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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[English]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, we are facing unthinkable levels of climate crisis events globally. Scientists are alarmed, and so should we be all.

It is very clear that last year, 2023, was the warmest year on record. Also, it is now clear for Canadians what we all knew. Records have been smashed. Records have been broken. This winter was the warmest winter on record in Canada, and according to senior climatologists, the warmest year on record by a stunning margin.

It is not just the land that is hotter and drier; it is the oceans. I refer members to a recent article in The New Yorker by Elizabeth Kolbert: “Why is the Sea so Hot?” Temperatures in our oceans reached a shade below 70°F globally, and since the start of 2024 they have been going up.

Are we—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Scarborough North has the floor.

BERNER TRAIL JUNIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 50th anniversary of Berner Trail Junior Public School in Scarborough North.

Since opening its doors in 1973, the esteemed institution has shaped the lives of countless students, parents, teachers and staff. Honouring their school motto, “Better Together”, students, past and present, are reconnecting and reminiscing over fond memories and moments.

The commitment and dedication of educators, parents and community members have undoubtedly contributed to the decades of excellence in education. Indeed, the name of the school is derived from C.H. Berner Public School, a single-room red-brick school-house at Finch Avenue East and Neilson Road that dates to 1872.

Today, Berner Trail's legacy continues with a vibrant and diverse student population located in the heart of the Malvern community.

I congratulate principal Jamie Wolch and the entire school community on reaching this remarkable milestone. I wish them many more years of success.

DISABILITY INCLUSION

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Helen Keller once said, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” In that spirit, today I am going to pay tribute to two organizations making a fantastic impact across Canada.

First, March is Easter Seals Month and a great time to recognize the wonderful work that Easter Seals Canada has done for over 100 years in Canada. Easter Seals' vision is to “fully [enhance] the quality of life, well-being and independence of Canadians living with disabilities”, and they are consistently a leading and reliable partner in efforts to do just that.

Also in this Marvel-like universe of inclusion champions is Special Olympics Canada, which hosted its 2024 Winter Games in Calgary at the end of February. It was incredible to see thousands of athletes, volunteers and families descend on our province of Alberta for a week of intense competition, joyful celebration and powerful community engagement.

To all of the superheroes at Easter Seals and Special Olympics, I say thanks for the life-changing work they do every single day. They are truly unstoppable.

*Statements by Members***ELMIRA MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL**

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I invite everyone to join us in Kitchener—Conestoga on Saturday, April 6, as we celebrate the 60th annual Elmira Maple Syrup Festival.

Since its start in 1965, the festival has grown to become the largest single-day maple syrup festival in the world. The community of Elmira, with a population of 12,000, will welcome up to 80,000 guests. Individuals and families can take part in the pancake-flipping contest, family fun arena, live music, the toy and craft show, and of course enjoy pancakes drenched in maple syrup.

I thank the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival committee for its dedication. I thank the sponsors for their financial support, and I thank the volunteers who work tirelessly to make this festival happen.

All proceeds are returned to our community's charitable and not-for-profit organizations. From the morning breakfast to entering a team in the pancake-flipping contest to savouring the food, supporting the vendors and enjoying the artists, I know that my family and everyone will have a great day at the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival.

I will see everyone there.

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[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Jean Ferrat said in his song, "It is so beautiful, life is beautiful," so today I say, "It is so beautiful, La Francophonie is beautiful."

Every year, we celebrate La Francophonie in March. All around the world, La Francophonie is a dynamic force that makes cultures soar and opens the lines of communication between them. La Francophonie is poetry. It is literature, it is a slam, it is values, it is living together and quite simply living.

From Morocco to Louisiana, from Quebec to Belgium, from the Ivory Coast to Tahiti, from Vietnam to Mauritius, La Francophonie is always with us. From David Cheramie in Louisiana to Patrice Desbiens in Sudbury, both poeticize La Francophonie in their own way. Aimé Césaire, elected politician, poet, playwright and essayist, made it his own too. We must not forget one of our finest, the great Dany Laferrière, who weaves an ineffable warmth into every one of his stories.

Through all of them, La Francophonie tells us its stories, as it charms us and speaks to us. It makes us a promise as well. It promises a world full of youthful spirit, happiness and friendship. Finally, with all of its different accents, La Francophonie is a celebration, a festival of the heart, a festival of the soul, a festival of life. On this International Day of La Francophonie, I wish everyone a happy Francophonie that will live on forever.

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• (1410)

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, March 20, marks the International Day of La Francophonie.

I would like to thank the francophone organizations and institutions across the country and in my community of Orléans for the outstanding work that they do in advancing and promoting the French language.

I would also like to recognize two francophone leaders from Orléans, Nicole and Louis Patry, who received the 2024 Champlain Fondateur de la Francophonie award at the Gala de la francophonie plurielle.

On March 1, I celebrated International Women's Day with 120 exceptional women from Orléans who joined me at my annual breakfast. At that time, I also had the honour of recognizing 38 women and girls by presenting them with the 2024 Orléans Leading Women and Girls Recognition Award.

Congratulations to all for their community engagement, and happy International Day of La Francophonie.

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[English]

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Holy Trinity Catholic High School 3A boys basketball team, who took home gold last week at the 2024 Alberta Schools' Athletic Association provincial championships.

This is a historic accomplishment for Knights Knation, as they became the first team north of Edmonton to ever bring home a provincial basketball title. The Knights rallied together, overcoming all odds to secure their victory in a game-winning free throw, in overtime, on home turf.

I want to thank principal Lou Ann Demers-Noble, vice-principal of athletics Kevin Garbuio, the coaching team, parents, volunteers and, of course, the amazing athletes who brought this all together. Their hard work and teamwork have paid off, and they have made their school and entire community so proud.

Go, Knights, go.

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WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY

Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this coming Sunday, March 24, is World Tuberculosis Day.

TB is the leading infectious disease killer in the world, only briefly passed by COVID-19 at the height of the pandemic. As an airborne disease, TB can spread rapidly, and it can be deadly unless properly treated. In 2022 alone, 1.3 million people lost their lives to TB and millions more were infected.

In January 2023, I had the opportunity to travel with Results Canada to Kenya. I saw first-hand how Canadian international assistance is efficiently and effectively used to fight TB. Dedicated community health workers and local organizations are tireless in ensuring people receive the safe and dignified treatment they need to recover from TB.

Yesterday morning, I had the honour to co-host a parliamentary breakfast where parliamentarians from all parties came together to hear from leading experts and passionate advocates who stand united in their vision of a world without TB.

There is more to be done, but with effort and political will, I believe that, yes, we can end TB.

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DIETITIANS DAY

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Dietitians Day in Canada.

Household food security is top of mind for many Canadians, and dietitians work hard to empower the health of individuals and communities. They are regulated health professionals who support children and adults with many illnesses, such as, for diabetes, by developing a healthy eating plan that regulates blood sugar. Dietitians work directly with other health care professionals, undertake scientific research, drive innovation and inform public policy.

[Translation]

It is important to recognize that malnutrition has a profound impact on mental and physical health. The skills that dietitians bring to the health care system can have a positive impact. They ensure that people have the resources to make healthier food choices, whether they are Canadians living in urban or rural areas, people with special needs or indigenous peoples.

We must recognize the important role this profession plays in building a healthier nation. Thank you to all the dietitians.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government's track record in following rules is not just disappointing; it is downright disgusting.

After a 16-month study at the government operations committee, today the government announced new measures to identify fraudulent billing cases. Five million dollars so far has been identified involving three subcontractors billing 36 different federal departments. This dates back to 2018. New ways of fraudulent billing will soon be uncovered. The RCMP have received referrals.

Statements by Members

What took this government so long, and when will Canadian taxpayers get their money back?

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● (1415)

MAD SCIENCE GROUP

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks the 38th anniversary of the Mad Science Group. Founded in 1987 by youthful visionaries, Ron Shlien and his brother, Ariel, the Mad Science Group has evolved into a national gem. It has ignited the spirits of countless young minds across Canada and beyond.

Mad Science has fundamentally altered how children engage with STEM: science, technology, engineering and math. Through awe-inspiring experiments and immersive encounters, it has kindled flames of curiosity and has nurtured an unwavering love of learning. Mad Science not only impacts young learners, but also serves as a platform for career-oriented employment, having empowered over 70,000 passionate individuals to share their fervour for knowledge.

As we commemorate 38 glorious years, let us extend gratitude to the contributing visionaries, educators and supporters. Their tireless efforts have transformed countless lives.

I am proud to honour Mad Science, especially my friends Ron and Ariel Shlien. May they continue to demystify science for future generations and to illuminate their path of discovery.

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CARBON TAX

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government cannot give anyone anything that it did not first take from someone else. In the case of the carbon tax and the so-called rebate, the government is literally taking from one pocket and putting it into another, but not before stuffing its own.

Canadians are smart enough to recognize a scam when they see it. This carbon tax shell game has gone on for long enough. The facts are in. The verdict is here. The PBO has said that Ontario families are paying \$1,647, while only getting a rebate of about \$1,000. That means every Ontario family is short \$600.

In Cobourg, volunteers at a local warming centre have told me that for the first time ever, they have clients who have full-time jobs, who cannot afford to do anything else, because they cannot afford food, and they cannot access shelter.

Statements by Members

We need a Canada that works for those who do the work. Seven premiers and 70% of Canadians agree; they are opposed to a carbon tax. It is time to vote non-confidence. It is time to spike the hike, and it is time to axe the tax.

• (1420)

[English]

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CARBON TAX

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, British Columbians pay the highest gas prices in Canada, thanks to punishingly high taxes, with the cost of gas going to over \$2 a litre this week. On April 1st, the Liberals and their B.C. NDP toadies will push prices even higher with a 23% hike on the carbon tax, driving the cost of gas, groceries and home heating to record highs. Many British Columbians are already struggling to put food on their tables and keep roofs over their heads, and now, the Liberals, with the help of the B.C. NDP, are going to make life even more expensive.

Nearly 200,000 people in B.C. use food banks in a single month. They cannot afford another tax increase, but B.C. NDP Premier David Eby is only too happy to do the Prime Minister's bidding and impose this made-in-Ottawa, Liberal-NDP carbon tax hike on British Columbians.

Only common-sense Conservatives are speaking up for the people of B.C., who are saying enough is enough. Their message, like ours, is to spike the hike or to call a carbon tax election.

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[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of La Francophonie, and I hope that all francophones and francophiles in Canada and around the world have a wonderful day of celebrations.

There is plenty to celebrate. If we look at the numbers, La Francophonie comprises 29 countries where French is the official language, including Canada. That means that there are more than 450 million francophones around the world and more than 600,000 francophones who call Ontario home.

As a proud Franco-Ontarian, I also want to take this opportunity to highlight the many contributions Franco-Ontarians make by enriching our language and culture within Canada's francophone community outside Quebec. I want to give a shout out to London's francophones, who have made our community thrive. Thanks to them, we can live in French in London, with two school boards that administer ten schools. We work in French. We also have resources to help newcomers live fully in French in a minority city. I commend all the hard-working organizations that support our community.

Long live the Francophonie, and long live francophones in Ontario and London.

LABOUR

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Donna, Sheila and Julie are three women who have given me permission to share their stories. They are among the 27 screening officers at the Victoria airport who recently lost their jobs. CATSA, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, disqualified these workers, forcing their employer to fire them, despite the employer wanting to keep them on. Donna is a single mom with two kids. She is extremely worried about how she is going to make rent next month. Sheila has had to search for a new home for her family in a housing crisis. Julie lives with a disability. She has been a loyal employee with CATSA for 16 years. She was given no right to appeal.

The infractions cited were as small as not looking under a bottle lid. They were never given any warnings. They were not offered more training. These workers deserve better. CATSA's decision to disqualify unionized workers without due process undermines collective bargaining. All of these screening officers are keen to return to work.

I am urging the labour minister to investigate this matter, and find the answers that these employees deserve.

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[Translation]

MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have some special visitors with us on Parliament Hill today. Over a dozen mayors and reeves have come to see us. Just by being here, they remind me of the beauty of the St. Lawrence, the mountains and the islands, and the deep love of life that defines their magnificent region.

What a great opportunity to clear our minds of some of the ugly comments recently made by others and, instead, acknowledge the hard and demanding work done by our municipal officials. Their task is not easy. It demands discipline, leadership and detailed knowledge of their community and of laws and regulations. They must also show empathy, kindness and courage.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I feel it is important to recognize them for their commitment and offer them our deep gratitude, admiration and co-operation. They are the very heart of Quebec's vibrant towns and villages.

Hats off to our municipal officials. To our visitors from Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix and L'Isle-aux-Coudres, enjoy your stay.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

● (1425)

CARBON TAX

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Liberal-NDP Prime Minister and his carbon tax scam are not worth the cost as Canadians get poorer. Two million Canadians visit a food bank in a single month, with a million more projected to this year, yet these climate zealots will hike the carbon tax 23% on April 1, making the cost of everything more expensive.

The PBO proved that Canadians pay more into this scam than what they get back in these phony rebates. Seventy per cent of premiers and Canadians reject this carbon tax scam, including Liberal premiers. That is why our common-sense Conservative leader is calling a no-confidence vote on the Liberal-NDP Prime Minister to spike the hike.

Will the Liberal lapdog NDP and inflationist Bloc stand with the majority of Canadians and common-sense Conservatives to call on the Prime Minister to spike the hike, or will they continue to support the scam? It is time for a carbon tax election so that Canadians can scrap the Prime Minister, and Conservatives can axe the tax.

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*[Translation]***REVEREND FATHER HADY MAHFOUZ**

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Reverend Father Hady Mahfouz is a prominent figure for all Lebanese people, and especially for Maronite Christians around the world. He was elected General President of the Maronite Order in July 2022. He is proficient in several languages, including Arabic, French, English, Italian, Spanish and German. He has published several books and articles on biblical interpretation.

Father Hady has strengthened the ties between the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik and the Université de Montréal, particularly with HEC. HEC Montréal offers its programs and awards diplomas at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

In 2016, he was elected Second Assistant General of the monastic order. Since being elected, he has shown exemplary leadership, complemented by his transparent and honest personality. He serves all Lebanese people of all religions around the world.

ORAL QUESTIONS*[Translation]***CARBON PRICING**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives have a plan to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. However, the costly Prime Minister, with the support of the Bloc Québécois, is making inflation rise with his taxes and inflationary deficits. He wants more tax hikes on April 1.

Will the Prime Minister bring down his inflationary deficits and taxes, or will he have to be defeated with a non-confidence vote and an election over taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada carbon rebate puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 families across the country in areas where the federal tax applies. We are giving more money to families while fighting climate change. That is what the vast majority of Canadians want.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives do not want to resolve affordability issues. They do not want to fight climate change. Fortunately, the majority of members in the House want to fight climate change and give people more money. That is what we are doing.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the opposite of what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said. On March 18, he said in committee that when we consider the economic impact, most families will be negatively affected by the carbon tax. What the Prime Minister is saying is not true. Canadians are going to pay more. There is also a second carbon tax that applies directly on the backs of Quebecers.

Are the Bloc Québécois members going to vote for Quebec families or are they going to once again vote for their boss, the Prime Minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition listened to Canadians once in a while, he would realize that they understand full well that the cost of inaction against climate change is enormous. Forest fires, floods, droughts, they all come at a high cost to our farmers and our fishers. This is a reality that we are dealing with, while putting more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 families across the country. The Canada carbon rebate is producing results for Canadian families, and the Conservative Party wants to eliminate it.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost, with the Parliamentary Budget Officer testifying again that “the majority of households will see a negative impact as a result of the carbon tax.” Now, he wants to hike the tax on April Fool's Day. We will not stand for it.

What will it be with the Prime Minister? Will he spike the hike, or will he face a non-confidence vote and a carbon tax election?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report lays out clearly that eight out of 10 Canadian families across the country, where the price on pollution applies, get more money back every year. That is how we put more money in the pockets of Canadians while having one of the strongest plans to fight climate change around the world. That is what the Conservative Party is standing against right now: money in the pockets of Canadian families and a real plan to fight climate change that is working, that is bringing down emissions, that is making us more competitive and that is helping build the future.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to read again the testimony from the March 18 appearance of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. He said, "Once you factor in the rebate but also the economic impacts...the majority of households will see a negative impact as a result of the carbon tax." The Prime Minister plans to make this problem worse with a carbon tax hike on heat, on homes, on fuel and on food. We will not stand for it.

Once again, which will it be? Will he spike the hike, or will we have a carbon tax election?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what will it be? It will be that Canadians get more money with the Canada carbon rebate. Eighty per cent of Canadian households, in areas where the federal carbon tax applies, get more money every year from the Canada carbon rebate than they pay in the price on pollution. On top of that, we are fighting climate change, making our industries more competitive and preparing a better future. There is no plan on the Conservatives' side of the House to either help Canadians with rebate cheques or fight climate change.

• (1430)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only did the Parliamentary Budget Officer testify that the majority of households will pay more in carbon taxes than they get back in rebates, but there is also a table showing that, in every single province in which this tax applies, middle-class families pay vastly more than they get back. Canadians know it, because, under the Prime Minister, they have seen their food, their fuel, their homes and their heating go through the roof.

Why do we not just end the debate and let Canadians decide and have a carbon tax election?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer clearly spelled out that eight out of 10 Canadian families in areas where the price on pollution applies get more money back every year than they pay in the price on pollution.

That is because we created a plan that not only is one of the strongest plans to fight climate change in the world but also puts more money back in the pockets of middle-class Canadians, as we build a stronger future, better careers, more competitiveness and a safer environment for generations to come.

That is the plan we have. That is not what they are doing.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister made a good joke. He told us about how well he gets along with the Premier of Quebec and how well they work together.

The reality is that everyone in the Quebec National Assembly except the Liberals—no surprise there—is calling for Quebec to be given all powers over immigration.

Is blatantly refusing François Legault's critical request without any explanation the Prime Minister of Canada's idea of friendship with Quebec?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague knows full well that Quebec has more power over immigration than any other province in Canada and that I sat down with Premier Legault last Friday to say, yes, let us work together to meet the objectives of Quebecers and the Government of Quebec.

We are here to help businesses and to ensure that public services and housing are not overwhelmed. We will work hand in hand, as we have always done. We are here to deliver for Quebecers and all Canadians, all together.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is here to deliver for Quebecers, then that is another epic fail to add to his record.

The Government of Quebec has paid for education, health, income security, child care and all government services. The Liberal government told Quebec to pay for it and said that it would pay Quebec back. The bill has reached \$1 billion, but now that Quebec has a huge deficit on its hands, the Liberal government is saying, "Find the \$1 billion yourself. I will not be giving it to you because we are such good friends. Now scram".

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if I were the leader of the Bloc Québécois, I would be careful not to imply that there are more Quebecers on his party's side than ours. We also speak for Quebecers. We represent Quebec ridings, and we are here to work hand in hand to deliver for Quebecers, especially when it comes to health care, where we are working to improve services. The federal government is here to spend billions of dollars on the priorities of Quebecers and Quebec. We are here to work together, and we will continue to do so on both sides of the chamber as Quebecers.

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first nations, Métis and Inuit communities across Canada are slipping further behind. Kids cannot access health services, and homes are falling apart. What are the Liberals doing? They are threatening to cut billions in services communities rely on. If it were up to the Conservative leader, Indigenous Services would be gutted altogether. The Liberals and Conservatives always seem to find ways to make rich CEOs even richer but never find money for real people.

Will the Prime Minister honour his commitments to indigenous people or leave them out to dry?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are unequivocally committed, and have been since 2015, to working in partnership with first nations, Inuit and Métis communities across the country to advance self-determination and reconciliation. We have tripled investments in indigenous housing, mental health, access to clean drinking water and jobs, to contribute to economic reconciliation.

We have also moved forward to compensate first nations children and families who suffered under the discriminatory child welfare system. We have built over 30,000 homes since 2016, and we recently announced that we will move forward in creating an indigenous loans support program.

There is, of course, much more to do, but we will keep doing it.

• (1435)

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that answer is little comfort to the residential school survivors and children who rely on those services. Imagine having to live in a mouldy home with young children, knowing that it is not a healthy place for them. That is the heartbreaking situation first nations are facing across the country. The Auditor General herself says that the government has no plan to close the housing gaps that are keeping first nations in inhumane conditions. Shame on them.

When will the Prime Minister take first nations housing seriously and provide the communities with the resources they desperately need?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made historic investments in housing and indigenous communities after decades of wrongful underfunding by previous governments of all stripes. We are working every single day to do more.

We are committed to working in partnership with first nations and their communities. We thank the Auditor General for her work and her report, and we will continue to move forward to do even more in partnership with indigenous people across this country.

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CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, among provincial parties, there has been an outbreak of common sense on the carbon tax. In fact, Nova Scotia Liberals,

Oral Questions

NDP members and Conservatives passed a unanimous motion in their legislature this week calling on their federal MPs to vote against the Prime Minister's 23% carbon tax hike. It is no wonder: The cost of the carbon tax to the average Nova Scotia family will be \$1,605, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer; \$1,605.

How much will the rebate be for the average family?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the federal price on pollution is a backstop. It is a system we put in place to both fight climate change everywhere across the country and put more money back in the pockets of Canadian families where it applies.

Every single province had and continues to have the option to replace the federal price on pollution with its own program, as long as it is as rigorous and stringent as the federal price on pollution. As long as they have a plan to fight climate change, as long as it is strong enough, they can do what they want. That is the option the provinces have. They can take that option. We are going to keep putting—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is demonstrably false, because Nova Scotia actually has a climate change plan, which he rejected and overrode with a federal carbon tax that is opposed by New Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives unanimously in the province's legislature.

I noticed he would not answer my question. He has been bragging about these rebates, but then when we talk about the cost, all of a sudden, he forgets the rebates. I am going to give him a second chance.

In the province of Nova Scotia, the cost to the average family will be \$1,500. It will be \$1,500 per Nova Scotia family. How much is the rebate?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is simply not true. The reality is, for eight out of 10 families right across the country in backstop provinces, families do better off with the Canada carbon rebate than they do with the extra costs of the price on pollution. This is a plan to fight climate change, but it is also a plan to put more money in the pockets of families from coast to coast to coast.

The Conservative leader does not care about fighting against climate change and he does not care about affordability either, because he would rip up the rebate cheques and he would do less on fighting climate change. We are going to keep delivering for Canadians.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he still will not answer the question. All the Liberal ministers came in with little cue cards a week ago with all these rebates on them. They were waving them around very proudly, and then we went to the Parliamentary Budget Officer and asked for the full price by province. We quoted that, for example, in Nova Scotia, it is \$1,500 in costs to the average family according to the PBO.

Again, that is \$1,500 in costs. What is the rebate, the number?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we see the lengths to which the Conservative Party will go to mislead Canadians about a plan that fights climate change and puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer himself admitted and said that we cannot take his words out of context, because he did not calculate the costs of inaction on fighting climate change. He did not calculate the competitive advantages of the innovation, the solutions and the economic growth that come with putting a price on pollution. The Conservative Party is not telling the full story.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer did not include the cost of climate change because the carbon tax does not address the cost of climate change. He made it clear the carbon tax will do nothing to change the cost of climate change, and that is why the tax costs more for every family in every province.

Let us go to Alberta, where two of the NDP leadership candidates have come out against the carbon tax. The Prime Minister's only friend in the province, Naheed Nenshi, has gone totally silent. Albertans will pay \$2,900 in carbon tax per family. What will the rebate be for them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, \$1,800 a year, for an average family of four, is the Canada carbon rebate. That is helping them. According to an analysis by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, it is more than they pay in an extra price on pollution because of the price we put in at the federal level.

The price on pollution puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families and fights climate change while building a stronger, more competitive future.

Conservatives have no plan to fight climate change and no plan to help Canadians with rebate cheques.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister found his cue card and finally talked about the rebate. He said the average family in Alberta will get \$1,800 while it is paying \$2,943. In other words, next year alone, after this forthcoming hike, the average Alberta family will pay \$1,100 more in carbon taxes than he gives back in his phony cheques.

Will the Prime Minister tell us if he understands that \$2,900 is bigger than \$1,800?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how about a different stat, a stat the finance ministry analyzed? It turns out that for an average income quintile group with an average household of 2.5 Canadians, the average net benefit per house-

hold in Alberta is \$723 a year. That is \$723 in the pockets of the average Albertan family because we put a price on pollution that puts more money back in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families.

That is what we are doing. That is how we fight climate change.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): The Prime Minister wants you to know, Mr. Speaker, that he has alternative facts. I get mine from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who reports directly to Parliament and is independent. He is using numbers that come from officials who report to him and depend on him for their jobs.

Let us take another province, Ontario, where the Liberal leader has now come out against the Prime Minister's carbon tax. Maybe she knows that the average cost to an Ontario family of the federal carbon tax is \$1,674 for this coming year. How much is the rebate in Ontario?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the average net benefit per household in Ontario is \$255 a year. That is fighting climate change while putting more money in the pockets of Canadians.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer himself demonstrated that eight out of 10 Canadian families in regions that get the carbon price backstop do better with the price on pollution. It puts more money back in their pockets than it costs them on the fight for climate change.

This is the plan we are delivering for Canadians. That is the plan the member wants to scrap.

* * *

• (1445)

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I do not put much stock in polls. Polls should not dictate a government's choices. That said, before he says who is speaking for whom, the Prime Minister ought to know that the Bloc Québécois has been ahead of the Liberals in every poll for longer than I can remember.

If the Prime Minister is doing that poorly in the polls, so poorly that even the Conservatives are outperforming the Liberals in Canada, perhaps it is because he does not respect Quebec, Quebecers or the National Assembly.

Oral Questions

Does he think that treating Quebec with contempt is a good idea because he knows he will never gain any seats in Quebec anyway, or because trashing Quebecers will at least win him votes in Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people know very well that in democracies, there is only one poll that counts, and that is on election day.

The Liberal Party has won more seats in Quebec than the Bloc Québécois in the last three elections. That is because we are here to deliver meaningful results for Quebecers and all Canadians with health agreements, help for dental care and seniors, \$6 billion for day care in Quebec and other investments that help create economic growth, jobs for the future for Quebecers and a greener world for all.

These are the investments we are making to represent Quebec, and we will continue to deliver.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we sensed a little vulnerability, but it is just that we do not know whether they will be sitting at this end of the House or that end.

If the government really wants to get Quebecers' attention, it will make adequate health care transfers. It will transfer immigration powers. Judges will be appointed. Things will get done the right way. So far, the government is not getting anything done, and its members are reading from cue cards in the House.

Will the Prime Minister at least go through the motions of doing his job for Quebecers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us consider the facts: 1.5 million Canadian seniors have signed up for our dental care plan, which the Conservatives voted against. More than a third of those seniors live in Quebec. That means hundreds of thousands of Quebec seniors will be getting free dental care thanks to federal investments in dental care.

We are here to deliver results for Quebecers. We will always be here for Quebecers and for all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now the legislature in Newfoundland and Labrador has acknowledged that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost after eight years. It passed a motion, supported by the Liberal premier and personal friend of the Prime Minister, to oppose the April 1 tax hike.

It must have heard from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that the cost to Newfoundlanders of the carbon tax this year will be \$1,874 for the average Newfoundland and Labrador family. What will their rebate be?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the average net benefit per household in Newfoundland and Labrador is \$303 a year. That is the money that they pocket with our price on pollution and the Canada carbon rebate cheques that go to households across the province.

The province is open to creating its own price on pollution, its own plan to fight climate change, as long as it is as strong as the federal backstop. The province is welcome to do that if it wants to do it a different way, but in the meantime we are going to both fight climate change and deliver more money to the families in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here are the facts directly from the Parliamentary Budget Officer: The cost to the average Newfoundland family is \$1,874, and the rebate is \$1,497, for a net loss of \$377 and growing. These are the facts. Could the Prime Minister stop denying the facts?

If the Prime Minister really wants to contest and argue that he should be able to raise the tax, why does he not have the courage to call an election and let Canadians decide?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are busy delivering for Canadians a price on pollution that puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 families across the country.

He wants an election on the price on pollution? We had three, and we won them all.

• (1450)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, then he should not be afraid to have one more.

This is a Prime Minister who has doubled housing costs. He sent two million people lining up at food banks and 8,000 joining a Facebook group learning how they can eat a meal out of a dumpster, and now his best solution is to hike the tax on their heat, their home, their fuel and their food.

If he really believes in it, why does he not call a carbon tax election now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard time and time again over these past many months the Leader of the Opposition talk about how Canada is broken. We are focused on supporting Canadians with things like child care, dental care and a plan to fight climate change that puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families right across the country. That is the approach that is delivering for Canadians.

We still have more work to do, and we are going to keep doing it to deliver for Canadians every single day we are in the House.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the finance minister claimed that the carbon tax was revenue-neutral, that the government did not keep a single penny. It turns out it keeps hundreds of billions of pennies. It has collected, so far, \$20.7 billion and has only paid back \$18.6 billion. In other words, the government has profited by over \$2 billion by pillaging the pockets of Canadians.

When will the Canadian people get their \$2 billion back? If the Prime Minister is so sure about taking it away, why does he not call an election to defend it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader is now complaining about \$2 billion that he would never give to Canadian businesses, would never give to Canadians, because he would scrap the Canada carbon rebate. We are actually delivering money across the country to communities, to individuals, to small businesses and to indigenous communities to fight climate change and help them afford their groceries.

The Conservative leader wants to eliminate the carbon rebate. He wants to eliminate the plan to fight climate change. He has no plan for the future of the economy.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canada is in first place. We rank number one. The Liberals should be proud—but wait, first place for what? Canada ranks number one for air pollution. For the first time, Canada is the most polluted country in North America. We are worse than the United States. With the climate crisis and forest fires, people are suffocating. They cannot breathe properly. Pollution is making them sick. People are dying, and it is going to get worse.

Is the Minister of Environment and Climate Change proud to represent the most polluted country in North America?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand that those remarks make a good sound bite for the NDP, but this is really about forest fires. Last year's forest fires were terrible. The reality is that we need to do even more to fight climate change.

The Conservative Party wants to step back from our fight against climate change. They want to take away the rebate cheques we deliver to Canadians. The NDP, meanwhile, has never had a plan to fight climate change when it comes to election time. We have always been there with a concrete plan, and we will continue to be there to protect Canadians.

* * *

[English]

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government continues to fail women, including care workers in women's shelters. The cuts to women's shelters have impact-

ed not only women fleeing violence but also shelter workers, who are facing a burnout crisis, consistently overworked and underpaid.

Seventy-five percent of the care economy is women. This is a gender equality issue. Why do the so-called feminist Liberals not stop wasting millions on private consultants and invest in fair wages for shelter workers to help save lives?

● (1455)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have demonstrated from day one that we are there to work with the provinces to invest in the care economy, whether it is commitments to raise personal support worker wages to \$25 an hour, whether it is through our historic child care agreements that are creating wage grids for early childhood educators or whether it is moving forward on strengthening support for indigenous communities and for care workers in and from indigenous communities, we will continue to be there.

We recognize there is more work to do. We are there to do it, hand in hand with the different jurisdictions across the country.

* * *

[Translation]

CHILD CARE

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for years, parents in my riding, Vaughan—Woodbridge, have been talking about how hard it is to find child care spots for their children. That is why we introduced our bill on early learning and child care, which the Conservative Party tried to delay.

Can the Prime Minister inform the House of the current status of this important bill?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, child care supports not only parents, but also our economy. I am so happy to see that with the support of the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge and our caucus, the Canada Early Learning and Child Care Act received royal assent yesterday.

Unfortunately, the Conservative leader ordered his members to obstruct and delay the passage of this bill. Nevertheless, we have kept our promise to Canadians. No matter where they live, they will have access to affordable, inclusive and quality child care.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

● (1500)

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost to our economy. Real per person GDP has grown more slowly in Canada than in all the rest of the G7. It is dead last. In fact, our per capita GDP is smaller than it was five years ago, which is the worst record since the Great Depression. The Parliamentary Budget Officer calculates that the carbon tax will blow an \$18-billion hole in the size of our GDP, \$1,000 in economic costs per family.

If he really thinks that is worth the cost, why will we not have a carbon election to—

The Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the same time, our population is growing faster than that of other countries around the world, if one is going to be telling the full story.

The reality is that our price on pollution puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families in the backstop provinces. This is a fact recognized by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and recognized by Canadians, who see both a real plan to invest in the jobs and careers of the future, the competitiveness Canada needs, and the fight against climate change to keep us safe, while putting more money in the pockets of Canadian families from coast to coast to coast.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government gets bigger and the people get poorer. After eight years, he is not worth the cost. He is blowing another \$18-billion hole in our GDP with the carbon tax, a hole that will mean lower wages and a lower quality of life for the Canadian people.

The Prime Minister now wants to quadruple the carbon tax, starting with his April Fool's Day hike. When will he realize that after eight years of Canadians' lining up at food banks and living in tents, he is not worth the cost?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the price on pollution returns every dollar it collects to the jurisdictions in which it is collected. That is the fact that built our program, our fight against climate change. The reality is that we are creating jobs and we are creating growth, and we are putting more money back in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families in backstop provinces. This is the plan that fights climate change, builds a stronger economy and supports Canadians right now with rebate cheques that the Leader of the Opposition would cancel.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, based on his own main estimates and public accounts, he has collected over \$20 billion in taxes and returned only \$18 billion, so it is factually inaccurate to say that he has given every penny back. In fact we know that in every single province where the carbon tax applies, Canadians pay more than they get back. Furthermore, there is only one provincial party that supports the tax; the B.C. NDP is happily implementing this federally mandated tax grab.

Will the Prime Minister today allow British Columbia to cancel the April Fool's Day tax hike?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a question and a contrast on facts, the reality is that the B.C. government has had a price on pollution since 2008, and the federal government has no involvement in British Columbia's price on pollution. It is a simple error of fact that the leader of the Conservative Party is trying to share with the House. He must be mistaken. Maybe it is an honest mistake, but the reality is that he is wrong on that fact, just like he is wrong on the fact that he does not understand that eight out of 10 Canadian families do better with the price on pollution.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, page 75 of the B.C. budget confirmed that the province was bringing in the tax hike on April 1 because it is forced to by federal law. According to the Vancouver Sun, "[The NDP] budget and fiscal plan, presented in February, says the carbon tax will raise \$9 billion over three years. The New Democrats plan to give back \$3.5 billion in climate action tax credits to low- and middle-income folks, and spend the rest as they see fit."

Will the Prime Minister end the carbon tax coalition with his B.C. provincial NDP counterparts so that British Columbians can get their money back?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one would think that for someone who has been railing against our plan to fight climate change and put more money in people's pockets for months now, he would actually have done his research to understand how it works.

Every single province has the ability to put forward its own plan to fight climate change as long as it is sufficiently rigorous to be fair to the other provinces that are also doing the same. That is what a Canada-wide plan to fight climate change is all about. Yes, the federal backstop gives back more money directly to Canadians in eight out of 10 cases, but B.C. and others are free to do their own thing.

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*[Translation]***INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, seated in the middle of a hundred or so Liberal members who are at risk of losing their jobs, the Prime Minister continues to interfere in provincial affairs. He boasts about pharmacare, which already exists, and talks about seniors, when he has refused to increase old age security.

Oral Questions

Another example is the Canada community-building fund. We are not talking about a lot of money, really, but the municipalities are used to using it as they see fit. The government wants to impose its own choices on them.

With 12 mayors from Charlevoix looking on, can he back off and let the municipalities do what they want?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Bloc Québécois is mistaken. We increased old age security for seniors 75 and up because we know that they have more expenses than other families.

Yes, we recognize that even in Quebec and across the country, there are people who cannot afford their diabetes medication or their birth control because they are not covered.

We are here to work with Quebec to deliver results and ensure that people can get their diabetes medication and their birth control. We will be here to ensure that people stay healthy.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if seniors use a lot of birth control, but I know that in Quebec, diabetes medication is paid for.

I will come back to one point, because I do not think he knows what I am talking about. The Canada community-building fund should allow municipalities to do whatever work they choose to do. However, to make it look like it is putting money into housing, the government wants to force small municipalities to invest money from the Canada community-building fund in housing.

Can the government be honest and let municipalities do what they want with their money?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems there are some challenges today when it comes to the facts.

Our housing accelerator fund gives money directly to municipalities across the country so that they can build more housing more quickly, except in Quebec, where we gave the Government of Quebec \$900 million. It then combined that with another \$900 million for municipalities across Quebec to build housing more quickly.

We are here to work in a manner that is respectful of jurisdictions, in partnership with Quebec, to deliver for municipalities large and small across the province.

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● (1505)

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister's catch-and-release policies and his mismanagement of our ports, car thefts have gone up by over 200% in Toronto and 100% in Montreal. There are 12,000 cars stolen in Canada's biggest city every single year. That is one car stolen every 40 minutes.

Will the Prime Minister accept my common-sense plan to scan every shipping container, reinforce our ports and put career car thieves behind bars?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, cracking down on auto theft starts with going after organized crime. We are doing that with \$121 million for Ontario to crack down on organized crime and car theft, and the Conservative Party voted against it. The public safety minister also announced \$28 million for border services in collaboration with police across the country. To stop organized crime, we are cracking down on money laundering, which is something the Conservative Party also voted against.

We will take no lessons from the Conservative Party that chose to weaken our borders and pull money back from enforcement services any chance it got while it was in government.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we pulled money back from back-office bureaucracy and costly consultants that now chew up the budget. CBSA is now spending \$60 million on arrive scam, while only five CBSA officers are monitoring 500,000 shipping containers at the port of Montreal. Conservatives put more CBSA agents on the front line at the port of Montreal and across the country.

Will the Prime Minister not accept my common-sense plan to cut back on the consultants and put boots on the ground?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government, in which that leader was a minister, cut hundreds, if not thousands, of positions in law enforcement across the country, including those of CBSA officers and those back-office experts who actually analyze the bills of lading and the origins to designate and find out where these auto thefts are happening and which containers have stolen vehicles in them. We are investing in them. We are giving more money, so they can do their work.

The common sense that the Leader of the Opposition is putting forward is nonsense. We know that they are all about cuts, not investments in keeping Canadians safe.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, why do we not just look at the CBSA's own numbers on this. In the first year of the Conservative government, there were a total of 12,673 CBSA officers. In the last year, there were 14,113. I know that the Prime Minister is not great with numbers, but 14,000 is bigger than 12,000.

By the way, if he wants to analyze whether stolen cars are in shipping containers, why does he not accept my plan to scan those shipping containers? Would that not be common sense?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will let the Leader of the Opposition's high-priced corporate lobbyist friends, who give him so much money at fancy cash-for-access private events, explain to him the impact on supply chains and shipping in Canada to try to scan 600,000 containers a day.

The fact is, we are doing everything necessary to invest in countering organized crime, to track those containers and to do the work. He is not paying attention to the things that actually grow the country, even though he is listening to high-priced lobbyists.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Calgary and my home province of Alberta are home to tens of thousands of proud Ukrainian Canadians. Since Russia's illegal war on Ukraine, Canada's commitment towards Ukraine has never been stronger. That is why our government introduced a modernized Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, which President Zelenskyy asked for, to be there to help Ukraine rebuild after it defeats Russia. Shamefully, the Conservative Party did not want to accept Ukraine's reasonable request for assistance. Can the Prime Minister update the House on this crucial trade agreement?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after the Conservative leader turned his back on Ukrainians and forced his own caucus to do the same—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I ask for order, please.

I will ask the Prime Minister to start from the top.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, after the Conservative leader turned his back on Ukrainians and forced his own caucus to do the same, he whipped his senators last night to vote against the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement that Ukraine asked for.

Our Liberal caucus, including the member for Calgary Skyview, never backed down. Despite the Conservative Party's efforts to derail Ukraine's hopes to rebuild after it wins the war, the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement received royal assent last night.

While Conservative politicians sell out to the Kremlin, we will stand with Ukraine.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the \$60-million arrive scam is just the tip of the iceberg. We have now learned that there is \$5 million in additional fraud that has been identified by the department of public procurement, and this is out of the \$21 billion the Prime Minister is now spending on outside consultants, which is a 100% increase, done fully with the support of the NDP.

Oral Questions

Can the Prime Minister tell us how much of this \$21 billion is fraud?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the situation is obviously unacceptable, which is why authorities are looking into the procurement process. Anyone who took advantage of our COVID response to save Canadians' lives should face consequences. All federal contracts with these companies have been suspended as the investigation continues.

However, everyone in the House noticed how quickly the Leader of the Opposition pivoted from the question on Ukraine. The reality is, his members are ashamed of him for forcing them to vote against Ukrainian Canadians, to vote against Ukraine, and to vote against support the Ukrainian president was asking for.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has demonstrated once again that he is a fake and a phony because—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition is a very experienced member of Parliament. I know that he would understand that that kind of a statement directed at an individual would not be considered parliamentary.

I will ask the hon. member to continue with his question.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is a fake and a phony on this issue, just like on everything else. He says—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member is a very experienced member and knows that, when the Speaker has chastised him a little for the use of language, it is not considered parliamentary.

I ask him to withdraw those comments and rephrase the question without using those words.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, this is a Prime Minister who authorized the export of gas turbines to pump gas from Putin's economy into Europe to fund the war. He is someone who signed on to allow Russian detonators to blow up Ukrainians on the battlefield, and he is pro Russia's energy policy to fund the Russian economy.

We will take no lessons—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

● (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is pretty weak sauce from the Leader of the Opposition. The reality is that President Zelenskyy—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I see that the opposition House leader is asking members to be calm. I will ask all House leaders to please ask all of your members, on all sides, to be calm.

The right hon. Prime Minister may continue.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is flailing in every way he can to try to divert attention away from the fact that his members voted against a request made by President Zelenskyy himself to support a Canada-Ukraine free trade deal. The reality is that constituents across the country feel betrayed by the Conservative Party voting against Ukraine.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainians asked for us to give missiles. The Conservatives support Ukraine, not giving turbines and detonators to Russia, which is what he has done.

The Prime Minister has failed Ukrainians abroad, and he has failed Canadians at home. Canadians are good and decent people. They do not have to live this way. They do not have to give up the things they used to take for granted, such as affordable food and homes, all for the incompetence and ego of one man. He is not worth the cost or the corruption.

Will he call a carbon tax election so Canadians can decide?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, members can notice how desperate the Leader of the Opposition is to try to find any excuse he can to justify their voting against Ukraine. Suddenly, he is not talking about the price on pollution that Ukraine put in itself years ago. He is not using that as an excuse, even though that was all we heard as a justification for why they voted against Ukraine, voted against Ukrainian Canadians and voted against the reconstruction of Ukraine, which we are committed to through a free trade agreement.

He stood in the House and voted against Ukraine, and he is now trying to do anything he can to hide from it. He let down Ukraine, and that showed who he is.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change is a reality that impacts my constituents in Ottawa—Vanier. They have asked the government to reduce emissions while putting more money back in their pockets. That is why, every year, they receive \$1,120 from the Canada carbon rebate.

While Conservative politicians fail to recognize that climate change is real and that there is an even greater cost of inaction, can the Prime Minister inform Canadians—

[Translation]

The Speaker: Order. I would ask the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier to restrain himself while someone is asking a question.

[English]

The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Hon. Mona Fortier: Mr. Speaker, while Conservative politicians fail to recognize that climate change is real and that there is an even greater cost of inaction, can the Prime Minister inform Canadians as to why our plan is so important?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for her hard work. The opposition leader would take away over \$1,000 from families in Ontario every year. That amount might be minimal to him when he is cashing his CCB cheque, but it is not to middle-class families.

We now know why he wants to take money away from Canadians. He is in the pocket of big business. We learned from media reports that he was partying with oil lobbyists and CEOs at private, cash-for-access fundraisers in Banff just last year. He cares about his wealthy donors getting richer. He does not care about—

* * *

● (1520)

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, families in Nanaimo—Ladysmith and across Canada should not have to worry about how to keep their kids fed while at school. A national school food program would make sure kids get the food they need to grow and learn, but the Liberals have been delaying for years. What about the Conservatives? They voted against feeding kids while putting the profits of CEOs first.

Children should not be left to go hungry. Will the Prime Minister make sure a national school food program is in the spring budget?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like all members in the House, the member is going to have to wait until April 16 to find out what is in the budget.

I can give people a preview right now. There will be support on housing. There will be help on affordability for Canadians. There will be opportunities to invest in growing the economy and creating good jobs for the future while we help Canadians through tough times right now. We are focused on young people. We are focused on seniors. We are going to keep delivering, including by working with provinces on important programs like school food programs.

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PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, thanks to the powerful advocacy of people with disabilities across the country, every MP in the House supported legislation meant to lift people with disabilities out of poverty. Nine months later, there is still no commitment from the government to fund what will be called the Canada disability benefit.

When it came to MAID legislation, this government sure moved fast to make sure that people with disabilities could die well. Will the Prime Minister show he is ready to ensure that people with disabilities live well and commit to a fully funded benefit in budget 2024?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is better than the question he just asked. He knows that it is really important to be there both to protect people when they are most vulnerable and to support their wishes. That is something that is foundational in Canada.

In regard to people living with disabilities, we have invested more in people with disabilities over the past eight years than ever before, and there is more to do.

We were very, very pleased to move forward on the Canada disability benefit, and we will have more to say in the coming months.

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier wishes to raise a question of privilege, but the House decided to proceed directly to the vote. After the vote, we will continue with questions of privilege.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

The House resumed from February 9 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:23 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Science and Research.

Call in the members.

• (1535)

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

Orders of the Day

(Division No. 669)

YEAS

Members

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

Business of Supply

Hughes
Hutchings
Ien
Johns
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khalid
Khera
Kmicc
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maguire
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McKay
McLean
McPherson
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morantz
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rota
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schiefke
Seeback
Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Soroka
Steinley
Stewart

Hussen
Iacono
Jeneroux
Joly
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khanna
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Kwan
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Majumdar
Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Melillo
Mendicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrice
Morrissey
Murray
Naqvi
Ng
Normandin
Oliphant
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Plamondon
Powlowski
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Ruff
Sajjan
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Scheer
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh
Sorbara
Sousa
Ste-Marie
St-Onge

Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Weiler
Williams
Yip
Zarrillo
Zuberi — 325

Stubbs
Tassi
Thériault
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North)

Gill — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX

The House resumed from March 19 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle relating to the business of supply.

● (1550)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 670*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Davidson
d'Entremont
Dowdall

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Dancho
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeschen

Business of Supply

Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis	Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Coteau	Dabrusin
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Damoff	DeBellefeuille
Ferreri	Findlay	Desbiens	Desilets
Gallant	Généreux	Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Genuis	Gladu	Dhillon	Diab
Godin	Goodridge	Dong	Drouin
Gourde	Gray	Dubourg	Duclos
Hallan	Hoback	Duguid	Dzerowicz
Jeneroux	Kelly	Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Khanna	Kitchen	Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Kmiec	Kram	Fisher	Fonseca
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Fortier	Fortin
Kusie	Lake	Fragiskatos	Fraser
Lantsman	Lawrence	Freeland	Fry
Lehoux	Leslie	Gaheer	Gainey
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Garon	Garrison
Liepert	Lloyd	Gaudreau	Gazan
Lobb	Maguire	Gerretsen	Gould
Majumdar	Martel	Guilbeault	Hajdu
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Hanley	Hardie
McLean	Melillo	Hepfner	Holland
Moore	Morantz	Hughes	Hussen
Morrison	Motz	Hutchings	Iacono
Muys	Nater	Ien	Johns
Patzer	Paul-Hus	Joly	Jones
Perkins	Poilievre	Jowhari	Julian
Rayes	Redekopp	Kayabaga	Kelloway
Reid	Rempel Garner	Khera	Koutrakis
Richards	Roberts	Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Rood	Ruff	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Scheer	Schmale	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Seeback	Shields	Larouche	Lattanzio
Shipley	Small	Lauson	LeBlanc
Soroka	Steinley	Lebouthillier	Lemire
Stewart	Strahl	Lightbound	Long
Stubbs	Thomas	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Tochor	Tolmie	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Uppal	Van Popta	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Vecchio	Vidal	Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Vien	Viersen	Masse	Mathysen
Vis	Vuong	May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Wagantall	Warkentin	McGuinty	McKay
Waugh	Webber	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Williams	Williamson	McPherson	Mendès
Zimmer— 119		Mendicino	Miao
		Michaud	Miller
		Morrice	Morrissey
		Murray	Naqvi
		Ng	Noormohamed
		Normandin	O'Connell
		Oliphant	O'Regan
		Pauzé	Perron
		Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
		Powlowski	Qualtrough
		Robillard	Rodriguez
		Rogers	Romanado
		Rota	Sahota
		Sajjan	Saks
		Samson	Sarai
		Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
		Schiefke	Serré
		Sgro	Shanahan
		Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
		Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
		Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
		Sorbara	Sousa
		Ste-Marie	St-Onge
		Sudds	Tassi
		Taylor Roy	Thériault
		Therrien	Thompson
		Trudeau	Trudel
		Turnbull	Valdez

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)

Private Members' Business

Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi— 205

van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Jeneroux
Julian
Khanna
Kmieć
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lake
Larouche
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
MacGregor
Majumdar
Masse
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McPherson
Michaud
Morantz
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Plamondon
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Kwan
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Maguire
Martel
Mathysen
Mazier
McLean
Melillo
Moore
Morrice
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Poilievre
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Scheer
Seebach
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer— 172

PAIRED

Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North)

Gill— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CONSUMER-LED BANKING ACT

The House resumed from February 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-365, An Act respecting the implementation of a consumer-led banking system for Canadians, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-365, under Private Members' Business.

• (1600)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 671)

YEAS

Members

Aboultayf
Albas
Angus
Ashton
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Bergeron
Bérubé
Blaikie
Block
Bragdon
Brock
Calkins
Carrie
Chambers
Chong
Cooper
Dancho
DeBellefeuille
d'Entremont
Desilets
Doherty
Dreeschen
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Falk (Provencher)
Ferreri
Fortin
Garon
Gaudreau

Aitchison
Allison
Arnold
Bachrach
Barlow
Barron
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blaney
Boulerice
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings
Chabot
Champoux
Collins (Victoria)
Dalton
Davidson
Deltell
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Gallant
Garrison
Gazan

Aldag
Ali
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Beech
Bittle
Blois
Bradford
Carr
Chagger
Champagne
Chen

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Arseneault
Atwin
Bains
Battiste
Bibeau
Blair
Boissonnault
Brière
Casey
Chahal
Chatel
Chiang

Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Coteau
Damoff
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Ehsassi
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Gerretsen
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hutchings
Ien
Jones
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lalonde
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McKay
McLeod
Mendicino
Miller
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid

Cormier
Dabrusin
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Gould
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Joly
Jowhari
Kelloway
Khara
Kusmierczyk
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAtulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Miao
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sousa
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Trudeau
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zuberi — 150

PAIRED

Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North)

Gill— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

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

Privilege

[English]

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, I had difficulties with the app. I am hoping there will be unanimous consent to have my vote counted in favour.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 36 minutes.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

BILINGUAL DOCUMENTS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a question of privilege.

On this International Day of La Francophonie, the fact that our institution behaved this way is a bit of an embarrassment.

I rise today on a question of privilege concerning the Liberal government's chaotic attempt to amend the New Democratic Party's opposition motion, moved on Monday. On Monday evening, with one minute left to debate the NDP opposition motion, the Liberal government House leader proposed a long, complex and unilingual amendment. As we know, extensive procedural arguments followed. However, given that the amendment was available in English only, francophone members could not fully participate in the debate.

Furthermore, translation delays prevented members from considering the amendment in French until immediately before the vote. In my opinion, the government's conduct obstructed the ability of francophone members to take part in House business. I consider this obstruction serious enough to constitute a breach of privilege.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, states the following at page 111:

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

It is impossible to codify all incidents which might be interpreted as matters of obstruction, interference, molestation or intimidation and, as such, constitute prima facie cases of privilege.

We have an absolute constitutional right to use either official language in parliamentary proceedings. However, the actions of the Liberal House leader—a member from Quebec no less—on Monday night diminished the ability of francophone members to participate in very important procedural deliberations in the House. The hon. member for Gatineau treated francophone members of this place like second-class members.

I would also refer the Speaker to Standing Order 65, which reads as follows:

Privilege

All motions shall be in writing, and seconded, before being debated or put from the chair. When a motion is seconded, it shall be read in English and in French by the Speaker, if he or she be familiar with both languages; if not, the Speaker shall read the motion in one language and direct the clerk of the table to read it in the other, before debate.

Unfortunately, neither the Speaker nor the clerk was able to read the amendment in French because it did not exist in French. It is shameful, it is shocking, and frankly, for an officially bilingual country, it is embarrassing. For those who do not know, the use of both official languages, French and English, in Canada and more specifically here in the House of Commons, has been required under the Constitution since Confederation.

If the Chair agrees that there is a *prima facie* question of privilege, I am ready to move the appropriate motion. I thank the Chair for his attention.

• (1605)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, given the nature of the privilege the member has raised, we will take it as notice and will provide comment in a relatively quick time span for you to make a decision.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to mention that the Bloc Québécois reserves the right to make comments later, when it has properly analyzed the situation raised by my colleague from the Conservative Party.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few points to the question of privilege raised by my colleague from Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

As you reflect on the ruling you should give on this question of privilege, I would like to remind you that, with the passage of the British North America Act, the greatest legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George-Étienne Cartier, members have been free to express themselves in the official language of their choice since the first sitting of the Parliament of Canada.

At the beginning of the 20th century, R.B. Bennett's Conservative government created the federal Translation Bureau. Under a law passed in 1934 following an admittedly heated debate, the Translation Bureau was given the responsibility of working with both chambers of Parliament and of acting on their behalf in terms of translations.

Later, John George Diefenbaker's government introduced simultaneous interpretation in the chambers of Parliament to keep a promise made by the Progressive Conservative Party in its 1958 electoral platform. Ironically, at the time, some Liberals were opposed to that change.

In an article commemorating a half century of interpretation in the House, Professor Jean Delisle pointed out that even Lester B. Pearson opposed simultaneous interpretation in Parliament. However, that Liberal opposition evaporated when Mr. Diefenbaker's government asked the House to approve the necessary provisions.

More recently, it was the government of Brian Mulroney, a great statesman whose legacy we examined following his recent sad demise, that passed a new official languages act, the one currently in force. That act, which has quasi-constitutional status thanks to Mr. Mulroney's government, made simultaneous interpretation in the House a right.

It goes without saying that bilingualism and parliamentary bilingualism are a proud legacy of the Conservatives. This NDP-Liberal coalition government, however, scoffs at bilingualism. We absolutely must take a firm and clear stand against any further diminishment of respect for the French language in the House of Commons.

• (1610)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to add my comments and agree with the question of privilege that was raised.

In general, what happened on Monday night was a gross and disgusting violation of the principle of the House being a deliberative assembly of members. The fact that the government put forward a last-minute, very substantive amendment, which was not at all debated in the House, is disgusting, and it would not be acceptable in any legislature around the world. It was particularly unfair, for the reasons my colleague explained, to our francophone colleagues because of the lack of translation available.

In general, the timeline and the process presented by the government seemed to try to reduce Parliament to pageantry and theatre, rather than recognize our substantive role as the deliberative assembly of one nation in both official languages. This was wrong and unfair in general, but it was particularly unfair to our francophone colleagues. I hope you will find in favour of this question of privilege.

[Translation]

The Speaker: I very much appreciate the points that all members have raised on this question of privilege. Given the broad interest in this matter and the desire for the Chair to render a ruling that reflects the concerns that have been raised, particularly by the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier and by a number of colleagues in the House, I would like to inform hon. members that the Chair has heard the essence of everything that has been expressed.

I will come back to the House with a decision very soon.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. I invite him to speak very quickly because, as I just said, the Chair has heard a great deal on this. I will incorporate his comments from the same perspective.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a francophone and proud representative of Louis-Saint-Laurent, a francophone riding in Confederation, I was very insulted to have to vote on a motion that was available in English only.

Routine Proceedings

The House leader of the official opposition had offered a solution that very evening, suggesting that the vote be postponed until the text could be properly translated. Unfortunately, that recommendation was not followed on Monday and that is a shame.

[English]

The Speaker: I see the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston rising on the same question. I will let the member know that I have heard a number of points on this issue. The Chair is satisfied that he has heard the full range necessary to make an important decision on this issue. I will ask the member to be very brief. This will be the last point on this question of privilege to be heard by the Chair.

The hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out something that I think is highly relevant but has not been mentioned in the previous submissions. I think it will be of use to you in coming to a decision.

We know that it was one minute, more or less, before the end of the debate that this was raised—

An hon. member: It was five.

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I am told it was five minutes, but the point is this. In the normal course of business, we present a motion in one language only. We do not stop the proceedings for an hour, as has actually happened, to give the opportunity for the second language to be produced. We would return to the debate and, if members could get the matter to you, Mr. Speaker, in both languages prior to the expiration of the debate, then you would end things. You do not halt things and allow members to get around to producing things at their convenience.

I think that rule would indicate that the wrong approach was taken here, and your guidance in your ruling, Mr. Speaker, for future situations of the same sort would be most helpful.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston for raising that point. The Chair will come back to the House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1615)

[Translation]

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER OF CANADA

The Speaker: Pursuant to section 536 of the Canada Elections Act, it is my duty to lay upon the table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 2023 by-elections.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 18 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

[Translation]

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION ACT

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act.

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

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since today is March 20, I would like to wish you a happy International Day of La Francophonie.

Pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the following reports of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie: “Bureau Meeting and 48th Annual Session of the ‘Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie’”, Tbilisi, Georgia, July 4 to 8, 2023; “38th Session of the APF America Regional Assembly”, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of America, September 5 to 7, 2023; “Parliamentary Mission to the United Nations”, New York, September 20, 2023; “Leadership Workshop for Parliamentarian Women of the APF”, Bucharest, Romania, September 25 to 29, 2023; “Working Group on Reforming the APF Constitution”, Geneva, Switzerland, November 23 and 24, 2023.

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[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have the pleasure and honour to present, in both official languages, the 17th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, also known as the mighty OGGO, entitled “Question of Privilege Concerning the Refusal to Respond to Questions by Mr. Kristian Firth”.

Routine Proceedings

LIAISON

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 107(3), I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Liaison Committee, entitled “Committee Activities and Expenditures: April 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023”. This report highlights the work and accomplishments of each committee, as well as detailing the budgets that fund the activities approved by the committee members.

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CANADA FRESH WATER DAY ACT

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce An Act to establish Canada Fresh Water Day.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is an honour to introduce a bill to establish a fresh water day in Canada.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my NDP colleagues for their enthusiasm on this.

(Motion deemed adopted)

• (1620)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: While I am on my feet, I move:

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

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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.

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Madam Speaker, we request a recorded division.

[English]

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

• (1700)

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

(Division No. 672)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings

Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Ien
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauson
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathyssen
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo

Zuberi— 175

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeschen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kniec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Majumdar
Martel	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Savard-Tremblay
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta

Government Orders

Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 150

PAIRED

Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North) Gill— 2

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RECONCILIATION ACT

BILL C-29—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

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

That, in relation to Bill C-29, An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the stage of consideration of Senate amendments to the bill; and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders on the day allotted to the consideration of the said stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

● (1705)

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise or use the “raise hand” function so the Chair has some idea of how many members would like to participate in this question period.

The hon. member for York—Simcoe.

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Madam Speaker, here we are again with the Liberal government moving closure.

I find it a little bit rich for the government to pretend to care about reconciliation when the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation in my community, my riding of York—Simcoe, are not entitled to the rural top-up. They live on an island in the middle of Lake Simcoe, but they are now considered part of Toronto under this goofy carbon tax regime. Once again, we are seeing the Liberals move closure so that first nations' voices, like mine on the Chippewas of Georgina Island, are being silenced.

Could the minister comment about the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation not being entitled to the rural top-up under this carbon tax regime in York—Simcoe?

Government Orders

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to highlight the number of days we have had debate on this particular bill: in 2022, September 21, 28 and 29; October 6; November 17; and November 29. I could go on. It is a total of 58 hours and 21 minutes.

The last time this matter was brought up, on February 12, we could have actually debated the issue that has been brought forward by my friend. However, there was a concurrence motion moved by the Conservative Party.

It is a little rich to suggest that we cannot get legislation done. This is important legislation that we need to get done and that is the reason we are moving this forward today.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have said before that there are two bloc parties in the House of Commons: the Bloc Québécois and the “block everything” party, which is the Conservatives. Over the course of the last few years, they have tried to block the dental care the NDP brought to Canadians. A million seniors have signed up for the dental care program, including thousands of people in each of the Conservative ridings.

Conservatives tried to deny dental care to seniors, pharmacare and affordable housing funding. All those good things that the NDP is forcing the Liberal government to do, Conservatives have been blocking.

Now we see the latest example of this with Bill C-29, an act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation. Conservatives are blocking it. They are refusing for the vote to be held on this legislation and for the bill to move forward. It is simply incomprehensible, I think, to most Canadians that Conservatives would be so mean-spirited as to block every piece of legislation, every bill and every law that is going to help Canadians.

To my colleague: Why do Conservatives seem to want to block everything?

• (1710)

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to highlight a couple of critical elements of this bill.

This is really a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action 53 to 56, four very important calls to action that look to establish, fund and support a national council for truth and reconciliation.

We already have an interim committee that has been working on the development of assessments for the calls to action. This bill would essentially set up an independent body to look at the actions of government and enable it to keep governments accountable on this path of reconciliation, which I know is a shared priority for all of us.

I really appreciate the question and want to emphasize the need to get this passed as soon as possible.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is worth noting that reconciliation is incredibly important for our nation to be able to move forward with a variety of projects.

I am very disappointed that this bill came forward despite efforts by Conservatives to bring in amendments regarding economic reconciliation. That is truly a way forward and will allow indigenous communities to be partners in prosperity. They were rejected at every step.

Why have they decided to move closure yet again rather than allowing us to continue having debate? It is an absolute disservice to the indigenous communities, specifically in my riding of Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, that came to committee asking for economic reconciliation to be considered. Why is the minister so opposed to economic reconciliation, and why will the Liberals not reconsider?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I question whether my friend opposite actually read either the TRC calls to action or Bill C-29. This is essentially about implementing four calls to action that speak to the establishment of a national council for truth and reconciliation.

The notion of economic reconciliation is something our government has been working on. In fact, the loan guarantee program in the fall economic statement, which the opposition voted against, is one of those elements. Therefore, I find it a little rich when colleagues are opposing the bill without even reading it, because we need to move forward.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, as members will know, on principle, I am deeply offended by the move toward the continual limiting and cutting off of debates through the use of closure.

I was elected to this place and have had the honour of representing Saanich—Gulf Islands since 2011. When this first began to happen under the previous administration of Prime Minister Harper, I counted the number of times closure and time allocation were used. It increased exponentially. At that time, the Liberals, in opposition, said they would not do the same thing, and now it is even more routine than it was under the previous Conservative government.

I would ask Liberal colleagues to consider that this will become permanent. I would say to our Conservative colleagues, who now object to it, that they will again experience it, no matter who is in office, unless we decide to respect debate in this place and not routinely use closure.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands. However, I fundamentally disagree with her on this particular issue, because we have had 17 days of debate in the House, along with 27 days of debate in the Senate, and it is now back here. The last time this was up, on February 12, a concurrence motion derailed debate on this, so we could not actually even debate this bill.

This is a bill on which we should have consensus. Everyone should come together. It should not offend anyone to be able to set up a national council for truth and reconciliation. If we are truly to move forward on reconciliation, we all need to come together on this. I find it troubling that we are unable to move forward.

The comments by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands really do not help. I have heard her on this issue over and over again, but Parliament also needs to govern at some point.

• (1715)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a national council for truth and reconciliation is an essential step forward. It is right in line with the calls to action.

I was very proud to have my first committee experience with the hon. minister, who was the parliamentary secretary at the time. We discussed the preambles to Bill C-29 in meetings. Actually, it is disappointing that we are still discussing it after four and a half years, when indigenous communities right across this country are relying on us for action.

The Conservatives will use attacks to say we cannot get this done, while they simultaneously delay. I want to ensure that Canadians are aware of the fact that there are members of the House of Commons who claim that the government cannot get things like this done but simultaneously extend and prolong debate, complaining when closure is the necessary next step in order to get it done.

Could my colleague, the hon. minister, speak to the importance of this for indigenous communities from coast to coast to coast?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, my colleague is someone whom I have had the pleasure of working very closely with. I admire the work he does, especially on the fight against climate change.

However, I want to take this opportunity just to talk about a couple of the other elements of the bill. This, essentially, would enable the establishment of a national council for truth and reconciliation. It would allow for an independent assessment of the work of the government on the 94 calls to action and the progress we make, along with annual reports, which are essentially a tool to keep governments accountable for what they have done and not done. I know the opposition sometimes asks us what we do, and there is no independent assessment of it. This would be an additional tool of accountability, one that all of us should actually be supporting for its quick passage.

I look forward to having this passed today.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is disappointing that the Liberals would impose time allocation on this.

One of the real challenges that has been highlighted time and time again in Bill C-29 is that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, although acknowledged as a national indigenous organization, has been left out of the proposed council. The organization has been very vocal about the disappointment in that regard.

Government Orders

While there have been continual calls to ensure that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is included in the council and the conversations surrounding Bill C-29, that organization has been specifically excluded. This means that many indigenous peoples across Canada, who are not necessarily represented by the other organizations that will have a seat at the table, are excluded.

To the minister, very specifically: Why has the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples been excluded?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, this issue has come forward. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples had a chance to make submissions at the Senate and the House of Commons parliamentary committees. An amendment to add it on as one of the members of the council, or to have a delegate from the organization, was considered by way of amendment. It was rejected. We are at a point right now where the final amendments put forward by the Senate are acceptable to the government, and we are recommending acceptance and passage.

Therefore, I do not want to relitigate an issue that has already been considered in almost 60 hours of debate over 44 days.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, the minister implied that I had perhaps not read the truth and reconciliation report, which is not accurate, but I am just wondering whether he could tell us how many actions the Liberals completed last year, 2023, when it comes to truth and reconciliation.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, we have either completed or are in progress on 80% of the calls to action that relate to the federal government or are in the sole purview of the federal government. We have been working on the path toward reconciliation. We established, for example, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are in the process of implementing the 231 calls for justice. We brought forward legislation recognizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Last June, the minister of justice put forward the action plan that essentially lays out our government's response to implementing UNDA.

We are working every step of the way with our partners to ensure that we are on the path of reconciliation, and I hope that the Conservative Party will join us in this journey.

• (1720)

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague just mentioned Bill C-15. I know that one of the first steps in Bill C-15 was actually to put in place an action plan. We are now very far out from the deadline of that, and I am wondering where the action plan is. I ask because every time I try to apply Bill C-15 to current legislation, the government keeps talking about an action plan, yet that should have been out already to make sure that all legislation going forward is consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

I am wondering whether the hon. minister can update the House about where the action plan is at.

Government Orders

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, that is a very important question. Last June, the minister of justice did release an action plan. The challenge is that there are a number of different calls to action that need to be implemented, so there is a review of loss process that is being undertaken, which can take some time.

I do want to note that the UN declaration has been transformational. If we look at the decision on Bill C-92 and the Supreme Court of Canada, it really establishes how much of an impact UNDRIP has had on Canadian law. I am absolutely certain, and I know my friend opposite believes in this fundamentally as well, that this is going to transform this country in a way that other things have not. Therefore, I do look forward to working with her in furthering UNDRIP and also on other issues that are of mutual importance.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, because we are able to have this conversation continue back and forth, the hon. minister seems to suggest that my opposition, in principle, to the use of time allocation would mean that this place would come to a standstill and no business could get done.

I plead with all sides of the House to return to the use of the rules we have, so House leaders, when they meet, can have a legitimate and honest sharing of views as to how many members in the place are legitimately prepared to speak. Under our rules as they exist, although they are continually ignored, this would require that members speak without notes and that they not read a speech that is handed to them.

If we were to do that, we would no longer have the situation where a government House leader looking at an opposition House leader would get a shrug of the shoulders and not be sure how many members they are going to put up, because everybody knows we can put up every last member if we hand them a speech to read. We have to make this place work to the purpose for which it was created: legitimate, honest, informed debate.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands. I do think we need to make Parliament work better. I do think that certain things we do sometimes, like all-night voting for example, are not good for our health. Unfortunately the process we have right now, the one that is not working sometimes, is prolonging bills that are very important to Canadians.

Bill C-29 is such an example. We have had 58 hours of debate. This is almost unprecedented for legislation of this nature. I believe that everyone will be voting in favour. We have had multiple meetings at committee. At what point do we say that we have no other choice? I believe that point for me was on February 12, when it could have been disposed of with a vote. We had a concurrence motion, and it derailed the debate. There is definitely frustration on my end, but there is greater frustration for communities that have been waiting and have been demanding that we put forward and implement the TRC calls to action.

• (1725)

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, I would like to circle back, if I could, to the exclusion of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. What is very disappointing from the minister's answer is he does not want to relitigate, which was his word, this concern, when according to Statistics Canada there are about 800,000, almost a

million, indigenous people across Canada who would not be represented by the organizations on the council.

With due respect to the minister, with regard to the 800,000 Canadians not represented by those on the council, does he suggest that it is not worth continuing the Conservative fight, at the very least, to ensure that those voices are included on the council for reconciliation?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: The bill, Madam Speaker, calls for establishment of a council of between 9 and 12 members. Four seats would be reserved, and there would still be eight more seats fully open. Nothing would preclude members of CAP, for example, from seeking a seat there and being represented. Second, just to confirm, once a person were to become a member of the board, the allegiance would be to the council itself and not to individual organizations. That is typically how these things work.

My suggestion to the member would be to advise members of CAP that they would be able to apply in an open and transparent process for an appointment to the council.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I get a kick out of listening to Conservatives talk about and question the number of recommendations from the truth and reconciliation report that we have accomplished, given the fact that when the report was tabled, Stephen Harper would not even accept the recommendations in it. Now, suddenly, they are trying to purport themselves as being the champions for the calls to action and the implementation of them. It is wild beyond belief.

My question comes on the heels of what our colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands was talking about. The reality is that now we have another situation where Conservatives are doing whatever they can to delay every piece of legislation, because unfortunately they do not come to this place with the objective of making lives better for Canadians. They come here with the objective of doing everything they possibly can to get in the way of the government and the parties that are trying to act responsibly.

It is pretty clear that the bill will most likely pass unanimously, probably even with the support of the Conservatives, yet they still will not let the bill get to a vote. I empathize with the comments from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, but the reality is that we just do not have support from the Conservatives to move forward on anything.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, what is really curious about this particular piece of legislation is that it would be an additional tool for accountability, through which the government of the day would be held to account. I am quite disappointed that the bill is being delayed, because, essentially, it would enable greater scrutiny of the work on reconciliation. I think that all of us should be held to a standard where we are accountable for the work that we do.

Government Orders

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I think the Conservatives are being disingenuous on the issue. There is no doubt that this is important legislation. Their previous leader, Erin O'Toole, allowed legislation to pass unanimously, and since the member for Carleton has become leader of the Conservative Party, his intent seems to be to burn the House down.

It is very unfortunate, because we have had 58 hours of debate and because the bill passed unanimously at third reading. I have the vote in my hands; 315 members voted for the bill at third reading. Not a single member voted against it, yet Conservatives are saying we should not proceed to a vote. It was passed, but they really want to stall more and block other pieces of legislation. That is tragically unfortunate, given the importance of truth and reconciliation.

I want to ask my colleague why the Conservatives are trying to say to the Canadian public that there is a reason for blocking the bill, when they voted, as all other members did, in favour of it.

• (1730)

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, it is very curious to me. I do think that on issues of reconciliation, on issues involving the rights of indigenous people, there is a moral imperative for all of us to come together. This is a plea I want to make because I know sometimes we get sidetracked by politics, but this is as simple as it gets. This should not offend anyone.

This is something that, ultimately, I do believe the Conservative Party will vote in favour of, but I think that obstructing this particular piece of legislation is a really bad sign of reconciliation. I do not think that something like establishing a national council for truth and reconciliation should be held up any longer. The first day of debate on it was September 21, 2022; that is almost two years ago.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, I appreciate that the minister keeps talking about the number of hours of debate. I think it is really important to highlight the fact that we completed third reading in the House of Commons, the first time around, on December 1, 2022. The bill then went to the Senate for first reading that same day, then sat there, got debated in the Senate, and came back amended only on November 30, 2023.

For the members opposite to say that Conservatives and our 15 Conservative senators, as amazing as they are, are somehow capable of holding up a bill of this magnitude is absolutely disingenuous and absolutely untrue. Frankly, it was not Conservative senators who were bringing forward all of the amendments; it was senators from the so-called independent Senate caucus, as well as many others. I would hate to let facts get in the way of a good story, but perhaps the minister needs to be more truthful when he is sharing things with Canadians.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, let me just illustrate a point. On February 12, there was scheduled debate on Bill C-29. That day, the Conservative Party moved a concurrence motion meant to derail the debate and derail a vote on Bill C-29. That is what I am talking about.

This has been going on since September 2021, when we had the first debate on the bill. It is now closer to two years. It is time to move on. I do not think there is anything more to be added to the debate. Many aspects of it have been considered by committee.

Very thoughtful conversations have been had in the Senate. It is back here for final approval.

I encourage my colleagues to reflect on what they have done to obstruct the bill.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Madam Speaker, I actually find this really disingenuous from both sides. The Auditor General just spoke out about the Liberals' not investing enough in indigenous housing, calling the situation deplorable.

On Monday I was in committee, and we were talking about child welfare. The Conservatives were in the committee trying to obstruct the study of Bill C-92 on reconciliation, on providing and upholding the right of indigenous people to regain our self-determination over matters impacting our children. They were trying to hold up a committee with a carbon tax motion and were calling it urgent, when we have kids being murdered, pipelines and MMIWG, and kids going missing through the child welfare system. I find it very difficult.

We are talking about residential schools. There are lots of things the Conservatives can obstruct. I certainly hope that they are not using residential school survivors to obstruct a bill that needs to pass. If there is anything more scummy than that, it is obstructing the progression of lifting up the voices of residential school survivors.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I fully agree with my colleague. The bill is essentially an additional tool that could be used to keep governments accountable for the work on reconciliation. The 2015 report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had 94 calls to action. The government has been in the process of implementing much of it. There has been debate on how much we have actually implemented and how much is in progress. I think the independent body would enable more accurate data. That is why it is so important that we pass the bill.

• (1735)

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, I am curious how the conversation has evolved from that minister over the course of this debate, and he suggested that, while all parties, including the Liberals at committee, voted to ensure that this council would be as inclusive of all indigenous voices as possible, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples should simply follow their process. However, and this is very interesting, he says that their loyalty will not be to their organizations but to the board.

I am concerned with the evolution of the language that has taken place over this half hour, which is exactly the reason a fulsome debate is required in this place. I would certainly call into question the suggestion that the Liberals have somehow settled all outstanding issues on the bill when, clearly, they do not have all the questions answered.

Government Orders

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I believe that I have already answered this question. I think that the process has worked itself through both Houses, and this matter has been discussed at length. I believe that there has been closure, and the matter is closed now.

I do encourage all members to support the passage of this bill, and it could even happen tonight. I am hoping we could get that done.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion.

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

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

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

• (1820)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 673*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier

Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
Sousa	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 178

NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Block
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe

Calkins
Carrie
Chambers
Chong
Dancho
DeBellefeuille
Desbiens
Doherty
Dreeshen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Gallant
Gaudreau
Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Jeneroux
Khanna
Kmieć
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Majumdar
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Moore
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Plamondon
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Scheer
Seebach
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Caputo
Chabot
Champoux
Cooper
Davidson
Deltell
Desilets
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Ferrerri
Fortin
Garon
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Larouche
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Maguire
Martel
Mazier
McLean
Michaud
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Poilievre
Reid
Richards
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Wagantall
Wagh
Williams
Zimmer — 146

PAIRED

Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North)

Gill — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Privilege

[English]

PRIVILEGE

WITNESS RESPONSES AT STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on the notice of a question of privilege that I provided the table with following the tabling of the 17th report from the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

At the outset, I want to note that the government operations committee is actually meeting this afternoon, so our colleagues who sit on the committee may wish to address this with the House tomorrow or possibly Friday.

Last week, Kristian Firth, the co-founder of GC Strategies, a two-person IT firm that does no actual work, finally appeared before the government operations committee to answer for his role and his company's role at the heart of the Liberal government's arrive scam.

The House is well familiar already with the Auditor General's damning report of this procurement fiasco. Other investigations have been popping up left, right and centre by other officers of Parliament, including possibly the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I believe that Bill Curry of The Globe and Mail pegged it at 12 active investigations.

Parliamentarians had questions for Mr. Firth and his partner, Darren Anthony, who had long resisted appearing before committee. That is why the committee, in its 14th report, had asked for a House order to compel their appearances before the committee, backstopped by the authorization of a Speaker's warrant to take them into custody if necessary, and the House unanimously concurred in that report the same day it was tabled.

As I said, Mr. Firth appeared to answer questions, but “answers” are not how I would describe what he gave. That is why, at the conclusion of his appearance last Wednesday, the government operations committee unanimously and without debate adopted a Conservative motion to present a report to the House, “outlining the potential breach of privilege concerning Kristian Firth’s refusal to answer those questions which the Committee agreed to put to him and his prevarication in answering others.”

The area of greatest concern that I want to highlight was Mr. Firth's refusal to say which public office holders he communicated with concerning the crafting of a so-called competitive contract with the Canada Border Services Agency. The House will recall that the Auditor General found, at paragraph 1.56 of her Arrive-CAN audit that GC Strategies was involved in developing the requirements set out in the agency's request for proposal. Naturally, parliamentarians wanted to know who spoke with him.

Privilege

Mr. Firth, however, stonewalled several members, including me, with repeated refusals to answer those questions directed to him, citing an RCMP investigation. When he was pressed on whether he understood the imperative nature of answering questions at committee, he again refused to answer, citing solicitor-client privilege.

On other occasions, in response to other questions asked of him, the witness offered evasive responses, a concept referred to in some procedural texts as “prevaricating”, something which I will elaborate upon in a few moments.

I would draw your attention to a handful of exchanges in committee with Mr. Firth as examples.

I asked whether Mr. Firth had lied to a parliamentary committee before. Mr. Firth answered by saying, “watch my previous testimony.” I also asked which public office holders Mr. Firth had met outside of government offices. Mr. Firth answered, “I’m more than happy to provide that information in writing, but I’m not prepared to do that right now, televised.”

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan asked Mr. Firth how many hours he spent sending LinkedIn invitations, a key component of GC Strategies’ apparent recruitment strategy, and Mr. Firth answered, “That has no bearing on this project, does it?”

The hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek asked Mr. Firth to name his contacts in the various departments which provided GC Strategies with 134 contracts. Mr. Firth answered, “I’d like to provide all of those details after this meeting, please. I would not like to speak about it publicly, just with how this committee is going.”

I asked Mr. Firth to name the individuals who allegedly provided the glowing testimonials which appear on GC Strategies’ website. Mr. Firth answered, “I do know the answer.” He then said that he would provide it “after this meeting”.

As an aside, I believe that the committee is still waiting on Mr. Firth to make good on some of those undertakings, undertakings that he had promised the committee he would answer by 9 a.m. the following morning. The government operations committee might have more to report on that in due course.

I will also add that there are concerns about the truthfulness of some of the testimony from Mr. Firth and other witnesses throughout the course of this committee’s study. However, that may well be a matter for yet another future report from the committee. For today’s purposes, we are of course concerned with Mr. Firth’s refusal to answer questions and his evasiveness on others.

• (1825)

Mr. Speaker, your predecessor ruled, on May 11, 2021, at page 7021 of Debates, about the role of committees in questions of privilege concerning the evidence of witnesses. He stated:

There is no precedent where the Chair has used testimony from a committee without there being a report on the subject.

This aspect of the matter is a concern for the Chair. It is not for the Speaker to untangle the committee evidence to determine who knew what and when. Such an initiative would trespass on the role of committee members and constitute a breach of my duty to act with impartiality. It is up to the committee to continue its own study and to inform the House of its conclusions, if it deems it appropriate, as has been the tradition.

The government operations committee has done its work. It has informed the House of its conclusion that Mr. Firth obstructed it, through his refusal to answer questions and providing prevaricating responses.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, at page 82, borrowing from a list of established contempts laid out in a 1999 report of the United Kingdom Parliament’s Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege, enumerates established areas of contempt, including, “without reasonable excuse, refusing to answer a question or provide information” and “engaging in other misconduct in the presence of, the House or a committee”.

On August 12, 1947, the United Kingdom House of Commons resolved:

That the refusal of a witness before a Select Committee to answer any question which may be put to him is a contempt of this House and an infraction of the undoubted right of this House to conduct any inquiry which may be necessary in the public interest.

Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, second edition, explains, at page 191:

A committee is not restricted in the scope of questions it can pose and a witness must answer all questions put to him, subject only to a point of order by a member of the committee that the question should not be permitted, and with an ultimate appeal of the chairman’s ruling to the committee.

Beauchesne’s *Rules and Forms of the House of Commons of Canada*, sixth edition, adds, at citation 863:

A witness who is unwilling to answer a question, after stating the reason for desiring to be excused from answering, may appeal to the Chair whether in the circumstances, for the reason stated, an answer should be given.

If you consult the transcript of last Wednesday’s meeting of the government operations committee, Mr. Speaker, you will see several instances where the chair was asked, without any objection from the committee, to direct Mr. Firth, on behalf of the committee, to answer the questions. Certainly, no members objected to the questions that were asked.

The chair, having heard the reasons offered by Mr. Firth, nonetheless directed him to respond. The chair also reminded the witness of the protections offered to him by the law of parliamentary privilege.

Perhaps it would also be helpful for the House to be refreshed on those important principles. Beauchesne notes, at citation 109:

Witnesses before committees share the same privilege of freedom of speech as Members.... Nothing said before a committee (or at the Bar of the House) may be used in a court of law. Thus a witness may not refuse to answer on the grounds of self incrimination.

Bosc and Gagnon add, at footnote 681, on page 1080, “As with Members, freedom of speech is extended to the testimony given by witnesses before committees and has been held to include protection from any possible prosecution.”

The reasons behind this important principle are elaborated upon by Bosc and Gagnon, on page 93:

This right [freedom of speech] is also extended to individuals who appear before the House or its committees in order to encourage truthful and complete disclosure, without fear of reprisal or other adverse actions as a result of their testimony. In 2005, the Federal Court of Appeal ruled [in *Gagliano v. Canada (Attorney General)*] that the testimony of parliamentary witnesses fell within the scope of parliamentary privilege because it is necessary for the functioning of Parliament for three reasons: “to encourage witnesses to speak openly before the Parliamentary committee, to allow the committee to exercise its investigative function and, in a more secondary way, to avoid contradictory findings of fact”.

● (1830)

In 2007, the Federal Court again recognized [in *George v. Canada (Attorney General)*] that a witness's testimony before a House committee is protected by parliamentary privilege:

“[A]lthough witnesses before a parliamentary committee are not Members of Parliament, they are not strangers to the House either. Rather they are guests who are afforded parliamentary privilege because, as with members, the privilege is necessary to ensure that they are able to speak openly, free from the fear that their words will be used against them in subsequent proceedings....”

The Court confirmed that parliamentary privilege “precludes other entities from holding Members of Parliament or witnesses before committees liable for statements made in the discharge of their functions in the House”.

However, Mr. Firth persisted in his refusals, citing the RCMP investigation and solicitor-client privilege. Given the latter grounds, it is perhaps important to refer back to Beauchesne at citation 863:

A witness is, however, bound to answer all questions which the committee sees fit to put, and cannot be excused, for example, on the ground that there could be risk of a civil action...or because the matter was a privileged communication such as that between a solicitor and a client, or on the grounds of advice from counsel that the question cannot be answered without risking self-incrimination or civil suit, or that it would prejudice a defence in pending litigation, some of which would be sufficient grounds of excuse in a court of law.

Very similar words appear at page 38.36 of *Erskine May*, 25th edition.

The fact remains that Mr. Firth was asked questions. He refused. He was pressed to answer by the committee, yet he continued to refuse. That is, I respectfully submit, a contempt of Parliament.

Next, I want to turn to the matter of Mr. Firth's prevaricating evidence. The *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, second edition, defines the verb “prevaricate” as “speak or act evasively or misleadingly”.

Derek Lee's *The Power of Parliamentary Houses to Send for Persons, Papers & Records*, at page 180, states that witnesses have been found guilty of contempt by the House or similarly punished by the House for prevarication.

Erskine May puts it, at paragraph 15.5 of the 25th edition, as follows: “In the past, witnesses...who have prevaricated, given false evidence, willfully suppressed the truth, or persistently misled a committee have been considered guilty of contempt.” That entry falls under the heading of “Misconduct of Members or officers of either House”, a phrase found in the list of established contempts found on page 82 of Bosc and Gagnon.

Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand, fourth edition, also comments in relation to witnesses' obligation to tell the truth, at page 776, saying, “Even to prevaricate before a committee might invite questions.”

In the United Kingdom House of Commons, several committee witnesses in the 19th century faced the wrath of the House when giving prevaricating evidence with a finding of contempt, even

Privilege

committal into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms or at Her Majesty's jail of Newgate.

Example cases may be found. I will not read them all, but they can be found on page 601 of the Journals for August 28, 1835; page 258 of the Journals for February 24, 1848; page 147 of the Journals for April 7, 1851; page 699 and page 742 of the Journals for July 20 and 29, 1853; page 354 of the Journals for July 28, 1857; and page 239 of the Journals for April 23, 1866.

A close cousin of prevarication is the wilful suppression of the truth. On March 3, 1828, a committee of the whole of the United Kingdom House of Commons, which was considering the East Retford Disfranchisement Bill, had before it a witness named Jonathan Fox who spent 90 minutes answering most questions with some variation of “I cannot say”.

● (1835)

The witness was asked to withdraw while the committee deliberated. These deliberations, at column 936 of the parliamentary Debates, are insightful. The record reads:

Mr. Alderman Waithman

observed, that the committee could not suffer its dignity to be trifled with in this way. He would appeal to the committee whether this man's answers could be believed. Something ought to be done to support the dignity of the House, which ought not to be trifled with in this manner. He should move, that the witness had been guilty of gross prevarication.

Mr. Bering

asked, how, if the inquisitorial power of the House was to be exercised, that power could ever be exercised if it was treated in this manner? One phrase was perpetually in this man's mouth.... Here was a man...who had entertained the committee for an hour and a half, with the same answer. He had been guilty, in his opinion, of gross prevarication.

Mr. Peel

thought it doubtful whether the witness had been guilty of prevarication; it seemed a wilful suppression of the truth.

The Attorney General

agreed, that the conduct of the witness did not amount to gross prevarication, although it was evidently a wilful suppression of the truth.

Mr. Wynn

confessed that he did not know what prevarication was, if the witness had not been guilty of it.

In the end, the House adopted a resolution that Mr. Fox “has attempted to defeat the investigation of the committee by wilfully suppressing the truth.”

All that to say that Mr. Firth was quite clearly dodging and weaving in his evidence to the committee, desperate to avoid giving answers. He was, to borrow from the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* definition, answering “evasively”. Now, based on the authorities I have cited, that is a further contempt of Parliament committed by Mr. Firth.

Normally, this is the point where I would say that I am prepared to move the appropriate motion, but what is the appropriate motion? Bosc and Gagnon comment, at page 150, that “The terms of the motion have generally provided that the matter be referred to committee for study”. Footnote 386 hastens to add, “There have, however, been exceptions to this practice.”

Privilege

Therefore, what would be the objective of another committee study in these circumstances? The facts are crystal clear. The questions and the refusals are already on the record. Would we ask the procedure and House affairs committee to report back saying, “Yes, Kristian Firth definitely refused to answer those questions, and man, he was really cagey, too?”

Maingot, at page 263, offers the answer, which is this: “nevertheless open in flagrant cases of contemptuous conduct to move that the facts in question constitute a breach of privilege”. He wrote, a little earlier on the same page, “the practice at one time provided that the alleged contemner be brought to the Bar of the House”.

Indeed, that is what the House decided to do in June 2021 after the government defied an order of the House concerning the production of Winnipeg lab documents, summoning the president of the Public Health Agency of Canada to appear at the bar to receive an admonishment on behalf of his agency. Now, these circumstances are a little different when we are dealing with a committee witness providing testimony rather than a document production order aimed at the government.

The House has, since the turn of the century, held two witnesses in contempt for their evidence before committee. In 2003, the government operations committee concluded that the former privacy commissioner George Radwanski had deliberately misled the committee in his testimony and should be found in contempt of the House. However, given that Mr. Radwanski had apologized to the House in writing, in addition to having resigned as an officer of Parliament, no sanctions were applied beyond the contempt finding.

In 2008, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts determined that the then RCMP deputy commissioner Barbara George had knowingly misled the committee in her testimony before the committee and recommended that she be found in contempt of the House, but it ordered no further action on the recommendation of the committee “as this finding of contempt is, in and of itself, a very serious sanction.”

● (1840)

More recently, in 2011, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development provided the House with extracts of evidence given by the minister of international co-operation, which contradicted her statements in the House. Speaker Milliken ruled, on March 9, 2011, that there was a *prima facie* case of privilege and the matter was referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which heard from the minister and other witnesses but did not complete a report before Parliament was dissolved.

Those cases involved contradicting answers. We are concerned here with getting answers. Therefore, we must look back further in time for instances when the House addressed similar situations.

In June of 1891, Michael Connolly, a witness before the privileges and elections committee, which was investigating allegations of corrupt practices on the part of a member of the House, refused to turn over documents that he brought with him and was being asked about. This was reported to the House, which in turn ordered him to appear at the bar, where he was questioned, granted counsel and ordered to turn over the documents in question.

In August of 1891, Thomas McGreevy, the member whose corruption was being investigated by the privileges and elections committee, appeared as a witness and refused to answer questions. The matter was reported to the House, which ordered him to appear in his place in the House to answer those questions. Mr. McGreevy did not appear, leading the House to order him to be taken into custody. Despite the Sergeant-at-Arms' pursuit of Mr. McGreevy by train as far as Quebec City, he was not captured but was expelled as an MP the following month.

In 1906, William Preston, a civil servant, appeared as a witness before the agriculture and public accounts committees where he refused to answer questions. Each committee reported the situation to the House, where a motion to summon him to the bar was debated, but a Liberal government amendment that excused Mr. Preston was adopted instead.

In 1913, R.C. Miller, a witness before the public accounts committee, refused to answer questions. The matter was reported to the House, which ordered him to appear before the bar, where Mr. Miller was further questioned but persisted in his refusals to answer. The House in turn found him in contempt and sent him to prison, where he remained until Parliament was prorogued four months later.

Let us be clear. I am not proposing that Mr. Firth be imprisoned for this particular offence. However, we must all recall that the House possesses awesome power and authority to vindicate its role as the grand inquest of the nation.

Citations 123 to 125 of Beauchesne's elaborate the following:

123. Privilege grants considerable punitive powers to the House of Commons. The mildest form of punishment is a simple declaration that an act or an article is a breach of privilege. When an individual has been present at the Bar it has been customary to deliver this conclusion to the culprit in the presence of the House. On such occasions, censure of the individual is usually added to the conclusion that privilege has been offended.

124. Occasionally the individual at the Bar will be given an opportunity to purge the contempt and promise better conduct in the future....

125. For more serious contempts the House may proceed further.

Before anyone worries that this might be an intense approach, the United Kingdom Parliament's Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege in 1999, at paragraphs 301 and 302, compellingly explained the need for such powers when confronted by contempt.

301. The first question to be considered is whether contempt of Parliament by non-members should still attract any punishment at all. We believe it should. Take, as an example, the investigatory work of committees. Powers must exist to ensure that committee investigations can proceed, that witnesses will attend and that papers will be produced. Apart from public officials and ministers, many interest groups and representative bodies, and many companies and private individuals, also appear regularly before select committees of both Houses. They almost always appear voluntarily. However, occasionally witnesses are unwilling to appear, or information necessary to an inquiry is not willingly provided....

● (1845)

302. If the work of Parliament is to proceed without improper interference, there must ultimately be some sanction available against those who offend: those who interrupt the proceedings or destroy evidence, or seek to intimidate members or witnesses; those who disobey orders of the House or a committee to attend and answer questions or produce documents. Sometimes the conduct is a criminal offence. Then the criminal law should take its course. In the case of non-members that will normally suffice. But unless a residual power to punish exists, the obligation not to obstruct will be little more than a pious aspiration. The absence of a sanction will be cynically exploited by some persons from time to time.

Some from the Liberal benches might urge upon the Chair in the House the fact that these powers concerning these witnesses had not been used in many decades and, therefore, they might argue that they are now in doubt. They might even object to my referencing precedent longer than their time in the House. To that, I would answer with paragraphs 76 and 77 of the 2013 report of the United Kingdom Parliament's Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege, which formed part of an analysis on options for enforcing the House's authority, barely 10 years old.

It reads:

76. It is unfortunate that Parliament's restraint has led to doubt about the continuing existence of its powers. They are a part of United Kingdom law and have been so for centuries. In this section we consider the third option, which would involve the two Houses re-asserting their historic penal jurisdiction and setting up procedures for exercising that jurisdiction.

77. The first and most important challenge is to assert the continuing existence of each House's jurisdiction over contempt. This is, fundamentally, a test of institutional confidence. We urge the two Houses to rise to this challenge.

This is why my "appropriate motion" would rise to the challenge and it would do the following: It would find Kristian Firth to be in contempt. It would order him to the bar of the House to be admonished by the Speaker. While at the bar, he would be required to answer the questions which the committee struggled to obtain answers to, as noted in the 17th report, tabled today. Finally, there would be provision for supplementary questions to Mr. Firth arising from the answers that he provided.

The first three items are perfectly consistent with and are modelled upon the order of the House adopted on June 17, 2021, whereby the president of the Public Health Agency of Canada was summoned to the bar to receive an admonishment and turn over the documents which had previously not been provided. Indeed, Lee writes at page 241, "Where the House finds that a breach of privilege or contempt has been committed by a person, the House may take steps to coerce the offender into complying with the order of the House or committee that resulted in the breach of privilege or contempt."

Given the distinction here of seeking answers to oral questions, as opposed to the production of papers, I would propose allowing for supplementary questions to be asked. While it has been some time since a witness has been questioned at the bar, the sequence of events would, I respectfully submit, be consistent with the past precedents that I cited of witnesses who had refused to answer questions at committee.

Though the relevant forms and procedures are old and do not neatly fit into our contemporary way of conducting House business, it does not make the idea impossible. Sir John Bourinot, in *Parliamentary Procedure and Practice in the Dominion of Canada*, fourth edition, at pages 70 and 74, explains the procedures for questioning

witnesses at the bar for those who want to understand the area better.

In conclusion, the 17th report of the government operations committee outlines a troubling new development in the Liberal government's arrive scam, which I believe amounts to a contempt of the House. Parliament deserves answers about this fiasco. All Canadians deserve to know those answers. We cannot allow the House of Commons to be trifled with or cynically exploited by witnesses who are too clever just by half. We must rise to the challenge. We need to demonstrate our institutional confidence as the grand inquest of the nation.

● (1850)

We must get answers from Kristian Firth about his conduct, which is at the very heart of the arrive scam. If you agree with me, Mr. Speaker, once we have allowed an opportunity for colleagues from the government operations committee to speak to the matter, if they wish, I am prepared to move the motion I outlined earlier.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I have two quick things. One is dealing with the question of privilege. The other is just ensuring that we get to the Questions on the Order Paper.

I'd ask for leave to do so.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 2255, 2257, 2259, 2260, 2263 and 2264.

[Text]

Question No. 2255—**Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to the invocation of the Emergencies Act in 2022 and the government's response to the events leading up to the invocation: (a) how many people were arrested in conjunction with the measures invoked or the events leading up to the invocation; (b) how many people were incarcerated; (c) how many people had their identity shared with financial institutions; and (d) how many people are still currently (i) incarcerated, (ii) facing trial related to invocation of the Act or the events leading up to the invocation?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to parts (b) and (d)(i) of the question, information with regard to particular events is not tracked in CSC's offender management system. As such, CSC is not able to provide the requested information.

The RCMP is limited in its ability to respond to this question, given that it does not have the mandate to offer responses on behalf of other police services or correctional services of jurisdiction.

Routine Proceedings

In response to part (a), as the RCMP is not the police of jurisdiction in the national capital region, where the Ottawa Police Service had the responsibility for investigations and possible charges under the Criminal Code, it is not able to provide a response to this part of the question.

For areas where the RCMP was the police of jurisdiction, the RCMP is able to provide a response. In Coutts, Alberta, on February 14, 2022, the RCMP arrested 11 individuals following the execution of search warrants and the seizure of weapons.

In response to part (c), while the Emergencies Act was invoked, the RCMP acted as a conduit to disclose information to financial institutions on behalf of law enforcement, as outlined by the emergency economic measures order. Police services only disclosed information on owners and operators of vehicles that were active participants in the events related to the invocation of the act. This information enabled financial institutions to decide to freeze or unfreeze financial accounts, solely at their discretion. The RCMP never disclosed any information on individuals who donated or purchased merchandise tied to the events related to the invocation of the act.

As of February 23, 2022, RCMP action had culminated in the disclosure of 57 entities to financial institutions, which included individuals and owners or drivers of vehicles included in the events related to the invocation of the act.

In response to part (d)(ii), the RCMP is not in a position to answer this part of the question.

Question No. 2257—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to the government's estimates on the efficacy of its Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations: (a) how many fabric, as defined in section 2 of the Textile Labelling Act, checkout bags (hereinafter "fabric checkout bags") were purchased at major Canadian grocers annually between 2015 and now; (b) how much gross revenue did major Canadian grocers make from the sale of fabric checkout bags annually between 2015 and now; (c) how many fabric checkout bags were sent to landfills annually between 2015 and now; (d) how many times, on average, are fabric checkout bags reused in Canada before being discarded; (e) how many times, on average, are single use plastic checkout bags reused in Canada before being discarded; (f) what percentage of fabric checkout bags does the government estimate are recycled; (g) what percentage of fabric checkout bags does the government estimate eventually end up in a landfill; (h) what research, if any, has the government undertaken to determine how many reuses of fabric checkout bags would be needed for them to be deemed as a viable environmentally-friendly alternative to single-use plastic checkout bags, including, but not limited to, factors such as (i) carbon insensitivity in manufacturing, (ii) energy use in manufacturing, (iii) comparative impact on landfills when discarded; and (i) if the government does not have the information for any of (a) through (h), why does the government not track such information or why was the research not completed?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the objective of the single-use plastics prohibition regulations is to prevent plastic pollution by eliminating or restricting the manufacture, import and sale of six categories of single-use plastics that pose a threat to the environment. The response is framed by this objective.

Questions (a), (b), (d) and (e) in this inquiry pertain to use patterns of reusable fabric checkout bags. This is outside the scope of the analysis undertaken in support of this risk management objective. Plastic fabric checkout bags are less likely to be littered and become plastic pollution and do not pose the same risk of ecologi-

cal harm to wildlife and their habitats as single-use plastic bags due to their different characteristics, such as weight and buoyancy.

Questions (c), (f) and (g) pertain to the end of life of reusable fabric checkout bags. In 2016, the recycling rate of plastic textiles was zero, while the value recovery rate was 7% through waste-to-energy. The rest was landfilled. Based on Statistics Canada's pilot physical flow account for plastic material, it is estimated that in 2019 nearly 350,000 tonnes of synthetic textile products, such as polyester, nylon, PVC and acrylic, were produced for Canadian consumption, many of them imported into Canada. In that same year, around 329,000 tonnes, or 94%, were landfilled, and 14,000 tonnes, or 4%, were incinerated for energy recovery. It can be assumed that this data is representative of the rates for plastic fabric checkout bags. Textiles and apparel make up the fourth-largest category of plastic waste sent to landfills in Canada. Environment and Climate Change Canada will publish a discussion document in 2024 to solicit feedback on key elements of a proposed road map to address plastic waste and pollution from the textile and apparel sector.

In answer to question (h), as part of the regulatory development process, the Government of Canada conducted a strategic environmental assessment, which reviewed available life-cycle assessments comparing single-use plastics product categories within the scope of the regulations with alternatives. Many life-cycle assessments conclude that a reusable substitute must be used many times before its environmental impacts equal or become less than those of single-use plastic products. That is why the regulations mandate minimum performance standards for reusable plastic checkout bags, cutlery and straws. The performance standards ensure that reusable substitutes made of plastic can be reused enough times to minimize or negate many of the negative environmental effects identified at the upstream stage of the product life cycle. The potential upstream environmental effect depends on the alternatives used to replace prohibited single-use plastic products. It is expected to be mitigated to a significant degree by existing or proposed measures from federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The government also considered other sources of evidence, such as litter data, peer-reviewed studies and the Government of Canada's 2020 "Science Assessment of Plastic Pollution". The evidence concluded that downstream effects from the regulations are expected to be on the whole significant and positive, given the reduction in plastic pollution and consequent reduction in threats posed to wildlife.

Routine Proceedings

With regard to question (i), direct responses to some of the questions posed are not yet available. The federal plastics registry would begin to obtain data, in the coming years, on the quantity and types of plastic placed on the Canadian market, how it moves through the economy and how it is managed at its end of life. Other questions may be answered as performance measurement of the regulations is undertaken. The regulations are being implemented in stages. The sale prohibition on single-use plastic checkout bags came into effect this past December. Therefore, the Government of Canada has only started monitoring its implementation, which includes the emerging issue of some reusable plastic fabric checkout bags being essentially single-use in practice, as well as their management at end of life. Reusable plastic fabric checkout bags are currently, for the most part, not recycled in Canada.

The government encourages reuse through the guidance document outlining considerations to take into account when selecting alternative products or systems to the prohibited single-use plastics that prevent plastic pollution and help Canada transition to a circular economy. Reduction strategies and reusable alternatives to single-use plastic items are identified as preferable in terms of overall long-term costs and environmental impacts.

Before the publication of the regulations, Canadians were already in the habit of bringing their own bags with them when grocery shopping. In 2021, 97% of Canadian households used their own bags or containers while grocery shopping. Of those who used their own bags or containers, 51% always did, 33% often did, and 12% sometimes did.

Question No. 2259—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to legal services and the Department of Justice: (a) what are the total legal costs incurred by the government for the cases of (i) Canadian Frontline Nurses and Kristen Nagle v. Attorney General of Canada, (ii) Canadian Civil Liberties Association v. Attorney General of Canada, (iii) Canadian Constitution Foundation v. Attorney General of Canada, (iv) Jeremiah Jost, Edward Cornell, Vincent Gireys and Harold Ristau v. Governor in Council, His Majesty in right of Canada, Attorney General of Canada, and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness; and (b) for each case in (a), what is the breakdown of the costs?

Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the legal costs incurred by the government for the Federal Court cases Canadian Frontline Nurses et al. v. AGC (court file no. T-306-22), Canadian Civil Liberties Association v. AGC (court file no. T-316-22), Canadian Constitution Foundation v. AGC (court file no. T-347-22) and Jeremiah Jost et al. v. AGC et al. (court file no. T-382-22), to the extent that the information that has been requested is or may be protected by any legal privileges, including solicitor-client privilege, the federal Crown asserts those privileges. In this case, it has only waived solicitor-client privilege, and only to the extent of revealing the total legal costs, as defined below.

The total legal costs, the actual and notional costs, associated with Canadian Frontline Nurses et al. v. AGC, Canadian Civil Liberties Association v. AGC, Canadian Constitution Foundation v. AGC and Jeremiah Jost et al. v. AGC et al. amount to approximately \$2,231,000.00. The services targeted here are litigation services provided in these cases by the Department of Justice, as well as litigation support services. Department of Justice lawyers, notaries and paralegals are salaried public servants; therefore, no legal fees are

incurred for their services. A “notional amount” can, however, be provided to account for the legal services they provide. The notional amount is calculated by multiplying the total hours recorded in the files for the relevant period by the applicable approved internal legal services hourly rates. Actual costs represent file-related legal disbursements and legal agent fees, as the case may be. The total amount mentioned in this response is based on information contained in Department of Justice systems as of February 7, 2024.

Question No. 2260—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to government statistics on injuries caused by COVID-19 vaccines: (a) what is the number of vaccine-related injuries reported to date, in total, and broken down by level of severity and type of injury; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by vaccine and manufacturer?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to parts (a) and (b) of the question, Health Canada, or HC, the Public Health Agency of Canada, or PHAC, the provinces and territories, and manufacturers continue to closely monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines through the Canadian adverse events after immunization surveillance system, or CAEFISS, and the Canada vigilance program.

An adverse event is any untoward medical occurrence that follows immunization. It is not necessarily causally related to the usage of the vaccine. Data on adverse events following COVID-19 vaccinations in Canada, overall and by type of vaccine and type of adverse event, is posted online on PHAC’s vaccine safety report website: <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/vaccine-safety>. All reports of adverse events following immunization received by HC and PHAC are included in this report, regardless of whether they have been linked to the vaccines. PHAC looks at all the data available in order to detect any early signals of an issue. It is important to note that although adverse events may occur after vaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine, they are not necessarily related to the vaccine.

Question No. 2263—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to capital subscription payments made by the government to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: what are the dates and amounts of each such payment made to date?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on June 14, 2023, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance announced that the Government of Canada would immediately halt all government led activity at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, or AIIB, and instructed the Department of Finance to lead a review of the allegations raised and of Canada’s involvement in the AIIB. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance issued an update on Canada’s AIIB review on December 8, 2023. As indicated in the statement, while Canada’s engagement with its partners continues, Canada’s participation in the AIIB will remain indefinitely suspended. During this pause, Canada will continue to withhold any further capital subscription payments owed.

Privilege

Payments from the Government of Canada to the AIIB are recorded in the Public Accounts of Canada, found at <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html>.

Question No. 2264—**Mr. Alex Ruff:**

With regard to the government's response to recommendations 8 and 13 in the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans entitled "Restoring Full Accountability for Resources and Governance of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission": (a) has a decision been made about transferring the responsibilities and governance of the Great Lake Fisheries Commission (GLFC) from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and, if so, what was the decision; (b) if a decision has not yet been made, when will a decision be made; and (c) if the government will be transferring the responsibilities and governance of GLFC to GAC, what is the timeline for when the transfer will occur?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada recognizes the importance of the Great Lakes to the economy, health and well-being of Canadians and the important role the GLFC has in protecting the health of the Great Lakes trans-boundary fisheries. With respect to recommendations raised by the committee, the forthcoming government response to the committee report is expected to be tabled in the House of Commons in late March.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 2254, 2256, 2258, 2261 and 2262 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2254—**Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to RCMP actions under the Criminal Code: (a) broken down by province or territory, and year since 2015, how many (i) arrests have been made, (ii) charges have been laid and what is the breakdown by final judicial outcome (e.g. charges dropped, conviction, case still ongoing, etc.); (b) how many times has bail been denied in relation to (a); (c) of those denied bail, how many were charged with firearm offences; (d) how many days on average do people who have been denied bail spend in custody pre-trial; (e) what is the longest period that an arrested person has spent in custody after being denied bail pre-trial; (f) what is the least amount of days a person denied bail has spent in custody pre-trial; (g) what is the average number of days a person denied bail spends in custody pre-trial if a firearm offence is included; and (h) what is the breakdown of (a) through (g) by those charged with violent crimes versus non-violent crimes?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2256—**Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to documents prepared by government departments or agencies about the Emergencies Act, since January 1, 2022: for each such document, (i) what is the date, (ii) what is the title or subject matter, (iii) what is the type of document (routine correspondence, directive, options to consider, etc.), (iv) what is the department's internal tracking number, (v) who is the sender, (vi) who are the recipients, (vii) what is the summary of contents?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2258—**Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to government surplus vehicles being scrapped rather than sold on the GCSurplus auction site: (a) how many vehicles were scrapped during the 2023

calendar year; (b) what are the details of each vehicle that was scrapped, including, for each, the (i) make, (ii) model, (iii) year, (iv) reason the vehicle was not listed on the GCSurplus auction site or otherwise sold as government surplus, (v) estimated resale value prior to scrapping, if known; (c) what were the total expenditures that the government incurred in 2023 relating to scrapping the vehicles, broken down by type of expense; (d) of the vehicles that were scrapped in 2023, were the useable parts available for purchase by the public, and, if not, why not; and (e) what is the policy for determining which surplus vehicles are made available for purchase versus which ones are scrapped?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2261—**Mr. Frank Caputo:**

With regard to bonuses for executives at the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), broken down by year since 2020: how many and what percentage of executives got bonuses (i) in total, (ii) broken down by province, (iii) broken down by correctional institution or other place of employment (i.e. CSC head offices)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2262—**Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to government dealings with BTNX: (a) what are the details of all contracts that government departments or agencies have had with BTNX since January 1, 2020, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) value, (iii) description of the goods or services, including volume, (iv) manner in which the contract was awarded (i.e. sole-sourced, competitive bid); and (b) what are the details of all grants, contributions, loans, or other funding agreements the government has entered into with BTNX since January 1, 2020, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount of funding, (iii) type of funding, (iv) program under which funding was provided, (v) amount of funding repaid to date, if applicable, (vi) purpose of funding?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PRIVILEGE

WITNESS RESPONSES AT STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened very closely to what the member put on the record, and it is a great deal of detail. On the other hand, my understanding is that the clerk had put in writing some requests for specific information and that information was provided. Therefore, the written request that came from the clerk of the committee was, in fact, complied with.

The bottom line is that I do not think we are in a comfortable enough position to respond until we have a little more time or enough time to respond in more detail on what is a very important issue.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I found the arguments of my colleague from Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes to be extremely detailed, and I would like to add the NDP's voice to this question of privilege.

The 17th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates was adopted unanimously. The points in the report are very clear, and I will not take much time. Let us look at the big picture. The witness, Mr. Firth, refused to answer legitimate questions directed to him. In our view, this constitutes a prima facie breach of parliamentary privilege and contempt of Parliament. Although it is rare, we have previously seen situations like this. In the vast majority of cases, when witnesses testify before our committees, they give answers and are ready to speak. In this case, it is very clear that the committee found that the witness did not answer any of the very relevant questions about the ArriveCAN app. The committee was seized with this issue and now Parliament is seized with it.

● (1855)

[English]

I would like to say that it is clear, when we look at the precedents that have been cited, and I will not repeat all of the various quotes from the procedural manual that governs our activities, that Mr. Firth's refusal to answer those key questions on the ArriveCAN application indicate that this is a breach of privilege and contempt of Parliament. It is clear, in my opinion, that this is an open-and-shut case of privilege. This is something that the Speaker could move to adjudicate in a very timely way.

I would add that the 17th report of the government operations committee is very clear. It was passed unanimously by all members. This is something that does not happen very often, but very clearly, when parliamentary rights to get to the answers on behalf of Canadians are violated, it is something that all members of Parliament should take seriously.

The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, who is our representative on that committee, believes as well that this is a case in which answers should have been provided. The fact that Mr. Firth was uncooperative, refusing to provide those answers, is something that should be of concern to all Canadians.

I believe there is a prima facie case of privilege being breached, of contempt of Parliament, and I hope that the Speaker will adjudicate as soon as he feels he has enough information.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to mention that the Bloc Québécois reserves the right to respond at a later time, but it will not take very long. We will come back fairly quickly with comments on the point of order raised by our Conservative colleague.

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, having sat through the presentation from the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, I would

Privilege

like to commend him for his thoroughness and for citation of relevant authorities in a fashion that did this place honour.

It is so encouraging to hear a debate, and I am not going to mention others, that is substantive and helpful. On behalf of the Green Party of Canada, I wish to commend the member, and I wish to commend to the Speaker the veracity of his point of order. I completely agree with every word spoken by the member for New Westminster—Burnaby on behalf of the New Democratic Party. The Green Party wishes to be aligned with those comments and the hope that the Speaker will come back and Mr. Firth will stand there and answer some questions.

● (1900)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will keep my remarks short.

I want to bring to light that I have been involved in a number of committees where we were at the line of an issue of contempt. It is important to put on the record what was explained to us in committee, that we are not a court of law. We may be really angry at government. We may be demanding witnesses. However, we have to do it in a judicious manner, and if there is an issue of contempt, it has to come to the House.

We have been in situations in which we knew we were not getting truthful answers from witnesses. My colleague and I were involved with one, with a certain group of brothers and their chief financial officer. We decided at that moment to actually not go that way, because we had gotten as far as we could as a parliamentary committee, and we felt the evidence stood.

However, the principle of parliamentarians being able to take this to the House has to be protected and preserved. It does not matter when the last time it happened was. What matters is that we have the obligation and the right and the power, when people are being dishonest and not telling the truth to committees, to bring it to the House, whether or not the government at the time likes it. These are tools that parliamentarians have.

Again, we are not a court of law, but we get evidence that we present to Parliament so that Parliament can make decisions and, if something is wrong, it will not happen again.

I trust that the Speaker is going to be very careful and judicious here with respect to the importance of preserving that right of parliamentarians to do their job and not be inhibited just because someone does not believe they are obligated to answer questions. They are obligated to answer questions when it is in the interests of the Canadian public.

The Speaker: I would like to thank the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay and the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for their interventions, as well as all members. In particular, I would like to thank the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes for bringing forward a very clear presentation.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

The member for Winnipeg North requested it, as did the member for La Prairie and the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, who have requested the participation of other members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. I will wait. I hope that these interventions will come fairly quickly.

I must say that the Chair is rather inclined to do everything possible to safeguard the right of members of the House to receive answers from witnesses who appear before a committee.

[English]

Following the intervention of the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, I will hope that the members of the government operations committee will quickly intervene and that we will hear from members from the Bloc and from the NDP, as well as from the Liberals, who indicated that they would like to come back on this issue. I guess I am kind of tipping my hand; I am quite disposed to the motion. I look forward to an intervention as soon as possible, so that we can dispense with this matter quickly.

[Translation]

I wish to inform the House that because of the delay, pursuant to Standing Order 30(7), the period provided for Private Members' Business is cancelled. The order is therefore deferred to a future sitting.

Pursuant to order made on Monday, March 18, the House will now resolve itself into committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 36 under Government Business.

* * *

*[English]***CANADA-UKRAINE RELATIONS**

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 36, Mr. Greg Fergus in the chair)

The Speaker: Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members how the proceedings will unfold.

Each member speaking will be allotted 10 minutes for debate, followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments.

● (1905)

[Translation]

Pursuant to order made on Monday, March 18, members may divide their time with another member. The time provided for the debate may be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each. The Chair will receive no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent.

[English]

We will now begin tonight's take-note debate.

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (for the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) moved:

That this committee take note of the Canada-Ukraine relationship and the newly signed strategic security partnership.

[English]

Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time this evening.

I rise on a topic that I wish I did not have to address. Two years ago, Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and, with it, unleashed an attack on democracy, freedom and the rules-based international order. Despite Russia's relentless assault, Ukrainians are standing strong, and Canada will stand with them for as long as it takes.

The war continues to touch all of us and the ties between our two countries are strong. We all have friends of Ukrainian heritage. Not only do I have a large Ukrainian community in my constituency of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, but many Ukrainian cultural and religious organizations, as well as the Ukrainian consulate, are located in my riding. I want them to know that I will not abandon them. Canada's support for Ukraine is ongoing and unwavering.

I would like to underline some of the supports. Since the beginning of 2022, Canada has committed over \$13.3 billion in funding to support Ukraine. This includes \$4 billion in military assistance, such as M777 Howitzers, Leopard 2 main battle tanks, armoured combat support vehicles, ammunition, high-resolution drone cameras, thermal clothing, body armour, fuel and more; \$7.4 billion in financial support; \$352.5 million in humanitarian assistance, including support for emergency health interventions, protection services and essentials such as shelter, water, sanitation and food; and \$186 million in development assistance and funds for the Canada-International Finance Corporation's facility for resilient food systems. We will also contribute \$198 million in security and stabilization assistance.

Canadian Armed Forces members are supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the United Kingdom and Poland under Operation Unifier, providing training on a range of military skills. Between 2015 and 2024, Canada trained more than 40,000 members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine as part of this operation. They have also been assisting with the delivery of military aid for Ukraine from Canada and on behalf of our allies and partners. Our support continues.

Last month, Prime Minister Trudeau and the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, held a bilateral meeting to discuss—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: It is very important for the member not to refer to sitting members by their names, but by either their titles or their ridings.

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Speaker, I apologize.

Our Prime Minister and the President of Ukraine held a bilateral meeting to discuss the situation on the ground and Ukraine's needs over the coming months. The two leaders signed a new, historic agreement on security co-operation between Canada and Ukraine to establish a strategic security partnership.

The agreement builds on the G7 joint declaration of support for Ukraine and outlines key, long-term security commitments for Canada to continue supporting Ukraine as it defends its sovereignty and territorial integrity, protects its people and rebuilds its economy for the future. As part of this commitment, Canada will provide just over \$3 billion in critical financial and military support to Ukraine in 2024.

In addition, the Prime Minister announced new support for Ukraine's resilience and recovery efforts. This includes \$75 million in peace and security assistance, which includes demining, cyber-support and intelligence support; and cultural support for the completion of the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide in Kyiv, helping preserve the memory of victims and survivors of the Holodomor, a systemic and heinous campaign of deliberate starvation by the Soviet regime that killed millions across Ukraine in 1932 and 1933.

The Prime Minister also announced the allocation of funding, up to \$39 million, for development assistance to provide access to essential mental health services for vulnerable populations, to help build food systems that are more resilient and to support efforts by local communities toward reconstruction and recovery. There is over \$22 million in humanitarian assistance to support trusted United Nations and Red Cross partners in delivering critical assistance, including emergency health interventions, protection services, shelter, water, sanitation and food, as well as the promotion of respect for international humanitarian law. There is also over \$18 million in peace, security and stabilization assistance to support projects.

For many Canadians, and especially those of Ukrainian heritage, it is important now more than ever that Ukraine continues to receive the support it needs to fight the war. I was proud to host our Minister of National Defence in my community of Etobicoke—Lakeshore last month to announce that we are providing Ukraine with the drones it needs to protect its troops and the country.

Of course, there is the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Yesterday, I was pleased to join my colleague from Etobicoke Centre and Ihor Michalchyshyn to witness the Senate pass the agreement, despite opposition from the official opposition in the House and the official opposition in the Senate. It was a fundamental way to show solidarity with Ukraine, and I cannot believe the official opposition did not support it. It is shameful.

In short, the federal government stands in full solidarity with the people of Ukraine. There are so many more measures I could discuss, but the bottom line is that we are here, we are with them and we will support them until this is over.

● (1910)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague's speech and want to thank him for his support for Ukraine.

Government Orders

We had the Ukrainian ambassador in front of the foreign affairs committee this afternoon. She gave us some very concerning statistics: Ukraine is facing six to seven times the number of shells daily from Russia that Ukraine is directing toward Russia. They have a dire need for 155-millimetre ammunition. There was a discussion at the committee today about the need for increased ammunition.

I know the Government of Canada has recently made announcements about shell production. Could the member tell us what the government's plans are with respect to increasing Canada's 155-millimetre shell production in order to contribute not only to Canada's security but to that of Ukraine?

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, Canada's support since the outset of this awful situation has been unconditional and unequivocal. I was not at the committee today to hear the ambassador's testimony, but I can say that her position, which has been unequivocal, is that Canada should support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

As for the specifics of the member's question on ammunition, I would be happy to speak to him after. I would be happy to try to find that specific information. I do not want to stand before the House and pretend I have specifics that I do not have in answer to a question.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, like my colleague from the Conservatives, I was at the foreign affairs committee this afternoon as we met with Ukraine's ambassador to Canada. One of the questions I asked her, which I will ask the member as he is a member of the government, was around the loopholes we see within our arms export regime. One thing that I think we all learned in November 2023 was that detonators were going through Kyrgyzstan and being used in Russian mines against Ukrainian people. The last thing I think Canadians want to know is that Canadian parts and components are being used in the very weapons that are being used against Ukrainians.

The New Democrats have long called for the closing of loopholes within our arms regime, and the government has not taken steps to do that. Is there any plan from the government to stop the loopholes that allow dual-use goods to be made into the weapons being used against our allies?

● (1915)

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, I thank the member for her continued support for Ukraine in this awful situation.

Again, I was not at the committee this afternoon. However, Canada works day in and day out. The Prime Minister, the defence minister and the foreign affairs minister are in regular, daily contact with their counterparts in Ukraine to make sure the measures that need to be taken are taken, including closing loopholes and preventing the types of activities the member is talking about. I can assure her that the federal government is taking every step and leaving no stone unturned.

Government Orders

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the member made reference to the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, an agreement that no doubt sends a very strong and powerful message to the world regarding Ukraine's solidarity movement. One of the big asks was how we could help Ukraine in the future. That is why the President of Ukraine came to Canada to meet with the Prime Minister.

This trade agreement is more than just a physical agreement. There is another aspect to it that I think speaks to our special relationship and being there for Ukraine. I wonder if the member could expand upon the importance of that agreement.

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, it is now, it is tomorrow and it is into the future. When this war comes to an end, Ukraine is going to have to be rebuilt. Canada is there with Ukraine now and will be with it then. The free trade agreement is a step in that direction so we will be ready when the time comes.

I speak to community members in Etobicoke—Lakeshore and across the country regularly, and they were enthused and excited and wanted to get this deal passed. Unfortunately, I spent more time answering these questions: Why is the opposition not supporting the free trade agreement? Why is the House not unanimously supporting the free trade agreement?

I cannot account for others. All I can account for is our side of the House, and we are there and we will be there after this is over.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it is a real pleasure tonight to have a few minutes to stand and talk about the relationship between Canada and Ukraine. The fact that the free trade agreement was passed yesterday is one of the additional symbolic things we can be doing to show our support for Ukraine.

Once the world witnessed the brutal unprovoked attack on democracy, freedom and the rules-based international order when Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale attack on Ukraine, not many people believed that Ukraine's capital would stand strong longer than two or three days. However, two years later, it is clear that their remarkable strength, resilience and love for their country made Ukrainians known around the world as members of a nation of the brave, and Ukraine has become a symbol of a steadfast force.

I am proud that Canada and our government stand alongside international partners with unwavering support for Ukraine. On the second anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, our Prime Minister and President Zelenskyy signed a new, historic agreement on security co-operation between Canada and Ukraine to establish a strategic security partnership. This agreement is intended to shore up Ukraine's security and outlines key, long-term security commitments for Canada to continue supporting Ukraine as it defends its sovereignty and territorial integrity, protects its people and rebuilds its economy for the future. As part of that commitment, Canada will provide over \$3 billion in critical financial and military support to Ukraine in 2024.

Our government has stood with Ukraine since day one of Russia's illegal invasion, and we will continue to do so until Ukraine and the Ukrainian people are free once again. The signing of the

new security agreement is yet another testament to Canada's unwavering support for Ukraine. Canada will continue to support Ukraine's implementation of the deep and comprehensive reforms necessary for full integration into the EU and NATO, and we commend Ukraine for the significant reform that has been made to date. It is clear that defence and security are the number one priorities for Ukraine right now, and our prayers are with all of the people in Ukraine.

The rebuilding and recovery of Ukraine are another highly important aspect to its agenda. To this end, I am thrilled to acknowledge the incredibly important milestone that Canada and Ukraine achieved last night, as I mentioned earlier: the royal assent of the modernized Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. As chair of the international trade committee, it was great to work with all members of the committee to examine it, process it and get it through committee and into the House. It is disappointing that the Conservatives turned their backs on Ukraine by voting against the free trade deal, but I need to emphasize that this side of the House will continue to stand with Ukraine in our words, in our actions and with our votes.

A modernized CUFTA marks an important milestone in the Canadian-Ukrainian relationship, one that will support our people, our workers and our businesses for years to come. Sectors of strategic importance to Ukraine's recovery include infrastructure, renewable energy, financial services, and oil and gas, which are all areas where Canada has strengths. Even more so, CUFTA will help make the reconstruction process transparent and sustainable. This agreement is the first FTA addressing anti-corruption provisions.

According to the latest estimates by the Ukrainian side, since February 2022, more than 37% of the total damage in Ukraine has fallen on residential buildings, another 24% on infrastructure and 8% on industrial assets. It is no surprise that Ukrainian and international analysts say that Ukraine will turn into the largest construction site in the world after the war ends. This free trade agreement sets the foundation on which Canadian and Ukrainian businesses can work together in the reconstruction of Ukraine and underpins the long-term economic relationship between our two countries.

Our government will continue making sure Ukraine has Canada's back in times of need. Canada will stand with Ukraine, as I indicated earlier, with whatever it takes, for as long as it takes. *Slava Ukraini*.

I am thankful for the opportunity to speak and to share time with the previous member.

● (1920)

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Chair, I know and respect the member's stance on Taiwan and some of the work she has done

However, I have been so concerned that some of the actions that the Liberals take, purportedly in support of Ukraine, do not line up with the tangible action that Ukraine has asked for. Examples are sending turbines back to Russia to pump Russian gas for sale in Europe, funding Putin's war in Ukraine, sending detonators in that direction and sending missiles over, which could easily be done. There was a direct request.

Certainly, we were disappointed that the Liberals put a carbon tax mechanism into the free trade agreement. This brought a domestic political issue into a debate that had a significant deal of cross-partisan support. It is very unfortunate that they would politicize that.

What is also unfortunate is that, quite often, actions do not line up with the words that members of the Liberal Party speak when it comes to ensuring that they are truly supporting Ukraine. Could the member elaborate on how they take tangible action to support the people of Ukraine, which includes energy security?

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Chair, I thank my hon. colleague for his comment and his interest. Politics gets in the way of a lot of things. At the end of the day, I think every single person in this House wants to see Ukraine do well.

As chair of the international trade committee, when we dealt with the Canada free trade agreement with Ukraine, it was an enormous pleasure to be able to talk with a variety of people who are already in Ukraine starting the rebuild that is happening.

As far as moving forward, we talk about a carbon tax that my colleague could not resist throwing out there. Ukraine had a carbon tax way before we even talked about it. I think Canada is way behind. The United States and all the other areas have had a carbon tax for years. Canada is just catching up now, and Ukraine is an example of how it functions well.

• (1925)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Chair, as a member of the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, this week, I had the pleasure of speaking with French President Macron's special envoy for Ukraine.

As part of those very interesting and meaningful discussions, we talked about how Canada and other countries have been somewhat lazy lately when it comes to providing help and support to Ukraine.

We talked about the post-conflict recovery, obviously, but we also talked about the current situation. It seems to me that, when President Macron announced France's strong support for Ukraine a few days ago, he was sending a message to the international community. I think that we should consider that message, understand it and acknowledge the fact that we need to step up our efforts. We need to do more to help Ukraine get through this conflict and defeat Russia as quickly as possible, so that we can start rebuilding Ukraine and its economy. We need to allow our domestic investors to establish economic partnerships with Ukraine as quickly as possible.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[English]

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Chair, I have to say that, when this war started, I was so impressed by that countries all around the world that pledged their support and stood beside Ukraine.

What has happened in the last six months, with the unexpected holdup in the U.S. with the House of Representatives, is that the funding Ukraine needs has still not been approved. If we really sup-

port it, as Canada has done, we need to put our money on the table and continue to be as supportive today as we were when this war broke out.

[Translation]

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Chair, we are here this evening to take part in a debate on the Canada-Ukraine relationship and the new strategic partnership between Canada and Ukraine.

[English]

I want to say clearly, at the beginning of this take-note debate, that Conservatives support the newly agreed to Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership.

We have long supported Ukraine. We did this well before the war in Ukraine began, started by President Putin's illegal invasion in 2014. On December 2, 1991, Canada became the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union, under then Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney. The late Brian Mulroney was recognized this week in the House for his great foreign policy accomplishments with then external affairs minister Joe Clark.

It was under Prime Minister Harper's leadership that Conservatives first negotiated the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, the first free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine. This deepened trade and investment relations between the two countries. The trade agreement removed tariffs from 86% of Canada's exports, with the remaining tariffs being phased out over the following seven years. This allowed for stronger exports of agricultural goods to and from Ukraine.

It was under Prime Minister Harper that Operation Unifier was started. That was a significant operation that was done jointly with the United Kingdom, and it was critical in preparing the Armed Forces of Ukraine for Russia's illegal invasion. In fact, my hon. colleague who just spoke in the House referenced that many were surprised about how Ukraine stood up to Russia's second illegal invasion in February 2022; many expected Ukraine's armed forces to collapse in the face of the Russian invasion. In fact, they did not collapse, in large part because of Operation Unifier, which began in 2015.

It was also Prime Minister Harper who led the charge at the G8, which no longer exists, to expel Russia as a member. This turned it into the G7. We all remember that famous video of Prime Minister Harper confronting President Putin on camera when they met in Australia, telling him he needed to "get out of Ukraine".

These are some things that Conservatives have done in the past to support Ukraine. In opposition, as we have been since 2015, we have continued that support. We have continually called on the government to support Ukraine and to provide more support, particularly military support. We have largely supported the government's initiatives with respect to Ukraine over the last two years.

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Long before Russia's war on Ukraine began in February 2022, we had called on the government to provide more lethal military equipment to Ukraine. It was not until February 14, 2022, a mere 10 days before the invasion began, that the government heeded our call. It then reversed its decision not to provide lethal military equipment and started to provide that equipment.

Since February 2022, we have called on the government to provide surplus light armoured vehicles from the Canadian Armed Forces and role 3 mobile hospitals. Recently, we have also called on the government to provide the NASAMS air defence system, as well as the CRV7 rockets, of which there are 83,000 in surplus in the Canadian Armed Forces. Ukraine has indicated that it wants and could use them.

The government could provide these four things immediately to support Ukraine: the surplus light armoured vehicles, the role 3 mobile hospitals, the 83,000 rockets and the NASAMS air defence system.

● (1930)

We have been calling on the government to do these things because we believe Ukraine needs additional military support. We have also been calling on the government to increase arms production in Canada, and in particular, the production of munitions. The NATO alliance and Ukraine, beyond that, are in desperate need of 155-millimetre shells. It has been assessed that Russia has produced millions of similar types of shells and that the alliance is desperately underproducing these shells. The government recently announced that it has looked at increasing shell production in Canada. Conservatives believe the government needs to do that expeditiously to meet not only Ukraine's defence needs but also our own here in Canada.

I will go back to the strategic security partnership that was just agreed to by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ukraine, formally titled "Agreement on security cooperation between Canada and Ukraine". There are two clauses in that agreement, in particular, that Conservatives support. Section I is titled "Resilience of Energy and other Critical Infrastructure". That part of the agreement reads:

Acknowledging that energy supply security remains crucial for Ukraine's resilience, and building upon existing support for Ukraine's energy infrastructure from the G7 and others, Canada will continue to seek to support Ukraine's overall energy sector with a special focus on nuclear safety and security and clean energy transition.

We support that; one thing we think Canada should be doing to support Ukraine and counter Russia is exporting clean liquefied natural gas, not only to displace Russian liquefied natural gas in western Europe and in Ukraine, as well as liquefied natural gas among other democratic allies, but also to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A kilowatt hour of electricity produced by coal-fired plants produces double the greenhouse gas emissions that a plant fired by natural gas does. We can meet our security and defence goals in co-operation with Ukraine and, at the same time, help reduce global emissions. About a fifth of all global emissions are produced from coal-fired electricity plants. If we could eliminate those in the next 10 years, we could cut global emissions, just on that alone, by 10%.

The technology to replace coal-fired electricity plants with LNG or with natural gas plants is decades old. It is easy to do. Ontario did it when it closed down the Nanticoke coal plant some years ago and replaced it with natural gas-fired plants throughout the province of Ontario.

The other section we like in this agreement is section N, titled "Compensation for Losses, Injuries and Damages Caused by Russian Aggression". We like it because we have long called for Canada to lead an effort, which we have suggested should be at the G7, to repurpose some 300 billion U.S. dollars in Russian assets that have been seized by western democracies. When the war broke out two years ago, scores of Russian assets were seized by western governments in order to punish Russia for its illegal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Those assets remain seized, but we need to take the next step and repurpose them for the reconstruction of the infrastructure in Ukraine, which has been much damaged by Russian aggression. About \$200 billion of those assets rest in Europe.

Canada has strong diplomatic ties to many countries in Europe; it has strong ties with the European Union, NATO member countries and individual member states. We should be using this diplomatic capacity to come to an understanding among the western alliance that we are going to repurpose the \$300 billion in assets to create a Marshall-type recovery plan for Ukraine. Thus, when this war ends, the people of Ukraine can rebuild their infrastructure, join the community of democracies and rebuild their lives.

● (1935)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Chair, for the people watching this debate this evening and for the record, I want to respond to a question that came up earlier with respect to Canada's provision of artillery shells to Ukraine.

From our own stocks and from other acquisitions, we have donated over 40,000 155-millimetre shells, but we are also currently involved in an effort sponsored by the Czech Republic to source 800,000 shells for Ukraine. Our contribution for that will be \$40 million.

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Chair, I would like to thank the member opposite for highlighting the government's recent announcement on acquiring additional 155-millimetre shells. I believe that the government should also be building domestic capacity to produce shells here in Canada.

It is clear in discussions I have had at NATO headquarters in Brussels last year and in talking to defence experts here in Canada that there is an undercapacity that has developed since, frankly, the fall of the Berlin Wall with respect to armament production. We have, through a series of decisions we made as a result of what was then called the peace dividend, decided to reduce the capacity of western democracies, NATO democracies in particular, to produce 155-millimetre munitions and other munitions, and we are in desperate need of rebuilding capacity.

The Government of Canada should lead an effort, which could be part of our 2% contribution to the Wales declaration, to invest in the capacity here at home to increase armament production, munitions production, so we can meet not only our needs but also the needs of NATO members and the needs of democracies beyond the NATO alliance, such as Ukraine.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Chair, I am pleased to hear a bit of criticism about Canada's weak collaboration on many levels with respect to aid for Ukraine. These days, Canada does not seem as motivated as it was in the early days when it wanted to declare itself one of the leaders in supporting Ukraine. That was appropriate considering that Canada has the largest Ukrainian diaspora in the world. It is only normal that it position itself and declare itself in that way.

We have seen the Liberals' ideology in some of the aid programs for Ukraine. We have seen the Conservatives choose to vote against the bill for the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement because of a mention or the appearance of the carbon tax in the requirements.

Does my colleague think that Canada should find the same motivation it had at the beginning of the conflict? Should we not all set aside any form of ideology or politics in a context like this and roll up our sleeves and properly support Ukraine in a way that reflects our abilities, to bring this war to an end and quickly start rebuilding that country?

• (1940)

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Chair, Canada has certainly given plenty of aid to Ukraine, but it has largely been humanitarian aid. That aid is obviously necessary, but right now, the issue is military assistance. Ukraine's security is seriously threatened by Russia. Ukraine needs more military aid, more ammunition and more military equipment. In my opinion, the Canadian government must take action now to give Ukraine help in this area.

There are four things we currently have, as a country, in our Canadian forces. We have surplus equipment that we can give to Ukraine now. We have asked the government to send that now. The biggest crisis in Ukraine right now is a security crisis. In my opinion, it is bigger than the humanitarian crisis.

[English]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Chair, I thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, who I believe is a good member of Parliament who often provides the chamber with good advice and, in this particular instance, a good history lesson. I am from the province of Alberta, the very same province from which the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney actually pledged recognition of the independence of Ukraine, which was a momentous moment for Alberta and one we are tremendously proud of.

To lean in on the question of our Bloc colleague a bit more, I do think that Ukrainians, at least the Ukrainians I know from Alberta, have been a bit nervous and a bit scared of the partisanship throughout this 44th Parliament, particularly when it came to the free trade agreement and the votes by the Conservative Party related to the support for that agreement. I think it is important for the

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security of Ukraine that we have an all-party approach to actually find unity in the chamber in our support for Ukraine.

However, one of the biggest ways to support Ukraine today is to actually ensure that the American security agreement, which would commit up to \$60 billion in support, including military aid, is actually passed in the United States. Republicans are withholding support on that right now. Considering the member opposite is a member of the Conservative Party and likely knows many members of the Republican Party as well, would it not be important for us to actually reach out, as America's close ally, to find ways to close the gap, the unfortunate partisanship, that is affecting our allies in Ukraine?

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Chair, the member is right to note that Alberta has always been a proud part of our federation and home to millions of Ukrainian Canadians. In fact the deputy prime minister under Brian Mulroney, Don Mazankowski, whom I got to know a little bit, was a proud Ukrainian Canadian. I think many Ukrainians across the country burst with pride when he took on that role in the government of the late prime minister.

With respect to our opposition to the free trade agreement, we indicated it was on a very narrow basis that had to do with the carbon pricing provisions in the agreement. We indicated at the time, in December 2023 when it was in front of the House, that while we were opposed to the agreement, we were not going to obstruct its passage through either the House or the Senate, and I think we have been true to our word. The bill has become law in Canada, so that is also evidence of our constructive approach to Ukraine.

We in the House all support Ukraine, but that does not mean there is going to be unanimity on every single aspect of the government's policy with respect to Ukraine. However, I cannot think of many other areas in foreign policy where there has been such multi-partisan support as there has been for Ukraine.

With respect to the path forward, I think the immediate need is a military need. It is clear that Ukraine's offensive stalled. It is clear that the Russian offensive is counterattacking and that territory is being lost as we speak, which is why I think that, even more than humanitarian need, there is a need for military kit and equipment right now for Ukraine. If the U.S. Congress is mired in legislative gridlock on these sorts of issues, then other NATO members should be stepping up to the plate to provide the funds and the equipment that Ukraine needs.

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As I said earlier, there are four easy things we think the government could transfer immediately, and actually some of them are surplus in the Canadian Armed Forces. One is surplus Light Armoured Vehicles that Ukraine has indicated it could use. Another is the surplus 83,000 rockets that are to be decommissioned. The NASAMS air defence system that the government announced support for about a year ago is another thing that we believe could be provided to Ukraine. The fourth item is the excess Role 3 mobile hospitals that the Canadian Forces acquired, I believe, in response to the pandemic. These are things we could transfer right now that could provide additional support for Ukraine.

Finally, in addition to all of those things, we really feel the need for the government to step up procurement and production of munitions here in Canada, which not only Ukraine needs but the western alliance also needs to recapitalize its stocks.

● (1945)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Madam Chair, I think this take-note debate is timely because it allows us to take stock of how Canada and Ukraine have been collaborating since Russia's large-scale invasion of that country in 2022.

What can I say, other than this agreement, the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, was signed on February 24, 2024, when the Prime Minister visited Kyiv with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. My hope is that this partnership will bear fruit. My fear is that it will be on par with what we have done so far, meaning that it will fall short.

Let me back up a bit. I think the fatal error that western countries made from the get-go was to suggest that, no matter what, we were not going to intervene. In my opinion, that gave Vladimir Putin license to do just about anything he wanted to do. I think we dropped the ball right from the get-go.

When the conflict began, members will recall that we were quick to deliver humanitarian aid. Militarily, we delivered what we called non-lethal weapons to Ukraine at that time: helmets, bulletproof vests, night vision goggles. Imagine being Ukrainian, seeing Russian troops coming in, and Canada sending helmets, bulletproof vests and night vision goggles.

Obviously, we quickly realized—I think the goal was to avoid provoking Russia—that this was not exactly what Ukraine needed. We began sending them ammunition, and before long, we were sending machine guns. Then, after a while, we started sending artillery, and some time after that, anti-aircraft defence weapons. Then, after a while, we sent them tanks, and after that we started sending fighter jets.

A few weeks after the conflict began, I went to NATO headquarters in Brussels and I asked the military command what was happening with the fighter jets. I was told that it takes six months to train a pilot. I went back to NATO headquarters a few months later and asked the military command the same question, and I was once again told that it takes six months to train a pilot. That is when I took the liberty of telling NATO's commander-in-chief that, if we had started training pilots from the get-go, then maybe we would have been able to prevent the Russians from settling into and forti-

fying their positions to the point where it is now almost impossible to get them out and maybe we would not be in the situation that we are in now.

I think that we misjudged the threshold beyond which we would risk provoking the Russians. Honestly, just between us, Madam Chair, the Russians already had their hands full with the Ukrainians, and I do not think that they would have engaged in a large-scale conflict with NATO. I think that the NATO countries misjudged the situation from the beginning, which means that we basically allowed Russia to really gain a foothold in Ukraine. That is extremely unfortunate.

I want to come back to the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, which will apparently be in effect for 10 years. This agreement will increase information sharing, co-operation and military support, help Ukraine join NATO and help Ukraine rebuild. That is all well and good, but what is in the agreement that goes beyond appearances and image?

● (1950)

I remember that extremely striking image of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Defence and the Prime Minister going to Kyiv. It is a spectacular image. A flag was raised on the flagpole at the Canadian embassy, indicating that the embassy was open. However, that is no longer the case today. Of course, we have staff working within Ukraine's borders, at home and in hotels, but not at the embassy.

In addition, when it comes to visa applications, Ukrainians are still being asked to leave the country and go to other countries in Europe to apply for a visa, because the embassy in Kyiv is still unable to welcome Ukrainian citizens who would like to apply for a visa.

I am all in favour of having a joint declaration of support for Ukraine. I hope it will help Ukrainians. We know that all political parties in the House want to support Ukraine, if we exclude the minor episode where the Conservatives were perhaps not up to the task of supporting the free trade agreement. Support is unanimous on the matter before us. However, everyone needs to walk the talk. We need to put our words into action. Right now there is a lot of talk and no action.

The proof lies in the fact that the Ukrainian defence minister said, “At the moment...50% of [weapons] commitments are not delivered on time.” Because of these delays, he said, “we lose people, we lose territory”. It may seem awful that western nations are failing to deliver on 50% of their commitments. It is appalling that 50% of their commitments are not being met. In Canada's case, however, the figure is almost 60%.

On February 19, *Le Devoir* published an article on Canada's failure to meet its commitments to provide assistance to Ukraine. The article said, “almost 60% of the value of the military equipment that Canada promised Ukraine after the outbreak of Russia's war of invasion two years ago has still not been honoured.... Of the \$2.4 billion in military aid promised by Ottawa since February 24, 2022, \$1.4 billion has still not made it to the front lines”. That means that 58% of everything promised to Ukraine has not been delivered. I am sure someone is going to tell me that these are only numbers.

I will continue. “The National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (NASAMS) and associated munitions, at a cost of \$406 million”, has not been delivered. “The 35 high-resolution drone cameras valued at \$76 million”, have yet to be delivered. “The promised winter clothing, worth \$25 million”, which would supply 2,000 Ukrainian soldiers with “boots, thermal layers, winter sleeping bags and patterned military uniforms”, according to the announcement made at the time, have yet to be delivered.

Ukraine is still waiting for small arms and ammunition worth \$60 million that the Canadian Commercial Corporation is trying to procure from an arms manufacturer in Ontario. The same goes for 10,000 rounds of 105mm ammunition, 76mm naval ammunition, 277 1,000-pound aircraft bombs and associated fuse assemblies, 955 rounds of 155mm artillery smoke and over 2,000 rounds of 81mm mortar smoke, and 2,260 gas masks, which were supposed to be sourced from the Canadian Armed Forces' inventory.

We know that our inventory is not especially well stocked, but what we do have, we could send right away. That has not been done. We are still fiddling around while the Ukrainians are in an absolutely terrible situation.

More tragic still is the fact that, for want of weaponry, Ukrainian soldiers are being subjected to wave upon wave of Russian attacks. The Russians have troops to spare, but the Ukrainians do not have the firepower to repel their attacks.

I support a strategic security partnership agreement between Canada and Ukraine. I am all for any measure that can really help Ukraine. Again, it is time to stop posturing, spouting good intentions, and paying lip service. It is time to make sure these promises are actually kept.

• (1955)

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for his speech. We were both members of the committee that must not be named. It was very interesting. What struck me was how we, as Canadians, take our safety here in Canada for granted.

We have welcomed more than 100 Ukrainian families to Châteauguay—Lacolle, and they are fitting right in. These wonderful people work in our communities, and we are happy to have them. In his speech, my colleague said that NATO should maybe

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have intervened sooner following the Russian invasion. I would like him to expand on that. Does he think Canada was ready to send troops to Ukraine?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Madam Chair, what an interesting question. The idea is not to say that we are going to send troops. The idea is to remain artfully vague about our intentions, if I can put it that way. However, we telegraphed our intentions from the outset, making it clear to the Kremlin that we were not going to intervene. Russia was free to proceed, because we were not going to intervene.

I want to point out that, a few weeks back, after a meeting attended by representatives from a number of allied countries, President Macron said that sending troops to Ukraine should not be ruled out. Following the same pattern that western countries have been following from the start, several nations, including Canada, rushed to say that President Macron was totally out to lunch, that his suggestion was ridiculous and that naturally, no troops would be sent.

All of a sudden, the western nations had blown any chance they had left of creating doubt about their intentions when it comes to what is happening in Ukraine. I applaud the courage of President Macron, who was not afraid to stick his neck out. Obviously, everyone thought that, since they had been talking all day, this was no slip of the tongue. I agree that it was not a slip of the tongue, far from it, but once again, there was not much solidarity from the other western countries, which once again brings us back to how slow we have been to actually help Ukraine.

I want to come back to the fact that we started out by sending helmets and that Ukraine is still waiting for fighter jets. When will we deliver the fighter jets?

• (2000)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Chair, I have a comment and a question for my hon. colleague. First, I said something earlier that I want to correct.

[*English*]

I said earlier that Don Mazankowski was a Ukrainian Canadian. What I should have said is that he was married to a Ukrainian Canadian and that he represented the most Ukrainian Canadian riding in Canada, which at the time was Vegreville. I just wanted to make sure the record was corrected on that.

[*Translation*]

That being said, I have a question for my colleague. He said that half of the aid that the government announced was not delivered to Ukraine. Can he explain why that is the case? What is the holdup?

He said that the government announced a lot of aid for Ukraine but that only 50% or 60% of it was actually provided to Ukraine. What is the holdup?

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Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Madam Chair, in fact, it is even worse than that. Some 58% of the aid has not been delivered. I am not very good at math, but if my calculations are correct, that means that only 42% of aid has been delivered so far.

My colleague has asked me a question I simply cannot answer. It is like trying to fit a round peg in a square hole. He has asked me to explain the inexplicable. Why has Canada not kept its word? Why has the Canadian Armed Forces equipment we promised to Ukraine not been delivered? Is it because we no longer have it? Is it because, when we promised it, we thought we still had it?

It has gotten to the point where we are asking ourselves these kinds of questions because it is so incomprehensible. It is one thing to have to buy equipment on international markets and wait for it to be ready. However, not even being able to deliver what we had in stock and had promised to deliver is completely incomprehensible. It raises other questions. Was the equipment not in good condition? Did we no longer have the equipment? In short, why was this equipment not delivered?

I am answering my colleague's question with a question, because I do not have the answer to his question.

[English]

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Chair, I am a little concerned, so I would love some clarification from the member. He spoke about how supportive he was of the actions of Emmanuel Macron. In response to Macron calling for soldiers to enter into Ukraine's land, the temperature was raised by Putin, in terms of threats of further nuclear responses. I would love to hear the member's clarification on that. It seems to me that is not helping what we are trying to accomplish. We want to ensure that Ukrainians have a peaceful, fast resolution to this, as opposed to raising the temperature.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Madam Chair, I would simply like to say that just because Putin says that things will escalate does not necessarily mean that things will escalate.

From the start, Putin said that if we helped Ukraine, things would escalate. That is why we started by sending helmets and bulletproof vests. Then we tried sending ammunition. We checked for an escalation but there was none, so we decided to send machine guns. Again, we wondered if things would escalate, and when they did not, we decided we could send some artillery. No escalation followed, so we decided we could send some anti-aircraft systems. Again, there was no escalation, so we decided to repeat the process by sending tanks. I think that Russia was basically blackmailing and threatening us the whole time, but it was never really in a position to follow through on its threats. As I said earlier, the Russians already had their hands full with Ukraine. It would have been surprising if they had decided to engage NATO countries in combat too.

I am not saying that we need to send troops. That is not what I am saying. I am saying that the mistake in the beginning was to tell Putin that we would not intervene. That left things wide open. We gave him carte blanche. We allowed him to do anything he wanted. The goal was to go back to keeping things vague, create a situation

where the Kremlin would be on the ropes again, not knowing what the NATO countries were going to do. However, on day one, we telegraphed the Kremlin what we were and were not planning to do, which was a mistake in my opinion.

• (2005)

[English]

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

It has been more than two years since Putin began his full-scale, illegal invasion of Ukraine. Today, New Democrats want to reaffirm our solidarity with Ukraine and Ukrainians.

Putin's genocide has killed and injured tens of thousands of Ukrainians and displaced hundreds of thousands more. However, through it all, Ukrainians have maintained their courage in fighting for Ukraine, for democracy, for international law and for an international order based on justice and accountability. Their spirit and resilience in the face of this war shines bright, and they do it for all of us.

Since Parliament's last take-note debate on Ukraine, much has changed. The unanimous solidarity among democratic countries is beginning to crack. The long-awaited strategic security partnership package from the United States has been held hostage by far-right Republicans who seek to undermine Ukraine's fight. Hungary's Viktor Orbán has repeatedly blocked Ukraine's membership in NATO and the European Union.

At a time when the far right is increasingly listening to Putin, Ukraine needs Canada to step up and support its fight. That is why it is so painful to see what is happening here in Canada.

First, we have seen the government not meet the urgency of Ukraine's fight. Time after time, the government announces a new aid package to Ukraine, whether it is for air defence systems, light armoured vehicles, funding toward demining activities, or seized Russian assets, only to have the promise left unfilled. While the government delays its delivery of aid, Ukraine is being bombed and Putin's attacks continue. We must demand that the government quickly deliver on all promised aid packages and find new ways to deliver aid quickly.

Second, what is truly painful to see is the erosion of our unanimous solidarity within this very chamber. I know the pride many members of the Conservative Party had when thinking they were champions for Ukraine. However, recently, I was shocked to see the shift in positioning from the official opposition, and Canadian Ukrainians have spoken to me in my riding about how they feel abandoned by this.

Not only did the Conservatives vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, but they put up delay after delay on the bill. After President Zelenskyy specifically asked us to support the deal, Conservatives did everything they could to block it. Even last night, the Conservative Party senators teamed up for one last attempt to block the bill.

Conservatives also voted against additional monetary supports for Ukraine, with millions of dollars in humanitarian aid and the monies required by Operation Unifier so Canadian Armed Forces members can continue to train Ukrainians. The Conservatives voted against those measures.

Canada is not immune to American-style far-right politics. We know that the dog whistles we hear from the Conservatives about cutting foreign aid, refusing to commit to honour the security guarantee and calling Ukraine some “faraway” land are playing to a dark side of their base that we have to call out.

As this war continues and we hear more and more escalatory rhetoric from Russia, Canada needs to take a leadership role on the world stage. Last week, Putin openly declared Russia is ready to use nuclear weapons. This was far from the first time the world has heard those threats, but we need to continue to take them seriously.

The nuclear threat is the highest it has ever been. The tensions between NATO, Russia and China are constantly rising, and diplomacy between countries is at an all-time low. Canada has a role to play in restarting the necessary talks on nuclear disarmament. Canada could join the 93 other countries that have signed on to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We can use our voice on the international stage to push for disarmament negotiations so that Ukraine and our allies are not faced with nuclear blackmail and bullying by nuclear superpowers.

This is a moment for all of us to reiterate our commitment to supporting Ukraine and supporting the fight to create a peaceful, just world.

● (2010)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Chair, I appreciate the member's emphasis on the importance of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, but my question is in regard to the amount of aid. Today, the Prime Minister of Ukraine indicated that close to an additional \$2 billion arrived in Ukraine, which ultimately brings aid closer to the \$7-billion mark. It is important that we provide all forms of support for Ukraine.

I wonder if the member can provide her thoughts on that issue. I am talking about everything from humanitarian aid to military aid to cash in hand. All of this is really important, and Canada does have a very strong and prominent role to play.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: Madam Chair, Ukrainians are used to all these announcements, but there is no follow-through. Canadians are used to that. There are so many projects and promises that Liberal governments have made over the years that they have never followed through on. While all of those announcements are great, I would really love to see some follow-through.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Chair, I have seen the response from Canadians from coast

to coast to coast. In my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby, the Holy Eucharist Cathedral, which serves the Ukrainian community in both English and Ukrainian, and many other organizations have stepped up to fundraise in the community to provide supports for Ukrainian refugees who come to live there. There is no doubt that there is a consensus in my community of being as supportive of Ukraine as we can be. I note that my colleague said in her speech that she is very supportive of the Ukrainian community in Canada and of the fight for Ukrainian democracy against this horrible dictatorship led by Mr. Putin.

I wonder to what extent Conservatives can justify their opposition to the strategic security partnership and their opposition to a trade deal with Ukraine, an opposition that seems to be systematic, when so many Canadians across the country are supportive of the Ukrainian people at this dire time, as they face this imminent threat to their country and democracy.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: Madam Chair, I know my hon. colleague cares a great deal about those in his community who are fighting for their relatives, family members and the Ukrainian diaspora.

I too have that in London—Fanshawe. In greater London, there are about 10,000 Ukrainians, and they have said the same thing to me. They are very concerned about this wavering of support they are starting to see and the lack of support for the free trade agreement with Ukraine.

I am so proud of the incredible work of the local Ukrainian council and the Ukrainian Centre. There is also the Canadian Ukrainian Logistics Division, which continues to go to Ukraine to deliver much-needed aid: helmets, boots, tourniquets, just name it. They have spoken to me about how concerned they are.

I can only say that I do not understand it. I hope the Conservatives see reason and come back to the solidarity that we all need to see for Ukraine.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Chair, Conservatives strongly support Ukraine. We supported sending lethal weapons to Ukraine even before the war, at a time when the NDP opposed it and spoke out against it. We supported consistent sanctions against Russia, even when the Liberals were granting sanctions exemptions to Russia.

I want to ask the member about the seizure of Russian assets. This is mentioned in the co-operation agreement, in section N. There is very important language there about seizing Russian assets and using them to support Ukraine.

One great way that we can continue to ensure Ukraine has the financial support it requires to fight the war and rebuild is to repurpose Russian assets, and, frankly, the government has been behind on this. I wonder if the member would support our call to repurpose confiscated Russian assets and use them to support Ukraine.

Government Orders

• (2015)

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Madam Chair, I would probably repeat a lot of what I said to the Liberal member. Conservative actions mean a great deal, and we have seen those actions and a lack of support. They have made their bed and they need to lie in it.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Chair, it is an honour, as always, to stand in this place and represent the people of Edmonton Strathcona. I am from Edmonton Strathcona, and at the very beginning of my political career, I became a member of the Canada-Ukraine parliamentary association. I followed in the footsteps of Linda Duncan, the member of Parliament for Edmonton Strathcona before me, who was also the vice-chair of the parliamentary association, the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group.

Of course, we have a very large Ukrainian population, but as I have said many times before, those of us in Edmonton all feel like we are bit Ukrainian. As one can appreciate, Heather McPherson is not a terribly Ukrainian name, but I know my way around perogies and feel very connected to the community. I am very proud of our caucus. I am very proud of the New Democratic Party for standing in solidarity steadfastly with the people of Ukraine.

We know Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, who are fighting against Putin and the brutal invasion by Putin and the Russian Federation, are not just fighting for themselves. They are fighting for us. They are fighting for freedom, for democracy and for the international rules-based order, and we need to do everything we can to support them.

That is why a little less than two years ago, I brought forward a unanimous consent motion in this House declaring what Russia is doing in Ukraine as a genocide. We were able to get unanimous consent to support that call. We were one of the very first countries in the world to have its Parliament declare that a genocide was taking place. I am extraordinarily proud of the New Democratic Party and being able to bring that motion forward.

I am also very happy that we were able to bring a motion forward just this February, which we were able to get unanimous consent for, that talked about reaffirming Canada's support for sanctions against Russia, providing military and financial assistance to Ukraine and conducting a security guarantee agreement with Ukraine. We are here today for that security agreement.

It is wonderful to stand in this place and know that New Democrats all across this country are supportive of the work happening in Ukraine. However, I have to say that I have some concerns about the support we have seen from the Liberals and the Conservatives.

As my colleague from London—Fanshawe mentioned beforehand, the Liberals are very good at making promises; they are not very good at keeping them. We have seen time and time again the Liberals promise aid, sanctions and enforcement, promise all of these pieces that have never come to fruition.

I went to Ukraine a year ago. I stood in Irpin and saw what the Russian Federation had done. I saw how it had targeted civilian infrastructure. I know that many mines in that country need to be cleared, and we need to support Ukraine so it can rebuild. However,

at the same time as we know these needs are so great, this year the Liberal government cut official development assistance by 15% and has indicated that there will be further cuts in the budget we will see in April. This is not going to help the people of Ukraine. It is not going to help people around the world who are suffering because of the food scarcity caused by this war.

Then we look at the Conservatives. I am very disappointed in their failures to support Ukraine. They will stand in this place and will tell us they are supportive of Ukraine, but actions mean more than words. It is easy to say things. However, when they vote against things like funding for Operation Unifier and things like the fair trade agreement that the President of Ukraine asked us to move forward with, those actions speak much louder.

I do not want to stand in this place and claim it is all Conservatives. I know there are members of the Conservative Party who still believe in working together with all parties across this floor to support Ukraine. I know they are there. I hope they will be able to convince their leader to go from the position he has taken to the position we have held for a long time, all parties within this place, of supporting Ukraine.

As I said, I am proud to be a New Democrat. I am proud that we are supporting Ukraine. However, there is more we can do. There is more we can do to help it rebuild and demine and to make sure it wins. We can make sure it gets tools quickly and urgently.

We need to stop announcing and we need to start delivering, and New Democrats are here. We stand with Ukraine. We remain standing with Ukraine.

• (2020)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Chair, the member is eager to politicize these issues, sadly, and cast aspersions on others. I want to point out that in February 2022, this member, on behalf of the NDP, spoke out against sending lethal weapons to Ukraine. I will read a quote from her in committee.

She said:

Some people in this committee and some members of our Parliament have been calling on the government to provide lethal weapons to Ukraine. I have some concerns about that, obviously.

Do you believe there are risks to providing those lethal weapons to Ukraine? This applies in terms of keeping track of those weapons, but more importantly, I'd like some information on how Russia would perceive that. Would they perceive that as an escalation instead of a de-escalation?

These are unbelievable comments from the member, opposing sending lethal weapons to Ukraine for fear of how Russia would react. Conservatives stand with Ukraine. We have been in favour of sanctions and in favour of sending weapons to Ukraine from the earliest days. The NDP spoke out against sending Ukraine the weapons they needed to fight back against aggression.

Will that NDP member, instead of casting aspersions everywhere else, look at her own conscience and apologize for those pro-Russian sentiments she expressed two years ago?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Chair, I think maybe the member needs a glass of water. He seems quite upset.

What I will say to him is that what we brought forward, as New Democrats, before the further invasion by the Russian Federation, was looking for peace. We were looking for a peaceful resolution. This happened before the invasion that we saw, the extension of the invasion by the Russian Federation. Of course, we are New Democrats. We are always looking to lessen the loss of life. That is in the very nature of what we do.

Today, and this week, we are honouring the work of the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney. I would like the members from the Conservative Party to perhaps reflect upon some of the legacy that Brian Mulroney brought forward. He was not someone I agreed on everything with, but I will say that his support for South Africa, going against the United States at the time, against an apartheid regime was extraordinarily important.

I wonder why they found it impossible for them to actually support sending humanitarian aid, perhaps going against the United States, and stopping the selling of arms to Israel, who is using them against civilians. I wonder if this particular version of Conservatism, which I think perhaps the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney would not be as impressed with, would have the courage the former prime minister had in terms of standing up for human rights. We are not seeing it from this particular opposition.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Chair, Canadians across the length and breadth of Canada have been very supportive, as my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona has said, in supporting Ukraine, but I think there is a profound problem when one party in the House refuses to support the strategic security partnership and refuses to support a trade agreement with Ukraine that we were asked, by President Zelenskyy, to sign.

The former Conservative leader Erin O'Toole would never have taken those radical, extremist stands. The current leader is an extremist. He is a radical. He takes his direction, I believe, from the Republicans in the United States, who have been steadfastly trying to stop any supports for Ukraine.

What does it mean when the leader of the Conservative Party calls Ukraine a “far away foreign land” and what does it mean when Conservatives stand with Danielle Smith, who is right beside the major Russian apologist for Putin, Tucker Carlson, who has provided so much damage in trying to attack Ukraine and reinforce the Russian dictatorship?

What does this all mean when Conservatives contradict themselves so vehemently?

• (2025)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: When we have only five minutes for questions, it would be good to have shorter questions so we could have more questions.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Chair, it is something that I have been appalled by and that many Albertans I know have been appalled by.

We heard from the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. We did not hear a single peep from him when Danielle Smith stood with Tucker Carlson right before Tucker Carl-

son went and did an interview in Moscow with Putin and used Russian propaganda. Frankly, I am surprised he was not standing with Tucker Carlson as well, because that is what we have come to expect from this particular member.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Chair, I would like to request the unanimous consent of the House to table the editorial I wrote immediately after that interview, which actually outlined and responded directly to some of the claims in it. If there is agreement, would the House allow me to table it to show the member what I actually said?

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Chair, I should say that I am sharing my time with the member for Orléans.

It is a real privilege tonight to be a part of this debate. I was hoping, as I prepared for it, that it would be a time where we, from all parts of the House, reflected on the importance of engaging with Ukraine and for Ukraine and of standing firm with Ukraine, leaving some of the other parts aside for tonight.

It is no secret that I travel the world a lot. The question of Ukraine and Canada's support for Ukraine comes up often, whether I am in the global south, eastern Europe, western Europe or other parts of the world. I often talk about the fact that it is a surprise to people how much Canada and Canadians are concerned about Ukraine. I think that is because, when they look at Canada, they think we are nice people, but they do not always get the fact that we are committed every day to the values and purposes that we want to uphold.

When it comes to Ukraine, there are three factors, I think, at least in my head. One is that we are affronted intellectually at Russia's aggression, its inhumane activity and its lack of understanding of the sovereignty of another country and the international rules-based order. Russia was a G8 member. It is now out of that group, but it is a permanent member of the Security Council and we expect more from it. We have seen the disastrous effects of the war, Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. It affects us and affronts us intellectually, but it is more than that. It is also in our hearts.

The other part of this is at the level of our hearts. As has been said in the House, we all know Ukrainians. If we are not of Ukrainian background ourselves, we have friends and family who are deeply affected personally by this conflict and we want to share with them, at a very emotional level, the disaster that is confronting their country of origin.

It is also a strategic issue. The reality is that, when many people look at the globe, they see Moscow over here and Ottawa over here, and they think we are very far away. Strategically, if we look at the globe on our toes and look down, we can see that we share a maritime border with Russia in the Arctic, which is already a fragile area. I am not saying that we are preparing for Russia to invade us at any time, but we are sensitive to the strategic importance of Canada maintaining its sovereignty. When we see an affront to the sovereignty of another country, we react.

Government Orders

It is intellectual, it is our hearts and it is also about Canadian sovereignty, so we are engaged. Tonight, we will say, once again, that we are committed not just yesterday, not just today, but also tomorrow. We will see this war through until the end. We will only stop when we come to peace, and that peace will only come when it is done on Ukraine's terms. That is our commitment and we will continue to do that.

I want to commend the previous Conservative government, which very early on, with the illegal invasion of Crimea, took steps to engage in that fight and set the stage, which we were then able, when we formed government in 2015, to continue. We began by training troops to get Ukraine ready because we knew that it was not the end of the story. The story was still continuing. As we progressed through those years, we also began to look at Ukrainian reform to help Ukraine get ready to be a part of the European Union and to become a part of NATO, which Canada has always been committed to. Ukraine is a country that we want to have as an ally, fit and ready to be a part of the groups that we are a part of, because our security is related to their security.

With the illegal invasion two years ago of Russia into Ukraine, we saw the disaster that happened. I would commend the documentary film *20 Days in Mariupol* to everyone in this place to see the disaster that the Russian troops, Putin's troops, brought onto the innocent people of Ukraine. That is why we have been awakened to this disaster, which has been caused by Putin's aggression and his failure to understand their sovereignty.

We have continued for two years, but not perfectly. I am very clear that our operations have not been perfectly done, but we are a leader among nations in the world in our support for Ukraine financially with sovereign loans, with engagement and with military equipment. We are continuing to support them and to listen to them in everything that they are asking us to do. That is acknowledged daily by Ukrainian politicians, by members of Parliament and by the government itself.

• (2030)

Now we get to tonight's take-note debate looking at the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership. This is a 10-year commitment, starting with over \$3 billion this year, on engaging the readiness, adaptability and resilience of Ukraine to fight for itself. It is a political document. It is military document. It is a security document. It is about co-operation and engagement. It shows our commitment to Ukraine, and we will continue to do that.

I look forward to questions. I feel like I am just starting.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Chair, my hon. colleague mentioned in his speech how Ukraine and Canada share many similarities, in particular, a shared geography with Russia: Ukraine borders Russia, and Canada shares an Arctic border region with Russia.

In light of the fact that Sweden and Finland have recently joined NATO and that NORAD modernization is going on, as the defence minister has indicated, could he tell the House what the government's views are on Canada's role in the Arctic, particularly as it relates to countering some of the threats the Russian Federation

presents not just to the Canadian Arctic but to the other Arctic nations in the NATO alliance?

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Madam Chair, that question is key in my mind. As someone who lived in Canada's north for six years, I am very aware of the strategic importance of Canada's Arctic, as well as the fragility of Canada's Arctic and the people who inhabit it.

I had not been to Finland until last year, but I made three trips to Finland in the last year and two trips to Sweden. Part of that was to engage with those northern countries. The welcoming of those countries into NATO has been absolutely critical. It changes the nature of our alliance. It adds more weight to the northern questions, to the near north, to the near Arctic, as well as the Arctic countries. Those voices at the table are very valuable for Canada. Of course, we were the first country to acknowledge and approve their accession into NATO. We did that not only because it is good for them and their security, but it is good for Canada and our security. Absolutely, we have to have them.

My colleague from Orleans, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, will be speaking after me. I am sure she will have an understanding of our restructuring, refunding and rebuilding of Canada's defence capacity in the north, both with NORAD and, I am hoping, with NATO as well, and for them to understand that our collective security resides on that front as well, not just in eastern Europe.

• (2035)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Chair, I heard my colleague opposite say earlier that Canada has been a leader in helping Ukraine. In reality, we rank roughly eighth on the list of countries supporting Ukraine, even though Canada is home to the largest population of Ukrainians outside of Ukraine. It seems to me that we could be doing a little more, especially since, as my colleague from Montarville said in his brilliant speech, barely 42% of the support and aid Canada committed to sending has been delivered to Ukraine.

It is all well and good to say that we are going to supply 1,000 F-18s, but if we have no intention of doing so, it is just talk. It feels a bit like the government is posturing, like this is all for appearances. The government is displaying its good intentions and virtue signalling by announcing major support for Ukraine, but if it does not deliver that assistance, it is pointless.

I would like to hear my colleague explain where we are at with the distribution of the assistance promised to Ukraine. How is the government going to do better, as the international community is increasingly calling for, in terms of military and humanitarian support for the current conflict in Ukraine?

*Government Orders**[English]*

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Madam Chair, I am not going to get into a recitation of everything that Canada has done, such as the military support and the training, but when I travel the world, believe me, we are thanked every day for the contributions we have done. There is no way Ukraine would have been able to withstand the massive assault it did from Russia without the training that Canada provided to 30,000 soldiers. I hear that every day.

Have we fallen short? Absolutely we can do more, but every country in the world is facing a similar situation. We are looking for armaments that are not always available. We are looking for weapons that are not always available. The ammunition needs to match the artillery Ukraine has, and it is not always available. This is not an easy task. Canada is working lockstep with our NATO allies and others to continue this fight.

We never said this was easy. I have been in opposition. It is very easy to do anything one wants in opposition and say anything. We are doing it day by day. We are working with the Ukrainian government, with the Ukrainian embassy here and with the tremendous ambassador, and we are finding ways to do that.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Chair, let us set the stage as a beginning.

When I think about Ukraine, I think our friends are in a fight for their very existence. Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians. To be clear, when we think about this attack, it is also an attack on all those who value peace, freedom and democracy. We, as Canadians, have a responsibility to help uphold those values.

We must make sure Ukraine has what it needs to defend itself and to help chart a course for a brighter tomorrow, once this terrible war comes to an end.

[Translation]

To guide these efforts, Prime Minister Trudeau and Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: I would remind the hon. member that we do not use the names of current members of the House.

The hon. member for Orléans.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Chair, I apologize.

To guide these efforts, the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Ukraine signed an agreement on security co-operation between our two countries in Kyiv this past February.

I am very pleased with the agreement, and the reason we are talking about it tonight is that it builds on previous bilateral agreements between Canada and Ukraine, as well as on the larger NATO effort to help Ukraine. Specifically, it builds on the 2017 Canada-Ukraine Defence Cooperation Agreement signed by the Canadian Department of National Defence, the Canadian Armed Forces and the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, a major milestone in our shared defence efforts.

It also builds on the G7 joint declaration of support for Ukraine announced on the margins of the NATO summit in Vilnius last July.

● (2040)

[English]

The aim of this new agreement is to expand and to deepen our political, foreign, military and security co-operation and effectiveness. This includes becoming strategic partners; enabling our two countries to share information more easily; delivering supports to Ukraine during both the conflict and the recovery; providing support to Ukraine in the event of future Russian attacks; helping Ukraine pursue integration into the Euro-Atlantic community; and supporting Ukraine in its pursuit of peace and security, with a special recognition that different segments of the population, including women, men, boys and girls, are all impacted differently by Russia's invasion.

As part of those efforts, the agreement contains several critical funding announcements for Ukraine. Those include \$3 billion in critical financial and military support to Ukraine in 2024, which I think my colleagues mentioned earlier; \$45 million for demining assistance and cyber resilience; another \$30 million to support on-going engagement between CSIS and the Ukrainian intelligence service; and other funding to support resilient food systems, mental health services and governance reforms, among other measures.

[Translation]

One important aspect of this agreement is that it strengthens Canada and Ukraine's already robust defence relationship. We are proud to say that we are helping to support Ukrainian troops by training more than 40,000 Ukrainian soldiers. Since the war started, Canada has provided \$4 billion in military aid to Ukraine, including \$95 million in materiel.

The agreement also recognizes the significant potential of the Ukrainian defence industry.

[English]

When Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine just over two years ago, it launched an attack on all those who seek peace and freedom across the globe. Putin thought the west would be quick to abandon Ukraine, but he was wrong; we are more united than ever. The security co-operation agreement signed last month is a testament to Canada's dedication.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague from the defence committee, the parliamentary secretary for national defence, for her intervention tonight and for her support for Ukraine.

Government Orders

I would ask the member, specifically on the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, how she envisions clause N., which talks about the seizure of Russian assets for compensation to Ukraine to help support the rebuilding efforts of Ukraine's infrastructure, for compensation to homeowners and for compensation to families who have lost loved ones and property because of the indiscriminate attacks by the Russian military and by Putin's war machine?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Chair, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. I like to believe that we share a common goal when it comes to support for Ukraine.

From the very beginning, Canada has been there in support. We were also very much engaged in the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. We believe that this is a way to help support the rebuilding and to look at current components where we can help Ukraine in its desire to militarize itself.

Unlike the member opposite, we voted in favour of this agreement. I would like to put on the record that I am extremely disappointed to see that the Conservatives, under the leadership of the leader of the Conservative Party, voted against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. We will continue to be there. We have an excellent rapport with Ukraine. We have been answering its requests to provide support, and we will continue.

• (2045)

[Translation]

Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Chair, according to the Liberal member who spoke before my colleague, Canada is having trouble keeping its promises because the weapons and equipment are not always available, the soldiers are not always available, the money is not always available and so on.

Would my colleague not agree that the problem is really that the government made too many commitments and should have been more realistic when it was making promises to Ukraine? If that is not the case, is it because the government has become indifferent about upholding the commitments it has made?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Chair, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague, but I have to smile a bit because from day one, Canada has been firmly committed to providing help to Ukraine. I mentioned the training to help Ukrainian soldiers, the new co-operation agreement and the aid for rebuilding Ukraine. We recently announced \$40 million to provide Ukraine with artillery ammunition during the 20th Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting. The Minister of National Defence is collaborating and conferring with our allies and partners to help Ukraine.

I absolutely do not agree that we are not providing help to Ukraine. We will continue to do so. Yes, sometimes there are challenges, but from the very beginning, our intentions of supporting Ukraine have always been very sincere.

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Chair, it is indeed an honour for me to be rising today as the shadow minister of national defence for the official opposition, the Conservative Party, and also as someone who is incredibly proud of his Ukrainian heritage.

I have to say this at the outset. I want to make sure everybody understands that Conservatives support Ukraine. We denounce Russia's invasion in Ukraine, which Putin has committed and has allowed his military to commit war atrocities and war crimes against the innocent people of Ukraine. Because of that, we support the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, which will enhance the co-operation between Canada and Ukraine and between the Canadian Armed Forces and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. We need to do more, not less, and we believe that this security agreement will set the tone.

We have spent the last couple of days here in Ottawa paying tribute to the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, former prime minister of Canada, who lay in state the last couple of days here in Ottawa, and I want to extend my condolences to Mila, to Caroline, to Ben, to Mark and to Nicolas. Brian Mulroney is so key to tonight's debate because of his incredible support for Ukraine. He was the first western leader, on December 2, 1991, who recognized Ukraine's independence, and I think it is very important that we honour his legacy and also the incredible work he did to make that happen.

The fall of the wall in Berlin and the end of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics all happened because of the work done by Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Brian Mulroney to apply increasing sanctions on the U.S.S.R. to make sure the Soviets were not able to fund their war machine and to put the Soviets into bankruptcy. Because of their incredible work of reaching across the Atlantic and of making sure they worked in partnership as western liberal democracies that shared a common heritage and loved freedom, democracy and human rights, they stood up against that Soviet bear.

Today, we find ourselves in a similar situation, where the Russian bear is now trying to flex its muscles, using its own war machine to invade Ukraine and to commit war crimes. To undermine the NATO alliance and to undermine all our democracies, Russia has been feeding out propaganda and misinformation that has only been paled by going back to Hitler's Nazis and what Goebbels did to make sure that misinformation and propaganda was disseminated, to not only their own citizens, but also around the world. As such, it is a responsibility of our western democracies to make sure people understand that what they see and what they get are actually two different things when we are dealing with the Kremlin, the kleptocrats there and their propaganda.

I think it is important, at this time, to also recognize that our friends in Ukraine and our friends in Israel are facing some horrific situations from terrorism, from war crimes and from barbarism, and we need to make sure we continue to stand with Ukraine and continue to stand with Israel in their times of need. We must call for the release of all hostages taken in Ukraine, who are being held in Russia, and all hostages taken in Israel, who are being held by Hamas. They have kidnapped over 20,000 children. They are brainwashing them and often using them in their military as cannon fodder against their own country, and I think that is deplorable.

As a Conservative, I am proud of our track record of supporting Ukraine. It started with Brian Mulroney, and many of us sat in caucus and in government with Stephen Harper. We were there for Ukraine in bringing forward Operation Unifier.

● (2050)

We were there for Ukraine by supplying it with military equipment as soon as the war in Donbas broke out in 2014, and with the illegal invasion and annexation of Crimea by the “little green men”, which we all know were the Wagner Group from the Kremlin. We were there providing things like winter kit, night vision goggles and body armour, and allowing the Ukrainians to be able to modernize. With Operation Unifier, they were able to train up to NATO standards and be in the position where they are today, able to fight back against what was supposed to be one of the superpowers in the world.

We had been saying this since 2018 when we saw that the war was not ending in Donbas. It was not just an insurgency happening in Luhansk and Donetsk. We knew that there were Russian troops on the ground supplying the weapons and the personnel that were carrying on the war and occupying territory in eastern Ukraine.

In 2018, Conservatives started to say that Canada should send over our surplus weapons. There was a cache of weapons sitting collecting dust in Montreal that was supposed to go to the Kurdish Peshmerga. That never happened, so we said, “Let us take those AK-47s, those grenades and grenade launchers and the Carl Gustaf anti-tank weapons, and give them to the Ukrainian military.” That did not happen until the war broke out in February 2022.

At that point in time, we immediately started saying, “Thank you for doing that, but we have more to do.” We have surplus weapons that are being disposed of, like our light armoured vehicles, our Coyotes, our Bisons and our armoured ambulances. Let us supply those to Ukraine. We have surplus Role 3 mobile hospitals that were bought for the COVID pandemic that were not getting used. They never came out of the containers. There are a dozen of them. Let us ship them over to help save lives on the front.

Let us send over more munitions. We need to ramp up our production of 155 rounds for the howitzers. Those artillery shells still have not increased in production to this very day, over two years since the war started.

Just recently, our leader of the Conservative Party called on the government to supply CRV7 rockets. There are 83,000 sitting in Dundurn, Saskatchewan, that are going to be disposed of, sent to the scrap heap. Instead of scrapping them, let us give them to the Ukrainians, who can use them to defend themselves and push back the Russian invaders.

In my last couple minutes, I have to say that I support the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership. In particular, I will talk about part 4.I and part 4.N. Part 4.I is “Resilience of Energy and other Critical Infrastructure”. It is important to note that this is talking about supporting Ukraine's overall energy sector. That means liquefied natural gas, which is the main source of fuel for its electricity. It is the main source of fuel for its heating. It is the main source of fuel to drive its economy.

We as Conservatives, including my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills as our shadow minister for foreign affairs, have clearly stated that the way we must stop putting fuel in Russia's war machine, the way we take cash out of the pockets of Putin and his kleptocrats in the Kremlin, is by taking away the market, the ability

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to sell their energy products in Europe. We need more Canadian energy.

There is also a focus on nuclear safety, and that is one thing Canada actually can do. We can do small nuclear reactors. We can actually help modernize the nuclear infrastructure Ukraine has, the power plants. I think we need to capitalize on that, and that will help Ukraine, especially as its nuclear power plants continue to be attacked by Russia.

Finally, part 4.N is “Compensation for Losses, Injuries and Damages Caused by Russian Aggression”, taking Russian assets here in Canada and around the world and using them to directly support Ukraine, Ukrainian families and Ukrainian businesses, and to rebuild Ukrainian infrastructure. It is also about the seizure and the repurposing of Russian sovereign options through compensation mechanisms. It is going to be a huge step towards actually allowing us to cover the losses, injuries and damages suffered by people who lost loved ones, and people against whom rape was used as a weapon, and to compensate people for the loss of their homes and their businesses.

● (2055)

This is a great opportunity for us to co-operate on all sides of the House to ensure that Ukraine is able to rebuild after the war ends, and that the Russian Federation pays for it.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Chair, I listened with great interest to the speech by my colleague, and I certainly appreciate the history that the member described, and that he does support the current security agreement that we are discussing tonight.

However, what I cannot understand is why he voted against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. What I cannot understand is why he and the rest of his Conservative colleagues, who purport to support Ukraine, voted against continued support for Operation Unifier, which they so greatly claim was something that came out of the previous Conservative government, but which they refuse to continue to support. In fact, it is even more important that the House show unity in supporting Ukraine. We are hearing from all parties that the House should show unity in supporting Ukraine, and I am not hearing that from the member opposite.

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Chair, first of all, I will take no lessons from the member. As a person of Ukrainian heritage, I always stand with Ukraine.

The first free trade agreement, which was in effect until today, was actually negotiated by the Conservatives. That was, by far, a superior trade agreement to the one we have now. Regardless of that, the Liberals stuck a poison pill in the free trade agreement. I am here voting on behalf of my constituents, and my constituents will never vote for a carbon tax. As long as there is a carbon tax in any legislation before us, Conservatives will vote against it. I have no problem standing up for that.

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On the issue of Conservatives' supporting Ukraine and voting against Operation Unifier, that was a budget item. We have lost confidence in the Liberal government. We will vote against the government every chance we get. Our constituents would not forgive us if we did not vote against the government, because we have lost confidence. We will continue to vote against it going forward.

I would like to remind the member that when the member's leader was leader of the third party, he and the Deputy Prime Minister voted against Operation Unifier on two different occasions because they were in opposition and did not support the government either.

• (2100)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Chair, I would like to tell my Liberal colleague that I will not single out that Conservative member by criticizing his commitment to Ukraine. I see him with the Canada-Ukraine group regularly. His commitment is beyond reproach. His party's position on the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement is another story, however. On a personal level, I can guarantee that the member is fully committed, with all his energy, heart and conviction, to defending the Ukrainians in this community.

I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I always find it interesting to hear from this member because he knows his stuff. I would like him to comment on how Canada is currently handling the conflict in Ukraine and on the support that can be provided by Canada, which I find weak and a little lazy. I said it earlier in another speech. I think Canada could do a lot more. I also feel that, contrary to what the Liberals think, the international community sees Canada as all talk and very little action. We have delivered 42% of the aid we promised.

Imagine if Canada were in a situation where it needed help from its international allies, if we had to defend our Arctic sovereignty, for example. It could happen. We must not rule it out. Does my colleague think that what Canada is doing right now could have some impact on how quickly international allies would come to Canada's aid?

[English]

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Chair, we are supporting the government for all of the military aid that has been provided to this point in time. I also appreciate the fact that every loan done under the Harper government that was offered to Ukraine to help with its economy, its government and the military has already been repaid. Ukraine has been honouring the loans that were provided from Canada and other nations.

However, the member is right: There have been a lot of announcements, and one is not going to win a war on paper; one actually needs to deliver. All we have to do is look at 14 months ago. The Government of Canada announced, with great fanfare, that we were going to send over a NASAMS air defence system. That still has not been ordered. As for the \$406 million, who knows where it is? The NASAMS is still either in the United States or not even built yet. There are a lot of questions around where the contract is. Ukraine needs that air defence system today. It needed it when it was first announced. It does not need it 14 months from now.

We also know that when President Zelenskyy was here, the government made a bunch of fanfare about sending over 50 new light armoured vehicles. I can say that the contract with either GDLS or Armatec in London has not been signed. We do not know that they are actually going to purchase these. This was, again, announced six months ago, and we have not even put a pen to a contract to allow our own Canadian industry to build the light armoured vehicles.

As I mentioned, Ukraine was burning through over 8,000 rounds of howitzer artillery shells on a daily basis. Canada has not even increased our production here, for our 155-millimetre shells built in Montreal, one iota. We are still building, today, 3,000 a month. That does not give Ukraine enough for even half a day. Canada and our allies need to step up, to really ramp up production. We have to get on a war footing and we have to make sure we support our Canadian defence industry so it can deliver the equipment, weapons and munitions needed by the Ukrainian military to defend its sovereign territory.

Finally, as we have been calling for, we have a lot of equipment that is being disposed of. We—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: I cannot give the hon. member another speech within the questions and answers.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

• (2105)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Chair, I do not question the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman on his loyalty to Ukraine. I think that is well documented. Certainly the member for Drummond is absolutely right in this regard. I do not question the loyalty and the support that his former leader, Erin O'Toole, had for Ukraine. I do question his current leader's support for Ukraine. He has denounced Ukraine as being a faraway foreign land. He pushed his caucus to vote against the Ukraine trade deal.

I know that the member is trying to defend his leader, and that is normal. Quite frankly, however, the idea that a trade deal that gives Ukrainians the decision whether or not to put a price on pollution is certainly not something the Conservatives could have voted against. His leader has not, in any way, confirmed that the strategic security partnership would be adequately funded.

It is true that Conservatives, last December, put Operation Unifier on the chopping block. A deliberate motion was moved to cut funding to Operation Unifier, and all Conservatives voted for it. If the intent was to show opposition to the government, the Conservatives had the ability to not move that motion and to move other motions. They chose to move the motion to cut Operation Unifier.

I think what concerns me the most is Tucker Carlson and Danielle Smith. The Conservative leader has not denounced that appearance with the Putin apologist, and my simple question is, "Why?"

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Chair, I would like to remind the NDP House leader that, before 2019, before being part of the Liberal-NDP coalition, he voted against Operation Unifier in every main estimate and every supplementary estimate, in every budget from 2014 to 2019. He has no right to criticize anyone over here who has lost confidence in the government. The NDP is propping up the costly and corrupt Liberals.

I would just say this as well: Our leader has been very vocal in his support for Ukraine. He has actually called on the government to send the 83,000 CRV7 rockets to Ukraine today. The Ukrainians have asked for them. All the inspections have been done. Instead of allowing them to sit there and collect dust or cost us millions of dollars to dispose of them, let us hand them off to the Ukrainian armed forces so that they could dispose of them in a way that protects their country.

I would suggest that the member for New Westminster—Burnaby get onside with the leader of the Conservative Party so that we could actually get the job done.

Mr. Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Madam Chair, I will be sharing my time with the Minister of International Trade.

I think it is really unfortunate that I am here yet again to talk about Ukraine and the war and using those two words in the same sentence. I wish, when I thought about Ukraine, my thoughts would be limited to growing up with my *baba* in Fort William. We would sit on the front steps of her corner store. She would bribe me with Coca-Cola and chips to get me to sit and listen to her Ukrainian hymns and stories about the old country.

I wish my thoughts of Ukraine were limited to thinking about my family in Odessa, which I visited, and visiting the village of my *baba*, which was near Horodenka in Chernivtsi, or the village of my *dido*, which was near Kamyanyets-Podilskyi.

Instead, here we are talking yet again about the war, an unprovoked attack by the Russian state, led by Vladimir Putin, in complete and utter disregard for the most fundamental principles of international law. In starting this war, Putin has committed what is known in international law as the crime of aggression, which in the words of the Nuremberg judgment is “the supreme international crime...[as]...it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole”, the evil being all other international war crimes.

I would love to talk more about how the invasion has affected the international legal order, which grew out of the horrors of the Second World War, and how the resulting international trade rules have brought prosperity to millions of poor people around the world. However, time is limited, there is a war on, so let me talk about some of the specifics and highlights of the agreement.

In 2024, Canada will provide \$3.02 billion in macroeconomic and military support to Ukraine. The agreement states:

In the event of renewed Russian aggression or attacks against Ukraine following the cessation of current hostilities, and at the request of either of the Participants, the Participants will consult within twenty-four...hours to determine measures needed to counter or deter the aggression.

There is a section of the agreement that commits both countries to establish closer defence industrial partnerships. In that, there is

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an explicit recognition of the acute need for ammunition in Ukraine.

There is talk of the need for Canada to continue to support demining. As a doctor who has operated on land mine injuries, that is really important to me.

Canada, in this agreement, commits to supporting Ukraine in making sure it holds Russia to account for war crimes, including in front of the International Criminal Court.

Lastly, the agreement commits Canada to working with other countries to establish a compensation mechanism whereby Russia would pay for the damages done to Ukraine.

I read a quote earlier about how starting a war is the supreme international crime. That quote came from the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. There were eight judges on the tribunal; two of them were Soviet judges. As we all know, both Russia and Ukraine were part of the Soviet Union. It is ironic that Russia not only committed the supreme international crime but also committed it against its own brothers and sisters in Ukraine.

It is also ironic that two of the judges on that tribunal were American. The United States is the historic champion of the international legal order. However, right now, we are seeing the United States struggle in order to continue to finance military assistance for Ukraine; much assistance has been absolutely crucial in preventing a Russian victory.

Crass political gamesmanship and unbridled self-interest seem to have guided many American Republican congressmen to try to block the Biden administration's attempt to provide a further \$60 billion in security assistance for Ukraine. This is an affront to the memories of those esteemed American jurists who sat at the Nuremberg trials and to the millions of people who fought and died on the side of the allied nations, both to fight the Nazis and to create the present international legal order.

Thankfully, we know that the war in Ukraine will eventually come to an end. Ukrainians will then be able to return to what they do best, which is to grow cucumbers, tomatoes, sunflowers and dill and, occasionally, to be able to sit down and calmly enjoy a nice glass of *horilka*. Unfortunately, that day will not come soon enough.

Slava Ukraini.

• (2110)

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Chair, I want to thank the member opposite, my colleague on the health committee, for sharing some of his thoughts on this important co-operation agreement, as well as some of his history of being Ukrainian and growing up with his *baba* and *dido*.

Likewise, I grew up in a Ukrainian family; there is a very special bond that we have. This issue is very troubling. The member talked a bit about the medical co-operation in this agreement. Could he provide a bit more on why it is so important that Canada respond in this way and what more we can do to ensure that we have a strong Ukraine and a strong Canada?

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Mr. Marcus Powlowski: Madam Chair, to tell the truth, I went through the whole agreement, but I did not see anything on medical assistance. However, that is exceedingly important.

In fact, I know that Canadian surgeons, as part of teams with American surgeons specializing in plastic surgery, orthopaedic surgery and neurosurgery, have gone to Ukraine to assist people who have been injured in the war. They try, as much as possible, to make them as close as they can to what they were before their injuries. Therefore, I think Canada has really contributed a lot in that respect, and, certainly, continuing to do so is important. However, I will stress that it is far better to prevent injuries and death than having to send surgeons and medical teams to try to undo what war has done.

• (2115)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Chair, we are all saddened by the news that Ukrainian children are trying to learn, struggling in this conflict, in bomb shelters. In places like Kharkiv, they have to go hundreds of metres underground to actually get the schooling that has been so cruelly interrupted by this massive invasion by the Russian dictatorship.

I think it is appalling to all Canadians to see a dictatorship that sees human beings simply as objects and tries to bulldoze over the Ukrainian people in order to take Ukraine, destroy its democracy and occupy the entire country.

Sadly, in the United States, the Republicans, the far right elements, are refusing to provide aid to Ukraine. To what extent does my colleague think Canada needs to step up additionally, given that the conservative Republicans have absolutely refused to support Ukraine and are siding with the Russian dictatorship? What does Canada need to do now to reinforce the supports for Ukraine, its democracy and its people?

Mr. Marcus Powlowski: Madam Chair, I would like to thank the member for his compassion for the Ukrainian people.

As to what Canada has to do at the moment, certainly, it has to hope for a good result in the upcoming election in the U.S. We certainly fear what is going to happen should Trump be re-elected.

What the member said earlier about the effects on children was very apropos for me, because the harm caused by this invasion will go on for years. The effect on the education of children is something that we are going to feel for years.

The fact that the Republicans are blocking this is absolutely terrible in my mind. The reality is, perhaps, that we in the western world, parts of NATO that are not the United States, need to contemplate the possibility that we will have to do far more on our own. At some point in the future, should Trump be elected, we may need to do things without the support of America. I certainly hope that Canada would be willing to make the commitment that is needed to continue support of Ukraine against Russia with or without the United States. However, I would certainly like to see the United States continue its historical role in promoting and supporting the international legal order.

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Chair, it is an

honour to take part in tonight's debate on the relationship between Canada and Ukraine.

Before I continue with my speech, I want to take a moment to recognize in the chamber former prime minister Brian Mulroney and to extend my condolences to his family and to all those who knew him. Prime Minister Mulroney was, of course, a steadfast supporter of Ukraine, and his leadership continues to positively impact the Canada-Ukraine relationship today. When Prime Minister Mulroney was prime minister in 1991, Canada became the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence.

As colleagues may know, Bill C-57 received royal assent yesterday, leading us one step closer to bringing into force the modernized Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. This modernized trade agreement represents a historic milestone for the Canada-Ukraine commercial relationship and for Ukraine's economic security, which I will be focusing my remarks on tonight.

The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, also known as CUF-TA, is just one of the tools Canada is using to support our ally Ukraine, which continues to face the violent consequences of Russia's illegal and unjustified invasion. Indeed, since the beginning of the conflict in 2022, Canada has committed over \$13.3 billion in multi-faceted support covering military, financial, humanitarian, development, security and cultural assistance for Ukraine.

The modernized free trade agreement is another form of support that will provide the framework for bilateral trade and investment. It will strengthen the foundation on which Canadian and Ukrainian businesses can work together, not only now but also during Ukraine's recovery and economic reconstruction over years to come, when it will win this war against Russia's illegal invasion.

Furthermore, our bilateral relations are strengthened through our warm people-to-people ties that are rooted in Ukrainian Canadians in our country. They represent roughly 1.3 million people and have shared values. Many of these values are reflected in CUFTA.

In January of this year, I had the opportunity to spend some time across western and central Canada, from Alberta to Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and of course here in Ontario. I have spoken with many Ukrainian Canadians, businesses and stakeholders about what was before our Parliament, which was the modernized CUFTA. There was a lot of interest from Ukrainian Canadians, certainly from the Canadian private sector, to support Ukraine as it continues to keep not only its economy going, but also its reconstruction activities.

The modernized CUFTA is going to do just that. Canadian companies would not only trade in goods, and that was the agreement we just modernized. It has been modernized with provisions that allow for services, trade and investments. The new trade agreement has nine new dedicated chapters that cover things such as cross-border trade in services, investments, financial services, telecommunications and good regulatory practices. As well, it includes dedicated chapters on inclusive trade, trade that will yield benefits to all in our economies, such as small and medium-sized businesses, which has a chapter. There is the first-ever trade and indigenous peoples chapter to be in a concluded FTA, as well as a chapter on trade and gender, so that the benefits of trade will be shared widely.

Ultimately, the outcome of this agreement is a modern, ambitious and fully comprehensive free trade agreement that will fortify the Canadian-Ukrainian bilateral commercial relationship for years to come and will support Ukraine's long-term recovery and trade interests. It is also good for Canada. There are many Canadian companies that have a lot to offer that will benefit from trade and investment in Ukraine.

I look forward to leading a business mission to Ukraine. Many businesses I talk to are interested in having the trade minister lead a mission that will open up some of those doors and create the opportunity, and that would just build on the momentum of the new CUFTA.

Let me conclude by thanking the negotiators, not only in Canada but also in Ukraine. They were negotiating this in the midst of a war, with sirens blaring and bombs going off around them. I want to thank them for their courage. Let us rebuild Ukraine together.

• (2120)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Chair, I want to commend the government for concluding this agreement with Ukraine.

My question is on reconstruction. The former secretary of the treasury Larry Summers, along with others, has advocated for the repurposing of some \$300 billion U.S. in seized Russian assets, which are mostly being held in democracies in North America and Europe to be used for the reconstruction of Ukraine in a type of Marshall 2.0 plan.

I am wondering what measures, initiatives and discussions the Government of Canada has undertaken in Washington, London and the European Union, and at the European Commission, about this proposal.

Hon. Mary Ng: Madam Chair, indeed, those conversations are absolutely taking place.

We share that view, certainly with our G7 colleagues and others, that part of this effort should absolutely include those assets of Russia and using them in the reconstruction efforts. I would say that discussions have taken place and work is under way. It will continue.

As I spoke about earlier, I just attended a reception with a number of Ukrainian Canadians, including the ambassador to Ukraine. It was really terrific to hear of and celebrate the agreement receiving royal assent. This is work that we are going to continue to do. I

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think members have heard us say on the government side that we will be there with Ukraine, standing in support of Ukraine until such time as Ukraine is able to win.

• (2125)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Chair, my colleague and the other Liberals who rose before her, be they ministers or not, have been saying for some time how important it is that Canada help Ukraine in this conflict. We are on board with that. We agree with it. However, we also all know that, to date, Canada has delivered on only about 42% of its commitments.

I asked a question earlier and I did not really get an answer. The question that I have been asking myself and that I would like the minister to answer is this: How is this possible? What is going wrong? Is it that we are not doing enough to deliver on our commitments? Were the commitments that we made too ambitious? Is that why we are unable to meet them? Why have we only delivered on 42%? Secondly, what are we going to do moving forward to ensure that this does not happen again? It is all well and good to make commitments, but we need to meet them. What can we do in the future to deliver on our commitments? We could commit to less, but I think that the solution is to be sure that we can deliver.

I would like the minister to comment on that.

[*English*]

Hon. Mary Ng: Mr. Chair, I want to thank the member and all of those in the Bloc for supporting this important agreement that we have negotiated and which has now received royal assent.

Canada is committed to supporting Ukraine. We have talked about the \$13.3 billion of support provided to Ukraine. Here is what I would say about being able to deliver. The agreement to modernize this FTA started in 2019, followed by the pandemic, and then followed by the start of the war. What is quite remarkable is that the agreement was started, negotiated and concluded in just a little over a year, and this was in dire circumstances.

What I started to say earlier and quickly concluded was an admiration for the Ukrainian negotiators, who at times were in basements without electricity, with sirens and bombs going off. In the most adverse of circumstances, their commitment was unwavering to complete these negotiations. My counterpart has certainly said to me how important these negotiations were because they signalled Canada's confidence in Ukraine and our steadfast support for Ukraine.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

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On the Prairies, Ukrainian culture is so completely intertwined with Prairie culture that it was hard for someone like me, who grew up in a Ukrainian household in rural Alberta, to not know that was not what all of Canada looked like. As a child, I thought that must have been what everyone else grew up with. The co-operation and the relationship Canada and Ukraine have had for as long as the Prairies have existed is an important piece because our relationship has existed for well over 100 years. That relationship is as important, if not more important, today than it was 100 years ago, when we were welcoming Ukrainian settlers, who helped us develop the agricultural strength that we now have on the Prairies and right across Canada.

One does not have to look very far in most of rural Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba to see a beautiful onion-domed church. There is also the proud Ukrainian dance heritage, which is a part of our cultural fabric. It is worth noting that former prime minister Brian Mulroney was the first leader to recognize an independent Ukraine back in 1991, and I am very confident that he did that as a direct result of the fact that he had Don Mazankowski as his deputy prime minister, who was from Alberta and represented a very Ukrainian riding. While Mr. Mazankowski was a Polish individual, he was married to a Ukrainian, so I am sure that played a role in that pivotal space. I highlight that to signal how important the relationship is, and always has been, between Canada and Ukraine and between Conservatives and Ukrainians because, frankly, there is no other space or option in this.

I want to highlight one of the pieces that I think is really important in this agreement on security and co-operation between Canada and Ukraine, which we are here to debate and have a conversation about tonight. That piece is to continue to engage with the international coalition for the return of Ukrainian children. This is key. As a mom of two little boys, I cannot imagine what it would be like to have my children stolen, yet that is what so many Ukrainians are dealing with today. They have had their children stolen by an evil dictator, Vladimir Putin, and his regime.

We need to continue working as a country, as a western space, to highlight the fact that atrocious activities have been undertaken. We have to do everything in our power to make sure we are continuing to fight to bring those children home. Frankly, they deserve it, and Ukraine needs to have people here in Canada and all across the world talking about the fact that those children have been stolen from their parents, from their communities and from their nation.

I want to highlight that this is something that I am very proud to see in this, and I hope we will continue to talk about those poor, innocent children, who have been stolen from their families, their communities and their nation. We need to bring them back to Ukraine so they can live in peace and harmony under a free Ukraine. Frankly, we owe it to our partners. We owe it to this strong relationship that we have had for well over a century to make sure that Canada and Ukraine stay in friendship and partnership now and as we go forward.

• (2130)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, one thing we know Ukraine will need going forward is the ability to rebuild its country. We know the damage that has been

caused by the Russian Federation, by Vladimir Putin, in this illegal invasion of Ukraine.

The current Liberal government has cut official development assistance by 15% and has indicated that in the next budget, it will cut that by even more. However, the leader of the Conservatives has said that he would also cut it. In fact, there are members of the Conservative Party who have said they do not think we belong in the United Nations anymore.

As we try to build a rules-based international order that involves engaging with other countries, being part of multilateral institutions and playing a role on the world stage, how does the member think Ukrainians should see the Conservatives' stance that they would cut foreign aid and step back from the multilateral institutions that are so important to us?

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Mr. Chair, I am not going to take any lessons from NDP members, who speak out of both sides of their mouths when it comes to this issue and so many others.

Frankly, if Canada delivered on the promises it has made to Ukraine and gave it the missiles we have sitting in Saskatchewan that are not being used, which Ukraine has asked for, that would go a long way in helping Ukraine deliver on a victory. These are the important pieces that we truly need to keep in mind.

Ukraine, right now, is asking for missiles and support so that it can continue fighting this war. We, as partners, have to continue to put the needs of Ukraine first. I am going to stand up and continue standing up, along with all of my Conservative colleagues, to ask that the missiles we have sitting in Saskatchewan, which the Ukrainian embassy has asked for, get delivered so Ukraine can fight and win the war.

• (2135)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the Government of Canada has been working very closely with not only Ukraine but allied countries that are supporting Ukraine and providing the type of support that Ukraine has been asking for. A good example of that is the ammunition request, a \$40-million commitment, that has us working with the Czech Republic along with other allied forces.

It has been encouraging that we have seen a high sense of co-operation among all political parties since the Maidan, I would argue, at the end of 2014 going into 2015. However, there was a great deal of surprise when the Conservative Party abandoned that consensus when it voted against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

How does the member justify her vote or the vote of the Conservative Party not to support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement when the President of Ukraine came to Canada during a time of war and asked for this support?

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Mr. Chair, I have been very clear that I do not support the carbon tax and that is a very simple thing.

I have been very proud to share my Ukrainian heritage and support of Ukraine. I am very proud to have been one of the first members of Parliament to stand in this chamber before the war broke asking and demanding that the Government of Canada act so we could bring Ukrainians here, because it was very clear that the war was starting out, but the government sat on its hands and did nothing.

I am not going to take any lessons from members on that side, who are sitting here trying to claim some moral victory when they did not act before the war started when they could have acted and saved the lives of innocent Ukrainians.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Chair, I was listening to my colleague's speech. One of the points she focused on was children, and I agree 100%. We tend to forget that the Russians have taken Ukrainian children away from their families. I get the impression that this has somehow been forgotten. No one talks about it anymore, yet it should be a priority for every country in the world to ensure that these children find their way back to their families.

We are not doing enough in terms of military aid. We are not doing enough in terms of humanitarian aid. As my colleague said earlier, there are children who have been torn away from their families amid general indifference. We also have to think about rebuilding Ukraine. Post-war reconstruction has to start before the war ends. It has to start now.

How do we encourage Canada and other countries in the world to invest so that companies have the confidence to go and do business in Ukraine, to ensure that the economy does not fall completely flat at a time when it needs to be strong enough for post-war reconstruction?

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Mr. Chair, under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, we signed the first free trade agreement with Ukraine. The goal was to work together to promote trade with Ukraine. Ukraine has economic strengths, and we need to do a lot more to make sure that Canadian businesses invest in Ukraine and that Ukrainian businesses invest here. I will continue to work to support free trade between the two countries.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, Conservatives support a strong, free, independent Ukraine. We always have and we always will. This is Ukraine as defined by the borders agreed upon in the Budapest memorandum, which was signed by, among others, Russia.

It is critically important, as we reflect on our support for Ukraine, that we not just speak of seeking victory eventually but speak of the urgency of victory, a victory as soon as possible. The Ukrainian people have shown incredible resilience, and democratic populations throughout the western world have been supportive of Ukraine. However, history teaches us that there is a time horizon after which support becomes more and more difficult to sustain. That is why we as leaders need to push for the continuation of that support, but we also need to push for victory as quickly as possible. That means not just expressing aspirations about things to be done

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eventually, but recognizing the real urgency in delivering to Ukraine the weapons and other things it needs urgently to defeat the Russian aggressors.

As we talk about that support, I want to highlight in particular the issue of urgency. For too long, we have seen announcements made without follow-through. We have seen significant delays in Canada from the government, but in other cases as well, in delivering promised support. We, as the official opposition, have been continually pushing the government to get from announcement to results much faster.

Earlier in this debate, I challenged NDP members over the comments they made before the further invasion, which were about delivering lethal weapons. They said that, of course, they took that position at the time because they wanted to pursue peace.

I want to underline the critical importance of peace through strength. Peace through strength is something we need now more than ever in our more dangerous world, with more threats and with our new cold war adversaries working together to threaten our security. We need to have a strong military. We need to acquire the military equipment to give to our allies in need. We need to strengthen ourselves and our allies because it is through strength that we achieve peace.

● (2140)

The doctrine of peace through weakness has always failed. Brian Mulroney, who we honoured in a particular way this week, understood that. He, Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, working, in a different sense, with spiritual strength, with Pope John Paul II, stood up to the Soviet regime. They stood up through strength, not through weakness and compromise and not through failing to hand over the weapons that were required. They achieved peace through strength, and justice through strength. This is what we need. We need to strengthen ourselves and our allies and deliver the weapons that are required urgently.

Since people are asking about the costs of this support, I want to say that the costs of inaction are much greater. I also want to highlight section N of the security agreement. We support the entire security agreement, and section N is about the seizure of Russian assets. One critical way that we can support Ukraine with its current needs and its future needs is by doing more to seize Russian assets and repurpose those assets to support Ukraine. This is a just and necessary way to support Ukraine in its time of need. Repurposing property from the Russian side can support the Ukrainian people.

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At this critical time in the world, a critical time in the struggle in Ukraine and a critical time in global security, it is time for us to recognize the urgency of action, the urgency of getting support to the front lines and the urgency of establishing the munitions manufacturing systems, moving forward with manufacturing the munitions here in Canada and getting them to the front lines as quickly as possible. We must recommit ourselves to peace through strength, recognizing that peace is never achieved through weakness, that we will only achieve peace through strength.

• (2145)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am sure the member is aware that Canada has made a commitment, working with allied forces, of what I believe is at least \$30 million to go toward artillery and ammunition. We are working with the Czech Republic to ensure that Ukraine can get different artillery on the front lines, which I think is a very positive thing given the member's comments.

The question I have for the member is similar to what I asked his colleague. How does the member justify voting against a free trade agreement? How would he best explain the reason he and the Conservative Party voted against it?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, the member knows the answer to the question. I have repeated it and explained it ad nauseam in this House.

I want to ask why Liberals opposed the amendments that I brought forward to Bill C-57 at committee. Those amendments were specific things that the arms manufacturing industry in Canada had proposed would be helpful. It asked the Government of Canada to establish a clear plan and send clear signals about its commitments to, over the longer term, acquire the munitions required for Canada's own needs and to support Ukraine.

The government has taken no action to send the right signals and provide the necessary support to ramp up our own domestic production of munitions. I believe this is an opportunity for Canada, and it is an urgent issue for supporting Ukraine.

Personally, I put forward six different amendments to this bill at committee that would have strengthened the export of munitions to Ukraine. The Liberals blocked those amendments at every turn. Actually, the Liberals and the NDP members were working together. They presented us from passing a motion in the House to allow those amendments to move forward, and they blocked those amendments at committee.

It is really shameful for the Liberals to, on the one hand, try to virtue-signal on this issue while continuously blocking efforts to get weapons to move forward. They make announcements but fail to follow through on them. It is not enough to talk about victory at some distant point in the future. We need urgent victory through the urgent delivery of required munitions. The government likes to wrap itself in blue and yellow, but it fails to deliver when it really counts.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Chair, my colleague from Montarville was wondering earlier about the gov-

ernment's strategy. The government is fearmongering and constantly hinting at the possibility of a Russian invasion. It has also removed all non-essential staff from its embassy in Ukraine, while the majority of European countries have maintained their staff on site as a sign of solidarity with Ukraine.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, I am not sure precisely what comments the member is referring to in terms of the timelines. If I understand the question, he is talking about the period in the lead-up to the initial further invasion. I know there was controversy around some of the decisions allegedly made by Canada in the context of embassy personnel. This is something we did ask questions about at the time at the foreign affairs committee, trying to get some responses from the minister on it.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Chair, I wonder if the member can share some of the concerns he raised at the foreign affairs committee regarding what the Government of Canada did with gas turbines, which were allowed to go back to Russia. I know he had some very strong feelings, and I was very proud to stand behind him and stand up with him as he was bringing that forward. I am wondering if he could describe that here tonight.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, Canada has a unique opportunity and responsibility among democratic nations. Many of our democratic partners are geographically small, densely populated nations endowed with few natural resources. Canada is blessed with an abundance of natural resources, which we could use to support our allies by improving their energy security.

Instead of developing Canadian resources and playing the role we need to play in the world in the midst of this intensifying global struggle, the Liberals chose to grant a sanctions waiver to export turbines to facilitate the export of Russian gas. They were facilitating the export of Russian gas when Canada should have instead been working to export our gas. We should have been providing an alternative to Russia. Instead, the Liberals were helping the Russians fund their war by exporting turbines.

• (2150)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it has been very clear from the very beginning that the government has been working with Ukraine and the allied countries in all different ways, even pre-war when we had Canadian forces, through Operation Unifier, helping with training tens of thousands of soldiers. Throughout this whole campaign we have been there in every way, working with allied countries. In fact, for a good portion of that time, we actually had the support of all political parties in regard to the types of actions we were taking collectively as a House of Commons.

Yesterday, we actually had the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement given royal assent. It could have been done a whole lot easier, had the Conservatives here in the House of Commons and the Conservatives in the Senate been more agreeable to its passage, but the Conservatives, time and time again, put up roadblocks. The member opposite just finished saying that he moved amendments. He cannot change the agreement. The member knew that. All he was doing was adding to filibuster and confusion.

The President of Ukraine came to Canada—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, I hope that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for me to table the motion I moved at the end of session in December that would have allowed us to move this trade agreement to a vote right away in December. It was a unanimous consent motion that was blocked by the Liberals. It would have actually allowed us to move to a vote faster. I wonder if there would be unanimous consent to table that unanimous consent motion I tried to move at that time that was blocked by the Liberals.

The Chair: The hon. member should know that during a take-note debate we cannot ask for unanimous consent for anything, so unfortunately we cannot do that. I would love to, but I cannot.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North has the floor, and no time has been taken from the member.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Chair, I am splitting my time, by the way, with the member for Davenport.

I can tell members that the Conservative Party, in a very real and tangible way, had the opportunity, not once or twice but on several occasions, to clearly demonstrate that it is still on side with the Government of Canada and members of the Bloc and the NDP, by doing several actions. One of those actions was to support budget initiatives. The Conservative Party actually voted against issues like training Ukrainian soldiers through the Operation Unifier program. They voted against that. They also voted against Ukrainian immigrant settlement packages.

My biggest concern, as I started to talk about, was the issue of the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. That is a significant thing. All one needs to do is take a look at history. What was happening in 2014 and 2015, when the people of Ukraine were wanting to see expanded trade with the European Union? Trade matters, and the President of Ukraine came to Canada at a time of war, signed an agreement and asked members of the House on both sides to get behind the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement, and the Conservatives chose not to.

They first started to say that it was because of the carbon tax, but then they found out that Ukraine already had a price on pollution. They knew that, or at least they found that out. The real truth of the matter is that, as we have seen in budget votes and in their actual vote on the trade agreement, the MAGA right is creeping into the Conservative Party with its hesitation in terms of fully supporting Ukraine. That had more to do with it than their red herring of the carbon tax, because Ukraine already has a price on pollution. They wanted to be a part of what was taking place in the European Union, where there is a price on pollution.

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At the end of this evening, it would be wonderful to see some of the Conservatives stand in their places, actually be straightforward with Canadians and clearly indicate that voting against the trade agreement was a mistake and that they are actually behind and will stand as one chamber and continue to support Ukraine, as we have been doing in a wide variety of areas. Those billions of dollars in investments have ultimately led to military support and support for those who are being displaced. This is getting behind the 1.3 million people and more of Ukrainian heritage who call Canada home and those who are well beyond that heritage.

It is the right thing to do, and that is why I would appeal to Conservatives. It is never too late to say they made a mistake and get behind the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement.

● (2155)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, tonight, we were actually supposed to have a take-note debate on the agreement on security co-operation between Canada and Ukraine, something that I think we all agree on.

This member is intent on sowing division and being hyperpartisan, so let me point something out to the member. He pointed out that President Zelenskyy may have disagreed with the position we took on a particular trade deal. Let us talk about a disagreement between President Zelenskyy and the current government. Early on in the conflict, the Canadian ambassador to Ukraine was actually summoned by the Government of Ukraine, an extraordinary step. The ambassador was summoned as a sign of the Ukrainian government's displeasure with the Liberal government's action. What was that action?

It was the Liberal government's decision to grant a waiver of sanctions regarding those Siemens turbines. It was the Liberal government trying to facilitate the export of Russian gas that was fuelling Russia's economy and Russia's invasion. The Government of Ukraine was deeply concerned that Canada was undermining global sanctions unity and was pushing toward a reality of Swiss-cheese sanctions that would be ineffective. The government should be ashamed of what it did, and it was only the Conservatives pushing back that led to the change.

Will the member apologize for his shameful role in allowing that exemption in the sanctions?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Chair, the member is trying to change the channel here. Canada has worked very closely with all our allied countries. Let me remind the member. Yesterday, we were talking about Brian Mulroney. Even members in the chamber today were talking about Brian Mulroney and the trade agreement of 1988.

People could reflect on some of wonderful things that Brian Mulroney did. He opened the chamber to the idea of free trade being a good thing. He also opened the idea that acid rain and the environment were also something very important.

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I believe that Brian Mulroney would have looked at the behaviour of the Conservative Party on Ukraine, and Brian Mulroney supported Ukraine, and he would have been somewhat disappointed with the way the Conservative Party of today voted on the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, when we should have had solidarity. That would have sent a very powerful message to the world that we collectively support Ukraine, today and well into the future.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Chair, if I was the member for Winnipeg North, I would be careful not to make too many assumptions about Mr. Mulroney's thoughts on what goes on in the House or in the Conservative Party. I am not sure he would be much prouder of the Liberals for the way they have managed Canada for the past while.

That said, tonight we are having a take-note debate to discuss the relationship between Canada and Ukraine and the new strategic security partnership. That is the theme of tonight's take-note debate. However, all that I have heard from the Liberals are questions for the Conservatives about why they voted against the free trade agreement because of a provision that mentioned the carbon tax.

My colleague from Montarville clearly stated in his speech earlier this evening that 58% of the aid that Canada promised to Ukraine has still not reached Ukraine. I want to know why. That is very significant. It changes things on the ground there. It affects Ukraine's ability to repel the Russian enemy. When will that 58% arrive? Why can we not do more? That is what I want to know tonight.

● (2200)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Chair, interestingly, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, earlier today, acknowledged an additional \$2 billion that actually came in very recently, and we are talking about a matter of days. That brings our total to somewhere in the neighbourhood of just under \$7 billion.

We also have all sorts of other investments through our allied forces. I suspect one will find that in working with the allied countries and Ukraine, there has been a great deal of flexibility. I am not going to concede the numbers that the member opposite and his foreign affairs critic were talking about earlier today. I do know that Canada continues to play a significant role, financially and with other forms of resources, to be there in a very real and tangible way for Ukraine.

The impression that the Ukrainian people have of Canada today is one of the very best in the entire world. We might be ranked somewhere around three or four on the perception of how we are contributing to what is taking place and of how we are being a positive factor for Ukraine and Ukrainian solidarity around the world.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it is a real honour for me to be speaking on behalf of the residents of the riding of Davenport on the agreement on security co-operation between Canada and Ukraine.

Many people might not know, but within my riding of Davenport there used to be a fairly significant Ukrainian population. I actually went to grade school there. I went to a Ukrainian school. It is called

St Josaphat. It is still there. The church is still there. The community has largely moved away, but I know they would be very proud of the contribution that Canada has been making and continues to make to Ukraine.

As we all know, Ukrainians have been defending themselves from Russia's full-scale invasion for over two years now. As we are all aware, they need coordinated global support now more than ever. A resilient, democratic and prosperous Ukraine is vital for stability and security in Europe and around the world.

Today I am going to focus on how Canada has responded through steadfast support to Ukraine, a coordinated approach to sanctions and strong diplomatic leadership on the issue of the forceful transfer of Ukrainian children. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Canada has continued to work in close collaboration with Ukraine, as well as our other partners, to provide comprehensive and multi-faceted support.

President Zelenskyy and Prime Minister Trudeau have reaffirmed the strength and importance of our bilateral relationship time and time again—

The Chair: Order. The hon. member knows we should not be mentioning the last names of members. It has been in a number of the speeches tonight. I just want to make sure that those who are coming after cross that out and put in the correct title.

The hon. member for Davenport.

● (2205)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, you have my apologies.

President Zelenskyy and the Prime Minister have reaffirmed the strength and importance of our bilateral relationship time and time again, including during the President's visit in September and in his address to the House.

On February 24, 2024, just a few weeks ago, when the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence visited Kyiv to mark two years since Russia's full-scale invasion, they were reminded, once again, of the bravery and resolve of the Ukrainian people.

This visit culminated in the historic signing of the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, which commits Canada to provide an additional \$3.02 billion in critical macroeconomic and military assistance to Ukraine in 2024, and frames our co-operation for the next 10 years. This brings Canada's total committed support to date to \$13.3 billion since 2022. This includes over \$4 billion in military assistance, \$7.4 billion in financial assistance to support Ukraine's macroeconomic stability and many other forms of support.

On security and stabilization, since 2022, Canada has committed over \$198 million in security and stabilization funding, including projects on demining, reducing threats from nuclear or radiological materials and chemical weapons, as well as countering disinformation.

The members of the House have often highlighted the importance of coordinating sanctions. Since 2014, Canada has imposed sanctions on more than 2,900 individuals and entities in Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Canada has also implemented targeted restrictions against Russia and Belarus in the financial sector, in trades for goods and services, in energy and in transport sectors.

We have also implemented export control measures, prohibiting the issuance of new permit applications and revoking valid permits to export controlled military, strategic and dual-use items to Russia. These measures, taken in coordination with our partners, are having an impact on the Russian economy and are expected to be cumulative and increase in significance over time. Canada will continue to work with partners to address loopholes, increase the cost of the war for Russia and prevent sanctions evasion, circumvention and backfilling.

The final issue that I want to address today is the unlawful deportation and forced transfer of Ukrainian children. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, thousands of Ukrainian children have been deported, forcibly transferred or otherwise displaced from the territory of Ukraine to the temporarily occupied territories and Russia and Belarus. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was clear: Children cannot be used as pawns of war. That is why our government launched the international coalition for the return of Ukrainian children, a joint initiative with our Ukrainian friends and allies to coordinate efforts to address the illegal transfer of children to Russia.

I know I have to wrap up, so I will conclude by saying that Canada will continue to stand, both today and always, with the government and people of Ukraine on the path to victory and recovery.

Slava Ukraini.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, as I take part in this debate this evening, it strikes me that actions are more important than words. We hear words from the Conservatives saying that they support Ukraine, yet their actions with regard to votes do not align with that.

This member is a member of the government. Recognizing all the announcements the government has made on supports for Ukraine is one thing, but the actual delivery of that aid has trickled. A fraction of what the government has promised to the people of Ukraine has actually been delivered, and Vladimir Putin is counting on that. He is counting on the world to lose interest, to look away and to be distracted. Russia is counting on the fact that it can outlast the patience of western allies.

When we dribble aid to Ukraine instead of giving it the tools it needs to win this war, we are playing into Putin's hands. Announcing things is great, but we have seen a fraction of that actually delivered to Ukraine. When will all of it get to Ukraine?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, while I respect the member's passion and her support for Ukraine, I do not agree. We have done a tremendous amount for Ukraine. We started out being recognized for our training of the military within Ukraine, which proved instrumental with this latest full-scale invasion by Russia. Since then, we have provided military support, economic support, sanctions and international aid.

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Today we are talking about the historic signing of the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, which not only commits us to additional dollars this year but also frames our co-operation for the next 10 years and commits 3 billion additional dollars. These are not words; these are actions. We acted over two years ago when this war first started. We continue to act, and we will continue to support Ukraine right until it wins this war.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):

Mr. Chair, I am very curious about something. When I gave my speech on co-operation, one of the pieces that I pointed out is so critically important is the fact that there is a provision in here about bringing home all the children who have been stolen from their families and their communities by Vladimir Putin and his evil regime. Does the member agree that we need to do more as a country to continue fighting to bring those children home, so they can get back to their parents, their families and their communities?

• (2210)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, bringing home Ukrainian children is a key part of the 10-point peace plan Ukraine has put out. I am really proud that Canada has decided to take leadership on this key point.

Indeed, thousands of Ukrainian children have been deported, forcibly transferred and displaced from Ukrainian territory. Fewer than 400 of those children have actually been returned. That is why I am so proud of our government for launching the international coalition for the return of Ukrainian children. It is a joint effort with our Ukrainian friends and allies to coordinate efforts to address the illegal transfer of children to Russia. I am proud that this is one of the key areas we are investing in, supporting and taking leadership in. I believe we will have great success in returning those children to Ukraine.

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is an honour to rise in the chamber today on the issue of our strategic partnership with Ukraine. As members know, I have been sanctioned by Russia three times. I have also had the honour of visiting Ukraine multiple times: pre-Maidan, during Maidan, post-Maidan and several times thereafter, just before the war.

I think it is important, as we get into this debate, to take a step back and consider the environment we are in right now. When America withdrew from Afghanistan, it signalled two things. First, it signalled the end of *Pax Americana*, of a peace that had stretched through the world in the aftermath of the Cold War and created the greatest period of peace humanity had known.

The second thing it signalled was a retreat for NATO from Afghanistan, from a legitimate war it waged after an article 5 attack on New York on September 11, 2001. In the aftermath of that moment, we have watched all of our Cold War arrangements unravel and the rule of law undermined.

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We saw in Hong Kong the end of a deal negotiated by Margaret Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping, a deal that was supposed to last for 50 years but ended at its halfway mark with the imposition of the national security law on the people of Hong Kong. What was the western response? It was muted.

In the aftermath of that, Russia turned up its invasion of Ukraine nearly 100-fold. It dispatched battalions of soldiers, arrogantly driving to Kyiv with the purpose of conquest. What was the western response? It was, “President Zelenskyy, we have a plane for you, not the guns you need to fight and win the war.”

It is interesting to me that President Putin and Xi Jinping sat at the Beijing Olympics prior to that invasion to map out their unlimited ambition around the world. Part of that ambition included not just the borders of Ukraine and the rest of the world in the Middle East and Asia; it also included ambition on our northern borders, our Arctic sovereignty.

Only a few months ago, part of this constellation of authoritarians around the world, with their interoperable cybersecurity effects and with their interoperable drone warfare, dispatched Iran and its constellation of proxies in the region to wage war on the western alliance yet again. They did it in Iran in the horrific attacks of October 7, which claimed over 1,000 Israeli lives, and they did it in the northern part of Israel through rockets launched from Hezbollah fighters, rockets that were Iranian-built and Iranian-designed, with technologies from Russia and China.

In the aftermath of the chaos we have seen, including the conflict in Gaza, which has claimed so many lives, we also see a disruption to our global trade supply chains across the Red Sea region in the form of attacks from Iranian-backed Houthis on shipping conglomerates that drive up the cost of everything everywhere, creating chaos and disorder in international markets and compelling a response from the west to make the authoritarians stop. Only weeks ago, the same network cut data cables in the Red Sea region that supplied 25% of data from the Indo-Pacific region into Europe.

These are massive attacks across our western alliance, and as the west comes under attack, it is time for us, as a country, to grow up and join an alliance of democracies around the world that reclaim policies of peace through strength instead of experimenting with various versions of appeasement.

In this discussion, in this take-note debate today, I am encouraged by the strategic partnership with Ukraine and Canada that has been proposed and agreed to. What is more important is implementing three particular parts of it, which will define Canadian leadership and help change the course of history for the better.

First, Ukraine must win the war. President Zelenskyy rose in this chamber and asked for one thing. He said to end Russia's weaponization of energy. Why would he say that? He understood that Canada is the sole NATO ally with the potential to backfill European energy demand, with 3 trillion dollars' worth of natural resource strength, the fourth-largest oil reserves in the world, NATO's third-largest reserves of natural gas and the capacity to scale nuclear and agricultural products and technologies for the world.

Putin today mimics Stalin nearly a century ago, bent on creating famine by weaponizing the food supply, disrupting international en-

ergy supply chains, and burning and blockading grain supplies for the developing world so that it cannot reach fragile markets.

● (2215)

Vladimir Putin spent years choreographing Germany's dependencies on Russian oil. Having exploited that to shake down Europe, he intervened in Syria and Libya to subvert pipelines that would supply Europe and amplified misinformation against our own Canadian energy, ensuring a steady stream of revenue for Russia's war machine of nearly \$1 billion a day, and \$250 million a day from Germany alone, to fund his war machine.

When Germany finally realized the costs of this, Chancellor Scholz and subsequently President Volodymyr Zelenskyy came knocking on our door for Canadian energy, and both times we turned them away.

Russia and Iran scale production today, evade sanctions and provide discounted prices to Beijing to wage their wars in Europe and the Middle East. Qatar, host to Hamas, inked a 3.5-million-tonne gas deal with France just this week. If the NDP-Liberals truly care about trading relationships that support Ukraine, then they can do the one game-changing thing that the world has been demanding, which is to end Russia's weaponization of energy and let Canadian resources be what fuels, feeds and secures the world.

Second is defence production.

In our inventories as a country, we can provide Ukrainians the CRV7 missiles they require and the mobile hospitals that were purchased but not delivered. We can provide the 155-millimetre ammunition and the light armoured vehicles they require to push back against the Russian tide. This request came directly from Ukraine as well. It was the Ukrainian ambassador who took to our mainstream press. He went on our cable networks to demand that the government come to negotiate defence production and defence supply. I am encouraged to see it as part of the strategic partnership laid out here today, but I believe it is a Conservative government that would deliver the inventory and the defence production partnerships that Ukraine requires.

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Finally, there is compensation for Ukrainians as they pursue the difficult task of rebuilding their economy. We know that Russia has \$300 billion of frozen assets across the western world, of which \$200 billion resides in Europe and \$4 billion in the United States. The requirement Ukraine will have to rebuild its economy is nearly \$600 billion. Repurposing these assets for losses, injuries and damages caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine is a critical requirement. We are at the halfway mark of that, but would it not be wonderful to think of Canada as a centre of investment, of infrastructure and of the partnerships that are required to rebuild the Ukrainian economy and the world thereafter? We have all the know-how, the skills and the expertise across our cities and our people to be a critical part of rebuilding this vital democracy.

Let me close with this. The democratic world needs to arrive at a shared understanding of the rivals we must now confront: rivals to our Atlantic alliance, most fiercely met by Ukrainian soldiers on the borders that they are fighting so hard to defend; rivals across the Middle East with our partners there, with borders that they deserve to maintain and with terrorist extremists that deserve to be defeated; rivals that are threatening the order of the Indo-Pacific region; and rivals that require deterrence to know that the resolve of the world is against their ambition to reorganize the world and that Canada would be a fierce and vital part of that partnership.

I am thankful for the opportunity to provide some views in this debate. Conservatives support the strategic partnership with Ukraine as an important step forward, and we believe that our future Conservative government will deliver the energy, the munitions and materiel, and the compensation for investment and infrastructure that Ukraine requires.

• (2220)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am going to comment on the tail end of the member's statement.

The Deputy Prime Minister, a strong and passionate person of Ukrainian heritage herself, has been a very strong advocate for securing Russian assets and establishing how the world can work with allied countries to build back Ukraine after we win the war. It is only a question of time, and I believe that this will happen.

In the trade agreement, there was a framework that would assist in the rebuilding of infrastructure. I am wondering if the member is familiar with that aspect of the trade agreement, and if so, if he could comment on whether he thought that was a good part of the trade agreement.

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Chair, it is not taxes on the infrastructure that is required for the concrete and steel to rebuild Ukraine that will be the solution. Any drag on the kind of development Ukraine requires to succeed is going to inhibit its ability, however small it is today or increased through European designs in the future for tax plans or carbon-pricing schemes.

In the good faith that the hon. member asked the question, the reconstruction plans that are beginning to be laid out by the Deputy Prime Minister are an encouraging first step, but they fall short in their capacity to be executed. Partners around the world on investment, whether it is the IFC, the World Bank, the major funds of

New York, our pension funds or sovereign funds across capitals that have literacy, gas and agricultural development projects from early stage to later stage, or disruptive technologies that can help Ukraine leapfrog forward in its development for the European future it deserves and demands, are all available to them.

While much of that project has become a focus of distraction for the Deputy Prime Minister through pandering to domestic politics in this country, it would be good for us to bring this country's consensus back on track toward the development of Ukraine and to succeed at a conversation around a concrete plan to rebuild Ukraine.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, my colleague spoke about the terrible decision made by the current government on the sanctions waiver for the turbine. For me, that was a horrible decision that was made by the government. In fact, it was me that called for an emergency debate in the summer, so that we could actually look at that issue and examine that quite closely. That was something that the Government of Ukraine had asked for.

Of course, the Government of Ukraine, President Zelenskyy, has also asked for the Parliament of Canada to pass the free trade agreement. We just heard his answer on the free trade agreement, but during his speech he also talked about the need to rebuild Ukraine. One of my deep worries that I have right now is that the government has cut development assistance and the money that we use to help our allies around the world. The government has indicated that it will be cutting further. The implications for Ukraine are quite dire, but the implications for other countries around the world are also dire.

I know that my colleague knows an awful lot about international development. Does he agree with his leader, who has made it quite clear that he wants to cut foreign aid even further? In fact, other members of his party have said that they would like to take the Government of Canada out of the United Nations. These are not serious foreign policy places to be. As a member of the opposition who wants to be the government, I am quite concerned when I hear things like that from his leader.

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Chair, I stand by every syllable of my leader's requirement to ensure that not a single Canadian dollar goes to terrorists, to useless multinational organizations or to dictators, all projects that the hon. member across the way seems to be obsessed with funding in Gaza. In terms of reversing bad schemes that do not work for the development of the most impoverished, I stand 100%, four-square, behind the leader of His Majesty's official opposition.

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It is actually a fact, a sad fact, that under NDP-Liberals, official development assistance declined 10%. Not just that, but at the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the increased war in Ukraine, what we saw was that the NDP-Liberal government dismantled the wide-ranging development assistance that Canada had been providing to Ukrainian civil society, the Ukrainian capital budget, its defence production and its training of its armed forces through Operation Unifier. The Liberals intentionally walked much of that back, dismantled it and weakened Ukraine just at the time when it needed to strengthen Ukraine for the oncoming anticipated offensive by Russia.

I appreciate the perspectives the member has offered in this debate, but I am very proud to say that our party, our opposition, has exactly the right plan to help Ukraine win the war.

● (2225)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague for his excellent speech and, certainly, for the wealth of wisdom and experience that he brings to the House.

I would like to ask him, based on his knowledge and expertise, what the best way to isolate the Russian regime is and to hold the Russian regime accountable for the crimes that they have perpetrated. We have seen crimes committed in terms of the abduction of children, systematic sexual violence and the crime of aggression in general. What steps does he see as necessary to hold the Russian regime accountable?

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Chair, at present, the government is still slow to sanction all aspects of Russian energy production and supply chains around the world. We are seeing Russian oil refineries being attacked, appropriately so, as a means to starve its capacity to fund its war machine. We see Russia today searching for specialized parts to rebuild these energy resources for itself, and it is suffering under the yoke of that. Enhancing it is a critical part of ensuring that Russia is incapable of accessing the resources it requires. I thank the hon. member for the question on how that can be done.

Twenty thousand-plus Ukrainian children have been spirited into Russia to be reprogrammed in what must be amounting to a cultural genocide of the Ukrainian people. One thing that can be done is for all Russian families participating in this unjust, horrific conquest of Ukrainian lives to be added to sanction lists with Magnitsky sanctions. These are all areas where forensic work can be done until these children are repatriated back to their families.

Finally, the supply chains being provided to Russia by the People's Republic of China and other bad actors should be sanctioned as well. We should be building an economic blockade against the kind of encroachment that Russia, China and others are pursuing in the conquest of the western world and of Ukraine.

I think there are many ways that imagination could come to choke the Russian regime from its capacity to wage this war.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, I have a very short question for the member.

He just talked about how he is deeply worried about the children who have been stolen by Russia, and I understand that, because for

me, that is one thing that makes it very clear there is a genocide happening against the Ukrainian people. However, I wonder why he is not able to see that the 13 innocent children who have been killed in Gaza or the children who have died in other places around the world matter just as much.

For me, a child is a child is a child. I look at every single child and I think about their human rights and why they deserve to be reunited with their families, why they deserve to live and why they deserve to thrive. I wonder why he feels that Palestinian children are Hamas instead of just children.

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Chair, these beautiful Palestinian children and babies who have been murdered in these last months deserve better than to be a political project for domestic pandering by the hon. member. Those children are being offered up by Hamas as human shields rather than being sheltered in the tunnel networks that Hamas has built to support its terrorism, which are multiple times the size of the New York subway or the London underground.

The hon. member's focus is an obsession with the democratic State of Israel, which is trying to liberate not just the babies and hostages held by Hamas today in Israel but also Palestinians from the yoke of tyranny that Hamas and its Iranian sponsors have been putting Palestinians through.

Rest assured that our commitment to every child everywhere in this world is steadfast and strong today.

● (2230)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

As we speak, the Ukrainian people are risking everything and sacrificing their lives to defend themselves against Russia's genocidal war, and despite being outmanned and outgunned, the Ukrainian people have shown great courage and resolve in defending their homeland and fighting for all of us. Notwithstanding that courage and resolve, the situation in Ukraine is more dire by the day, and the consequences for us, and globally, are more dire by the day.

Russia is committing war crimes and genocide every day. Hundreds of millions of people in the global south are facing food shortages and famine because of Russia's attacks on Ukraine's agriculture sector. The war is one of the primary causes of food inflation and energy inflation here in Canada and around the world that Canadians and others face when they fill up at the pump or they buy food at the grocery store. The war poses an existential threat to Canada's security and to global security.

Our government has said that Canada will stand with the Ukrainian people until they win and that victory is the only option. Victory is the only option for Ukraine, but it is also the only option for Canada. Victory is the only option for Canada because Ukraine's victory is vital to Canada's security.

If Russia wins, it will not stop at Ukraine. If Russia wins, Canada, Europe and the U.S. will be the next to defend themselves against Russian aggression. Every Ukrainian soldier on the front lines today is one fewer Canadian who will have to fight in the future. Every dollar we spend in Ukraine today is millions of dollars less that we will have to spend in the future. Our government understands this, and that is one of the reasons Canada has been a global leader in supporting Ukraine.

Canada has provided approximately \$13 billion in support of various kinds, whether that is financial aid, military aid, immigration assistance or humanitarian aid. We are leading in the seizure of Russian assets globally and in the initiative with Ukraine to bring the deported children back to Ukraine from Russia. Yesterday we passed the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, and there are many more things.

These are important contributions, important steps, but it will not be enough until Ukraine decisively wins the war. If we want to stop global food shortage and inflation, and if we want to ensure our own security, we need to ensure that Ukraine achieves a decisive victory. This means that Ukraine wins the war by recapturing every inch of its territory, but it also means that Ukraine must win the peace, which includes many things. To me it includes that Ukraine is secure as part of NATO, that there is justice for Russian war crimes, that we help Ukraine rebuild and that Russia pays for that rebuilding.

As my colleagues will know, and I see some colleagues here who worked with me on the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, I have worked very hard to advocate for these measures, and I have also worked very hard to ensure that our support for Ukraine extends across all parties in the House of Commons. It really used to, but that has changed. Under the Conservative leader, the Conservative Party has abandoned Ukraine. I am not concerned about the members of the House as much; I am concerned about their leader. It is what he does not say and how he forces the members to vote when it matters. As another member mentioned a moment ago, it is not even the words that concern me as much; it is the actions. Their voting three—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, the member is violating the rules. He knows that it is unparliamentary to make implications about the presence or absence of members in the chamber. I hope you will call him to order.

The Chair: I really do not recall his actually saying whether he was here or not. I would say that we should be judicious in what we are saying and make sure we do not say whether someone is here.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, I never mentioned anybody's presence or absence. What I talked about was the position of the leader of the Conservative Party. He required his MPs to vote three times against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and against military aid for Ukraine. They voted to cut Operation Unifier. They voted against funding for Ukrainian immigrants settling here in Canada. Yesterday I personally went to the Senate and watched Conservative senators unanimously vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. The leader of the Conservative Party

will not say whether he will support the security agreement with Ukraine that Canada signed.

What has happened to the Conservative Party of Brian Mulroney or John Diefenbaker? In summary, there is a far right movement in Canada, just like there is in the U.S., where it has taken over the Republican Party, that believes the pro-Putin propaganda and does not support Ukraine. There is a Putin wing in the Conservative Party, and the leader of the Conservative Party is seeking to earn its support. The Putin wing has taken over the Conservative Party.

The second thing that has happened is that he is trying to consolidate the PPC vote, and the PPC has always been pro-Putin and anti-Ukraine. He is pandering to the PPC vote and has given in to the Putin wing of the Conservative Party. That is what has happened with the Conservative Party.

We need to make sure that we stand with Ukraine until it wins, and for that to happen, the Conservative Party, and specifically the leader, needs to step up and start voting in favour of Ukraine. He needs to make sure his members step up and start voting for Ukraine. That is how we are going to make sure Ukraine wins. That is how we are going to make sure we all win.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

● (2235)

POINTS OF ORDER

UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Chair, what is absolutely disgraceful is the member sitting here and spewing mistruths in this chamber and sowing disinformation. Frankly, I do not expect anything different from the member.

What Ukraine needs right now is light armoured vehicles and rockets. What it needs right now—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, on that point of order, all members in the chamber are honourable. I think many of the words the member used were borderline unparliamentary. I would just suggest—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Chair, I heard what the member opposite said. I have also been listening to what he is calling—

The Chair: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is rising on the same point of order.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, members have been called to account before many times, on various sides, for suggesting that members of the House have sympathy with foreign authoritarian regimes.

Points of Order

The member who just spoke made an outrageous, verifiably false and unparliamentary claim. He accused members of being part of a so-called pro-Putin wing. He was not called to order by you, Mr. Chair. Now the Liberal member is continuing to cast aspersions.

Frankly, it is disgusting to see what the Liberals are doing here. They are trying to foment division when we should be trying to work together on this issue. I would ask you, Mr. Chair, to call these members to account for their unparliamentary language and their disgraceful conduct during this debate tonight.

The Chair: The Speaker has ruled on this. He has mentioned that members should be judicious in how we are being recognized here in Canada. What we do here is seen across the world. Saying that one is part of a certain group is incorrect and, I would suggest, unparliamentary in this case.

Therefore, I would ask the hon. member to hold back on the rhetoric a bit, rephrase and try to stay away from that.

On the same point of order, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Chair, we have to be very careful that we do not start saying that members cannot say a political entity in the House is affiliated with another type of organization. That is often referenced in many different ways. I am just raising that. I do not believe the member has to apologize—

The Chair: When someone in the House is saying that someone is standing with Putin, that is probably a little too far out on the edge, as the Speaker has ruled.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I think if you check Hansard, you will find that I did not speak about individual members. I said that there is a pro-Putin wing in the Conservative Party, and that is not—

The Chair: I think that is exactly what has been brought up here.

• (2240)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, he was saying exactly the same thing about the NDP, so he should have to apologize.

The Chair: The member for Miramichi—Grand Lake was asked to apologize for saying something very similar to, I think, what the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona said.

The hon. member should retract that and apologize for it. Then we can go on and ask questions.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, what I said was fact. What I said was not in breach of the Speaker's ruling—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I have asked you to retract it. Please retract it and apologize, or your evening is going to come to an end.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, I will not apologize for speaking the truth.

The Chair: I will make this easy. The hon. member will not be recognized until he apologizes.

We will go on to the next speaker, the hon. member for Jonquière.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Chair, I would just like clarification, because this could set a regrettable precedent.

If any member of this Parliament told NDP members that they are pro-Palestinian, would that member be silenced and accused of using unparliamentary language? If any one of us told other members that they are pro-Israeli, would that be cause for expulsion?

We need to be careful about using ideologies. I certainly understand that, but sometimes we have to take controversial positions. Some members of the Conservative Party may have controversial views; indeed, one might say that some of them are pro-life and others are pro-choice.

We would be playing a very dangerous game if we were to expel MPs for saying things that align with ideological leanings expressed in the House.

The Chair: I believe the Speaker's ruling had to do with the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake saying that the New Democrats support Hamas. That is very close to what the hon. member said this evening. I would therefore like the hon. member to withdraw his remarks. If he declines to do so, I will go to the next person on the list of those who want to speak.

[English]

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, I just want to illustrate that when the Conservatives accused members of the House of supporting Hamas, that was a very different thing, because Hamas is an illegal terrorist organization. We actually do not have that designation right now, and maybe we should, for the Russian Federation, and we certainly do not have it for the People's Party.

I think we can say that many members of the Conservative Party have shown they are much closer in values to the PPC than they are to perhaps a progressive conservative movement. I think it is fair for the member to say that. However, when there is a member who calls somebody out for being associated with an illegal terrorist organization, that is a very different thing.

The Chair: Ultimately, it is this: When something is causing disorder in the House, we have to find a mechanism in which to put that disorder aside so that we can continue the debate that is scheduled for this evening. The statement was causing tremendous disorder, just like when the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake did something very similar.

The hon. member for Drummond.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Chair, this is turning into a debate as interesting as it is worrisome. On the one hand, you referred to a member's remarks causing disorder in the House. Any statement, whether members agree with it or not, can cause disorder in the House. Is the Chair going to crack down on every statement that causes disorder in the House? That is my first point.

My second point is that there is currently a conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Russia launched a massive invasion of Ukraine, an action we vigorously condemn. We support Ukraine, and I believe the entire House of Commons supports Ukraine. That does not mean it is illegal, unthinkable or impossible to hold a different opinion. People could, quite legitimately, support Putin and be pro-Russian. That is not a crime. It is not an opinion I share or agree with. I can see why Conservative members would take offence at being associated with that. I can see why the member for Etobicoke Centre might consider a particular wing of the Conservative Party to be pro-Russian. That does not make saying so unparliamentary.

I think that, as my colleague from Jonquière pointed out earlier, we are walking a very thin line right now. I feel this could set a very dangerous precedent. Freedom of expression is at stake. Freedom of opinion is at stake. I think the Chair will have to consider that when ruling on this point of order.

• (2245)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, let us be very clear about the precedent that was set by the Speaker's decision with respect to the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake. When there are regimes that are clearly deplored by all parliamentarians, by all Canadians, and that are subject in some way to sanctions by the Government of Canada, then casting those kinds of aspersions to say that members in the House are affiliated with or are supportive of those regimes has been deemed to be unparliamentary. Of course, it is the sort of the thing that someone has the freedom to say outside the House in the same way that someone has the freedom to call another member a “liar” outside the House. However, members do not have unlimited ability to say whatever they want while still being within the parameters of what is allowable under parliamentary procedure.

The Speaker ruled, and the Speaker has ruled in similar cases, that making the direct, clearly false claim that members of the House are affiliated with or supportive of regimes that are deplored by all parliamentarians and all Canadians, such as the Putin regime or Hamas, is deemed unparliamentary. The Chair is now applying the precedent that was set to the member for Etobicoke Centre, who claims to care about partisan unity on this issue but clearly does not. He is clearly trying to drive a partisan agenda for electoral purposes, not for principled reasons, which is unparliamentary. The member for Etobicoke Centre has rightly been called to order, and he should rethink the approach he is taking if he actually cares about advancing the cause of Ukraine.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Chair, I certainly do not want to repeat what has already been said,

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but I do want to raise my concern as well that there is a bit of a precedent here that we need to be worried about.

There are a lot of big feelings in the House, but the problem is that it should not be those who scream the loudest or light their hair on fire who get the most attention. When one is in a grocery store and a kid is on the floor kicking and screaming, one does not feed that fire. I would ask that we be more cautious, absolutely, with the words we use, but it should not be those who kick and scream the loudest who get their way all the time.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Chair, I would like to make one last comment. I understand that we all want to get to bed tonight. However, we have heard comments that I find worrisome, for example, when people say that if all parliamentarians are of one opinion or if all Canadians are of one opinion, other opinions should not be allowed. We nearly got to that point.

When there is an international conflict like the one between Ukraine and Russia or the one between Israel and Palestine, I think that all opinions should be heard in the House. The same thing goes for internal matters. All opinions should be heard. We are here to debate things. We might take offence. We can shout all we want, but no opinions on an international conflict should be considered unparliamentary.

[English]

The Chair: We have to be very judicious in the words we are using and how we are talking, especially when we are talking about things that are so important to the world at the moment. I want to make sure we are giving respect to the debate we are having tonight. That is what I am really trying to accomplish this evening.

* * *

CANADA-UKRAINE RELATIONS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it is great to follow my hon. colleague from the wonderful city of Etobicoke and the riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore. I know the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore is a proud Ukrainian Canadian. He represents the Ukrainian community, not only in Etobicoke but across Canada, with everything in his heart and everything in his soul, and he believes in the cause of defeating the Russian aggression we have seen over the last two years and the invasion of Crimea several years earlier.

I am proud to stand with my hon. colleague and to be his colleague. I have known him for many years. He is an esteemed and learned member, and not only here in this House. He also served in provincial parliament. He is a good person, he means well and he believes in what he says. I know he is also the chair of the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group and has done a lot of work there.

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I rise tonight to speak as an individual who supports the Ukrainian Canadian community, all one million-plus of them, but also in my role for the last few years as the chair of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. In that role, I get to participate in the Council of Europe meetings at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, where we hold a number of bilateral meetings with delegations, including the Ukrainian delegation. I believe the current Ukrainian defence minister was actually a member of that delegation.

We had several meetings with them, and I wish Godspeed to Mariia, Ilyana and all members of the PACE delegation from Ukraine, whom I will see shortly in the month of April. I know how hard they are working to ensure the brave Ukrainian men and women fighting this unjustified barbaric invasion by Russia are going to prevail.

I was watching this debate earlier on this evening, and it was great to see the non-partisan nature of what was going on, but unfortunately, I think the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan decided to make it a little more partisan than it should be. There was some banter back and forth, but let us be serious: Everyone in this House, all 338 of us, know Russia needs to be defeated.

As Mario Draghi said, there is no Europe if Russia wins. Unfortunately, when the leader of the official opposition said that something was going on in a “faraway” land, it was an inappropriate remark to make, in my humble view. We are all held to account in what words we state, in our deeds in this House and as parliamentarians.

I see the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, whom I have spoken to before. Much like the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore, he is a staunch, proud Ukrainian Canadian. He wants nothing more than to see the full sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine for the Ukrainian people and the freedom of the brave men and women in Ukraine.

Two years ago there were not many folks in this world who believed Ukraine would stand up to Russia the way it has, but it did for many reasons, including the participation of the Canadian Armed Forces through Operation Unifier, which has trained over 40,000 Ukrainian troops and continues to provide resources. There are 300 Canadian Armed Forces troops in Europe right now, in Poland, the U.K. and Latvia, helping out.

I was doing some note-taking, because I do not sit on the defence committee or foreign affairs committee as I have other responsibilities, and I was looking at Canada's participation. We are in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group. We are in the air force capability coalition. We are in the armour capability coalition. We are in the drone capability coalition. Since February 2022, Canada has committed over \$13.3 billion in funding support to Ukraine, including in 2024, when we will commit another \$3.02 billion in spending.

● (2250)

When I hear feedback from my constituents, it tends to be far-right individuals who do not believe in supporting Ukraine. It is a fact. Much like in the United States, there is an element on the political right that does not support aiding Ukraine. That is a fact. It is

unfortunate, and I try to speak to them, calmly, to say that we need to stand up for Ukrainians.

I also want to give a big shout-out to the President of Czechia—

● (2255)

The Chair: I hate to interrupt, but we are out of time. Five minutes flies by pretty quickly. I will get someone to ask the hon. member a question, and maybe he could finish off his speech in his answer.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to thank the member for his kind words toward me. I do appreciate that.

This is an issue that has all-party support, this new strategic security agreement between Canada and Ukraine.

I was not going to ask a question, but he did raise the misinformation out there. Research has been done, both in the Ukraine by NATO itself, through its Estonia cybersecurity and misinformation centre of excellence, which I had the chance to visit this past summer, as well as here in Canada. Everybody always wants to talk about the far right, and there is no doubt. The Tucker Carlsons of the world, the PPC types out there, are actually out there promoting all the Kremlin propaganda.

There is also a growing mountain of evidence to show that the far left, the alt-left, the Antifa types, are also saying that Russia is justified in its attacks on Ukraine and that Ukraine does not actually exist. It is all the same revisionist history that is pushed out by Putin and his troll farm in St. Petersburg.

I just want to ask the member if he recognized the fact that there are extremes on both sides of the political equation that are squeezing all of us who are supporters of Ukraine, and it requires us to fight back even harder on the misinformation and disinformation and to unite Canada and the world, including our American cousins, in their support for Ukraine.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Chair, I will say that I do agree that there is an element of the far left, and we do see it in some of the European political parties, that are not as supportive as they should be. It is quite unfortunate. I see that in my heritage country of Italy. There are some far-right parties and some far-left parties that are not supportive.

On Canada's free trade agreement with Ukraine, which I believe was originally negotiated by the official opposition, I understand their dislike of carbon pricing and of taking action on climate change. However, I really believed that was one measure, one policy, and I know it received royal assent last night, that all parties should have come together to support. I really do believe that.

I was very disappointed that official opposition did not support that. At the end of the day, it was something that the Ukrainian people, Ukrainian Canadians and President Zelenskyy asked for and wanted. We should have come together, as 338 parliamentarians, to support Ukraine. Our Canadian Armed Forces are doing it. We should have done it as well. As parliamentarians, we should continue to do that going forward.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Chair, we are talking about rebuilding Ukraine. We are talking about the support Canada should be providing.

After listening to everything that was said this evening, especially by my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois and my colleague from Montarville, who gave an excellent speech with a lot of detail on the percentage of the aid Canada promised that has been delivered to Ukraine and on the delays in delivering that aid, is my colleague satisfied with the Government of Canada's response and support with respect to Ukraine? Does he, like me, think that we should get going and do more?

• (2300)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for his very important question. I want to support Ukraine.

[English]

We want to do that as much as humanly possible. Even with this innovative agreement with Czechia, we need to do everything we can to support Ukraine. We will always try to do more, as much as possible, whether it is munitions or sanctions. I believe that most, if not all of us in the House are actually sanctioned by the Russia government. We need to keep sanctioning Russian officials.

On that \$300 billion U.S. in foreign assets out there that are frozen, we need to make sure that we reconstruct Ukraine with that, that Canada is at the forefront of that and that we will rebuild that country, because it is a beautiful place and the breadbasket of Europe. They are an innovative, hard-working people. We are going to be with them, today, tomorrow and in the future.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Chair, I have the unenviable task, or should I say the privilege, of wrapping up this discussion. I believe I am the last speaker this evening, so I will try to keep it relatively brief.

We are here this evening to talk about the partnership between Canada and Ukraine, an agreement that seeks to reflect the values of solidarity, democracy and freedom. By signing the Canada-Ukraine strategic security partnership, Ottawa is committing to supporting Ukraine in its fight to preserve its territorial integrity and its sovereignty.

Russia's attack on Ukraine, for which we recently marked the second anniversary, is indeed a war, despite the fact that Moscow calls it a "special military operation". This attack is unacceptable and unjustifiable. Regardless of the reasons given by Moscow, which may or may not be legitimate, this war is unquestionably a tragedy. Is it an inevitable tragedy? One day we will have to take

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stock of the whole affair and ensure that history does not repeat itself.

The Japanese Zen Buddhist master Shunryu Suzuki once said that the cause of conflict is some fixed idea or one-sided idea. War is a clear sign that dialogue and diplomacy have failed. However, even when dialogue and diplomacy initially fail, they are exactly what can bring about an end to war. Let us hope that a lasting peace will emerge following a proper negotiation process.

This unjust war is even more tragic because Russia was born in Ukraine, when we think about it. Historically, Russia was born in Ukraine. Its rich culture, fascinating heritage and grandiose history owe an enormous debt to Ukraine. Let us hope that Moscow heeds the principles of Lao-tzu, the father of Taoism: "a large state, lowering itself, can win over a small one.... Large states want no more than to unite and nurture people. Small states want no more than to join with and serve people. To give both what they wish, therefore, the large state should lie low."

This war has dramatically deepened the rift between Russia and the west, much to the delight of China, which has literally pounced on the Russian economy and geopolitics.

This war is also speeding up Ukraine's integration with the west. Afterwards, we will need to move forward cautiously, to avoid creating a world where new blocs exist in a state of latent, but permanent, confrontation. Such a world would be extremely dangerous. We need to stay cautious. Arrogance will lead nowhere in politics, either domestically or internationally.

As we understand it, the agreement before us aspires to establish greater co-operation and mutual support. It is meant to demonstrate a commitment to a safer and fairer future for everyone and to strengthen Canada's resolve in defending the fundamental principles that guide democratic societies.

In dealing with this conflict for two years, Ukraine, a courageous, resilient country, has risen to immense challenges. Since the conflict began in 2014, the people of Ukraine have shown an unwavering determination to protect their freedom and their right to self-determination.

This agreement seeks to go beyond mere military co-operation. It includes measures intended to strengthen Ukraine's security, stability and prosperity.

Under the agreement, Ottawa commits to supporting Ukraine, helping to rebuild the country and reinforcing Ukraine's defence capabilities. There is specific language about post-war commitments, which gives us an opportunity to dream of a not-so-distant future when combatants will have laid down their arms and taken up writing instead.

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Industrial co-operation is important and the agreement contains a section on that. Still, most of the problems are known, but Canada is always slow to respond. Canada's lack of munitions production capacity is a known problem that is criticized by the defence staff, but Canada still has not increased its production of 155-millimetre artillery shells after two years of war. National Defence is also concerned about the cuts announced by the Liberals. Canada cannot always rely on the United States to have its back, especially when it has been so undisciplined on a host of geopolitical issues.

● (2305)

This agreement also deals with the fight against corruption, the promotion of the rule of law and the defence of human rights. We firmly believe that these values are essential to guarantee a better future for everyone, for all Ukrainians. This shows that Ukraine is serious about addressing the very real problems that have been plaguing the country for far too long.

Obviously, we have condemned the Russian attack from the start, but that must not make us lose sight of the magnitude of the challenge facing Ukraine when it comes to corruption and the treatment of significant minority groups within the country. We must not be blind to that. The situation in Ukraine and the country's track record are far from rosy in that regard. It was important to be serious and require real guarantees. By specifically mentioning these issues in the agreement, Kyiv is showing that it is not neglecting them, and that is a good thing.

In his monumental novel *War and Peace*, which was published serially between 1865 and 1869, the Russian literary giant Leo Tolstoy expounded a fatalistic vision of history. He attached little importance to free will, instead emphasizing the inevitable historical determinism that governs all events. He believed that human will ultimately matters very little. He was probably right, but we have a duty to at least do what we must.

In closing, I want to thank the people of Ukraine for their resilience and courage in the face of adversity. Together, we can build a better future for everyone, a peaceful future. Together, we can stand for freedom and peace.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Chair, I enjoyed listening to my hon. colleague's speech. He began his remarks with a comment on Russia's civilization and rich culture. Canada is a western country, a country that, like all democracies, is founded on the principles of the Enlightenment. I believe that the three most important principles of the Enlightenment are democracy, freedom and the rule of law.

Can my colleague comment on these principles, which are the founding principles of all democracies, and on the fact that Russia now does not follow the three principles of the Enlightenment?

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Chair, it goes without saying that a dialogue might have been an option when the U.S.S.R. imploded, when several republics imploded, and the communist regime came to an end. Perhaps that would have been the time for those involved to reach out to one another properly and come up with a solution. Those were catastrophic years, during which the most aggressive and violent form of neo-liberalism was rammed down Russia's throat, bringing the country close to extinc-

tion. Production plummeted. The mafia took control; so did the oligarchs. Perhaps that is when the anti-western sentiment took root.

I think we will have to take a clear-eyed look at the situation and also accept that the west may have played a part in these divisions. Historically, Russia has always been a country marked by tension between western and Asian cultures, even though three-quarters of its territory is in Asia. There was Tsar Peter I, Peter the Great, who wanted to westernize Russia very quickly. As a country, it has seen a number of movements, with a wealth of literature and intellectuals associated with the Enlightenment. I think this dialogue will have to be rebuilt in due course. Let us also have the courage to look inward, at ourselves. We probably made mistakes, at crucial moments in history, and now Russia is extremely upset with us.

● (2310)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I liked the tail end of the member's speech. He did something I wish I would have done, and that was to acknowledge the Ukrainian heroes, those on the front lines fighting not only for Ukraine but also for allied forces in democratic countries that believe in the rule of law and freedom. I acknowledge that. That is what this strategy is really all about. As one of many countries that recognizes the need to be there, not only in the short term but also in the long term, we owe it to the Ukrainian heroes.

As a last thought, I would acknowledge the Ukrainian heritage community and Ukrainian people around the world who have come together in solidarity to ensure that parliaments around the world respond positively and provide the needed supports, such as the \$30-million commitment to enhance artillery shells for those frontline heroes.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Chair, I have to admit that the member's speech took some interesting turns. I am not exactly sure what to make of it. The member began his speech by saying that he was disappointed in the ending of my speech, in what I had not mentioned. It reminds of the expression "whataboutism".

He said he was disappointed that I had not mentioned the war heroes. Okay, I will. I honour the heroes of the war and the people who served on the front lines. That said, I write my own speeches. If the member wants to write my speeches for me, great, it will save me some time. I have a speech to give tomorrow morning. He can write it for me, although I might have to rewrite some parts because we may not always agree. If he wants to write me a rough draft, I have no objections. My speech is at 11 o'clock in the morning; I look forward to getting his rough draft.

The Chair: I think that something was lost in translation.

The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot for his speech. I think he did a fine job describing the role of Ukrainians in building democracy. To me, there is a really interesting thing that is important to note and that is the fact that Vladimir Putin is obviously not working alone in his attack and illegal invasion of Ukraine.

Does my colleague think that we should hold Russia's allies responsible, countries such as Iran and others that are helping Russia in its invasion of Ukraine?

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Chair, just as an aside, I want to give credit where credit is due. My colleague explained his point to me and now I understand him better. I misunderstood. I do not think that he will be drafting my speech after all, so that is settled.

To answer my colleague's question, it goes without saying that this is a complicated geopolitical game. For example, we saw that the European Union decided to stop buying Russian oil and gas, but it was buying oil and gas from India, which was reselling Russian oil and gas at a higher price, so India was making a profit on the same oil and gas. That gets rather complicated. In this global trade game, whether in this case or any other, determining provenance can be complicated. Do we need to improve the mechanisms? Yes, but let us be careful not end up with a new world with blocs in constant rivalry. That could be a powder keg and a rather complicated situation.

I value dialogue. In this case, obviously, a war broke out. Sides have been chosen. We must put an end to it as quickly as possible, and the peaceful path is the best option. Diplomacy will undoubtedly be the only way out. In due course, however, we must take the time to reflect on a vision of the world that does not include rivalries resurfacing long after we thought we had left them behind.

• (2315)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, the discussion that is happening, particularly what was raised by my colleague from Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, is very important.

The global context we are in is one of a new global cold war where there are two different blocs. There is the bloc of democratic nations and a kind of anti-democratic bloc that is increasingly working together. I do not, of course, relish this reality. This is a tragic reality, but it is a reality and one that requires us to fortify our will, be strong and stand up to the opponents of democracy everywhere.

In particular, we see how the Burmese regime has been working with and assisting the Russian regime. The government has left a massive hole in our sanctions in the Burmese regime, an area where we are inconsistent with the Americans, and it is allowing the Burmese oil and gas sector to continue to fund the junta.

We have also seen failures of the government to hold the Iranian regime accountable. Drone technology from Iran is being used by

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Russia in the context of its invasion of Ukraine. We see these various other actors, such as North Korea, the People's Republic of China, Burma and Iran, that are engaged in supporting the Putin regime.

I would add my voice to those who are saying we need to strengthen our sanctions regime and hold anti-democratic actors accountable while fortifying our own strength to support the people of Ukraine.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Chair, I would basically say that the position that we in the west, in democratic nations, have chosen to take is not necessarily shared by every country in the world.

Diplomacy still has its rights. If a country does not share our position, I do not think that is a reason to suspend diplomatic channels with that country. We have to continue to do business. We have to continue to engage in dialogue. We have to continue to have cultural, intellectual, political and various other exchanges. We have to continue to have relations with countries that do not share our position on this conflict. That goes without saying.

That strategy could well help us convince them over time, and it could be much more effective than a hostile approach.

[English]

The Chair: I just wanted to say to the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre that I will not be reporting this back, so the hon. member, even though he became invisible to me for a few moments, will be fully seen tomorrow during the session of the House.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Chair, I rise on a point of order. What you just said is not consistent with what you had previously said, nor is it consistent with the precedent set by the previous Speaker regarding the member for Miramichi—Grand Lake. I am not sure why you are saying now that you are reversing your previous decision in defiance of precedents set by the Speaker.

I would ask you to apply the precedent and hold the member for Etobicoke Centre accountable for his unparliamentary language and insist that he apologize before being recognized. That was what you said, and that was the ruling of the Speaker in regard to a Conservative member. I would expect you, or any Chair occupant, to treat all parties equally in this place, and to not give special allowances to the government on matters of amendment or on matters of the statements they make in the House. I ask you to apply the rules and the precedents of the House and to defend the privileges of all members equally and fairly.

The Chair: I will be bringing this to the attention of the Speaker tomorrow morning.

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It being 11:20 p.m., pursuant to order made Monday, March 18, (The House adjourned at 11:20 p.m.)
the committee will now rise.

(Government Business No. 36 reported)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Accordingly, the House stands adjourned
until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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