faster. If they do not bargain in good faith, then before they are in a strike position it goes to binding arbitration, which will come to a resolution that maybe neither party will be satisfied with but at least will not have an impact on families, Canadians, businesses and our export partners.

I look forward to the debate and listening to the ideas my colleagues have. I am from a union family. I support union workers. I support the rights of people to collectively bargain. I have been on the other side and can say that it is no fun crossing a picket line.

With that, I look forward to the comments and questions from my colleagues.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it has been many years that I have had discussions on issues like anti-scab legislation and final offer selection. I can go back to the very hot debate topics in 1989-90 inside the Manitoba legislature, and I like to think that I have been a strong advocate for anti-scab legislation.

I appreciate a number of the comments the member made. I often look at British Columbia or Quebec and to what degree public servants are incorporated into the legislation. I do not necessarily know the details. I think it is a legitimate question. I would like to see it maybe addressed in more detail as it goes to committee.

The question I have for the member is this. Does the Conservative Party support passing this legislation to go to committee?

● (1610)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, I can tell the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, first of all, is that I did ask the Minister of Labour when this bill was first introduced whether the federal sector was included, and he indicated it was not. I think that is an opportunity. If it is sauce for the goose, it should be sauce for the gander.

The Conservatives are going to look at what amendments are put forward. As I said, there are some areas where I think the bill needs improvement, so we will be looking for that. At the end of the day, we will look forward to what happens at committee.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, although we are firmly in favour of this—we have stood up to defend this idea 11 times—I get the impression that there is a good deal of smoke and mirrors here. Again, I want to say that we strongly support it. In fact, Quebec has had its anti-scab legislation since 1977.

### Government Orders

The bill before us mentions a rather vague exception that talks about a threat to the life, health and safety of any person. What does that mean? Would that not potentially circumvent the right to strike? That needs to be clarified.

Then, the fact that there would be an 18-month delay before the act came into force after royal assent means that, even if the bill were passed tomorrow morning, there would not be time to bring it into force before the next election. I get the impression that the Liberals, who have repeatedly voted down anti-scab legislation every time it has come up for a vote, are once again bribing the NDP by telling themselves that it does not matter, because in 18 months the Conservatives will abolish it when they are in power.

Does my colleague share my interpretation?

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, the member knows full well that I worked hard to bring in a bill seeking to protect the pension plans of unionized and non-unionized workers. I really want to have a strong bill.

However, there are problems. I agree with eliminating the 18-month delay, because if something is good, it is good immediately. That is my opinion.

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I found the member's speech really interesting, although I do not necessarily agree with all the points, and I think she may be confused on a few issues.

The facts are that anti-scab legislation has existed in Quebec and British Columbia for quite a long time and, as my friend said earlier, the sky has not fallen. I have heard all of the Conservative arguments, which are really catastrophic, but we know that so many people in this country want labour to matter because, when scabs walk in, it takes away workers' power to negotiate. This is what this is.

I am wondering if the member will support this bill moving forward and if we are going to maybe get some ideas that the Conservatives want to bring forward. At the end of the day, I hope that every party in the House supports workers.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, as I said, I absolutely support workers and people's right to collectively bargain. What I have a problem with is that, when people do not come to the table in good faith, things go on and on and, all of a sudden, there are impacts on Canadian families, Canadian businesses and our export partners. These are things that could be eliminated. There are better ways of doing it. We need to look to other countries that do it better.

I am very interested to hear about Quebec's legislation and what exactly it has done. I know there are some facilities, such as chemical facilities, etc., that would need that kind of protection.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If the House gives its consent, I move that the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

• (1615)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

[Translation]

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)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### CANADA LABOUR CODE

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

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, before I begin my speech, I would like to draw members' attention to an event that took place this weekend and that we have not yet discussed in the House, even though it is a major artistic event. I know that members may think that this has nothing to do with the subject at hand, but there is a bit of a connection, and I think it is important to point it out.

This weekend, two Quebecers, a man and a woman, won international film awards. It is important to acknowledge that. On Saturday evening in Paris, Monia Chokri won the César award for best foreign film for *The Nature of Love*, beating *Oppenheimer*. This romantic comedy was directed by an actress and director from Quebec who has made movies with Xavier Dolan. She surprised everyone by cleaning up at the awards ceremony in Paris. Once again, Quebec is edging its way in and making its mark on the international scene. Our work is being seen everywhere.

In Berlin on Saturday night, Philippe Lesage, a director in his forties with a few films under his belt, won the Berlinale Grand Prix of the international jury with a film called *Who by Fire*. I want to repeat something I have often said before. Although this prize for best foreign film was awarded to a film made in Canada, it is the creators, directors and artists from Quebec who make Canada famous abroad in this field, as in so many others. I have often spoken about that in the House.

Soon, unfortunately, that will not be the case. Quebec is going to become independent in the next four or five years. When our artists shine at the Césars, the Oscars or Cannes, they will win awards while representing Quebec. We will still acknowledge Canada on the major world stages. We will thank Canada, which has contributed somewhat to our international reputation.

Getting back to the bill at hand, I am always a little uncomfortable with this type of legislation. Quebec is a progressive place. We have said often in the past and we will say it again. Quebec has had anti-scab legislation since 1977. For non-federally regulated workers, this issue was settled 50 years ago. We settled the matter 50 years ago. If Quebec were independent, all Quebec workers would be governed by that legislation by now. There would be no scabs. It would be a non-issue.

The same applies to a number of other areas, as I have already said in this place. We are in the midst of a housing crisis. Quebec has the most social housing of any province. Why? When the federal government withdrew from housing in 1993, the Government of Quebec stepped in and took over. It created a social housing construction program called *AccèsLogis Québec*, which has helped take some sting out of the crisis compared to other parts of the country. There are collateral effects.

Interprovincial immigration will be one of the main causes of inflation in housing prices in the coming years. People are moving from Vancouver or Toronto to Gatineau and Montreal because rent is a little cheaper. There is also a housing crisis in Quebec. There are 10,000 homeless people on the streets in Quebec. I will also talk about that later.

Homelessness has doubled in Quebec in the past five years. The only program that helps folks who are unhoused, the Reaching Home program, is going to be cut by 3% by that government over there. That may not seem like a lot. Some people think it is not so bad. Let us think about what the housing crisis means. It means single mothers sleeping in their cars in Trois-Rivières. It means immigrant families who thought this would be an *El Dorado* or paradise, but who are sleeping in tents by the river in -30°C weather in Saint-Jérôme. How can we stand for such a thing? The government is going to cut that program by 3% because it wants to show the Conservatives that it can be fiscally responsible. Because of that, it is turning its back on the most vulnerable. It makes absolutely no sense.

• (1620)

Which province has the least amount of greenhouse gases and produces the least? Which province is performing best in a country that is not performing well at all? On every climate change indicator, Canada ranks last. It always comes dead last.

This brings me to the IMF study that mentioned in 2022, Canada spent \$50 billion on the oil industry. That is \$50 billion in direct and indirect aid to the oil industry. How can we stand for such a thing in the middle of a housing crisis, when we need to build 3.5 million housing units according to the CMHC, but five million according to the latest study by CIBC? Imagine how far off the mark we are.

### *Government Orders*

In the meantime, people are sleeping in the streets, single mothers, women fleeing domestic violence, persons with disabilities and students are sleeping in their cars. They question these studies. We need these people. They are the workers of tomorrow. In the meantime, Canada, with support from the Conservatives, is throwing \$50 billion at the oil companies, which raked in \$200 billion in profits in 2022. How can we stand for such a thing?

Speaking of progressive, Quebec has more women in the workforce than anywhere else in Canada. Why is that? It is thanks to day care. Who was behind the day care program? It was Pauline Marois, a great politician and a great woman from Quebec whom I salute today. She was premier and a visionary. Quebec created \$5-a-day day care, government-funded day care. Two things happened as a result. It brought more women into the workforce, and it made it possible for Quebec to achieve the lowest child poverty rate in Canada. That is quite something. Those are big steps forward.

Nowadays, we have sat back and watched Canada become more and more progressive. The government adopted the national child care program last year. That is great. It is hard for us to be against that, because we already had one. The same goes for the dental care program. It is hard for us to be against that, because we already had one. We cannot be against the pharmacare program either, because we already have one.

We, the members of the Bloc Québécois, are sitting here in the House, discussing bills and battles that have already been waged and won. It is sad to say, but Canada is a millstone around Quebec's neck. We are ready to make progress and move forward, but Canada keeps holding us back. Canada keeps dragging its feet and maintaining the status quo. It is not moving forward. Inflation is out of control. More and more people are living in the streets. I spoke about it earlier. The federal government is failing seniors. It is not doing nearly enough to address climate change. Canada is not moving forward. Quebec is ready to push ahead, but Canada is standing in its way.

What are Quebecers supposed to think when they watch our debates and see these bills and the federal anti-scab bill? They are wondering why these measures have not been passed yet, why this has still not been settled, and whether the federal government is stuck in 1975. How can we trust this country? How can anyone want to be part of it? A Quebec worker looking at this, assuming know he does not work for the feds and knows nothing about it, would think the matter has been settled for 50 years. His company is not allowed to use scabs. He looks at this situation and wonders why Canada is still where it is and why this issue has not been settled. No, it is not settled.

As my colleague said earlier, the Bloc Québécois has tabled 11 bills on this subject. We have been working on this for a long time. My NDP colleague said earlier that his party has introduced eight bills. The Liberals blocked them every time. It just does not make sense anymore. The Government of Canada has to move into the 21st century. It has to get into the business of protecting workers. Giving them leverage with employers is fundamental. It forms the basis of everything; otherwise, bargaining power does not exist.

*Government Orders*

By the way, I forgot to mention that Quebec is the province with the highest unionization rate in Canada. Quebec understands the importance of banding together and the importance of unions.

• (1625)

Quebec realizes that workers have more power against the employer when they work together. It is high time we—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We have to go to questions and comments now.

[*English*]

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, maybe like you, I was so involved in listening to the hon. member that I wanted him to go on.

Could the member mention the recent impacts on the Port of Montreal and the labour disputes, and how this legislation might help to add balance so that we do not have prolonged disputes, as we have seen recently in Montreal at the port?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, I will answer the question with another question.

As my colleague mentioned earlier, workers have been there at the port of Québec for 200 days. They have been close to the breaking point for 200 days. They even had to find other jobs so they could stand up to the employer and keep the negotiations going. It has been 200 days. How can such a thing be accepted in Canada?

These people have no leverage. Allow me to underscore once again that this bill will not become law until 18 months after it receives royal assent. What might happen in the next 18 months? There could be a federal election. What might happen in the federal election? The Conservatives could come to power.

Does anyone seriously think that the Conservatives would vote for a bill put forward by the NDP and Liberals? I think not.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I agree that we need to follow Quebec's and B.C.'s leadership across this country to make sure that workers are protected. It has been very concerning for me to hear the Conservative rhetoric that somehow the workers are disrupting the flow of goods, which is absolutely shameful. When we think about the workers, what they are really doing is fighting for their rights to work collectively to make sure they are safe.

I wonder if the member could talk a little about why it is important for workers to have rights and what that does for the economy and for the good of all people when those unions are respected.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, as I think I mentioned in my speech, respecting workers' right to negotiate with employers, to restore the balance of power with the employers, is the very essence of labour law. That is what good labour relations are all about.

As my colleague said so well, if we want to negotiate working conditions that make sense and that align with the current inflation-

ary situation, for example, workers need to have that leverage. It is fundamental. This needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert for his passionate speech. I would like to ask him a question that has really been bothering me.

Last December, I received a letter from an organization in Trois-Rivières, Les Artisans de la paix. They told me that their budget had been cut by \$79,000 under the Reaching Home program.

We are seeing more and more homeless people on the streets in Trois-Rivières. A lot of people are experiencing homelessness. The distress is very real. I would like to ask my colleague the following question.

When I get letters like the one from Robert Tardif, executive director of Les Artisans de la paix, who says that it is totally irresponsible and inconceivable to make cuts to such a program, how should I reply, in light of the 3% budget cut to the Reaching Home program?

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a point. I talked about it in my speech. It is appalling that the government is cutting the only federal funding that goes to help these people.

I have seen it too. I did a tour of Quebec last year. My colleagues know that. I saw the tent cities throughout Quebec. There are families there. There are single mothers with children there. It is terrible. There are students there. If the students are not living in tents, they are living in their cars. It is shocking. How can we stand for that?

It is wintertime. The government is getting ready to cut just 3% from the budget, but it should be increasing the budget. We urgently need to take care of this. My colleague is right.

Soon I will have my report from that tour, and it will include meaningful suggestions. He will hear about it.

• (1630)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if my colleague can provide his thoughts on the Province of Quebec, the Province of British Columbia and, now, the federal government moving toward anti-scab legislation. How can this provide national leadership so that, hopefully, other provinces will look at the legislation, look at what other provinces are doing and look at bringing in more anti-scab legislation across the country?

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, I invite every province in Canada to follow Quebec's example. However, we are sorry that it is going so slowly that I think that Quebecers are going to make a different choice in a few years so as not to endlessly repeat past battles. It is a fight we have already won in Quebec, and with Quebec's independence, we will consolidate these gains and all the others I mentioned earlier. It is coming soon.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Order. It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Taxation; the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Royal Canadian Mounted Police; the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, Housing.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member of the Bloc Québécois for his kind introduction and his wonderful speech.

This is my first speech about Bill C-58. The Green Party supports this legislative measure because it is necessary. I am so pleased that we have the opportunity to debate it, and I hope that all members of the House will vote in favour of this bill. It is so important for workers' rights and employer-employee relations.

*[English]*

I had the experience, before ever becoming involved in partisan politics, and the real honour of working on behalf of organized labour and trade unions. I was a lawyer with the only downtown firm in Halifax, in those days, that represented only union-side labour. All the other downtown firms in Halifax represented the employers. I had the great honour of working on behalf of the long-shoremen's union, the Nova Scotia Government Employees Union and others.

I understand something about labour relations and the importance of having leverage, having some way in which workers have tools to create balance so that the employer does not hold all the cards. We know that when a union goes into a legal strike position, it is very important that they are able to exercise those rights, because they are rights. The difficulty we have had in Canada over many years is that, in common parlance or the terminology, employers will use "scab" labour. Scab labour translates to the language in this legislation: "replacement workers".

*[Translation]*

It is the same thing. The slang term is "scab workers". They are a serious threat to workers' rights.

*[English]*

It has been a long time coming to this legislation, as my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, who just spoke, pointed out.

The province of Quebec has had legislation to prohibit the use of replacement workers during a legal strike or lockout. That legislation has been in place in Quebec for 46 years.

*[Translation]*

I want to once again commend Quebec. The Province of Quebec has often been the first to implement such important measures. That was the case with day care and with workers' rights.

*[English]*

Here we are, finally, in February, debating this legislation, at second reading before a vote, which was first tabled in November. While I was waiting for the opportunity to speak this afternoon, I went back over Hansard and tried to find any evidence of any speech from any Conservative member of Parliament that would let us know if they favoured the legislation or not.

We just tried again with the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton. I cannot find any clear indication, which means that I live in hope that my Conservative friends will be voting in favour of getting this legislation passed at second reading and to committee where it does need some improvements.

**An hon. member:** Wait for the vote.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, my friends across the way said that they want to keep me in suspense. That is okay. Suspense is a lot of fun.

I do hope that everyone in this place, across all party lines, will vote for this legislation. It does need amendments. I see that the United Steelworkers union has made it clear that it would like to see the exemptions and the loopholes in this bill, Bill C-58, removed. There are some exemptions that would allow certain categories of workers and volunteers to continue their activities during strikes and lockouts. That certainly undermines the core purpose of this legislation.

*[Translation]*

The main purpose of this bill is to do away with the use of replacement workers. We do not need small loopholes that allow for the use of replacement workers.

• (1635)

*[English]*

We do not need loopholes. We need to close them up and tighten them up when this bill gets to committee.

Another place where I hope we can see improvements in committee is in getting rid of the 18-month delay before the bill would come into force. We have seen, as I mentioned, that the Province of Quebec has had this legislation for 46 years. The Province of British Columbia also has this legislation. A stable set of union-employer relations and a system of collective bargaining that is respected really matter. Both sides have their tools, and they need to have access to those tools. It is an unbalanced and therefore less economically secure situation for our economy when the tools to one side are removed. Strikes and lockouts actually last longer when scab labour is used. There is greater stability and greater security for our economy when scab labour is eliminated, and I would urge the government to amend the legislation to make this stronger.

*Government Orders*

However, in looking at this and going back over Hansard to try to find any indication of how my Conservative friends were going to vote, I found that friends from South Shore—St. Margarets, Mégantic—L'Érable, Essex, Calgary Nose Hill, Calgary Rocky Ridge, Chilliwack—Hope, Provencher, Battle River—Crowfoot and Sarnia—Lambton made repeated reference to things that have nothing to do with this legislation. If I may, I will take a moment just to clarify.

When we talk of replacement workers, we mean specifically one thing only: the use of scab labour when a union is in a legal position to strike or there is a lockout. Those are the situations in which replacement workers in this legislation, Bill C-58, are referenced and banned. It is unfortunate, then, that in so much of the very limited debate, consisting of basically three days, with a number of speakers, over and over again Conservative members have raised the Stellantis battery plant, its use of federal dollars and the fact that it is also subcontracting with South Korea. Numerous speakers have made the mistake of referring to workers, in the context of workers from South Korea working at the Stellantis battery plant as part of a trade agreement that was put in place by the previous Conservative government, as somehow being replacement workers. They are emphatically not replacement workers when they are from other countries under agreements that have been made. Certainly, the Green Party prefers that all workers in Canada are Canadian workers who live and work here, but we have many, many agreements with large multinationals to use workers from other countries. Just to be very, very clear for people watching from home, those workers are not replacement workers. They have nothing to do with this legislation.

Therefore, despite references that somehow the Liberals are violating their own Bill C-58 by allowing 900 workers from South Korea at the Stellantis battery plant, saying that they are, as quoted from one of my Conservative colleagues, “essentially replacement workers”, I want to be very clear that they are essentially nothing of the sort. They have nothing to do with Bill C-58. They are not replacement workers. They are, in fact, workers from another country who have been brought in under the kinds of deals that have been organized between transnational corporations and various governments in this country. It is not my favourite thing to see workers come in from other countries, but let us not mix up our concepts, because it creates confusion in the public.

This legislation is, purely and simply, about one thing and one thing only. That is to defend the rights of workers within trade unions to support organized labour in this country, which has given us so much. From work hours that are reasonable and banning child labour to many social improvements right across this country, we can thank organized labour. Workers who go out on strike should never have to see their colleagues crossing a picket line to continue to support the unfair practices of an employer when a union is in a legal strike position.

With that, I would like to thank the House for its time and allow the Green Party to go on record as being strongly in favour of Bill C-58 and strongly in favour of improving it and strengthening it in committee.

• (1640)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member from the Green Party for her support of this bill. I wonder if the hon. member could talk a bit more about the maintenance of activities agreement that is proposed in this bill, whereby we would be working with the Canada Industrial Relations Board prior to any strike action to establish what maintenance activities are required for safety or environmental protection. This goal of having prior agreements would also help us to have fewer strikes, and shorter strikes if they do occur.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, there are reasonable elements to the proposition that before a strike there is an agreement on what is absolutely necessary to take place, but I am concerned by the criticisms from Unifor, the United Auto Workers, the United Steelworkers and others that these represent potential loopholes. I would want to make sure that in expert evidence in committee it is absolutely nailed down that such provisions do not constitute loopholes that weaken the rights of workers.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, although I have the utmost respect for the member opposite, I want to clarify something for her. In my riding, with respect to the Stellantis deal and the 1,600 replacement Korean workers, workers went to see what was being done. It is carbon steel welding, which all of the welders in my riding can do, so it actually is replacement workers, which is contrary to what the members opposite would say.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, I am sorry to my hon. colleague from Sarnia—Lambton. I respect so much her pioneering work in engineering, but I went to law school. It does not mean I know more, but I do know that replacement workers are one thing only: In trade union relations and collective bargaining, replacement workers are scab workers, not workers who come from another country who do work Canadians could otherwise do.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands for her speech. I am not surprised that she supports the bill, because she is a woman with progressive values who generally supports this type of bill. We are very pleased to hear that, because, as we know, the Bloc Québécois is strongly in favour of this bill.

During her speech, I also appreciated her recognition of Quebec's pioneering role in this type of legislation. Quebec has had anti-scab legislation like this for 47 years and, since then, there have been two classes of workers in Quebec due to the federal jurisdiction we are trying to get rid of. We will get it done. We led the way for dental care, pharmacare and child care. Canada is taking its cue from Quebec, and that is a good thing; it makes us happy.

*Government Orders*

When Canada draws inspiration from Quebec like this, does my colleague not think that Canada should also not undermine Quebec by recognizing it and giving it its money? That does not apply to anti-scab legislation, but it will apply to dental care and pharmacare, because the new federal program will bring in another structure and undermine existing structures in Quebec.

With all due respect, does she not think the government should give Quebec the money it is owed and create programs for Canada? Obviously, we will be voting in favour of this, as long as it does not hurt Quebec.

• (1645)

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague. I completely agree with him, except for one thing. The rest of Canada is in dire need of pharmacare.

[English]

If there is a problem with the money between the province and the federal government, we have to figure that out. I do not want to, at this point, say that absolutely Quebec's approach should be protected in terms of the money, because we will get a better deal in pharmacare when there is one buyer, a single payer, that can drive down the price of pharmaceuticals.

[Translation]

I would also like to congratulate Quebec for being a pioneer in the fight against climate change and the fossil fuel industry.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, absolutely, anti-scab legislation is necessary and we need to get on board. The NDP has tried to move it forward eight times in the last 15 years, and finally the moment has arrived.

One of the issues we have concerns with is that it is not a perfect piece of legislation. However, this is what we have. On the implementation date in the legislation, it is extremely long, at 18 months. Does the member think that needs to be shortened?

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, to my friend from Vancouver East, absolutely, 18 months is too long. It makes no sense. Let us get that fixed in committee.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to join in the debate in the House on a matter of great significance for our workforce and the future of collective bargaining in the federally regulated private sector.

Bill C-58 is an essential piece of legislation that seeks to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board regulations, 2012. At the core of Bill C-58 is the commitment to create a fair, collective bargaining process by introducing a ban on the use of replacement workers, commonly known as scabs, during strikes or lockouts.

The implications of this legislation are far-reaching, touching the core of the relationship between employers and workers during labour disputes. What makes Bill C-58 particularly noteworthy is the extensive collaboration with the labour movement, exemplified by the dedicated work of organizations such as the Durham Region-

al Labour Council in my riding. The involvement of these councils, representing the interests and concerns of workers, has been instrumental in shaping the provisions of this bill. The Durham Regional Labour Council, along with other labour organizations, has a long history of being a vocal advocate for fair treatment of workers and the regulation of replacement workers.

Through a series of consultations, discussions and negotiations, the labour movement has played a crucial role in influencing the content and scope of Bill C-58. The goal has been to strike a balance between the rights of workers to engage in collective bargaining and the operational needs of employers, especially during critical periods of labour disputes. This collaborative process has strengthened the bill significantly, demonstrating what can be achieved when diverse voices, especially those representing the labour movement, actively engage in the legislative process. The provisions within this bill reflect a balanced approach, acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of both workers and employers.

As Teamsters Canada president, François Laporte, put it, "This is a big step forward for workers." Lana Payne, national president of Unifor, which represents the thousands of skilled tradespeople at GM's Oshawa assembly plant, said, "This legislation is a step toward levelling the playing field. It will be good for the economy and good for labour relations". To quote our labour minister, "Our economy depends on employers and workers negotiating an agreement at the table". That is what this legislation does. It provides a framework such that employers, along with workers and their unions, will be able to negotiate better deals at the table.

The legislation is a response to the acknowledgement that the right to strike can be undermined when employers resort to the use of replacement workers, perpetuating imbalances between workers and employers. The ban proposed in this bill would be a crucial step toward fostering a healthier workplace and strengthening the rights of employees in federally regulated private sectors by prohibiting employers from using new hires or contractors to perform the work of unionized employees who are on strike or locked out. Furthermore, it would prevent employers from allowing employees in a bargaining unit to work during a full strike affecting the entire unit. The ban would not be absolute, but it is carefully crafted to allow certain exceptions.

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The Government of Canada respects the right to strike, as protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, all governments also have a responsibility to make sure strikes and lockouts do not risk the health and safety of the public. To protect the public, the rules of engagement require employers and unions to continue providing certain essential services during strikes and lockouts. Employers can use replacement workers if it is necessary to prevent threats to life, health or safety; the destruction or serious damage to the employer's property or premises; or serious environmental damage affecting the employer's property or premises. This measured approach would strike a balance between protecting workers' rights and ensuring the essential functioning of businesses in exceptional circumstances.

To enforce the ban, the bill would empower unions to appeal to the Canada Industrial Relations Board if they believed an employer was violating the ban. This independent administrative tribunal has the authority to investigate complaints and, if found valid, order the employer to cease the violation. Furthermore, the bill introduces a maximum fine of \$100,000 per day for employers convicted of violating the prohibition, emphasizing the seriousness of the offence.

• (1650)

Bill C-58 would also set clear timelines requiring parties involved in a strike or lockout to come to an agreement within 15 days after notice to bargain collectively. This agreement would outline what activities, if any, need to be maintained during the work stoppage to prevent an immediate and serious danger to the health and safety of the public. If parties cannot reach an agreement, they can apply to the Canada Industrial Relations Board to arbitrate a settlement. The board would be obligated to make a decision within 90 days and could expedite proceedings if necessary. The bill would mandate that parties must have an agreement or a board decision in place before issuing the required 72-hour notice for a strike or a lockout.

The rationale behind Bill C-58 is grounded in the recognition that the ability to form a union, bargain collectively and strike is fundamental to a healthy workforce and democracy. The prohibition of replacement workers would be a critical step toward preserving the integrity of the right to strike, ensuring that workers could act collectively without facing the threat of immediate replacement.

The ban on replacement workers would be a positive economic move. It would promote stability, certainty and better collective agreements by preventing the distraction from the bargaining table that could otherwise prolong disputes and negatively impact workplace dynamics for years. By addressing these challenges head-on, Bill C-58 aims to create an environment conducive to constructive labour relations and economic prosperity.

In conclusion, Bill C-58 represents a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to enhance the collective bargaining process in federally regulated private sectors. By introducing a ban on replacement workers and improving the collective bargaining process, the legislation aims to strike a balance between workers' rights and the essential functioning of businesses.

Let us all remain focused on the overarching goal, which is to create a fairer and more equitable collective bargaining landscape.

Bill C-58 is a step toward achieving this goal. Together we can build a future where the rights of workers are protected and our economy thrives on the principles of fairness and cooperation.

• (1655)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the NDP is very proud of the work we have done on the bill, but I do have some serious concerns.

I know that in my riding, in Comox, search and rescue helicopters are flown by our forces members, but the maintenance and upkeep of those helicopters has been contracted out to IMP Aerospace, which is a private company. We are now seeing substantial staffing shortages due to low wages, and just to be clear with the member and with the Chair, they are between \$10 and \$20 less than the average standard for the industry. Workers are really having a hard time making sure that they keep everything safe, but they are working overtime to make sure our military people are safe.

I am wondering how it is possible that they are told, with 46 workers, that they cannot strike because they are considered essential. Now they are down to just over 20 workers, with only 16 of them able to work right now. This is a contract that National Defence has agreed to. Why is the government not protecting its workers through this contract?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, I cannot profess to know the particulars the member opposite is referring to, but I think it is a good-faith question, and I appreciate that from her. I always appreciated the member's work on the procedure and House affairs committee when we served on it together. I would be happy to look into the matter. I cannot say that I know enough about the details, and I would need to clarify some of them before I could undertake to answer the question. I do not want to give her an answer that is just for the sake of it; I would rather give a legitimate response.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my question has to do with the government's departments. It has a whole IT department. It has a whole procurement department that outsources and that looks for help if it needs it. Therefore, with respect to the ArriveCAN app, I want to know why the government decided to outsource the procurement of IT when it has a whole IT department and a whole procurement department.



**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure I see the relevance to the particular bill we are focused on, but perhaps I can speak to one of the questions that has come up: Why does this not include the public sector? I think the reason is that this is a particular set of amendments to the Labour Code, which is not the Public Service Act; it is another act. My understanding is that the public sector unions have agreements with the federal government to ensure that during any labour disputes, essential services are able to be provided and that Canadians do not see any interruption in those essential services. My understanding is that public sector unions do not use replacement workers.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I have a rather direct question for my colleague.

Does the 18-month delay his government included in the legislation not bother him?

That is more time than this government has left, those 18 months before implementation. We are all aware that there could be a change in government before the legislation takes effect. However, this is a fundamental law. We are talking about defending the rights of workers. In Quebec, we have been doing that since 1977. Canada is already way behind.

Could this not be done more quickly? I would like the member to explain to me why there is a delay.

[English]

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, I wish my French were good enough for me to respond in French.

The 18-month timeline of coming into force is something that was debated, that we did work on and that we felt unions and labour organizations, as well as employers, needed as the runway to adapt, because this would be a really significant change. It would be arguably one of the biggest changes in terms of collective bargaining in Canadian history. I would say that it merits a bit of a runway for organizations to adapt and get ready, and the Canada Industrial Relations Board needs time as well.

• (1700)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, a few weeks ago I had a meeting with Perrin Beatty, president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, who expressed concerns over the legislation. I spoke to him about how we have developed the legislation. One of his concerns was the consultation process that was used.

Maybe the parliamentary secretary could highlight how the legislation was developed in concert with union and business.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, I always appreciate Perrin Beatty's interventions and sometimes his critiques of the work of our government. I find his comments very helpful.

Just to clarify, my understanding is that there were 57 stakeholder organizations that came together at five round tables, where labour organizations and unions sat down with major employers. The sectors that were represented were the telecommunications sector; air, marine and rail transportation sectors; and courier and postal services sectors. They, as well as all of the major unions, all

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participated in the round tables. There were 71 written submissions, 45 personal stories, individual comments and then a "What We Heard" report, which was published.

All of the work of proper consultation was done in the lead-up to the tabling of Bill C-58. That is why the bill is so significant.

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to bring the voices of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to this chamber as I rise today to speak to Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012.

This bill would, of course, amend Part I of the Canada Labour Code and the industrial board regulations to prohibit the use of replacement workers, and improve the process of protecting against the immediate and serious danger to public health and safety during a legal strike or lockout. More specifically, the bill would prohibit employers from using new hires or contractors to replace striking workers. In addition, they also could not use members of the very same bargaining unit that was on strike or in a lockout position.

There are two exceptions provided for in the bill. First, employers would be able to use those replacement workers in the strike or lockdown if it was necessary to protect life, health or safety; protect against destruction or damage to the employer's property or premises; or to protect against serious environmental damage affecting those premises. Second, employers could use employees within the bargaining unit to prevent that same list of circumstances that I just outlined.

When I commute to Ottawa, I fly in to and out of Windsor. My flight path almost always takes me, depending on which way the wind blows, over the new battery plant being built in Windsor, the Stellantis plant. In fact, on Friday, a few days ago, I toured one of the buildings of this new plant with the leader of the official opposition and my friend, the member for Essex. This building was being erected by a local third-generation, family-owned construction company, Rosati, with a strong, unionized, industrious local workforce.

I find it a bit ironic that we are debating this legislation today, Bill C-58, when the government committed \$15 billion of Canadian taxpayer funds for a battery plant that is hiring foreign replacement workers. We can make the argument that this is not the very same worker. The point is that this is \$15 billion of taxpayer funds. That is going to cost every family in Canada \$1,000, while leaving our union workers out in the cold. We can debate the semantics of whether that is a replacement worker or not.

I also find it ironic that this legislation would not ban the use of replacement workers in federally regulated workplaces, but this legislation is not being extended to the public sector unions. In those situations, the federal government is a party to the negotiation process. Is that not a bit curious?

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Last November, we also learned that the Liberals are allowing companies like NextStar and Northvolt to bring in hundreds of foreign workers to help build electric vehicles in Windsor and Quebec. Not surprisingly, the government has received major pushback from our unions on this. Sean Strickland, the executive director from Canada's Building Trades Unions, has called the situation unconscionable. He said that bringing in 900 foreign workers is well beyond the standards his organization has ever seen.

Conservatives will always stand up for Canadian workers. In fact, we tabled a motion in November at the House's government operations committee to compel the government to be transparent with Canadians once and for all, and publish the contracts for the two battery plant deals, as well as the three others that have received a promise of federal subsidies. Of course, Liberal members on the committee objected.

The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle compared this situation to shareholders demanding to hold a company's CEO accountable. By shareholders here, of course we mean the Canadian taxpayers. By the company's CEO, we mean the Prime Minister of Canada. He said, "foreign replacement workers coming to Canada, thanks to taxpayer subsidies, is of interest not just to the workers in the area but to every single Canadian family whose tax bill is underwriting this."

A further example of taxpayers underwriting government overspending is, of course, the arrive scam app. It gave a \$20-million contract to GC Strategies, a two-person IT firm, though it might be four people but that does not really matter, which does no actual IT work. The government cannot confirm how much the company has received. We have learned that GC Strategies has received a quarter of a billion dollars in consulting contracts since 2015.

Why did the Prime Minister not go out and hire another 600 border guards to address the car theft we are experiencing, or the import of handguns or drugs from across the border? That would have been \$60 billion far better spent. It has never been more clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

• (1705)

I am a Conservative, so I believe that the market mechanism is the most efficient means by which to transfer the value of goods and services. Services include things like the labour that is required in almost every sector of our economy. However, markets only function best and are sustainable over time when there is a balance of power across the negotiating table where these goods and services are being established. Too much power on one side or the other distorts the process, leads to unfair outcomes and is not sustainable over time. Collective bargaining is one such structure that has developed over time to bring some balance to the negotiating table. It is obviously used in many sectors of our economy.

Prior to being elected, I served and participated in a form of such bargaining on behalf of processing vegetable producers in annual negotiations with processors to establish pre-plant contracts for the terms and conditions of sale for a particular vegetable crop each and every season. Do members know what? We did not always agree. Then, a strike or a lockout really was not an option for either the processors or the growers as it is Mother Nature who dictates, through the seasonality of our Canadian climate, when the crops

need to be planted and harvested. The certainty of a pre-plant contract was vital for both processors and producers so that they were assured of a supply for the processors and of the opportunity of a fair return for the producers. Therefore, an alternate form of dispute resolution needed to be found in the event of contract negotiations not being agreed upon by the pre-approved deadline.

For many years, the industry used the final offer selection arbitration process as this dispute settling mechanism and, as unpleasant as any arbitration ever is, the system worked and worked well for many years for several reasons. The first is that it was fair.

Second, it worked well because it drove good negotiations, which I believe is the goal of all processes to establish fair values, be it for a tomato crop or for an hourly wage. In the event that two parties to a contract talk could not agree by a specified predetermined time, they flipped final offers. At that time, both parties submitted their final offer to an arbitrator or to a panel of arbitrators of all the outstanding disputed items in the contract. Some time after a period of conciliation or mediation, an arbitrator or a panel of arbitrators had to pick, and here is the key, one party's position in its entirety. They could not "split the baby in half".

Herein lies the beauty of the system. If either party submitted an unreasonable or indefensible position, even on one particular aspect of the contract, it risked the arbitrator picking the other party's position. Therefore, in effect, the final offer selection process drives good negotiations to settle at the table where the best agreements are always made, rather than risk an arbitration process.

Let me be clear. Canadian workers have the right to collectively bargain and to determine fair value for their work, and it is inevitable that not all such bargaining situations will end in an immediate agreement. Bill C-58 sets out one option in the event that a strike situation occurs. Of course, unions will argue that the option for replacement workers tips the balance of power too much toward the employers, while employers will state that the lack of such an option will lengthen strikes and jeopardize so much of the critical facets of our economy, thus hurting the Canadian public.

In another setting, I have personally experienced a different option: final offer arbitration. That has worked to settle disputes and has allowed crops to be planted and harvested on time without disrupting or losing a season. Improved labour relations should be the goal of any and every government, and having good labour relations is ultimately what is best for our country, for our workers and for our employers.

I look forward to the continuation of the debate to see if Bill C-58 is the right tool in the right circumstances. I look forward to questions from my colleagues.

• (1710)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very familiar with final offer selection. It was a topic of great debate from about 1988-91 in the Manitoba legislature. We had a sunset clause on final offer selection legislation. It was ultimately a compromise by the then NDP premier Howard Pawley that, as opposed to bringing in anti-scab legislation, we had final offer selection. It is an interesting story, but I do not have enough time to talk about it.

I am very much interested in the member's position on this legislation. Does he support the legislation going to committee?

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, what I enjoy about this place is that we have the opportunity to debate. I have listened to speeches today and actually gone back to previous days and read through other speeches, and I am still learning about the nuances of the particular sector. As I explained, I have had experience in an agriculture setting, where deadlines were imposed by a force that growers and processors both acknowledged, so there was a process developed to address that.

On final offer arbitration, I am glad the member opposite is so familiar with it. I have the opportunity to meet with many groups, and not just from agriculture, as they come into my office. I have talked with labour unions and all sorts. What I am exploring here and listening for throughout the debate is something that no one has yet told me, which is how the final offer arbitration process is an unfair process to either the labour side or the employer side. That is the beauty of it, that it actually drives a good negotiation. Arbitration is always unpleasant, as are strikes and lockouts.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I share the parliamentary secretary's curiosity with regard to the Conservative Party's position on this legislation. Its members are still studying it at this late hour, and I guess it is going to be somewhat of a surprise, maybe a good surprise and maybe a bad surprise, when it comes to a vote.

My question is whether he has consulted with labour unions in his constituency on the topic of this bill, and if so, what message did they bring to him with regard to banning replacement workers in strikes and lockouts?

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, the answer, short and simple, is yes. I have had locals and different unions in my office and asked them that very question. I explained the arbitration process to them; some were familiar with it and some were not. I have asked them the question of whether that would work in their situation.

In full transparency, the arbitration process was actually removed from the industry I spent 20 years in, and not at the behest of the growers. It was actually removed at the behest of the processors. In this situation, they would be in the employer role, whereas I collectively bargained on behalf of producers.

## Privilege

• (1715)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question for my Conservative colleague is very simple, and it has to do with this anti-scab legislation. It seems that the Conservatives are against this bill. Once the Senate has passed this bill, it will take 18 months for it to come into force.

Can the member confirm that, if the Conservatives take power, they will tear up this legislation?

[English]

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot answer that question, because where I am right now is in listening mode. I have two ears and one mouth. I exercised the mouth for a full 10 minutes and am now using my two ears to try to listen and understand the various positions. The question is speculative as to what might happen in the future, but I am still listening to the debate and will determine exactly what my response will be to the question when it is put before us.

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to give my colleague the opportunity to elaborate on anything he did not get the chance to say in his speech.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I could go into my stump speech about how resolution mechanisms are different in different situations. I am very familiar with that in the ag situation, where different marketing mechanisms are used in different sectors based upon four factors. I will not get into all of them, but one set of circumstances does not lead itself to the same outcome when it comes to dispute resolution.

\* \* \*

## PRIVILEGE

### PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF BILL C-63

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising this afternoon on a question of privilege concerning the leak of key details of Bill C-63, the so-called online harms bill, which was tabled in the House earlier today.

While a lot will be said in the days, weeks and months ahead about the bill in the House, its parliamentary journey is not off to a good start. Yesterday afternoon, the CBC published on its website an article entitled “Ottawa to create regulator to hold online platforms accountable for harmful content: sources”. The article, written by Naama Weingarten and Travis Dhanraj, outlined several aspects of the bill with the information attributed to two sources “with knowledge of Monday's legislation”.

I will read brief excerpts of the CBC's report revealing details of the bill before it was tabled in Parliament.

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“The Online Harms Act, expected to be introduced by the federal government on Monday, will include the creation of a new regulator that would hold online platforms accountable for harmful content they host, CBC News has confirmed.”

“The new regulatory body is expected to oversee a digital safety office with the mandate of reducing online harm and will be separate from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), sources say.”

“Sources say some components of the new bill will be modelled on the European Union's Digital Services Act. According to the European Commission, its act “regulates online intermediaries and platforms such as marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms.””

Then, today, CTV News published a second report entitled “Justice Minister to Introduce New Bill to Tackle Harmful Online Content”. In Rachel Aiello's article, she says, “According to a senior government source [Bill C-63] would be expected to put an emphasis on harms to youth including specific child protection obligations for social media and other online platforms, including enhanced preservation requirements. It targets seven types of online harms: hate speech, terrorist content, incitement to violence, the sharing of non-consensual intimate images, child exploitation, cyberbullying, and inciting self-harm, and includes measures to crack down on non-consensual artificial intelligence pornography, deepfakes and require takedown provisions for what's become known as 'revenge porn'. Further, while the sources suggested there will be no new powers for law enforcement, multiple reports have indicated the bill will propose creating a new digital safety ombudsperson to field Canadians' concerns about platform decisions around content moderation.”

As explained in footnote 125 on page 84 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, on March 19, 2001: “Speaker Milliken ruled that the provision of information concerning legislation to the media without any effective measures to secure the rights of the House constituted a prima facie case of contempt.”

The subsequent report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs concluded: “This case should serve as a warning that our House will insist on the full recognition of its constitutional function and historic privileges across the full spectrum of government.”

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, the warning has had to be sounded multiple times since. Following rulings by your predecessors finding similar prima facie contempt on October 15, 2001, April 19, 2016 and March 10, 2020, not to mention several other close-call rulings that fell short of the necessary threshold yet saw the Chair sound cautionary notes for future reference, a number of those close-call rulings occurred under the present government that would often answer questions of privilege with claims that no one could be certain who had leaked the bill or even when it had been leaked, citing advanced policy consultations with stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, your immediate predecessor explained, on March 10, 2020, on page 1,892 of the Debates, the balancing act that must be observed. He said:

The rule on the confidentiality of bills on notice exists to ensure that members, in their role as legislators, are the first to know their content when they are introduced. Although it is completely legitimate to carry out consultations when developing a bill or to announce one's intention to introduce a bill by referring to its public title available on the Notice Paper and Order Paper, it is forbidden to reveal specific measures contained in a bill at the time it is put on notice.

In the present circumstances, no such defence about stakeholders talking about their consultations can be offered. The two sources the CBC relied upon for its reporting were, according to the CBC itself, granted anonymity “because they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter before the bill is tabled in Parliament.”

As for the CTV report, its senior government source “was not authorized to speak publicly about details yet to be made public.”

When similar comments were made by the Canadian Press in its report on the leak of the former Bill C-7 respecting medical assistance in dying, Mr. Speaker, your immediate predecessor had this to say when finding a prima facie contempt in his March 10, 2020 ruling:

Everything indicates that the act was deliberate. It is difficult to posit a misunderstanding or ignorance of the rules in this case.

Just as in 2020, the leakers knew what they were doing. They knew it was wrong and they knew why it was wrong. The House must stand up for its rights, especially against a government that appears happy to trample over them in the pursuit of legislating the curtailing of Canadians' rights.

Mr. Speaker, if you agree with me that there is a prima facie contempt, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion.

• (1720)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, the opposition House leader, for raising this question of privilege. I will take it under advisement and come back to the House. The hon. parliamentary secretary is rising on the same point.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we would like to review the comments of the opposition House leader and also provide a viewpoint to the Speaker's Office at some point.

**The Speaker:** I thank the members for their co-operation in that regard.

### CANADA LABOUR CODE

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

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today we stand at the height of transformative change in the landscape of Canadian labour law. With the introduction of Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, we are ushering in a new era of labour relations that would place the principles of fairness, safety and economic stability at the forefront of our national workforce policy.

At its core, Bill C-58 seeks to reinforce the sanctity of the collective bargaining process by banning the use of replacement workers during strikes or lockouts. This critical legislation would mandate that employers in federally regulated sectors cannot hire new employees or managers after a notice to bargain collectively is given, or contractors to perform the work of striking or locked out employees. This move would be not merely a legislative action but also a profound statement of our collective belief in the power and importance of genuine negotiation between employers and unions.

Before I go further into the details of the legislation, let me recognize the important role and success of trade unions. Trade unions have been instrumental in shaping the economic landscape of developed countries, including Canada, playing an important role in their development into prosperous economies with a high quality of life for workers.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as industrialization accelerated, trade unions emerged as key players in advocating for workers' rights, leading to significant labour reforms. They fought for fair wages, reasonable working hours and safer working conditions, contributing to the growth of a middle class that fuelled consumer spending and economic expansion. The labour movement led to the establishment of minimum wage laws and overtime pay, and to the prohibition of child labour, among other labour protections. Trade unions were central to securing workers' benefits such as health care, unemployment insurance and pension plans, which are cornerstones of the country's social safety net.

These achievements not only improved the quality of life for workers but also stabilized the workforce, reducing labour disputes and fostering a more productive economy. Moreover, trade unions have played a critical role in advocating for policies that benefit the wider community, such as public education and health care, contributing to the social and economic well-being of the broader population. Their ongoing efforts to ensure fair employment practices and equitable economic growth continue to support the high standard of living in Canada.

Trade unions remain highly relevant in Canada today as they continue to address the evolving challenges faced by workers in a rapidly changing economy. In the era of globalization, technological advancements and shifting labour markets, unions play a critical role in advocating for fair wages, job security and workers' rights amid increasing automation and the gig economy. They provide a necessary counterbalance to corporate power, ensuring that eco-

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nomic growth benefits all layers of society, not just the top echelons.

Let me also touch upon the importance of collective bargaining and why unions are still relevant today. Collective bargaining and negotiations between employers and unions are fundamental mechanisms that ensure a balanced and fair relationship in the workplace, with profound implications for both the economy and the quality of life of workers. This process allows unions to negotiate on behalf of their members for better wages, benefits, working conditions and job security, reflecting the collective interests and needs of the workforce.

By providing a structured framework for dialogue, collective bargaining helps prevent labour disputes and fosters a cooperative environment where both parties can work towards mutually beneficial solutions. The importance of collective bargaining extends beyond individual workplaces, contributing to broader economic stability and growth. It helps in setting industry-wide standards that can elevate living conditions and reduce income inequality. Furthermore, by giving workers a voice in their employment conditions, collective bargaining empowers them, promoting workplace democracy and participation.

• (1725)

In today's rapidly changing labour market, characterized by the rise of precarious employment and the gig economy, collective bargaining remains highly relevant. It adapts to new challenges, such as remote work arrangements and the need for continuous skills development, which would ensure that workers are protected and fairly compensated in the face of technological advancements and global competition. Through collective action and negotiation, trade unions have been key to balancing economic development with social equity, making them fundamental to the prosperity and the high quality of life enjoyed in Canada.

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While Bill C-58 would mandate that employers cannot hire new employees after a notice to bargain collectively is given, it smartly delineates two critical exceptions to this rule to ensure that essential services and public safety are not compromised. Employers would be permitted to use replacement workers only when necessary to prevent threats to life, health or safety; to avoid serious damage to property or premises; or to avert significant environmental harm. Furthermore, it would allow employees in the bargaining unit to work during a full strike or lockout if it is vital to prevent immediate and serious danger to public health and safety. The bill underscores the importance of staying at the bargaining table and fostering an environment where disputes can be resolved through dialogue and mutual respect, rather than through adversarial and potentially harmful practices.

The prohibition against the use of replacement workers would be a significant step toward levelling the playing field during labour disputes. Moreover, the bill introduces a more structured and predictable framework for maintaining activities during strikes or lockouts. It would mandate that employers and unions must collaborate to determine what essential work must continue, with clear deadlines for reaching an agreement. This approach would not only minimize disruptions but also emphasize the collective responsibility of both parties to safeguard the public interest.

Economically, Bill C-58 is poised to instill greater stability and certainty across industries. By discouraging protracted disputes and fostering healthier labour relations, it would create a more attractive environment for business and investment. The certainty and predictiveness this legislation would bring to labour relations would be invaluable for our national economy, ensuring that Canada would remain competitive on the global stage.

In conclusion, Bill C-58 represents a bold step forward in our journey toward a more equitable, safe and prosperous labour market. It would reinforce the right to strike as a fundamental aspect of a healthy workforce, address the inefficiencies in the current system and set a new standard for labour relations in Canada. As we debate and discuss this landmark legislation, let us remember the profound impact it would have on the lives of Canadian workers, the health of our industries and the overall well-being of our nation.

• (1730)

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, from what I have learned, this legislation has been a long time coming. The NDP has introduced similar bills eight previous times, and I have learned as well that Quebec and British Columbia already have legislation similar to this. There has already been a lot of great work to make sure that there are better relationships between employers and the unions.

I wonder if the member can explain why the members of the Liberal Party decided to have an 18-month delay in the implementation of this legislation, given how important those relationships are and given how important it is to protect the rights of workers.

**Mr. Chandra Arya:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member that this is most important legislation when it comes to the labour workforce in our country. This would be a fundamental change to the way in which collective bargaining and negotiations would take place. Because this would be a major change, it would require time

for all the parties involved to get adjusted to the new reality. This is a long time coming, and it would be around for a very long time, so the period of 18 months is required for all the players to get accustomed to the new reality and to make necessary adjustments in their approach in future negotiations.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the speech by my colleague. It caused me to reflect on the number of measures that the Liberal government has brought in, during this Parliament and in previous Parliaments, that really go to the promotion and the defence of unionized workers and of workers across the country. I would like to hear my colleague's comments on how the government has stood for workers in Canada.

• (1735)

**Mr. Chandra Arya:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government, since it came to power in 2015, has always worked for the benefit of the labour force in our country. It has worked hand in hand with the labour unions at all levels. It has always consulted with them and has taken necessary steps to protect their well-being.

Personally speaking, my wife is a member of the CUPE union. I see the benefits to the labour force that has the unions. Unfortunately, for the federally regulated workforce, out of a million employees in the federal workforce, only about 34% are unionized. I hope that this particular legislation, similar to what is already available in B.C. and in Quebec, will be adopted by the other provinces in the coming days.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, I was not satisfied with the answer given to my NDP colleague earlier about the 18-month delay.

As I mentioned earlier today, 18 months is probably more time than this government has left. If the government really intended to legislate to prevent scabs from violating the legitimate rights of workers who have taken legal strike action or who are locked out, it would legislate quickly.

Eighteen months means that it would be easy for a government to undo all of this if a different party were to come to power. No one knows what the future holds, but that is more or less what we are dealing with. However, if the law is in effect, it would be far more inconvenient to replace it.

I would like my colleague to explain the idea behind the 18-month delay. Saying that it is complicated and that people need to adjust is not a satisfactory answer. It is not complicated. If there is a strike tomorrow morning, the employer is not allowed to hire people to replace the striking workers. That is all there is to it. I do not find it complicated.

Port of Québec workers have been locked out for quite some time. There is no way that should be accepted in a G7 country, especially in Quebec, where workers have been protected against that for 47 years when their employer is provincially regulated.

[English]

**Mr. Chandra Arya:** Mr. Speaker, this legislation has come to the House after many decades. I do not think that it makes a big difference to wait patiently for another 18 months, instead of putting it on the employers and the unions who are currently negotiating or are on the verge of starting their negotiations. Once everybody understands, it should not lead to any unintended consequences if it is suddenly brought into force. The 18 months is a good time for everyone involved to get adjusted to this new reality.

**Mr. Earl Dreessen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to speak to Bill C-58 regarding labour issues in Canada. In both my former professional role as a teacher and my volunteer role as a hospital board member, I have dealt with labour strife over those years.

The issue of replacement workers was always uppermost in the minds of both my colleagues in teaching and our community health care workers. One of my fellow hospital board members was Tony Silbernagel. He sadly passed away just a few months ago, but as an astute businessman and community volunteer, Tony taught me so much about compassion within our community.

There have been a number of dear friends over the past couple of months who have also passed away. Erhard Poggemiller was the former mayor of Kerrobert, Saskatchewan. Once he moved to Alberta, he was a councillor in Didsbury up until the last election. His sudden passing was a shock to us all, but I know how committed he too was to health care in Saskatchewan.

Two other dear friends, who served as Red Deer city councillors, passed away during the Christmas holidays. My childhood friend, Michael Dawe, was a treasured member of the city of Red Deer. As a historian and archivist, there was no one better. His former colleague, Frank Wong, also passed away during this time. Another icon of our community and former Red Deer alderman was Jack Donald. His philanthropy and care for our community were something that will be remembered forever.

Communities have many leaders. Friends like Dave Brown, Winnie MacFayden and Jean Klepper did so much for our central Alberta communities. Whether in sports or agriculture, they were also leaders. Sadly, within my family, we just dealt with the passing of my wife's brother, Charles Moore. Charlie was one of the founders of then-premier Lougheed's dream of rural gasification throughout Alberta. He received lifetime achievement awards from the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops and the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies for his unwavering commitment to community. He was also the recipient of at least five community, provincial and national medals and citations. It was all for the community, for each and every one of these dear friends who have recently passed away.

My experiences with labour disruptions started in the late sixties, when I chose to remain at home while my family enjoyed a trip to California so that I could look after the farm and complete a correspondence course over the summer. I had just received all of my lessons when a postal strike started. It was more than three weeks

### *Government Orders*

later that I was finally able to send any lessons up to Edmonton to get marked. I received the input from the instructors only a couple of days before I had to write the final exams. Postal strikes take their toll.

Coming from an agricultural community and having seen the effects of workplace actions, either at the ports or with the railroad, I am well aware of the costs that exist when Canada's supply chain is disrupted. This legislation looks at some of these issues, but there must be true certainty, especially now, as we look for solutions to get our country's economy back on track. It is with those thoughts in mind that I would like to address some of the key points of this legislation. With all of it, though, there is the underpinning of the responsibility of a federal government to ensure that everything in this country runs smoothly.

The buck stops at the cabinet table. We may look at a labour minister as being the one with the responsibility to make these tough decisions, but if it does not have strong input from the ministers of other critical infrastructure, such as agriculture and natural resources, and from other regional ministers, the government never gets the true picture of the pain that these labour disruptions actually cause to the country. That is also why it is important for us, as legislators, to be able to deal with these issues. I wonder if it should be a common goal for all of us to ensure that cabinet can quickly deal with these issues, especially when back-to-work legislation can be interrupted by something as simple as the House not sitting.

I have been on both sides of the table when it comes to negotiations. It is never easy, but having done so, I am well aware of the strategies that are involved with labour issues. The reality is, either as a teacher and a member of the Alberta Teachers Association at the time, or as a hospital board representative, the real decision-makers were beyond my reach. Negotiators do what they feel is in the best interest of negotiations, not necessarily the best interest of members. This is a harsh reality, but it is in fact true.

• (1740)

However, that does not mean workers, companies and businesses cannot find common ground. If one looks at the results of many negotiations, once the threat of back-to-work legislation becomes evident, it is amazing how quickly two sides can get together. Unions would argue, and perhaps they are right, that is for us to see, that this type of legislation helps on the other side as well.

### *Government Orders*

When they do, of course, there is a sense of pride and accomplishment if it is managed to be done without government intervention. That is the way it should be. As government, we should find ways to ensure that is the rule and not the exception. A fair and logical approach for replacement workers, one hopes, would make negotiations more meaningful.

This bill was tabled in November 2021, and we are now here, in February 2024, debating it. The Liberal-NDP coalition sure likes to take its time with the legislation it tables for debate. Nevertheless, moving on, Bill C-58 would do two major things. First, it would ban replacement workers in federally regulated industries, such as banking, airports and telecommunications, but it does not ban them in the federal public service.

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

One of the concerns with rail and port disruptions in agriculture is that any delays for a producer getting their product to market has a serious impact on their cash flow. In fact, it can be days or weeks of obstruction for farmers, and that ripple effect could last the entire season. When it comes to the movement of goods, it is not just the issue of the days workers do not show up. All the way down the supply chain, affected businesses need to adjust their schedules. It can sometimes be weeks to get the system running smoothly again.

Everyone deserves to have a safe workplace, a beneficial relationship with their employer that is built on a foundation of trust and goodwill. Just the same, businesses need to be able to operate and meet their clients' demands in a manner that allows them to continue to operate.

My concerns with this bill, Bill C-58, have nothing to do with workers' rights to organize or to engage in collective bargaining, because Canadian workers undoubtedly have those rights. However, labour legislation is always controversial in Canada. I want to be clear. There is a big difference between the boots on the ground and the suits in the union offices. The agendas are not always aligned. Conservatives believe that the government should work with unions and employers in areas of federal jurisdiction to develop dispute settlement mechanisms and to encourage their use to avoid or to minimize disruptions to services in Canada.

Of course, the Liberal government, ironically, has put a lot of money into contract workers and replacement workers. It is basically the same type of thing. GC Strategies, a two-person IT company that does no actual IT work, was paid nearly \$20 million for ArriveCAN. That money could have been spent much more wisely.

In conclusion, I have concerns about the impact and the reach of this legislation. I have concerns about whether this bill draws the right balance between employer and employee. There are mixed signals from the Liberal government. On one hand, it speaks glow-

ingly about banning the use of replacement workers but on the other hand, it is investing heavily in consultants.

As Canada rebuilds from the pandemic, from the imposed mandates and the economic consequences of undisciplined spending, it is vital that we rebuild our economy and workforce with sound labour policies.

• (1745)

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, we have said, and reiterated today, that we are in favour of such a bill. We are a bit shocked that it will not come into force for 18 months, because this government will likely not be in office 18 months from now, and we are concerned about that.

With regard to the Port of Montreal longshore workers and the Canadian National and Air Canada employees, would it not have been smarter to take advantage of that delay to have them learn French?

[English]

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, it would certainly have helped if I had learned some French over the years. My interpretation said 18 days, but it is 18 months, as we know.

There are concerns and one is if the House is not sitting and there is an expectation of having right-to-work legislation. When the House sits, we can deal with that when needed, but if it is not, then all of a sudden it gets dragged out. We can always say that is allowing the process to work. However, we do not work our way through that problem, and maybe that is something we should be looking at as well because it is something we see happen with the ministry of labour.

As I mentioned during my address, it is important that everybody talks to the labour minister because there are a lot of other things that happen other than just his discussion with businesses' employees.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I heard my Conservative friend bemoan the fact that this bill was tabled in December and yet here we are, in late February, still debating it.

I have two simple questions. The first is whether the member wishes this bill moved through the House more speedily and, second, whether he will be voting for this bill at second reading.

• (1750)

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, what I said is it was a couple of years ago when it was first proposed and now we are finally seeing it come for discussion. The other question was whether we should have 18 months. There will be a different government in 18 months.



It still comes back to: What have we heard? What are we looking at? Are there any assurances that the restrictions on replacement workers are going to speed up negotiations? Those are the questions and what I believe everyone is talking about here today.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, it is encouraging to hear members of the Conservative caucus talk relatively positively about the labour movement, but they have not been clear about their intentions with regard to the legislation.

After listening to the member's speech, I would ask the member to reflect on how he will vote on the legislation.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, a lot of Canadians are in suspense right now as well because they want to know what would happen if we had an election. I am prepared to listen to whatever the electorate says in that regard as well.

We are talking about three westerners from the Liberal Party. I hope that the member is one of them.

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to publicly extend my sympathies to the member for Red Deer—Mountain View on the passing of his close friend and brother-in-law Charlie Moore, whom he referenced in his speech.

I have gotten to know the member really well on the natural resources committee and I know he is a fierce advocate for his constituency of Red Deer—Mountain View, as well as for agriculture, but specifically as an advocate and defender of the world's most ethical energy, and that is Alberta oil and gas. I want to thank him for his advocacy.

True to Liberal form, this is another bill that seeks to divide Canadians. We have seen it over and over. Whether it is on social, economic, cultural or regional issues, the Liberal-NDP government has chosen to divide Canadians. Again in this bill, we see that federally regulated industries are captured in this bill, whereas federal employees are not. What is the fairness?

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, part I of the Canada Labour Code “sets the rules for unionization, collective bargaining and labour disputes in federally regulated sectors. More specifically, Part I applies to” and it then goes through the list, “the federally regulated private sector, which includes key industries such as: banking; telecommunications and broadcasting; air, rail and maritime transportation; most Crown corporations (for example, Canada Post);...First Nations band councils”. It also applies to “all private sector businesses and municipal governments in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon”.

Therefore, the question becomes why we are taking certain groups and carving them out. From what I have heard in the last couple of days, there has really been no discussion about that. I think this is something that really deserves more of that thoughtfulness.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the motion.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

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.

• (1755)

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded division.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, February 27, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent at this time to call it 6:30 p.m. so we could possibly begin the late show.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

### TAXATION

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to address the House virtually this evening and to pursue a matter I first raised in question period late last year, on October 27, 2023. It deals with an issue that is of concern to many Canadians, just at the time when Canadians are feeling pain at the pumps. While I know my colleagues on the Conservative side of the House think that it is due to the carbon tax, it is far more due to the excess profits being experienced by the oil and gas sector. A minuscule impact is from carbon pricing.

There is a pin on my jacket to show that we stand with Ukraine. Ever since Putin invaded Ukraine, that has had a very serious impact on fossil fuel prices globally. It has been to the benefit of large fossil fuel companies, and they are reaping extraordinary, record-breaking profits in the tens of billions of dollars every month all around the world. It would be fantastic if our sanctions against Russia bit deeply enough to mean that selling Russian oil would become off limits, but we know that many countries continue to buy Russian oil.

The modest proposal I raised in question period comes from the hon. colleague from Kitchener Centre, who has put forward Motion No. 92 to put an excess profits tax on oil and gas as is currently done for insurance companies and banks. It is a very reasonable proposal to apply the Canada recovery dividend to fossil fuel companies.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

This particular proposal, Motion No. 92, has been reviewed, and the benefit to the Canadian treasury has been calculated by the Parliamentary Budget Office at over \$4 billion. In other words, those are funds we could be receiving as a nation from excess profits. As Eric Reguly in the business pages of *The Globe and Mail* noted some time ago, these profits are not based on business acumen or sound planning or great management by the oil and gas sector; they are pure and simple war profiteering. That is what they are. The companies are making a lot of money as Ukrainians face the brutality of Putin's regime.

Other countries are applying excess profits tax at much higher levels than what is proposed by my colleague in Motion No. 92. In fact, Motion No. 92 itself points out that the United Kingdom is charging excess profits tax at a level of 25% and generating £5 billion; and Europe is charging excess profits tax at 21%. This modest proposal, using the same Canada recovery benefit that is currently being applied to banking and insurance, would be at 15%.

While I cannot say he answered my question, when the hon. Minister of Environment responded to it, he spoke of other things the government is doing. He did not speak of the finance question at all. Why are we not taxing the excess profits of the oil and gas sector at the very time that it is reaping extraordinary rewards in war profiteering? The oil and gas companies are also hiking prices at the pump and profiteering from price gouging.

The time is certainly overdue to ensure that we bring in the profits from the oil and gas industry, through proper taxation, to national revenues so that they could be used on such things as the disability tax credit. Then, the poorest of the poor in this country could receive additional financial support in this time when we are all feeling the pinch from the affordability crisis. I hope the parliamentary secretary will provide a better answer than the minister did.

• (1800)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have always enjoyed having exchanges with the leader of the Green Party. I know she gives a great deal of thought to her presentations and, ultimately, her questions. I think some questions are a little easier to answer than others.

We have a Prime Minister and through the Prime Minister a Minister of Finance, our Deputy Prime Minister, who have taken the issue very seriously. I do not need to tell the House, because everyone knows, of the ethnic heritage of our Minister of Finance and how she really does have an appreciation of what is taking place in Ukraine today and the impact that oil is having in supporting Russia.

I do agree with the leader of the Green Party when she talks about the misconception of the price on pollution as being the sole source of the exorbitant prices that people are having to pay for gas. It is something that is not necessarily new. She put a great deal of emphasis on, today in particular, the war. There is no doubt that it has had a significant impact.

I would suggest that excess profits is something that has been ongoing. Governments in the past have tried to deal with it, both at the federal level and at the provincial level. We have seen regula-

tions in different provinces, both in Atlantic Canada and out west, where there have been attempts to deal with some of the excess profits. At the national level, standing committees have attempted to deal with it.

I understand that the leader of the Green Party is saying to just have an excess profits tax imposed. I do not fully understand how that works, to be honest. What I do know is that the Minister of Finance has been very open in terms of listening to arguments, in particular those that have come out of the pandemic, with regard to the huge amount of profits in different sectors.

I am thinking of the financial area, where we have put in some specific taxes on companies where there was extreme wealth. I do not know to what degree there is a willingness to do something today on that front. I do believe that there is a great deal of discussion taking place. I think that we also have to factor in other elements of the debates. At the end of the day, I do not think anything is off the table, *per se*. Some might take a little longer to move forward.

The cost of fossil fuels, as I indicated, has been a frustration of mine for many years. In fact, shortly after getting elected in 2010, I had a presser that talked about the price of gas and the collusion that was taking place that led to excess profits. Maybe one of the ways we can deal with that is to enhance competition or boycott one particular station until it lowers the price of a litre of gasoline to a certain level. I think that consumers are frustrated. I am really encouraged that in Winnipeg we have a new gas company, 204 Fuel's, which has provided a great deal of competition. I can say that where that gas station exists, the price of gas has actually been going down; its price is consistently lower than everyone else's.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I do hope that we will see the Minister of Finance move to tax the windfall profits of the oil and gas sector. We do know how to do it. It is not complicated. The Minister of Finance is already doing it in applying it to the excess profits that have been occurring in the banking and insurance sector.

Surely we can align our policies to move away from fossil fuels and ensure that we get support to Canadians without going deeper in debt, without expanding the deficit, by bringing in more revenues. That is how one balances the budget. Bring in more revenues from excess profit taxes and from wealth taxes on what is going to offshore tax havens, making sure that we deliver for Canadians affordability on a planet on which we can survive and on which our children will survive.

• (1805)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the leader of the Green Party that the government is very much aware, particularly the Minister of Finance, of the many hardships that many Canadians are having to endure. Not that long ago, we had inflation rates that were close to 8%, I think in June 2022, and we are finally getting inflation rates under control.

The cost of providing fuel for transportation does have an impact through the gouging that we all have seen. Is there a policy alternative? I can assure the member that the Minister of Finance is looking at a wide spectrum of options. The idea is to support all Canadians and have their backs.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize an eastern Ontario legend, George Tackaberry. George has recently won the Lifetime Business Achievement Award from the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce, and that is supported by the 1000 Islands Community Development Corporation.

To call George Tackaberry a legend is a bit of an understatement. He is a decades-long community leader, a philanthropist and a very successful business owner. Starting in 1957, G. Tackaberry & Sons Construction has grown from a humble family business to a thriving operation throughout eastern Ontario, employing 100 full-time workers and 200 seasonal workers.

It is clear that throughout George's life, he has made it his mission to enrich the lives of people in our community through his philanthropic endeavours. Brockville General Hospital, the Gord Brown Memorial outdoor rink, the United Way Leeds and Grenville, dozens of charities, youth athletic teams, service clubs, parks, community gardens and schools have all benefited from the great generosity of the Tackaberry family.

The Brockville Airport was able to extend its runway to 4,500 feet because of George's donation of materials, time and money. More recently, and near and dear to my heart and everyone in our community, George and his family donated \$500,000 to Maple View Landings redevelopment project that will see the Maple View long-term care home greatly expanded and retrofitted to become a shining example of care for our seniors and the vulnerable in Ontario.

George has a big heart for our community and he has a big heart for all of his passions, and that includes Tack's Toys, his extensive collection of vehicles and equipment, and among them is a limousine of a former prime minister and a former president. What does George do with Tack's Toys? He makes them available for tours for a donation to support local causes.

I congratulate George on the award and lifetime of exemplary service and dedication to our community. Our entire community, our province and truly our country are so much better because of all that he has done.

I want to hearken us back to the first time that I put this question to the government. The number that we were dealing with was different. Since then, we have had an Auditor General's report. The Auditor General has told us that the cost of the arrive scam is at least \$60 million, not the \$54 million we were talking about before.

Common-sense Conservatives, on the one hand, have said that we will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. On the other hand, we have a Liberal government that is lining the pockets of insiders, while Canadians are lining up at food banks.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

For the NDP members' part in the costly coalition, they are doing everything that they can to help them, including voting eight times to continue shovelling money out the door to insiders, including GC Strategies, a two-person firm working out of a basement that received \$20 million but did no IT work.

My question to the parliamentary secretary is very straightforward. The Liberals voted against the Auditor General conducting an audit. Will the parliamentary secretary ensure the government's full co-operation and waive any cabinet confidences for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when it investigates?

● (1810)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just to start off, I have a very brief comment. What the member highlights is a success story that many of us could easily relate to within our own constituencies or jurisdictions.

We often talk about individuals, but we do not talk enough about small- and medium-sized businesses and the profound, positive impact they have in our communities. I am very respectful of and admire the work of those entrepreneurs, those small businesses that invest their time and resources. Ultimately, they take a substantial chance in terms of creating opportunities for literally hundreds, if not thousands, of people.

I just want to tip my hat to the many entrepreneurs and business people in our communities. That principle applies in every region, where we get them coming to the plate, helping to build a healthier and stronger community.

Having said that, I know that the member opposite and others have been very concerned with regard to the whole ArriveCAN issue and what has been taking place with it. Interestingly enough, I would suggest to the member that it does not really matter what side of the House one sits on; all members are very concerned. I do not think there is a member inside the House who does not have a question or two, in terms of what has actually taken place.

We have to put things into the proper perspective. At the time when this was occurring, the federal government was literally spending billions of dollars during a worldwide pandemic. There were a number of demands on a wide variety of different departments.

That does not justify any sort of abuse, in any fashion whatsoever. Unfortunately, when that kind of money is spent, when those types of programs are created, there are going to be mistakes. This was a very big mistake.

The Government of Canada has recognized that and has taken the actions necessary to ensure that there is some justice at the end of the day. The Government of Canada values the tax dollar just as much as the Conservative Party does. We want to get to the bottom of this issue, and we will do so.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

After all, the ministers responsible, either directly or indirectly, have been wanting to see results, both internally and externally. At the end of the day, we expect the procurement process to be followed properly. When that does not take place, we have to ensure that there is an appropriate consequence. This has been, and always will be, the case.

This is not the first government where we have seen some things go wrong at times within procurement. What is important is how the government reacts when something does go wrong. The government has reacted very positively and quickly on the issue, whether it is through those internal reviews that we see taking place or the comments in the standing committees.

We will continue to ensure that there is a consequence to any sort of inappropriate behaviour in this whole issue.

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, a two-person firm working out of a basement in suburban Ottawa was getting \$258 million in contracts from the Liberal government, starting mere weeks after it was elected. This has been reported in *La Presse* and elsewhere. On the arrive scam, of course, this same company got \$20 million.

The parliamentary secretary talks about taking action. What happened to ministerial accountability? Who is in charge over there? Conservatives have put forward a very clear plan to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

While the Liberals are firefighting on the other side of the House, they are not tending to the most basic responsibility to Canadians, which is their fiduciary responsibility. Canadians are lined up at food banks, struggling to get by, and the Liberals are lining the pockets of insiders. Their friends in the cover-up coalition, the NDP, are voting with them every step of the way.

Canadians want to know this: Why will the Liberal government not put Canadians first instead of its own friends?

• (1815)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, that is just not true. There is no conspiracy out there whereby we are seeing all these public dollars being funnelled to one community, whether it is a political community or another community. That does not exist. It is in the minds of some members in the opposition who like to try to tie the word “scandal” to everything that takes place, believing that if they continue to say it time and time again, whether in social media or inside the House, they will be able to successfully fool Canadians. I would suggest that Canadians are a lot smarter than that.

If we take a look at the budgetary and legislative actions that we have taken over the last number of years, the proof is in the pudding. It was right from day one that we saw substantial tax breaks for Canada's middle class, the enhancement of child benefit programs and supporting our seniors. The proof is in the pudding, and we will continue to be there for Canadians.

## HOUSING

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is in a housing crisis. There is not one part of this country that has not been negatively impacted after eight years of this Prime Minister and the NDP-Liberal record. Housing prices have doubled; rents have doubled, and at a time

when we need to build more houses, five million homes in the coming years just to meet demand, we are actually seeing housing starts and construction starts drop in Canada year over year. It is a very dangerous trend to begin with, and the numbers ahead only look worse.

One of the worst problems we have in this country is with gatekeepers, and I am going to make the argument that the Liberal government, over the course of eight years, has been one of the worst gatekeepers at both a macro and a micro level. At a macro level, we have the Liberals being gatekeepers because they have doubled our national debt, which has resulted in 40-year-high inflation, and now we are seeing interest rates unlike any we have seen in decades. To build a new home in my part of eastern Ontario, whether it be in the united counties of SDG or the city of Cornwall, the cost to build and the cost of a mortgage for any family that desperately needs a place to live are becoming more and more out of reach, not easier. However, the micro level, where the Liberal government is gatekeeping and blocking new homes and units from being built is right in the city of Cornwall by the Liberals' own transport minister and department.

Here is a bit of background. For the last eight years, Liberal candidates locally, and numerous ones after that in the Liberal government, have promised to divest a bunch of waterfront lands in Cornwall, and the City of Cornwall and Akwesasne want to return those to local say and local control. For eight years, they have dithered, delayed, done these vague consultations and over and over again spun their wheels, with bureaucrats contradicting each other. It has been an absolute mess.

The record is very clear. The Liberals have had eight years, and they have not even moved any of these parcels of land forward an inch to progress. Now it is getting bad, because there is one small parcel, Parcel 6, at the intersection of Water and Brookdale, where the City of Cornwall is reviewing an application to build a private-developer building of 506 units in two towers on Brookdale Avenue, which is a significant investment that is desperately needed to increase supply. We need more places to live, and this gets 506 in the right direction.

However, Transport Canada, with lawyers and bureaucrats and back-and-forth, are still dithering and delaying even on getting this one parcel transferred to local control between the City of Cornwall and the Federal Bridge Corporation just south of it, to allow council to know that they own that intersection, that they can put the entrance into it so that the developer can get it under way and council can approve it once it has all the information. Months and months later, the mayor and Akwesasne Grand Chief Abram Benedict are all on record saying that they want to see this parcel transferred. They want to see it come to local ownership so that council has all the tools and information to try to finalize the site plan and approval for this project. However, Transport Canada and the Liberal government are blocking it.

I asked my original question on this topic a couple of weeks ago, but I did not get even a semblance of an answer about Cornwall and this project specifically. Now that the Liberal government has had it and knew that I was coming here for this debate tonight on this topic, what is the update from the Liberals on finally getting even this one parcel intersection transferred, so that we can make a decision and try to get more units built in the city of Cornwall?

• (1820)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of things to say.

First, to answer specifically, the member tried to say that, for eight years, the Government of Canada has not done anything with the project. I can tell the member that there are numerous projects across the country the Government of Canada has moved forward on. It is not quite as simple as seeing a square block of land, clicking our heels and making it happen. Sometimes things take time.

The member opposite did not tell the House what some of the complications are. I suspect there are some complications, and he might even know of some of those complications, but he is being very selective in what he is saying. Rather, he wants to pass the blame.

He started off talking about how housing is in such a crisis. His current leader was the minister of housing under Stephen Harper and did absolutely nothing on housing. In the last 50 years, there has not been a government more proactive on the housing file than this government. We finally have a government that developed a housing strategy. We finally have a government that came out with new programs, such as the housing accelerator fund. We finally have a government that is working with other levels of government.

What does the Conservative Party do? It votes against every measure we have. We have had agreements with municipalities and so forth, far superior and in greater numbers than the Conservative Party could ever imagine, let alone put into place. At the end of the day, there is absolutely no consistency coming from the other side.

I can say that, as a national government, we have led very strongly on the housing file. It is not just the federal government alone that is responsible. It takes provinces and municipalities. The good news is that we are working not only with provinces and municipalities but also with non-profit organizations and other stakeholders because we recognize the need for and importance of housing, un-

like the Conservative Party, which wants to try to paint a picture that is not complete.

The government will continue to work where it can to provide ongoing support for housing. Our actions to date have seen and will continue to see the development of tens of thousands of new housing units. However, every time we bring in some sort of initiative, the initial response from the Conservative Party is to criticize it. Then it wonders why it is that we are not co-operating or doing some of the projects it is identifying.

I can assure the member that the department is aware of the request and that there are discussions and dialogue in the Cornwall area on the issue. We waited for a while to try to get the Kapyong Barracks in Winnipeg, a large parcel of land that involved a great deal of negotiations. It took several years to make it happen.

We know that the government, through its different departments, is looking at ways we can enhance housing opportunities. We are looking at ways we can work with municipalities. We can contrast that to what the Conservative Party is talking about or what it did when it was in office. I can tell members that it is literally night and day.

Therefore, it is a bit much to sit and listen to a member being critical of the government and trying to give a false impression that we are not doing enough on the housing file when I witnessed for a number of years, when I was in opposition, a government that did nothing. We can contrast that to a government that has made historic funding and has worked with other levels of government, unlike any other government in the last 50-plus years.

• (1825)

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, tonight the Liberals knew that I was coming to ask a very specific question about the negotiations and transfer of a specific parcel that the federal government owns. People who live in the city of Cornwall, are on council, are staff members or are members of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne are getting caught up in red tape. They cannot get a straight answer. After eight years, they cannot even transfer one single piece of property. I do not think the member could even point Cornwall out on a map, let alone know the intersection or what we are talking about here.

The bar was so low for me to come here tonight to just get an update on the timeline and the plans to get this done. The City of Cornwall, Akwesasne and the Federal Bridge Corporation are all on board with the solution. No wonder housing prices have doubled. No wonder there are tent cities. No wonder the number of housing starts are dropping in this country. It was a low bar. I told the government I would come here tonight to ask about this and what the government's plan was. It could not even give a basic update.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I will ask one more time, and the government has known for weeks what the question is. What is the plan? What is the update on the specific piece of property and the plan to get it done?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member knows full well he is not far from the Minister of Housing or from the Minister of Transport, and he could cross over and ask those questions on the side. He could also check with the local municipality or write to the departments. I would be interested in seeing that correspondence.

I suspect the municipality and other groups, such as indigenous communities, have in fact been working hand in hand with the federal government to try to work this issue through. I applaud them on their actions. Sometimes there is no simple answer, or at least an answer that is going to satisfy the politics the member is trying to bring forward. I say that only because of the manner in which he

started the discussion. He did not start the discussion by asking, “What about Cornwall?” It was more about being critical of the national government and the national government not doing enough on the whole housing file. That is how he started the discussion, and now, he wants to conclude it as if he is being a strong advocate for Cornwall.

This government will continue to work with the people of Cornwall and others to try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:28 p.m.)

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