



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

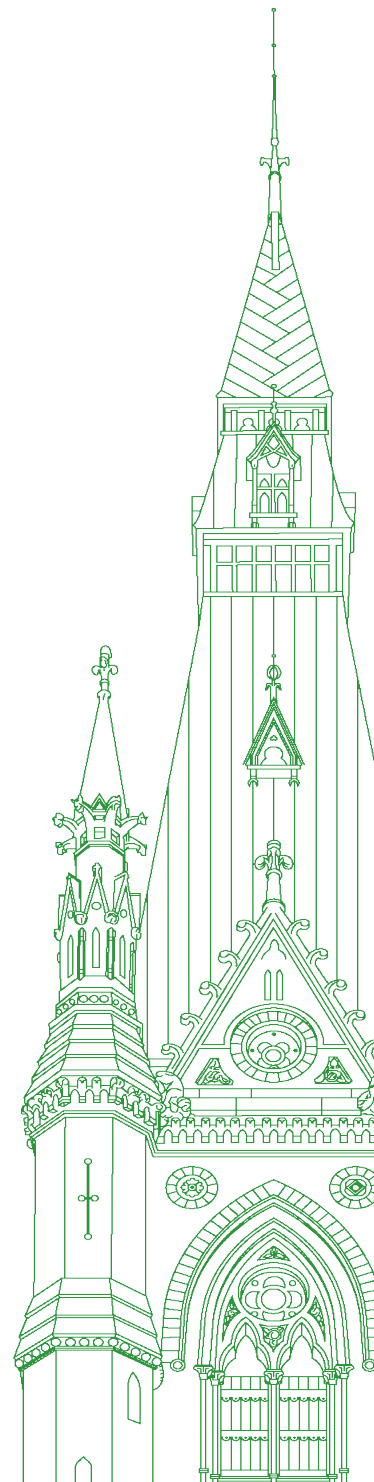
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 151 No. 307
Thursday, May 2, 2024

Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 2, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

(Division No. 748)

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

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

While I am on my feet, I move:

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

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

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

The Speaker: Call in the members.

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

• (1045)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask you to verify the photo of the member for Papineau. His face is not visible. I would like you to check with the clerks to see whether his vote counts.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am not sure whether the hon. member for Papineau is online. If not, his vote does not count.

[English]

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

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	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	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	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)

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MacDonald (Malpeque)
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Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Morrice
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Saijan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
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Moore
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Perron
Poilievre
Redekopp
Richards
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
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Perkins
Plamondon
Rayes
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Scheer
Seebach
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

NAYS

Members

Aboultayf
Albas
Baldinelli
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Bragdon
Brock
Calkins
Carrie
Chambers
Chong
Dalton
Davidson
Deltell
Desbiens
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Ferrerri
Fortin
Garon
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Jeneroux
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek

Aitchison
Arnold
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Bergeron
Bérubé
Blanchet
Block
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo
Chabot
Champoux
Cooper
Dancho
DeBellefeuille
d'Entremont
Desilets
Dreeshen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Gallant
Gaudreau
Genuis
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Jivani
Khanna
Kmiec
Kram-Neuman
Kusie

PAIRED

Members

Sidhu (Brampton East) Vidal— 2

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

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

The decision of the government to proceed to the orders of the day prevents the presentation of private members' bills. I have an important private member's bill on Ukraine and munitions. I wonder if there would be unanimous consent to allow members of all parties, if they have private members' bills, to table them now.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I already hear “no”. I am assuming that the member—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I just want to remind members that they maybe want to have a conversation with other members ahead of time before asking for unanimous consent. That way they will be more successful in their attempts.

I also want to remind members that the House is in session and that if they wish to have conversations to please take them outside, because I have trouble hearing what is going on.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1050)
[Translation]

WAYS AND MEANS

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance) moved that a ways and means motion to introduce a bill entitled An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, be concurred in.

[English]

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.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we would request a recorded vote.

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

• (1135)
(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 749)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	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
Freeland
Gaheer
Garrison
Gerretsen
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Joly
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Singh
Sousa
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Trudeau
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Government Orders

Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Gazan
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Miller
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid
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NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Bragdon
Brock

Privilege

Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Dowdall	Dreeschen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Hoback
Jeneroux	Jivani
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Majumdar
Martel	May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poillievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Savard-Tremblay
Scheer	Schmale
Seebach	Shields
Shipley	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer — 150

PAIRED

Members

Sidhu (Brampton East)

Vidal — 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, be read the first time and printed.

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

* * *

PRIVILEGE

NOTIFICATION OF MEMBERS FOLLOWING FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a question of privilege that was raised by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan on Monday. He and I, and my hon. colleague here, belong to a group called IPAC. It is an international group, the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, and it appears we have attracted some unwanted attention.

Last Wednesday, the member and I were on a call with IPAC in London and were advised of this form of cyber-attack. I am at an age and stage when I do not pretend to understand exactly what they were talking about, but I am given to understand that a group called APT31, or Advanced Persistent Threat 31, was conducting cyber-attacks against some colleagues here and indeed around the world.

The only reason we found out about it was that the FBI was conducting a surveillance operation a couple of years ago, and we were caught up in that surveillance operation. That was a couple of years ago, so the question becomes this: Why did we not know about it? IPAC contacted the U.S. Department of Justice and asked why we did not know about it.

The U.S. Department of Justice did notify the relevant nations, sovereignty to sovereignty. IPAC then compared the FBI list with its own list, and the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, myself and my colleague here were on that list. The question becomes this: How come we did not know about it?

Since then, we have been advised that the FBI did notify the Canada Security Establishment, or CSE, and CSE, in turn, notified Parliament, or the IT service that runs Parliament. A security check was run in a timely fashion, and the good news is that the system we have here was not breached. In that respect, it worked.

However, at that point, a decision was made to not notify the affected members of Parliament and the affected senators; I think there are about 13 of us in total. That is a bit more problematic, so this is why I support the member's privilege question because I do think this needs to be investigated.

I am given to understand that there are literally hundreds of thousands of attacks on our IT system on a daily basis, literally a massive volume, and it becomes difficult to know, when attacks are unsuccessful, when and how and if members should be notified because our inboxes could be literally filled on a daily basis with notifications of attacks.

On the other hand, if I, as a member who is interested in security matters and defence matters, have an unusual volume of attacks or if other members, for other reasons, have unusual volumes or patterns of attacks, then that seems to be quite relevant to the interests of those individual members.

The reason I am supporting the hon. member's question of privilege is that we need to start to review these protocols, and do it sooner rather than later. I want to make the point that this is not a government issue; this is a Parliament issue.

● (1140)

The government did its job, so to speak, in that CSE reported it to our security services and the people who run them. However, I believe that PROC needs to look at this. It needs to review the sequence of events to make sure that, as I am describing it to the House, they were correct; to examine the decisions that were made when the information became available to Canadian authorities; and to review whether this is the kind of information that should be shared with members and, if so, in what format, how frequently, etc.

I do not think we can take this very lightly. The analogy I have drawn in the past has been that it is like somebody looking at one's mail in the post office. I think we would all be pretty upset with somebody examining our mail. It is a bit of an exaggeration to say that, but it gives the sense in which the emails that are coming into our offices need to have security not only for ourselves but also for our correspondents and our constituents. These are significant volumes of emails.

I just want to raise what I believe is a question of privilege. I hope the Speaker finds it to be a question of privilege and asks the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to move the relevant motion.

As I said, this is a significant issue. The chamber needs to deal with it in a timely sort of way; I hope PROC ultimately does as well.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on the same question of privilege, I just want to add my comments to those of both of my colleagues, who are the co-chairs for Canada on the IPAC organization.

I do not believe it ends there. I want to see this go forward. It is great that the firewall held and nothing was penetrated. However, if these attacks are happening, as members of Parliament, we need to be briefed better than we currently are. If there is any overabundance of attacks on my system for some particular reason, I would like to know that.

I appreciate the fact that the firewall held up, but it is a question of where we go from here. If we are getting thousands of attacks every day, all parliamentarians need to be more aware and make sure that we are doing what we need to do to protect ourselves. I also think that the parliamentarians who were under surveillance from various areas need to know that to protect themselves.

I do not think it should change the fact that many of us stand up on files on human rights issues that we care about. I would not want to see intimidation be a factor in stopping us from doing our jobs.

Government Orders

I believe that the more information we have, the better informed we are and the better we are able to protect ourselves and our citizens.

● (1145)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate the hon. members' interventions. We will certainly take that under consideration as we deliberate on bringing back a statement on this.

* * *

CANADA—NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR ATLANTIC ACCORD IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada—Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There are nine motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-49.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 1 to 9 will not be selected by the Chair because they could have been presented in committee.

There being no motions at report stage, the House will now proceed, without debate, to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

[*English*]

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (for the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources) moved that the bill be concurred in.

[*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.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we are prepared to have this pass on division.

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, we would like a recorded vote.

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

● (1230)

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

(*Division No. 750*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag

Alghabra

Government Orders

Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	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
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
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
Rayes	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson

Sarai
 Schiefke
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sorbara
 St-Onge
 Tassi
 Thompson
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 Van Bynen
 Vandal
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Zahid
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Scarpaleggia
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Singh
 Sousa
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Trudeau
 Valdez
 van Koeverden
 Vandenbeld
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
 Albas
 Arnold
 Barlow
 Barsalou-Duval
 Bergeron
 Bérubé
 Blanchet
 Block
 Brassard
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Caputo
 Chabot
 Champoux
 Cooper
 Dancho
 DeBellefeuille
 Desbiens
 Dowdall
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Epp
 Falk (Provencher)
 Ferreri
 Fortin
 Garon
 Gagnéux
 Gill
 Godin
 Gourde
 Hallan
 Jivani
 Khanna
 Kram
 Kurek
 Lantsman
 Lawrence
 Lemire
 Lewis (Essex)
 Lloyd
 Maguire
 Martel
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Melillo
 Moore
 Morrison
 Muys
 Normandin
 Paul-Hus
 Perron
 Poilievre
 Reid
 Richards
 Rood
 Savard-Tremblay

Aitchison
 Allison
 Baldinelli
 Barrett
 Beaulieu
 Berthold
 Bezan
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Bragdon
 Brock
 Calkins
 Carrie
 Chambers
 Chong
 Dalton
 Davidson
 Deltell
 Desilets
 Dreeshen
 Ellis
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
 Fast
 Findlay
 Gallant
 Gaudreau
 Genuis
 Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gray
 Hoback
 Kelly
 Kitchen
 Kramp-Neuman
 Lake
 Larouche
 Lehoux
 Leslie
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lobb
 Majumdar
 Mazier
 McLean
 Michaud
 Morantz
 Motz
 Nater
 Patzer
 Perkins
 Plamondon
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Ruff
 Scheer

Schmale
Shields
Simard
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Webber
Williamson

Seeback
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 142

PAIRED

Members

Sidhu (Brampton East)

Vidal— 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That the membership of the Standing Committee on Procedures and House Affairs be amended as follows: Mr. Carr (Winnipeg South Centre) for Mrs. Chagger (Waterloo).

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am sorry. I had my hand up to try to vote, but you announced the vote.

The Deputy Speaker: I apologize, but with unanimous consent we can do all kinds of things here.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Speaker, I hope to find unanimous consent to vote yea.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADA—NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR ATLANTIC ACCORD IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.) moved that Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada—New-

Government Orders

foundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act and the Canada—Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-49 today.

[English]

People in Newfoundland and Labrador have relied on the ocean's resources for centuries. It is what we know. It feels somewhat historic when we talk about the Atlantic accord. Someone not from Newfoundland and Labrador might not realize the significance of the agreement. Particularly for Newfoundland and Labrador, the Atlantic accord is fundamental to the respect and recognition shown between federal and provincial governments.

The accord was an agreement signed in 1985 that bound the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to a common understanding that the people of our province are the principal beneficiaries of their natural resources. The Atlantic accord recognized what my province brought into this country. It recognized the historic resource strengths of Newfoundland and Labrador, and today it recognizes that strength for the future because now the accord would apply to renewable energy, to wind energy.

A Newfoundlander's talking about wind may come as a joke to some. We do have a huge opportunity in harnessing the wind in our province. We have a lot of it, wind that will power not just the grid but also some groundbreaking hydrogen projects. The province knows it and so do we. It is why we work so closely together to manage and develop that resource. The bill before us represents a moment of opportunity, and down my way, we know how to seize opportunity when it comes.

Times were bleak after the cod moratorium until “first oil”, until Hibernia, when we really did not have a clue what we were doing. I remember “first oil”. We knew, though, that it was possible. We knew it could be done. Jointly managed and regulated through the soon-to-be-former C-NLOPB, we stayed the course and people prospered. We did this in what the president of ExxonMobil told me was one of the harshest environments in the world to operate, but we did find a way. More important, we built up one of the most skilled labour forces that the world has ever seen. and people noticed. Companies noticed, much like they are looking to us now.

In 2019, we renewed the accord. We established a Hibernia dividend for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, which was \$3.3 billion of secure, long-term and predictable payments that run from 2019 to 2056. More important, it also recognized the province as the principal beneficiary of its resources. I am very proud to have helped negotiate the agreement, and I stand by the document.

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Now is the time to renew the accord again. In fact, to call the amendments “amendments to the accord” feels a little wrong. It is a natural evolution because the world is evolving. Where we get our energy is evolving and investment is evolving. The Atlantic accord would include renewable energy so Newfoundlanders and Labradorians could be the principal beneficiaries of that too. We would not be losing what we built on the offshore. We are very proud of it actually.

People of my province and the government there are hand-in-glove with this when it comes to the energy mix. We accept the world as it is. We embrace it. We applaud the engineering skills that built a West White Rose gravity structure, because they are the same skills that will help construct wind turbines and the monopiles that are stored next door in Argentia.

Let us think about all the jobs that come with this work; as Minister of Labour, I know I do. When we have a good management structure in place, the more projects that we attract and build and the more jobs that they bring, the better. They are good, well-paying jobs. Right now there are oil and gas companies across Canada that are making sure that the expertise of our workers can be used to build renewable energy projects, and we are going to need every worker we can get because big things are happening and they are happening quickly, but they will not happen as quickly if we do not have the workers.

I have said this before: If someone grows up on a rock in the middle of the ocean or if they grow up in a small town in Labrador like I did, they cannot afford ideology. They grow up seeing the world as it is, not as they wish it to be. They accept the world as it is. They accept opportunities for what they are, and they are clear-eyed about it.

Between the Minister of Rural Economic Development, the member for Avalon, the member for Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, the member for Labrador, the member for St. John's East and me, we knew the accord would need to reflect the changes in the times. As companies and markets look to renewables, Newfoundland and Labrador needs to be well managed. It needs to be well positioned, and when it comes to energy, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians do not like playing catch-up; we like to lead. Even our province's oil and gas industry association's biggest champion, Noia, changed its name to reflect the global shift in energy; it is now Energy NL. Sustainability and reducing emissions has become the name of the game, so Energy NL's vision is a sustainable and prosperous lower-carbon energy industry.

● (1235)

With all of the wind, we are now seeing big hydrogen projects on our doorsteps, first-of-their-kind facilities. When I was the natural resources minister and we were developing Canada's hydrogen plan, never did I think I would see the German chancellor's plane one day land on the west coast of Newfoundland at Stephenville airport, carrying the CEOs of Seaman and Mercedes. They were saying that they could invest in and create a green hydrogen facility anywhere they choose to, and that they chose us.

If people have not been out my way, I can tell them that it can get windy. The winds off the Atlantic coast rival those of the North Sea, which is the birthplace of the world's offshore wind industry.

This gives Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia a once-in-a-generation opportunity to become the leaders in an energy sector of the future, to support our region's industrial future and create good jobs that will exist for generations to come.

It is expected that the offshore wind industry will attract one trillion dollars' worth of investment by 2040. We would be out of our minds to think we would not be ready for that kind of money and those kinds of jobs. We are talking about renewable energy. That is a change, one that sometimes makes people anxious. However, this is not about politics; it is about markets, investments and jobs. Industry understands something that skeptics do not, which is that the world is looking for renewable energy, wind and solar, in the overall energy mix.

We can sit on our hands and let those industries be built in other countries and let their workers get the good jobs, or we can get in on the ground floor and make sure that workers here get the jobs. We can make sure that Canadian workers, Atlantic Canadian workers, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, are the ones who will be selling renewable energy to the world and taking home the profits.

[Translation]

We are going to ensure a great future for the people of my home province, Newfoundland and Labrador.

[English]

By passing Bill C-49, we would secure Newfoundland and Labrador's and Nova Scotia's futures as forces to be reckoned with in the global offshore wind and renewable energy sectors.

● (1240)

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the hon. minister on his speech. My area has the second-largest group of people who came from his province to work in the resource sector for many years, and we have a strong connection with his province. I appreciate that he believes the resource sector is responsible, and its workers have tremendous skills.

The one thing I would ask him is this: What is the government going to build, and what resource sector would it depend on for all the parts and pieces to build it and the fluids to drive it?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, I would say to the hon. member that it is oil and gas. I do not know whether that is such a difficult answer to say, but it is oil and gas, and proudly so.

In fact if we look at wind turbines, they take an awful lot of copper, about 60,000 pounds, so there is a lot of mining involved not just in this country but around the world. All of this brings good Canadian jobs if we play our cards right.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the committee's study, the Bloc Québécois proposed a number of amendments, including the idea of conducting seabed impact studies before developing wind turbines, which was rejected by the Liberals, among others.

I have a simple question. Was it simply to avoid setting a precedent for oil and gas development on the seabed, so that there can never really be an environmental assessment or an impact assessment before drilling takes place?

[English]

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, I fail to see the logic of the hon. member's question. It seems to lean on whether or not oil and gas or renewables are treated the same. Let me assure her that the piece of legislation before us is such a fundamentally sound piece of legislation in the Atlantic accord and has built such a proud and prosperous industry off the shores of my home province that asking me to extend that jurisdiction, which is respectful of provincial jurisdiction, is something that I would think most members of the House would abide by.

By making sure that our governments work together and that provincial jurisdictions are upheld, we can work together to build a new industry in the same regulatory regime in renewables: wind and hydrogen. We do not have to say no to say yes to others. All of these are going to be important parts of the energy mix.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats worked long and hard to make sure that this project for Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia got off the ground, because we need to get serious about the renewable sector.

What worries me is that the rest of the world is moving much faster. Our main competitor is the United States. There is one project in Rhode Island where 250,000 homes will get energy, and the Vineyard project is 400,000 homes. The Europeans are moving, and China is leaving everybody in the dust, and yet the ITCs, the input tax credits promised by the government in 2023, are still not out there. I am talking to people in the industry, the mining industry in particular, who are looking to go stateside.

We cannot build this new economy without kick-starting the ITC credits that are needed. When are they going to come out? We cannot leave our regions behind.

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, the ITCs are something new, which actually builds the argument for what we are talking about with this piece of legislation. Why would we create something new when what we have works so well? Investment tax credits are new to this country. In particular, I am very proud to say that some of the ITCs are dependent and would only be activated, in other words, investors and companies would only realize them, if investors make sure that union wages are paid or union members are hired. In this case, we have a regulatory regime that works.

If we want renewables to succeed, as the hon. member brings up, as competition begins, why would we go back to the drawing board and start a whole new regulatory regime for renewables? It would take way too long. Let us use what we have, which works so well.

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That is what the provinces of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador are asking us to do.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the minister being a colleague of mine from Newfoundland and Labrador, I am sure he is very proud of the oil industry in our province. He mentioned the Port of Argentia. I am sure he remembers being there to announce a \$38-million investment as the port gets involved in wind energy.

I wonder if the minister could talk about that and how important it is to that particular region.

• (1245)

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows I love Argentia and I like taking people to Argentia.

The energy transition is going to be complicated, as the hon. member knows, and I am very proud of my province in the fact that as we continue in one energy sector, we are working in another energy sector. In fact, our industry association has changed its name from NOIA now to Energy NL, with the express purpose of looking at ways to lower emissions and looking at the overall energy mix and how they all work together.

I am very proud of Argentia as we see the gravity-based structure for the West White Rose project being built. It is being built with wheelbarrows. What they had to do is unbelievable. Right next door to it is the biggest monopile marshalling port on the eastern seaboard. This is where they are stacking all those big monopiles that are going to go up and down the eastern seaboard. These are the same workers, and I am very proud of them. It is a workforce with some of the best experts, when it comes to energy, in the world, developed in the past 30 years in my province. It is taking over the world. It is something to be proud of.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would ask my hon. colleague across the way if he will support the Conservative amendments, given that we consulted with the likes of Mr. Max Ruelokke, who I am sure the member is well aware of, with over 40 years' experience in the management of offshore petroleum resources in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia and in consultations worldwide. In fact, he was the chair and CEO of the C-NLOPB for six years. I am sure my hon. colleague respects him quite highly.

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I heard the minister mention earlier the good union jobs. There are also amendments that were suggested by the FFAW-Unifor, which, in committee, were voted down in a very partisan manner. All Conservatives want is to make this bill work so that the oil and gas industry, the fishing industry and the renewable energy industries can work together and bring investor confidence back to those resource-based industries in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Will the minister support the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and vote for the common-sense Conservative amendments?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, I honestly cannot wait to vote against those amendments, in the same way I could not wait to say no to 20,000 amendments that that party put forward to try to block this piece of legislation. That is not practical investing. That is not investing in the future. That is hoodwinking. This member has accused the premiers of those two provinces of being hoodwinked by us. He has accused us of hoodwinking the Premier of Nova Scotia and the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador. I do not think so.

Conservatives have done everything they can to get in the way of this.

The Progressive Conservative Party, which I have spoken very highly of, and John Crosbie, whom I would consider a mentor to me, built this industry, but we know what the Conservative Party has done with this industry. For goodness' sake, when it took 300 days for an environmental assessment for just an exploratory well, Conservatives found a way to make it 900 days. They are the kings of red tape when it comes to our offshore industry. We have reduced it to 90 days.

They think I am going to pay attention to their amendments because, clutch my pearls, we are being partisan. I do not think so. Get out of the way of investment. Get out of the way of jobs. Get out of the way of the future. This is happening and we are leading.

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute honour to rise again in the people's House and to address this important bill that is before our consideration here today.

Bill C-49 shows a continued lack of true consultation by the current government with stakeholders and on-the-ground industry workers, who have continuously come out to speak out against this bill with fervour. This is the furthest thing from bottom-up legislation, legislation based on feedback given by the people who would be most affected by these decisions. Good legislation would have taken that into consideration and made sure the voices of those who are most impacted by a certain piece of legislation are truly considered and implemented into the government's approach. That is clearly not the case here.

Industry stakeholders, fish harvesters, those in the offshore industry and residents of those provinces are raising legitimate concerns. What we, as His Majesty's loyal opposition, are doing is bringing those concerns to the fore. We are using every tool available to us to make sure that those concerns are heard, whether that is through amendments or through making sure that due diligence is done at committee and in this chamber. Those voices have a right to

be heard, and our job is to make sure those voices are brought to the fore. That is how we get to better legislation. Our aim is to fix the bill. Our aim is to help the legislation become what it should be.

The Liberals have ignored those legitimate, absolutely positive amendments that were brought forward. They are not considering those things that the stakeholders themselves and the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia are bringing forward. I think it is so important that the government take the time to consider those very legitimate concerns.

I am a proud member from the region of Atlantic Canada. I am excited to represent a region in New Brunswick. One thing that has frustrated me and, I know, other colleagues from Atlantic Canada on this side of the House is the fact that we have so much potential that has yet to be realized. There is so much potential that has yet to be fully tapped into. Those in the industry and those whose livelihoods depend upon this are clearly saying there are a lot of things that we could do.

Our provinces could take advantage of a lot of the resources that are literally under our feet and in our waters, if we only had a government that would listen to our concerns, get off our backs, get out of the way and allow us to do what we do best. Instead, we are putting up more roadblocks and we are putting undue power in the hands of one minister who, with the stroke of a pen, could veto a lot of tremendous potential development that could take place in our region.

Atlantic Canada, like other parts of this country, many times has felt ignored, isolated and marginalized by the current federal government. Atlantic Canadians are speaking loudly and clearly. They want the government to hear that they have concerns with this bill as it is written: "Fix the bill. Make the bill better. Make sure it reflects the legitimate concerns of those whose opportunities and future livelihoods truly depend upon it." We have heard it from fish harvesters, we have heard it from oil and gas workers and we have heard it from various stakeholders.

Mr. Scott Tessier, chief executive officer for the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board, said that the petroleum sector and the fishing sector "are absolutely critical to our province and the economy of Canada, so it is absolutely critical to have an effective consultation and engagement framework in which fisheries interests are at the table with a meaningful say and a full voice." We need to make sure that people's voices from those sectors are being considered and reflected in this type of legislation that is brought forward.

Mr. Michael Barron, the president of the Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association, said that "a more involved in-depth consultation needs to be had with other primary users of this space moving forward."

What will accompany this bill will strain the energy sector and give the minister the ability to veto energy projects brought forth by industry workers. We are hearing this coming from across sectors. They are raising concerns, and the real, legitimate problems, as has now been borne out by a federal court saying that Bill C-69 is unconstitutional, are once again being raised in regard to Bill C-49.

• (1250)

If a bill is being built on the back of a bill that has already been deemed unconstitutional by a federal court, the Liberals may want to go back to the drawing board to reconsider it, and see that this may be a little bit of a stretch and they had better address the concerns so they do not run into the same legal problems of implementation they are having with Bill C-69.

It is worthy of consideration, and it is worthy of going back to the drawing board to make sure we get this right. It is more important to get a piece of legislation through that is good and right than it is to just get a piece of legislation through for the sake of saying that we got it through. These concerns need to be heard and need to be brought forward.

There is so much potential. This is an area of passion for me, whether it was when I was spending my time on the natural resources committee or on the fisheries committee. One thing I hear from industry stakeholders in both sectors is how much potential there is within each of their sectors that is unrealized and untapped. They feel like, every time they go ahead to take advantage of the opportunities within those sectors, there is a big, heavy hand of government and bureaucracy that comes down on their backs, saying that they cannot do this, go there or expand in this area, and the only way they could grow and develop is the government's way, as old Frank Sinatra famously used to sing, do it *My Way*, and if they do not, then it is the highway. Quite frankly, we need to get them at the table so they have the opportunity to expand, grow, develop, and realize the potential that is theirs.

When I was preparing my remarks today, I could not help myself, and I had to go to this famous old story. It is one I heard years ago as a young man. I hope the House will indulge me. Members may recognize it as I read it. There is a reason why this old story came back to me today, and maybe members can relate to it somewhat. When I think of Atlantic Canada and our potential, and I think of the frustrations that we have felt as Atlantic Canadians, oftentimes being overlooked, this story comes to mind. It says:

In a world of hills, so steep and high,
Lived a little blue engine, reaching for the sky.
With a heart so bold and wheels that could,
The Little Engine faced a challenge understood.

On a sunny day, with a load so grand,
A shiny new train was stuck in the sand.
The passengers fretted, their spirits so low,
They needed help to make their journey go.

The shiny trains, big and strong,
Said, "We can't help, the hill's too long."
But the Little Engine, with a gleam in its eye,
Stepped forward, ready to give it a try.

"I think I can, I think I can," it said,
Climbing the hill with hope widespread.
Coal-fired determination, puffing and chugging,
The Little Engine's spirit was truly tugging.

The hill was steep, the challenge immense,
Yet the Little Engine, with confidence,
Chanted its mantra, clear and loud,
"I think I can, I'm strong and proud."

Up the hill, the Little Engine strained,

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Raindrops falling, courage gained.
"I think I can, I think I can," it cried,
As it chugged along with a sense of pride.

Passing others who doubted its might,
The Little Engine pressed on with all its might.
"I thought I could, I thought I could," it sang,
As over the mountains, its triumph rang.

A tale of courage, resilience so true,
For the Little Engine, and for me and you.
A journey of belief, where dreams unfold,
"I knew I could," a story retold.

To the little ones, with dreams so wide,
The Little Engine whispers, right by your side,
With "I think I can" echoing through the air,
You'll conquer any hill, if only you dare.

What is the lesson of the little engine that could, and how does it relate to Atlantic Canada and Bill C-49? It is that we have so much potential and so much we can do. We have so much we want to do. The last thing the little locomotives of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador need is a great, big locomotive called the federal government saying "No, you can't. No, you can't. No, you can't."

What we need is someone to stand on the side of the little provinces to say, "Yes, you can. Yes, you can. Yes, you can. There is hope. Yes, it can get better." Let us tap into our potential, utilize our resources and climb the hills of challenge that face us by utilizing all of the above, as well as the renewable energy and existing energy resources, to expand, grow and do all that we can.

With this, I must introduce an amendment.

• (1255)

I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources for the purpose of reconsidering Clauses 61, 62, 169 and 170 with the view to prevent uncertainty and a lack of clarity caused by the inclusion of similar provisions contained in Bill C-69, an Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, which would insert unanticipated conditions and requirements beyond existing legislation and regulations through these clauses.

• (1300)

The Deputy Speaker: The amendment is in order.

We will move on to questions and comments. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was an interesting story. I would say to the member that, yes, he can. He can realize the potential by passing Bill C-49, which has the premiers of the provinces that are most affected recognizing the true value of it, as it is. I would ask the member to reflect on the great potential Atlantic Canada, in particular the two provinces in question, would have through the passage of this legislation.

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I saw the passion in the speeches of the minister and others, particularly those from Atlantic Canada, when they talked about the future and how wonderful the future is, as well as the potential of this legislation. They are joined by the premiers of both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Why does he not say that, yes, he can convince his Atlantic caucus colleagues, at the very least, to get behind Bill C-49 and do the right thing by supporting it? By supporting it, he would be supporting Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, I will tell members what we can do. We can do our jobs as His Majesty's loyal opposition to make sure that what gets passed through the House is actually reflective of those whose livelihoods are most dependant upon the very industries that are most affected by the impacts of this bill. We have heard overwhelmingly from those industry stakeholders that this is a flawed bill that needs to be amended and corrected.

We are doing our job and, yes, we can, and, yes, we will. We will keep fighting to make it a better piece of legislation, so that the concerns of all Canadians, including Atlantic Canadians, are heard.

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleague to provide some clarification. He gave a rather eloquent speech, but I would like to understand why the Conservatives are opposing a bill that promotes greenwashing and that does absolutely nothing to reduce offshore petroleum operations. I would like to understand the Conservatives' position, because, from what I understand, the goal of the Conservative MPs is to protect the interests of the oil and gas industry and ensure that there is as much oil and gas development as possible, which is something this bill allows for. That is why I do not understand the Conservatives' position.

[English]

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, the answer is very clear. I find it intriguing that the hon. member from the Bloc Québécois is raising a concern about how we are standing up to reflect the concerns that stakeholders and provinces have raised.

These concerns are regarding way too much power being granted to a federal minister. They could come in to stamp out some provincial industries and the areas that impact provinces and regions within their jurisdiction. It takes way too much power away from the provinces and puts way too much into the hands of an overreaching, over-encroaching federal government. In particular, a federal minister could have veto power over energy development and resource development.

As our western friends in Alberta and Saskatchewan know very well, the over-encroachment of the federal government into areas of provincial jurisdiction is stifling and hampering. It hurts business and industry. I am sure my colleague from Quebec would be very concerned if federal ministers started overreaching into areas of provincial jurisdiction. We share that concern, and I hope the member would be onside with our concern regarding that.

• (1305)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as a prairie girl, this is a little outside of my zone, but I do

come from Alberta. The member, in answering the question of my colleague from the Bloc, brought up the example of the oil and gas sector in Alberta and the need for the federal government not to overreach.

One of the problems I have is that, on occasion, provincial governments, and I would use the example of the Alberta provincial government, do not do a particularly good job of promoting renewables or promoting forward-looking industry. As members know, Danielle Smith paused renewables in Alberta, and \$33 billion dollars' worth of investment was chased from our province.

From the member's perspective, is there a place for the federal government to ensure strings are attached?

Another example would be when money came from the federal government for orphan wells to be cleaned up in Alberta. There were no strings attached, despite the fact the NDP asked for them, and the wells in Alberta have still not been cleaned up.

Does he not see the federal government has to have some role to play in developing our resources and in making sure that resources are being developed adequately?

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, I must say that my concern, as it relates to the federal government's jurisdiction and the role we can play as a federal government, is this: I believe that the federal government should become the biggest cheerleader for Canadian energy on the planet.

Canada's energy is the best-sourced energy in the world, and it has the strictest environmental regulations in the world for development and extraction. Instead, the government is talking down our energy sector, putting the boot on our energy producers and taking on provinces that are responsibly extracting and developing their energy resources. Frankly, those are helping the rest of our country have the social programs that we so desperately need and want, whether it is our health care or our education. I know we, in the east, greatly appreciate the transfer payments that have come from our western colleagues.

I think it is time that the federal government appreciate how dynamic our energy-producing provinces are in bringing economic vitality to this country, so we have a good country. It needs to start cheerleading our energy development and start cheerleading the good advancements that have happened in improving technology and extraction practices. The government needs to get stop getting on the backs of our provinces about them developing their resources for the good of the country as a whole. Let us stand up for Canada's energy.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his passionate speech. He should look at joining a theatre group somewhere along the way.

Why can we not do them all? Could we not do wind energy, oil energy and tidal energy? We have got an ideal spot to start it right in the Maritimes, the Atlantic provinces, to do just that.

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, I share the absolute belief in all-of-the-above approach when it comes to energy. Any country that is going to be secure going forward in the geopolitical climate we are in internationally better have solid energy security, reliable energy resources and solid food security. If we do not get those three things right, we are in a lot of trouble. Part of that is all of the above. A big part of that, too, in improving and cleaning not only our atmosphere but the world's, is ensuring we are doing all we can to get great, clean, good, solid Canadian liquefied natural gas on the world markets, displacing dictator oil from dictator regimes.

Instead of being on the backs of that development and expanding that development, and standing and impeding the progress in those sectors, the government needs to get on the side of Canadian energy and say yes to all the of the above. Let us expand our nuclear capacity; let us expand wind and solar; and, yes, let us expand liquefied natural gas. Let us utilize it and ensure more Canadian petroleum products are on the world market not less. Every bit more of Canadian petroleum and energy we get into the world the world is much better off. Our people get paid good wages and the resources are utilized to improve the overall environment of the planet.

• (1310)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I know that we are debating Bill C-49 on offshore wind, but for my hon. friend for Tobique—Mactaquac, I am surprised to see a Conservative MP wanting to go to bat for SNC-Lavalin getting more work with its shady practices.

SNC-Lavalin bought Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. for the bargain basement price of \$15 million back in, I think, 2013. It is behind Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, and if there ever is a small modular reactor built in the member's home province, it will be built by that same corporation and not Moltex, which has never built a reactor and does not plan doing one. It will leave it to its partner, formerly known as SNC-Lavalin. I wonder if the member has any thoughts on that.

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, kind greetings to the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. On this, I simply would say that it is important that we do an all-the-above approach and not be locked in to just renewables or just one avenue, whether it is solar, wind or nuclear. We need all of the above and move with everyone together. A rising tide will lift all boats. An absolutely all-encompassing energy policy will lift not only all Canadians, but it will lift the entire world to a better place.

Let us get Canadian energy on the world market and improve the world's environment and improve Canada's economy.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I hope that I can speak with the same passion as my colleague, but I have to admit that I am not an oil and gas enthusiast, far from it.

I want to begin by saying that Bill C-49 was introduced to us as a bill that seeks to promote renewable energy, but such is not the

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case. Before I explain why I do not think that is the case, I would like to give a bit of background. It feels like groundhog day to me, because I am often repeating the same thing here in the House, that Canada is trapped in the oil industry's stranglehold.

We could take that one step further and say that Canada is an oil monarchy and wants to stay that way. We are among the four biggest polluters in the world, and we share that enviable position with Russia and Iraq. I do not know whether the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources planned to become a “petromonarch”, but unfortunately, that is what he is. Today, with the Trans Mountain pipeline in place, Canada is going to be producing an additional 600,000 barrels a day, when Alberta is already producing a record number of nearly 4 million barrels per day.

From an environmental perspective, we can all agree that that is awful. If we look at the government's actions in recent months, we again see the same thing, a willingness to financially support the oil and gas sector. I remember that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change said he wanted to put an end to inefficient fossil fuel subsidies in 2023, but he did not know what an ineffective subsidy was. How can we put an end to something we do not know about? That is rather difficult. I would simply point out to him that, in 2023, the federal government invested \$18.5 billion in the oil and gas industry. We are a long way from ending fossil fuel subsidies.

I would also point out that he should put a cap on emissions by 2026. Of note, the emissions cap prosed by the federal government is a limit on emissions but not on production. Canada will therefore produce more oil but reduce carbon intensity. Basically, I see this as a person on a diet eating poutine. If someone goes on a diet, they should not eat poutine. If the government wants to reduce carbon intensity, it should not help produce more oil.

It is a bit of a pipe dream to say we will reduce the carbon intensity of the oil sector by investing huge amounts of public money in technologies that are questionable and unsound, technologies that are assessed by several experts as doomed to fail. Nevertheless, the government's big strategy in its budget is to invest no less than \$83 billion by 2035 to promote this pipe dream of lower carbon intensity oil. That is not counting the \$65 billion that have been invested in the oil and gas sector in recent years.

I see that all these numbers are making your head spin, Mr. Speaker. I could not agree with you more. I too find it alarming. I am saying that because this is the context in which Bill C-49 is being proposed.

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I am a well-intentioned guy. My mother always says that about me and she is right. I am a person who means well. At first reading we told ourselves we should give it the benefit of the doubt. The first stumbling block we saw was the possibility that Bill C-49 interfered with provincial jurisdiction. From a constitutional perspective, management of offshore energy is a federal jurisdiction, but previous agreements were signed to manage the oil and gas sector with Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador. New agreements were presented to us as agreements aiming to include renewable energies.

● (1315)

At first reading, we decided to give it the benefit of the doubt because there were no jurisdictional issues. We therefore voted in favour of sending the bill to committee. I was prepared to participate in committee discussions and to try to improve it. This was the goal of the Bloc Québécois and its approach to studying the bill.

However, the main problem soon became clear. Bill C-49 is not about renewable energy. The government refused every amendment proposed by the Bloc Québécois. I will present some of them shortly, since I am sure I will have time. We proposed possible solutions while remaining totally open. All were dismissed outright.

Here is why I say Bill C-49 is not about renewable energy. In committee, we heard from Normand Mousseau, Scientific Director of the Trottier Energy Institute. No one is more qualified to talk about energy and energy transition. Mr. Mousseau said that there is a fundamental principle when it comes to engaging in energy transition. This fundamental principle is quite simple: Renewable energy must be given priority over fossil fuels or carbon-intensive energy. We decided to use this as the starting point for our amendments. The idea was to determine how Bill C 49 could favour renewable energy over fossil fuels or carbon-intensive energy. Unfortunately, the government was completely against this approach. This is why I say the bill is not about renewable energy.

I talked about Normand Mousseau, but we heard from another very interesting witness, Ches Crosbie, who was invited by my Conservative colleagues. Mr. Crosbie came to talk to us about his vision of energy in Canada. What is interesting about Mr. Crosbie is that he does not believe in climate change. The Conservatives invited a witness who does not believe in climate change and who is convinced that all the money invested in new technologies is a waste of time and a scam. I am translating freely. He told us that it was bogus, and his testimony, along with the questions I asked him when he appeared before us, was picked up by the CBC. I am not a big fan of the CBC; not being anglophone, it is a bit more difficult for me. In any case, the leader of the Conservatives in Newfoundland was forced to defend himself. Tony Wakeham was forced to say that he believed in climate change and that the witness who had appeared before the Standing Committee on Natural Resources was a bit off base. I wonder on what basis my Conservative friends chose to invite someone who is prepared to deny the reality of climate change, which is accepted by everyone. It is a bit like deciding to invite to the Standing Committee on Health someone who defends the idea that cigarettes do not cause cancer and are actually good for athletes. We would say that is completely far-fetched. However, Ches Crosbie, the Conservative witness, shamelessly said before the Standing Committee on Natural Resources that we

should stop talking about this bogus climate change theory and stop investing money in new technologies because that would not do any good. I think we all get the picture.

I said our goal from the outset was to improve Bill C-49 to better govern offshore energy activities and better plan the energy transition. Everything we proposed was roundly rejected by our Conservative friends.

I would like to review some of our amendments. This will clarify why we will vote against Bill C-49. We have said this already, but we will vote against Bill C-49 because it is incompatible with the energy transition.

The first type of amendment we submitted aimed to foster the Bloc Québécois's general vision, which is energy transition and fighting climate change. Earlier, I talked about Normand Mousseau. We wrote our amendments based on his words, stressing, among other things, the need for the federal government to follow the example of Quebec and of other countries, which have halted new oil and gas development projects.

● (1320)

We thought that if we could change the bill to prevent new oil and gas projects and instead focus on renewable energy, we would have done our job, and we could vote in favour of Bill C-49. However, the Liberal government responded that, while Bill C-49 deals with renewable energy, there would be no prioritization of other types of energy, as Normand Mousseau recommended in his testimony. We felt this undermined transition.

With the amendments we proposed, the government could have built the regulatory foundations to gradually phase out oil and gas by voting, among other things, to reform the system governing them. Our goal was to ensure that adequate regulation of current oil and gas projects would end the approval process for new ones. The government dismissed this outright. We also wanted to help create a new offshore renewable energy regulatory system that would have allowed effective planning that considered the needs of all users of the sea and required a proper environmental assessment.

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For example, we proposed that the regulator be responsible for preparing a strategic plan for gradually reducing petroleum-related activities, consistent with Canada's commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% to 45% below 2025 levels by 2030. These are commitments the government itself made. If it had taken this direction, it might not be in the situation it is in today, when it was announced that our emissions increased by 10 megatonnes between 2021 and 2022. How are we supposed to reduce our carbon emissions when our main economic sector is still oil and gas? It is completely impossible. We suggested in good faith that the government focus on renewable energy, but it refused.

We also made certain proposals because what most surprised me about Bill C-49, which would amend the two acts governing offshore energy, namely the one for Newfoundland and the one for Prince Edward Island, is that the regulators have no expertise in renewable energy. Witnesses told us straight out that they know how to develop and analyze fossil fuel projects, but they have no idea how to develop renewable energy projects. We therefore moved amendments aimed at developing the appropriate expertise for planning and assessment processes, but these amendments were also rejected out of hand by the government. Our amendments were consistent with the briefs and testimony that numerous environmental groups and energy sector specialists provided to the government during the study in committee, but the government obviously did not listen. The government turned a deaf ear and refused to listen to the people who have the expertise needed to develop this type of renewable energy project.

Lastly, we submitted amendments aimed at ensuring that, if one or more energy projects are commenced in an area where no other projects are under way, low-carbon energy projects should automatically get priority. For example, in an offshore area, if there is a choice between a wind power project and an oil project, the analysis should be based on the carbon intensity of each project. That would have been essential, but the government did not agree to our amendment. It dismissed it out of hand. This proves what I have been trying to say all along, which is that Bill C-49 is not a renewable energy bill. It is just greenwashing, an attempt by the government to ease its conscience by saying that it is working on implementing wind power projects, but without actually making them a priority.

• (1325)

In fact, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island currently have no infrastructure to distribute the electricity that the wind turbines will produce. Developing this kind of infrastructure requires resources, and the construction costs involved are astronomical.

The federal government, however, continues to invest heavily in the pipe dream that I talked about earlier, which calls for lowering the carbon intensity of the oil and gas sector. However, the government is not investing in clean technology the way it was supposed to. For all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will vote against Bill C-49, and it will never lose sight of the fact that the energy transition cannot be carried out while the oil and gas industry are receiving support.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised the Bloc would not be supporting this legislation, when one takes into consideration that this legislation is mirror legislation. There are two other provinces with different political parties, both a Liberal premier and a Progressive Conservative premier, and this legislation mirrors their provincial legislation. All three of them ultimately need to pass. The people of two other provinces and the people here in Ottawa are working together on an important issue.

The Bloc, on the one hand, says that we should be working with provinces. This is a good example of provinces working well with Ottawa to do something of great benefit for their regions, and the Bloc is voting no. From my perspective, that is highly irresponsible given that I always thought the Bloc's mandate was to, at least, work with the provinces. That is constantly what we hear from the Bloc.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I think that what is irresponsible in the fight against climate change is to continue our out-of-control support for the oil and gas sector. That is irresponsible. I began by saying that one of the stumbling blocks was to determine whether offshore areas fell under federal or provincial jurisdiction. Constitutionally speaking, they are under federal jurisdiction. That is one thing. The federal government can of course have agreements with the provinces, but this bill is clearly not aligned with the energy transition, despite the fact that we tried to improve and enhance it.

If the government were really interested in the energy transition, most of the strategies included in its budget would not be intended to support the oil and gas industry, but rather to support the clean energy sector, which is not the case. The government would have agreed to amend the bill to prioritize clean energy over fossil fuels. They do not want to prioritize low-carbon-intensity projects over oil and gas projects, even for new and future projects. That is obviously why the Bloc Québécois will be voting against the bill, which is bad for the environment.

• (1330)

[English]

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Standing Committee on Natural Resources with the member for Jonquière, and he is very passionate about what he believes in. On the oil and gas issue, we would have the exact opposite views. I think we are blessed with a beautiful oil and gas resource here in this country that needs to be used responsibly. As we have seen from our oil and gas producers, they do it responsibly. We have the cleanest and most ethically produced oil and gas in the world.

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On another issue, the issue of proper consultation, I wonder if the member could comment a little further on whether he thinks the Liberal government allowed proper consultation with our fishers and also our lobster harvesters.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Provencher for his question. It is true that we do not always agree, especially when it comes to straws and gas guzzlers. I do not agree with him on these matters. I do not agree with him that Canada's oil and gas sector is one of the most ethical, either. Oil from the tar sands is probably one of the dirtiest oils in the world. However, let us set that aside for now.

On the issue of consultation, we do agree.

On the issue of the purposes of use, several groups of fishers testified that the federal government's consultation process was botched. They feel that they were not heard and that the measures that should have been taken to help the fishery and ensure sound management of the different users were not put in place. Indeed, the consultation process was inadequate. It is not that the government did not have enough time. It had plenty of time to work on Bill C-49.

The government even planned to have the committee travel to Newfoundland or Prince Edward Island, but, because of poor management or I do not know what, the visit never happened, and we were unable to speak with the people on the ground except during committee meetings, when witnesses were called. I totally agree that it would have been better to have a much more robust consultation process than we actually did.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's intervention today was very interesting, and I listened with agreement regarding much of what he said.

One of the concerns that I have is that we are seeing a lack of actual, meaningful action by the current government to make sure that Canada can be leading on renewable energy. The member will have heard me say many times in the House how disappointed I am with the Province of Alberta and with the premier, Danielle Smith, for pausing renewables in my province.

However, I am also concerned when I see things like the Liberals promising investment tax credits to kick-start a clean energy economy. They promised that in 2023, and we still have seen nothing. Instead, companies are looking to the south, where there are those credits and that investment. I wonder if the member could comment on how that would be helpful for making sure that Canada can be a leader in a new economy.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague.

If we look at the federal government's strategies in the past three or four years, clean energy has never been at the centre of those strategies.

In the latest budget, we saw tax credits pop up for clean electricity. Those will apply this year. We shall see what that looks like. However, the bulk of the federal government's strategy, the bulk of the financial support—earlier I was talking about \$83 billion by 2035—is being offered to the oil and gas sector to support a pipe dream, the low-carbon oil pipe dream.

Environmentalists all agree that we need to cut oil production. Meanwhile, the federal government is investing in increasing production and trying to reduce carbon intensity. It defies all logic. The oil being produced is going to be burned somewhere. It is going to generate greenhouse gases.

Canada is one of the countries that invests the least in renewable energy, and we are also one of the countries most heavily tied to the oil and gas sector. In the next 15, 20 or 30 years, much to Alberta's chagrin, it will be a disaster. Other countries are moving forward; they no longer even want to consume products that are made in Canada because of the disproportionately high carbon footprint.

Somehow the Liberal government and the Conservative government do not seem to see it.

• (1335)

[English]

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite mentioned that the committee would have liked to fly to Newfoundland to meet with the people at the energy boards and whatnot.

Could he please inform the House what that plane burns to get Newfoundland?

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many litres of fuel it takes to get to Newfoundland and Labrador. The committee did not make it there. If the aim was to have consultations, perhaps they should have made it there.

However, I can say that I have to drive for six hours every time I travel from Saguenay to Ottawa, and I do it in an electric car. I invite my colleague to do the same when he goes back home.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would like to get some clarification from the member if I can. What the member was actually telling me in his answer was that there are conditions where Ottawa, or a political party in Ottawa, can be in opposition to what a province wants. Therefore, even though Newfoundland and Labrador and the Province of Nova Scotia want this legislation passed, because of the policy of the Bloc, its members believe that it is not in Canada's best interests to see it passed.

Would that same principle apply for all provinces?

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that the federal government is using this bill as environmental window dressing. The bill has nothing to do with the energy transition. The federal government could have been honest in its presentation of the bill, clearly indicating that what it wanted was continuity in the offshore energy sector. In this case, continuity refers to oil and gas projects.

Nowhere in the bill does it say that there will be no more new projects. We tried to make the federal government aware of the situation and encourage it, like Quebec, to say that there would be no more oil and gas development. That is what I am trying to explain to the parliamentary secretary. The federal government could have done that, since offshore activities fall under its jurisdiction.

However, the federal government is not as squeamish when it comes to the issue of caribou in Quebec. The Minister of Natural Resources has a lot to say about that. He knows very well that the delicate issue of the woodland caribou should be resolved in Quebec and that it could be a disaster for large numbers of small communities whose economies rely on the forestry industry. I would like him to be more conciliatory when it comes to the issue of caribou.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by paying tribute to the member for Timmins—James Bay for all the work he has put into Bill C-49. He pushed hard for a transition to clean energy. I think that his work should be recognized by the House.

We support Bill C-49 because we finally see the Liberals taking the first small steps toward clean energy. Anyone who travels outside Canada can see how other countries around the world are investing in clean energy. They see that things are beginning to change in Asia. They see things are beginning to change in Africa. All anyone has to do is fly over Europe and the North Sea to see all of the wind power projects making a huge difference.

I visited the island of Samsø in Denmark. The government of Denmark is making the necessary investments in clean energy. The island of Samsø has converted all of its heating and electricity, and has almost finished converting its transportation system. Everything works on clean energy.

In the United States, with President Joe Biden and the Inflation Reduction Act, there are successful investments everywhere. The potential for Canada is enormous. When we look at the U.S. market, where states and municipalities are demanding clean energy, we can see the potential for the production of clean energy in Canada.

What we have is a grid that has not been set up, as some European grids have, to be able to include the potential of clean energies from a variety of sources. Scandinavia and Germany have already converted. Canada lags far behind.

There is work to be done. That is why the NDP and our entire caucus supports Bill C-49. We can see the potential, and we think it is important to make these investments. This bill is a first step toward this clean energy potential. We need to see leadership on the

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part of the federal government in this area so that we can have clean energy projects across Canada.

When the member for Burnaby South becomes prime minister, we will have a New Democratic government and we will see the difference. We can make the transition that other countries are already engaged in.

• (1340)

[English]

Bill C-49 would modernize the Atlantic accord acts, notably by establishing a framework for the development and regulation of offshore renewable energy projects in both provinces, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador, and their offshore areas. Currently, the Atlantic accord acts implement agreements between Canada and these two provinces on the joint management of offshore petroleum resources.

Under the proposed bill, regulatory authority for offshore wind power would be granted to the two existing jointly managed offshore boards that are currently exclusively responsible for regulating offshore oil and gas projects: the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board and the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board. They would effectively be put in place as regulators for offshore wind power.

This is extremely important, because we know that there is much to do in terms of putting in place all the foundations for renewable energy sources, which can be a powerful driver of Canadian prosperity in the years to come. We have unlimited potential right across the country. I think of Alberta and Saskatchewan, where we could ultimately be seeing powerhouses of solar and wind power.

The export of renewable energy could make a profound difference, particularly because so many American states and cities require renewable energy as their feedstock. They simply will not accept energy that is not renewable. We need to modernize our grid and make these investments. We have seen, both under the previous Conservative government and the current Liberal government, no investments in any meaningful way to modernize our electrical grid to allow for the import of renewable energy. We have seen, quite frankly, a couple of decades of stagnation when it comes to renewable energy. New Democrats support the bill because it is a first step forward, but there is much to do.

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The reality is that we are seeing investment moving into clean energy. This is vitally important. There are energy workers in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia; we cannot leave them behind. We need to make sure we put in place the investments that allow for offshore wind projects for which energy workers could use their enormous skills. Having been an energy worker and having worked at the Shellburn refinery in Burnaby, B.C., which is now closed, I can say that the skills of workers in the energy sector are enormous. If we are to really capture the immense potential that comes from renewable energy, we need to make sure we pass legislation such as this, as well as making the powerful investments that are so important and that other countries have made in order to ensure incredible prosperity.

During the hearings, the member for Timmins—James Bay said very clearly that strong concerns had been heard from fishers about ensuring that any new developments respect the fragile nature of North Atlantic fisheries. New Democrats share their concerns, as the member for Timmins—James Bay said so eloquently. We urge the provinces to work with the stakeholders to ensure that any new projects are developed with the recognition of the need to protect the fisheries. This is vitally important.

We know that we need to catch up with other countries. I will give two examples. Off Rhode Island, there is a new wind farm that is going to provide energy for a quarter of a million homes. That is as a result of President Joe Biden's leadership in making the investments for clean energy. Twenty-seven other major projects in the United States are on track to be completed by next year, 2025. For example, the Vineyard Wind project is creating enough power for 400,000 homes.

Atlantic Canada, with its high energy costs, could become a world leader in low-cost energy, including wind and green hydrogen. However, the reality is that we have not seen from the Liberal government, as we did not see from the Conservative government before it, any real effort to provide the kinds of frameworks and investments that are so important for building those massive opportunities in offshore wind.

There was a promise from the Liberals to put in place investment tax credits to kick-start clean energy. That was last year, and the credits are still nowhere to be seen. Investment is still flowing south, and we see Canadian companies looking to partner in the United States now, where investment is guaranteed. The reality is that we have CAPP holding meetings with the government to continue to get subsidies for the oil and gas sector, but for energy workers who are interested in the potential for clean energy, there are no opportunities being presented to them. This is because of the fact that the government has not acted, in the same way as the Conservative government did not act before it. Therefore, what we need to see is a federal government willing to step up.

In Alberta, there was incredible potential. My colleagues from Edmonton Strathcona and Edmonton Griesbach would agree that there was immense potential. I believe there were \$33 billion in clean energy projects in line to be built. Clean energy has immense potential in Alberta. However, the premier, Danielle Smith, basically put a hold on all those projects. Why would anyone do that when there is potential for enormous growth?

• (1345)

Alberta could be the clean energy powerhouse of the planet. Why would the premier basically halt \$33 billion in clean energy projects? It makes no sense at all.

Under the Harper government, we saw a hatred of clean energy. The one program it did put in place regarding home renovations was so oversubscribed that, basically, the government abruptly cancelled it. In the years following, when I was the energy critic, as the NDP was the official opposition at the time, I went across the country—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, my Conservative colleague says we will be so again, but we are actually going for government. We are fine to leave the Conservatives as the official opposition, which they are currently. I wish I could say they are an effective opposition, but they are not effective at all.

The reality is that we had an ability for clean energy to thrive in Alberta that was nixed by the premier of the province. I think, right across the country, people would ask why she would do that and hurt her own province. However, I will leave that debate to the Alberta legislature at another time.

Coming back to the United States, since President Biden was elected, there has been an announcement of \$240 billion, a quarter of a trillion dollars, in new clean energy manufacturing investments. The private sector has announced \$110 billion in clean energy manufacturing investments, including more than \$70 billion in the electric vehicle supply chain and more than \$10 billion in solar manufacturing.

We certainly see the reaction from Conservatives. They do not want to see these kinds of investments taking place in Canada, but the reality is that having a quarter of a trillion dollars in private sector investments in clean energy in the United States shows the incredible potential. According to a variety of estimates, the Inflation Reduction Act is estimated to be creating 1.5 million additional jobs.

I come back to the issue of Danielle Smith cancelling and basically stopping 33 billion dollars' worth of clean energy investment in Alberta and however many hundreds of thousands of jobs that would have resulted in. Again, it is a decision that makes no sense at all; Conservatives will have to explain why anyone would want to cut on something that could have been a real path for prosperity.

As a result of President Biden's plan, the U.S. is now on a path to meet the goal of cutting emissions 50% to 52% below 2005 levels by 2030, as well as reaching net-zero emissions by no later than 2050. I contrast that, of course, with the utter failures of the Harper government and the current government. Both have utterly failed in bringing down emissions. Canada has a very poor track record.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I understand my Conservative colleagues are asking why Mr. Harper failed. I am more than pleased to talk about that.

I will start with the \$30 billion Conservatives gave to overseas tax havens every year, through the Harper sweetheart tax haven treaties. That is \$300 billion that Conservatives used to splurge on overseas tax havens over the course of the dismal decade when Mr. Harper was in power. Not one Conservative has ever been able to explain what good it did for Canada to give away a third of a trillion dollars to overseas tax havens. The Harper government stopped pensions, forced seniors to work longer, slashed health care funding and cut services to veterans. It did all those bad things. It was a terrible decade, with \$116 billion in liquidity supports going to Canada's big banks to maintain their profits and \$300 billion, according to the PBO, given away to overseas tax havens. Conservatives' financial management is an oxymoron. They are simply not good at managing money; they are terrible at it. It is unbelievable.

• (1350)

If one does not believe me, one just has to look at the fiscal returns actually tabled by the Ministry of Finance, federally. It is hardly a hotbed of social democrats in the federal Ministry of Finance, but it has been saying, year over year, for the last few decades, that the worst governments, in terms of managing money and paying down debt, are the Conservative and the Liberal governments.

The governments that are best, of course only provincially, up to this time, at managing money, at paying down debt and at the same time ensuring we have effective education programs, effective health care programs and effective investments in our youth, and have better programs for seniors and for families, and this is from the fiscal returns of the federal government, are NDP governments. It should not be a surprise to anybody that we are not only the best at managing the services that Canadians need in every province that we have governed in, but also the best at managing money. That comes from the federal Ministry of Finance, no less.

I wanted to take just a few minutes to talk about, as the member for Timmins—James Bay has done so eloquently, the climate crisis that we are in.

Scientists who are monitoring the collapsing ice shelves of Greenland have noted how soot from fires, which lands on the ice shelves, draws more heat and leads to ever faster disintegration of the ice fields. This is raising water levels, causing ocean instability and leading to more storms. We are at a tipping point. It is essential that we act fast and take the magnitude of this crisis seriously.

The first step is to take on what the member for Timmins—James Bay has called a pathological obsession of big oil to extract as much profit as possible from the burning of the planet. Big oil has shown no interest in limiting the damages it has done and, in fact, is pushing for an increase in production.

Scientist David Archer states, “The climatic impacts of releasing fossil fuel CO₂ to the atmosphere will last longer than Stonehenge...longer than nuclear waste...longer than the age of human civilization so far.”

Statements by Members

It also does not make economic sense. Last week, the International Energy Agency stated that we are at “the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era”, as “demand for oil, natural gas and coal” are all going to “peak” over the next few years. Therefore, we need to prepare to ensure that we are actually putting in place all those fundamental issues, programs and foundations and to ensure that we can benefit from the clean energy economy to come.

The reality is that the declines, in terms of production and emissions, are nowhere near steep enough to put the world on a path to limiting global warming to 1.5°C. We are going to have to work more steadily, and there has to be faster policy action by governments.

That is why it is so important to move on Bill C-49. I am pleased, on behalf of the NDP caucus and on behalf of the member for Timmins—James Bay, to support this legislation.

It is not a panacea. It does not get the job done, but it is a first important step that allows us to move forward for the clean energy economy to come, to allow energy workers in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia to do the important work that they can do to ensure that we have growth and development of clean energy and that we have more jobs in Atlantic Canada.

It is for all those reasons that the NDP is supportive of Bill C-49.

• (1355)

[Translation]

Now, should the government be doing more? The answer is yes.

We have had two decades of inaction, first with the Harper government, then with the current government. These two governments did not make the investments other countries made. In our opinion, it is essential that we put all the tools in place, including, of course, Bill C-49.

It is extremely important that we implement the bill, and that we invest in order to create jobs and prosperity and to lower the price of energy in Atlantic Canada, ensuring that everyone can benefit from clean energy in the future.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

EDUCATION INITIATIVE FOR WAR-DISPLACED STUDENTS

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have so many reasons to be proud of my alma mater, and today, I rise to share with Canadians just one: International Students Overcoming War, or ISOW, at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Statements by Members

ISOW was started by Laurier students in 2014, and in the years since, students have contributed to sponsor refugee and at-risk students living in conflict zones, covering both living and tuition costs for recipients. To date, 34 students have been sponsored from eight different countries, including Somalia and Myanmar, with a 100% graduation rate.

My thanks to Dr. Gavin Brockett for his leadership and support of those incredible students.

Let us recognize the powerful impact of initiatives like ISOW and support their work, like a recent proposal that includes supporting women from Gaza, because by helping them, we are helping build a more compassionate future for all.

* * *

● (1400)

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and celebrate a great Canadian. Tomorrow, Sir Graham Day celebrates his 91st birthday.

Graham is considered one of Canada's greatest corporate leaders, and he has contributed here at home and across the pond in the United Kingdom. He grew up in Halifax, and after graduating from Dalhousie University with his law degree, he started a practice in Windsor, before he was recruited to work with CP Railway and was eventually headhunted to serve as the CEO of British Shipbuilders.

Graham has advised two United Kingdom governments, including Margaret Thatcher's efforts to privatize major industrial assets in the 1980s. He served as the chairman and CEO for the Austin Rover Group, Cadbury Schweppes and British Aerospace.

Graham remains the last Canadian to be knighted. He is an inductee of the Canadian Business Hall of Fame, a recipient of the Order of Nova Scotia and an Officer of the Order of Canada. He is passionate about military service and was appointed the honorary Colonel of the West Nova Scotia Regiment.

Beyond all of his accomplishments, he is a heck of a guy.

I wish a happy birthday to Graham and to his family back home in Hantsport.

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GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, absurd, asinine, foolish, bonkers and deranged are synonyms for wacko, and they are exactly the adjectives that describe nine years of the Prime Minister's policies and behaviour.

Hiking the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre is wacko. Letting people smoke meth next to kids in parks is wacko. Creating censorship laws that Margaret Atwood calls "creeping totalitarianism" is wacko. Two million people accessing food banks each month in Canada is wacko. Repeat violent offenders walking free and terrorizing communities is wacko. Tent cities being the norm in Canada is wacko.

We cannot manage reality if we do not acknowledge it. Wacko chaos is the reality after nine years of the Prime Minister; he is dangerous. Conservatives will fight every single day to restore public safety, to restore affordability and to restore common sense.

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[Translation]

CHOQ FM COMMUNITY RADIO STATION

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, CHOQ FM is the only fully francophone local community radio station in Toronto. It is located in my riding, Davenport.

On May 1, 2024, it celebrated 18 years of service to francophones, sharing their history, participating in current affairs and building a solid francophone community in our city and across the country. CHOQ FM offers francophone citizens, leaders, companies and organizations in the greater Toronto area significant and essential visibility, both on the air and in social media.

For these reasons and many more, I am extremely proud to pay tribute to CHOQ FM for everything it has done to support and revitalize francophone communities across Canada.

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● (1405)

DIANE CHARRETTE

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honour an exceptional woman who is a shining star in her community, though she prefers to work behind the scenes.

This positive and dynamic woman provides reassurance and uses her organizational skills to make things happen. I am talking about Diane Charrette, who has been active in her community since age 15. Over the years, she has energized the communities of Saint-Édouard, Yamachiche and then Sainte-Ursule.

Through her involvement in organizations like the Optimist Club, the youth softball club and the FADOQ seniors' club, this amazing woman has always been a real dynamo, pitching in with infectious enthusiasm.

She is also legendary for making a soup that can warm hearts as well as bellies. This devoted and ever-present mother is also a top-notch administrator. Her ready smile, her warmth and her ability to bring people together make her a joy to one and all.

For all those qualities, I say kudos and thank you to Diane.

* * *

DANIEL BOUCHER

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Daniel Boucher, who is retiring after 30 years as executive director of the Société de la francophonie manitobaine.

He took up this position at the height of the language crisis in Manitoba. This situation motivated him to dedicate his career to striving to make a difference in the francophone community and to advance the cause of Franco-Manitobans.

Under his leadership, Franco-Manitobans secured several major gains, including the creation of their own school division in 1994 and the passage of Bill C-5, an inclusive act that ensured the long-term vitality of Manitoba's francophonie.

Fortified by these developments and by francophone immigration, Manitoba's francophone population is going strong, having grown from 11,000 in 1991 to over 112,000 today.

I had the privilege of working with him and standing alongside him for several of the advancements he secured for Manitoba. I wish him a long retirement and offer my thanks. We owe him a great deal.

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[English]

DUTCH HERITAGE DAY

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Sunday, May 5 is Dutch Heritage Day in Canada, and Liberation Day in the Netherlands. It is a time for Canada to honour the sacrifices made by our veterans who played an integral role in the liberation of the Netherlands from Nazi Germany in 1945. Battle of the Scheldt and the liberation of Arnhem were instrumental in freeing the Dutch from occupation.

After World War II, hundreds of thousands of people made Canada their home, contributing to all aspects of Canadian society. There are now over a million Canadians of Dutch descent who can trace their history to these integral events, which shaped not only Canadian but Dutch identity alike.

As co-chair of the Canada-Netherlands Friendship Group, I am pleased to recognize Dutch Heritage Day, to thank our veterans, and to recognize the lasting and growing bonds between our nations.

Fijne Bevrijdingsdag. Happy Dutch Heritage Day.

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[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on March 21, the Table de concertation de Laval en condition féminine, or TCLCF, celebrated its 35th anniversary.

Ever since the TCLCF was founded in our riding, Vimy, it has worked for the collective defence of women's rights and for improvements to our quality of life, while representing more than 30,000 Laval women.

Over the years, its focus has broadened in response to political, economic and social developments in order to address emerging challenges facing women. It continues to fight systemic discrimination through education, awareness raising and community engagement.

Statements by Members

I would like to thank the board and its chair, Audrey Leclerc, as well as Marie-Eve Surprenant's entire team. I wish them a happy 35th anniversary and many more to come.

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● (1410)

[English]

RICHMOND HILL

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Richmond Hill has gone international.

On Friday, April 26, Richmond Hill made history by welcoming the new headquarters of the United Nations University Institute for Water Environment and Health to our community. We celebrated this milestone with Minister of International Development, former ambassador Bugailiskis, Dr. Kaveh Madani, his worship, Mayor David West, the city and the UNU-INWEH team, as well as many community members.

The inauguration remarks, followed by the signing of a joint statement, the flag-raising ceremony, the ribbon cutting and an insightful tour of the UNU's new headquarters in city hall, forever enshrined this event in the history of Richmond Hill.

This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity will unite top minds from academia and government worldwide to tackle water, environment and health challenges. I cannot envision a better location for its new campus, offering a world-class education for environmental sustainability, all made possible by the visionary leadership of Dr. Kaveh Madani and Mayor West.

* * *

[Translation]

BRUNO GILBERT

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on June 6, part of the world will gather to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landing. This moment of courage, sacrifice and solidarity marked an important turning point in the history of the Second World War.

More than a hundred thousand men, filled with fear, landed on this beach to confront the enemy. Among them was the Régiment de la Chaudière, the only French Canadian unit to have taken part in the landing.

Last September, Lieutenant-Colonel Bruno Gilbert became the 27th commander of this regiment. The native of Saint-Georges began his career at the Régiment de la Chaudière in 1986 as an infantry soldier and quickly rose in the ranks. After a stint as sergeant major of the 35th Canadian Brigade Group and being honoured as a member of the Order of Military Merit, he returned to the Régiment de la Chaudière. Mr. Gilbert also passed on his passion for science to youths as a teacher in Beauce-Appalaches CEGEP.

Statements by Members

I wish to congratulate Mr. Gilbert on his nomination and his contribution to the community. I wish him success in his new duties and thank him for proudly representing Beauce.

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[English]

TREVOR CHILDS AND NICHOLAS SKINNER

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, being a coastal province, we know that the sea does giveth and, sadly, does taketh away.

On April 21, the first day of the lobster season in Lark Harbour in Newfoundland and Labrador, Trevor Childs, 44, and his nephew Nicholas Skinner, 28, set off to set their traps. On shore helping were Trevor's dad, his grandfather and some others, getting the traps ready to load aboard their boat for the young men to set off. However, the sea had another plan and swamped their boat. They perished in the cold waters.

The small communities of Lark Harbour and York Harbour were in shock, but none more than their families.

Trevor is leaving behind the love of his life, Joanna, and precious Carrie, 9; Addisyn, 6; and Reece, 2. Nicholas leaves the love of his life, Martina, along with his mom, dad, siblings and numerous other family members, friends and the entire fishing community of our province.

Both of these young men loved the outdoors and all it offered. They were great contributors to their towns, always there to lend a hand.

These tragedies impact everyone in small rural towns. In moments of loss, communities knit together to help the families heal and move on.

May Trevor and Bruddy rest in peace.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Liberal-NDP government's soft-on-crime policies, crime, chaos and disorder have become the norm in our country. Thanks to Liberal bills, Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, violent crime is up 40% and extortion is up 218%.

Towns and suburbs that were once peaceful are now being terrorized by gangsters. Just this week, a 19-year-old connected to a string of extortions was charged for three separate home shootings, including one where bullets hit a child's play room. He was arrested, charged and let out on bail. Guess what. Now he has fled the country.

Canadians have lost faith in our justice system. Despite the Prime Minister's inaction, extortion is a federal responsibility. The Criminal Code is federal. The RCMP responsible for catching these criminals is federal. The catch-and-release bail policies are also federal.

Only common-sense Conservatives will reverse the damage, stop extortion and bring home safe streets for all Canadians.

• (1415)

JOHN ALLEN FRASER

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on April 7, we lost a proud British Columbian and great Canadian.

The Hon. John Allen Fraser served as the 32nd Speaker of the House from 1986 to 1994 and for 21 years as the member of Parliament for Vancouver South. He was held in the highest regard by all who knew him. I and so many sought out his counsel on many public affairs.

I was honoured to speak at his piping-out ceremony from the Seaforth Highlanders during my tenure as associate minister of national defence. I note that his bride of 59 years was Cate Findlay, not a family member but the right clan.

John was a UBC-trained lawyer, minister of the Crown and the first Speaker to be elected by secret ballot. He was a voracious reader with a keen sense of humour, and an orator of note who loved the outdoors.

As chief opposition whip and on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank Speaker Fraser for his service to our province and our country. My thoughts are with his friends and his three daughters Sheena, Anna and Mary, and their children, as they mourn his loss.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for recognizing an extraordinary Canadian, John Allen Fraser.

* * *

[Translation]

SASHBEAR FOUNDATION

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, May is Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month.

Borderline personality disorder, or BPD, is a serious and complex mental illness stemming mainly from a chronic dysregulation of emotions. People who suffer from BPD, close to 2% of the population, have enormous difficulty controlling their emotions; as a result, they are all particularly sensitive and emotionally reactive.

The Sashbear Foundation is committed to raising people's awareness about BPD. Since its creation by Lynn Courey and Mike Menu, this charitable organization has restored hope, taught skills and offered a community to more than 10,000 families that have been greatly affected by a loved one's mental health.

Every year, the foundation organizes the Sashbear Walk, which gathers hundreds of sympathizers to create an orange sea of support, reduce stigmatization and raise awareness about this illness and our national mental health crisis.

Statements by Members

I urge my colleagues to visit sashbear.org to learn more about BPD.

• (1420)

[English]

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[English]

WORLD PARA HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, teams from around the world are gathering in Calgary next week for the World Para Hockey Championship. I am so pleased to share that the starting goalie for Team Canada is none other than Adam Kingsmill from my home community of Smithers, B.C.

Despite losing his leg in a tragic lawnmower accident when he was just a toddler, Adam became an accomplished athlete, playing softball, racing motocross and excelling at stand-up hockey, all with the incredible support of his parents Bobbie and Grange.

In 2016, Adam caught the eye of Team Canada's coaches, who convinced him to try para hockey, or sledge hockey. Five years later, he brought home a silver medal from the world championship in the Czech Republic. He followed that up just a year later with another silver, this time at the 2022 Paralympic Games in Beijing, China.

Adam's indomitable spirit, determination and achievement continue to inspire people across northern B.C. and across Canada. I hope my colleagues will join me in wishing him and his teammates the very best of luck at this year's world championships. Go Canada. Go Adam.

* * *

[Translation]

JANI BARRÉ

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a woman from Saint-Hyacinthe has made it into the Guinness Book of World Records. Jani Barré, who has a rare genetic disorder called osteogenesis imperfecta, completed her 10th marathon in a wheelchair in London.

She completed the fastest women's wheelchair marathon in history, with a time of four hours, 19 minutes and 21 seconds, beating the record set in 1983 by a woman who happened to be an Olympian.

Jani may have brittle bone disease, but she also has an iron will. Despite having suffered 157 fractures in her lifetime, she has been training for the past 20 years or so at her second home, the Saint-Hyacinthe boxing club, which was founded by her father, Bernard.

I am certain that she is not done yet. She is a model of unwavering determination and someone who should inspire us all.

My dear friend Jani is a source of pride for our region and for all of Quebec.

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are way past their breaking point. It is so bad that the CEO of Food Banks Canada now says that food banks are becoming unsustainable. Canadian food bank usage is at an historic high, two million people per month. Food banks cannot meet this demand.

For people who have not been forced to the food banks and still utilize their local grocery store, let us consider some facts from a new report by Canada's food professor. Sixty per cent of Canadians are so desperate that they are eating expired or spoiled food. Twenty per cent of households with the lowest incomes use over 20% of their disposable income just to buy food.

After nine years of short-sighted policies of the Liberal-NDP government, families are sliding deeper and deeper into debt. This is not the Canada that I grew up in and this is not the Canada in which we want to raise our children. Common-sense Conservatives would rebuild our economy and bring home lower prices for all Canadians.

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POLISH HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this February 7, we had a historic vote on my Motion No. 75 in the House of Commons.

Unanimously, all members of Parliament, spanning various political affiliations and regions of our country, resoundingly gave unwavering support for declaring May as Polish Heritage Month and designating May 3 as Polish Constitution Day in Canada.

Today, on Polish National Flag Day, parliamentarians from Canada and Poland, the Polish Embassy and Ambassador Dzielski, consuls general, the Canadian Polish Congress and the community at large came together to commemorate these milestones on Parliament Hill for the first-ever Polish flag raising.

As we recognize and celebrate Polish Heritage Month and, on May 3, Constitution Day from coast to coast, and with the Polish and Canadian flags flying proudly on Parliament Hill, I say, *dziękuję bardzo*, thanks very much, to the entire Polish Canadian community.

[Member spoke in Polish]

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when will the Prime Minister make it illegal to smoke crack in a hospital room? Just the date, please.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Province of B.C. made a request for a temporary pilot project. B.C. now has concerns about that project, which we share. We are now working together to address those concerns. Opioid addiction is a tragedy that has affected far too many Canadian families. We have to work together to solve it, not score cheap partisan points off the pain of Canadians. There are no pilot projects anywhere else in Canada.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, because of the government's decision, it is no longer illegal to smoke crack, meth or shoot up heroin in public spaces in British Columbia like parks, hospitals and public transit. The British Columbia government has now begged the Prime Minister to reverse this decision.

I have a simple question: When will the Prime Minister once again make it illegal to smoke crack in a hospital room? Just the date.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, we believe in working together with Canadians to solve our country's most pressing problems. That is why earlier this week I was in touch with Premier Eby, and I assured him that we share his concerns. We are working urgently together to address them.

Let us remember that opioid addiction is a tragedy afflicting so many Canadian families. Let us work together to help them, not to score cheap partisan points.

• (1425)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, dangerous addictions are hurting Canadians. After the government's decision to change the law, overdose deaths shot up and drug-related crime went through the roof. Now the British Columbia government is asking for the government to reverse its decision. It is a simple question. It is a simple decision to make.

One final time, on what date will the government make it illegal to smoke crack in a hospital room? Just the date.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservative House leader, I have actually been in touch with the Premier of B.C. about this truly pressing issue, and unlike the Conservatives, we are working collaboratively with the Province of B.C. We share its concerns and we are working together to support public health and public safety. What we are not doing is fundraising off the pain, death and suffering of Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day that this radical Prime Minister dithers on the deadly ex-

periment of legalizing hard drugs is a day that more people die. Six people a day are dying in British Columbia.

After nine years of this Prime Minister, Quebec is not immune to this crisis, which is affecting all regions of Canada. The Journal de Montréal reports that crack consumption is surging in Montreal and will increasingly start happening in public places.

Will the Prime Minister put an end to his extremist experiment in legalizing hard drugs today and say no to any possibility of expanding it to Quebec?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, British Columbia requested a pilot project. B.C. now has serious concerns, which we share. That is why we are working urgently and closely with the province to address this concern.

I want to point out that these are tragedies for families across Canada. It is important not to politicize Canadians' grief.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not politicizing to talk about syringes on the ground, distressing situations and unacceptable behaviour a stone's throw from a school in Montreal. We now know that the Prime Minister's radical experiment to legalize hard drugs in British Columbia, which was supported by the Bloc Québécois, has been catastrophic and deadly.

The Bloc member for Joliette had this to say in the House: "The hope is that this pilot project will set a course". The member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques said that "the Bloc Québécois fully believes that it is a step in the right direction".

Quebec has no interest in going down that road. Can the Prime Minister assure the House that he will not follow the radical advice of the Bloc Québécois?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, opioid addiction is a tragedy that we must address together by prioritizing public health and safety.

Conservatives will simply say that our government's policy is extremist and radical. However, do my colleagues know who actually has extremist and radical policies? White supremacists and misogynists. It is time for the Conservatives to condemn policies that are truly extremist and radical.

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, La Presse reported today that CBC management is planning for closer ties between the English-language network and Radio-Canada.

Radio-Canada is not in crisis. CBC is in crisis. Closer ties will mean concessions made at the expense of Quebec culture and Quebec creators. Our cultural identity will be taken away and we will be assimilated into English Canada's identity. This is a very dangerous slippery slope.

Will the Prime Minister reassure francophones in Quebec and Canada that the government has no intention whatsoever of merging CBC and Radio-Canada?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really want to thank my colleague for his question because we have the same concerns as all Canadians and especially all Quebecers about the French language and Quebec culture.

I can assure all Canadians that French-language broadcasting will not be touched. That is a priority for us.

• (1430)

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have an idea. Instead of merging aspects of CBC and Radio-Canada, how about making them more independent from each other? CBC has one set of problems, and Radio-Canada has another. The two of them do not have the same cultural identity, the same audience or the same corporate culture. They are two completely different entities. The Liberal-appointed CBC execs' proposal would weaken Radio-Canada to shore up CBC. The ultimate outcome will be assimilation of the francophone public broadcaster.

Why not make them two completely separate Crown corporations?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we share the concerns about the French language, francophone culture and Quebec culture in Canada. We will always work hard to support the French language, francophone culture in Canada and francophone Quebec culture. We will always support Radio-Canada.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, another report, another failure. Under this Minister of Environment, Canada will miss its greenhouse gas emissions targets. That is not surprising.

Everyone will remember the Liberals' environmental legacy: the purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline, throwing \$34 billion of our money away on one big pipe; the billions more thrown at the oil companies; the waste of public money; the pollution; the ravaging of our climate. The Minister of Environment must be so proud.

Can the Liberals stop stringing us along and pretending to care about the climate crisis?

Oral Questions

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is doing more to fight climate change than any other federal government in the history of Canada. We put a price on pollution. We have a major, \$93-billion industry program to stimulate the green transition.

We are and should be proud of what we are doing, and we know that more needs to be done.

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[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been letting the ultrarich off the hook for years. However, thanks to the NDP's capital gains changes, the wealthiest will pay a little more, and the Conservative leader does not like this. Maybe that is why he is getting wine and dined tonight by Bay Street billionaires at a cash-for-access fundraiser. Like the Liberals, the Conservatives would rather hand out billions to wealthy CEOs than fund the services people really need.

Why are the Liberals maintaining the Conservatives' corporate giveaways?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really glad that the member opposite has raised an issue about which the Conservatives have been notably silent, and that is our increase in the inclusion rate on capital gains. We agree with the member opposite that it is just not fair for a nurse or carpenter to pay tax at a higher marginal rate than a multi-millionaire.

However, I agree with the member opposite. I think the Conservatives support that kind of unfair tax policy.

* * *

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal minister responsible for legalizing hard drugs is misleading Canadians. Yesterday she told Canadians that the Liberals were waiting for further information from British Columbia in response to B.C.'s request to end the legalization experiment. However, just yesterday, the B.C. minister responsible told us that it had responded to the government in just a few hours. This has happened when B.C. had 2,500 overdoses in just one year.

Why are the Liberals misleading Canadians, and will they end their radical drug policy?

Oral Questions

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opioid crisis is affecting communities and families across this country, and it is a tragedy. That is why the B.C. government approached the federal government for a three-year pilot program. B.C. communities are facing extremely serious challenges. People are dying from deadly street drugs, and public consumption is a concern.

B.C. is amending its proposal, and we are supporting it in this work because that is what we do; we partner together to save lives. What is the Conservatives' plan?

• (1435)

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they did partner together. They partnered together for a radical policy that has led to countless deaths. Imagine an elderly woman in hospital having to lie beside somebody who is smoking crystal meth—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to start again. I am hearing voices from the far end of this room, and I cannot hear.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo from the top.

Mr. Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, the minister is correct. The Liberals partnered with the provincial NDP to create a crisis of unprecedented proportions that led to people dying due to the government's radical policy. After nine years, the Liberal-NDP government is flooding the market with free drugs. This is happening to our brothers, our sisters, our fathers, our mothers and our children. They are all being fuelled with addiction to the free drugs.

Will the Prime Minister reverse course and end his radical experiment of legalization?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we work with our provincial jurisdictions to ensure the health and safety of Canadians in the face of the toxic drug supply. We are treating the matter with urgency, and all partners are working together to find a path forward as fast as possible to provide operational clarity for law enforcement, health care services and all those involved in saving lives.

We want the same thing: public safety and access to public health care services for those who need it. Conservatives would cut everything; we are here to save lives.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal minister responsible for legal hard drugs in British Columbia is not being straight with Canadians. Yesterday she said she is waiting for more data from B.C. to decide whether she would reverse her decision to legalize drugs like cocaine, opioids and fentanyl in parks, playgrounds and hospitals. The B.C. NDP confirmed yesterday that it answered the Liberal government's request for more data within hours. After nine years of the Prime Minister, drug deaths tragically rose 380%. It is as if that were not enough data.

Why will the Liberals not be honest with Canadians and just end their radical drug policies?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we speak to our provincial counterparts, the experts and those with lived and living experience. The member for Carleton will not even meet with Moms Stop the Harm or other experts and those who are advocating for their families and their lives.

We continue to work with our B.C. counterparts. They have provided amendments to their proposals, and we are working together to face the public consumption issues.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I speak to residents in my communities, and the minister is not listening to British Columbians. She did not listen to B.C. mayors who wanted to stop open drug use in their communities a year ago. She is not listening to B.C. parents horrified to find crack pipes and needles near schools and playgrounds.

A student project from a school in my community had students writing to me about issues important to them. Unbelievably, crime and open drug use was the number one issue. The Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

Why will the Liberals not be honest with Canadians and just end their radical drug policy?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are not genuine with Canadians about their care or concern for those who are dying from the toxic drug supply. The opposition leader talks a big talk about investing in treatment. The Conservatives cut two-thirds of their drug treatment fund when they were in power. They focus only on treatment and recovery. They do not focus on safe consumption sites. They do not focus on harm reduction as health care.

We need to partner with everyone. When will the Conservatives listen?

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal minister responsible for legal hard drugs is misleading Canadians. Drug overdoses are now the leading cause of death among youth aged 10 to 18 in British Columbia. Just yesterday she said she was waiting on more information from the B.C. NDP government, which the province said it delivered within hours.

How much more information does she need to end the radical and extremist policy, which is putting the children of British Columbia at risk?

• (1440)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, I have been in touch with the Province of British Columbia. B.C. requested the pilot project, and I was in touch this week with the premier of B.C. He and his government have serious concerns about the pilot project. We share those concerns and are working together with B.C. to address them.

I do want to say that making political hay out of the pain of suffering Canadian families is simply irresponsible.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is supposed to be in the business of protecting children, not killing them with exposure and access to hard drugs.

The RCMP has confirmed that legal hard drugs are being sold on the black market. In Abbotsford, the soccer association has to regularly sweep the pitch for needles. The legion and many businesses in Mission have to deal with crack smoke every day.

When will the government do the right thing and cancel its ideologically extreme experiment to legalize hard drugs, and start protecting B.C.'s children?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a mother of three, including teenagers, I care so much about Canada and Canadians. I agree that opioid addiction is a tragedy; it is a public health tragedy and it is a public safety tragedy.

Let me tell members what is putting the public safety of all Canadians at risk: consorting with white supremacists and misogynists. That is a public safety risk. The Conservatives have an opportunity today to disavow that. They should do it.

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[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the National Assembly unanimously adopted a historic motion:

...it denounces the refusal of the New Democratic Party, the Conservative Party of Canada and the Liberal Party of Canada to uphold the principle of respect for Quebec's jurisdictions and to grant Quebec the right to opt out with full compensation...

This is the first time that the National Assembly has unanimously rebuked each of the federalist parties by name because all of them are working against Quebec.

When the government says it is working hand in hand, does it mean hand in hand with these parties against Quebec?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, going against the Bloc Québécois does not mean going against Quebec. On the contrary, we are working with Quebec on housing, seniors, young people, day care spaces and measures to ensure children go to school on a full stomach.

Oral Questions

Bloc Québécois members oppose all that. They are doing the opposite of what they promised Quebecers. They were elected on the promise that they would fight climate change and work for seniors and housing. However, they vote against all that. They voted against everything they promised Quebecers. Shame on them.

The Speaker: Before the hon. member for Joliette speaks, I just want to encourage members not to interrupt when someone else has the floor. I hope that this will also apply to the member for Joliette.

The hon. member for Joliette.

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a unanimous motion by the National Assembly of Quebec is historic. Canada's Liberals have been denounced by their Liberal allies in Quebec. The NDP has been denounced by Québec solidaire. The Conservatives have not been denounced by their ally Éric Duhaime because he has no members. Quebecers do not vote Conservative. However, the Conservatives were also unanimously condemned by the National Assembly of Quebec.

All elected members in Quebec City see that all federalist members in Ottawa are working to undermine Quebecers' ability to make their own societal choices.

Does the government realize the precedent it has set?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, finally, the Conservatives have one ally, and that is the Bloc Québécois.

The two parties always vote together. I am sensing a deep unease in that corner. I would call it a Bloc hangover, because whenever they promise something and do the opposite, they are breaking their word and their commitment to the people who put their trust in them. While the Bloc said that it would fight climate change, fight for seniors and fight for the environment, it is doing the exact opposite, because it is following the Conservatives. Shame on them.

• (1445)

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, whether it be in health care, housing, or other areas, in this budget, the federal government wants to dictate to Quebecers how to run Quebec. By refusing to amend the budget, the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party and the NDP, the three parties, have proven that they want to exert control over Quebec. However, the unanimous response from the Quebec National Assembly yesterday was clear: We, Quebecers, always want to be masters in our own house.

Does the Minister of Finance realize that Quebecers do not want the neighbouring country's elected officials to decide Quebecers' priorities for them?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the priorities of the people in my riding is access to affordable quality dental care.

Oral Questions

The great news is that, since yesterday, thousands of seniors in my riding, 300,000 seniors across Quebec and one million seniors across the country now have access to accessible and affordable quality dental care. For some, this is the first time in their lives that they have had this. That is great news for all Canadians. It is certainly great news for all Quebeckers.

* * *

[English]

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's dangerous drug policy in B.C. allows people to smoke crack on a public bus, to shoot up next to a park with children playing there and to blow smoke from meth in the face of a nurse in a hospital.

Now we learn what the Liberals want to do to Toronto: what they have done to B.C. The Leader of the Opposition sent the Prime Minister a letter asking him to reject Toronto's request.

Are the nurses in Toronto getting people who smoke meth in hospital rooms, or will the Liberals finally reject the request?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are completely committed to working with communities across this country in facing the opioid crisis and the tragedies that are happening to so many families. Every request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The member should know this.

Toronto Public Health has not submitted a proposal that adequately addresses the dual objectives of public health and public safety, which have guided us throughout addressing the opioid crisis.

Every level of government, including the province, must be engaged in the process. We continue to work together.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' plan is killing 22 Canadians every day, and opioid deaths have doubled in this country in just two years. I cannot believe that the minister from Toronto wants to expand the lawlessness into her own city. Otherwise, she would just say no.

I will give her an opportunity to just say that, one more opportunity to stop the extremist experiment on the streets of Toronto. Will she, yes or no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a minister. I am a Toronto MP. I am Toronto mother. I know, as everyone in the House should, that the opioid crisis is a tragedy and that there are no families in Canada that are untouched by it.

The B.C. pilot project was requested by B.C., and B.C. has serious concerns. We share those concerns. We are addressing them. There is no other pilot project anywhere in Canada, and the B.C. experience should and will be instructive.

Mr. Jamil Jivani (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been 24 hours since the Leader of the Opposition sent the Prime Minister a letter, asking him to reject Toronto City Hall's request to legalize

hard drugs, and we are getting no serious answers from the NDP-Liberal government.

After seeing death and disorder in B.C., why can the Prime Minister not take the no-brainer and say no? At what time today can we expect an answer to Toronto City Hall?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the members opposite were not listening to my previous answer.

The only pilot project in Canada is in B.C., and B.C. has serious concerns. We share them, and we are acting urgently together to resolve them. There are no other pilot projects anywhere in Canada. I think all Canadians are aware of the B.C. experience, and we need to take it into account.

We invested \$200 billion in the health care system. The Conservatives voted against it.

* * *

● (1450)

GROCERY INDUSTRY

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, people in Port Moody—Coquitlam are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing rents and grocery prices.

Meanwhile the Conservative leader is schmoozing with Canada's wealthiest at a \$3,500-a-year wine club. This is the guy who said he would cut dental care and pharmacare in favour of keeping billion-dollar corporate handouts. The Liberals are no better. They are letting big grocery CEOs rack up obscene profits while Canadians go hungry.

When will the Liberals stop this corporate greed?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the recent federal budget, we put forward a plan to establish fairness for every generation that would ask the wealthiest to pay a little more so we can fund the things that really matter to the people who have been struggling the last couple of years.

We have plans that would reduce the cost of living by reducing the cost of housing and solving the housing crisis. We have a plan to launch a national school food program to make sure that hungry kids have food on the table.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

Hon. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, as I give this answer, the Conservatives jeer because they do not support the measures that would help vulnerable people in this country. We will stand up for the middle class. We will stand up for the vulnerable. It is a shame the Conservatives will not join us.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while rich CEOs make record profits, families in Nanaimo—Ladysmith can barely put food on the table.

What is the Conservative leader doing about it? He is hosting a fundraiser with Canada's richest elites where it costs thousands just to step through the door. It is no wonder, when he was in power, the biggest corporations got \$60 billion in handouts while services to British Columbians were gutted. The Liberals maintain these handouts.

Will the government end these corporate giveaways?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would agree with my colleague that it is disturbing to see the Leader of the Opposition siding with big corporate at a time when all Canadians should be united to put pressure on big grocery in this country.

If, on the other side, they are really honest about caring for Canadians, let them speak up. Let them tell Loblaw and Walmart to adopt the grocery code of conduct in this country. If we speak with one voice, we are going to improve the lives of Canadians. Are they going to do it?

* * *

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Halifax is home to thousands of researchers with limitless potential, and it is essential to provide the support necessary to fully unleash that potential.

Halifax researchers are making advancements in ocean science, brain repair, lithium ion battery technology, pediatrics and so much more. Their work contributes to the economic and social prosperity of Canada and improves the lives of all Canadians.

Could the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry please tell us how budget 2024 would support research and researchers in Halifax and across Canada?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a great question from a great member. This is a colleague who has been advocating for research and science in this country.

Canada's research students are our greatest resource in this country. Researchers at Dalhousie University are pushing the boundaries of brain health, big data and ocean research. In budget 2024, we invested \$3.4 billion in our world-leading talent. Students will see an increase in their stipends to support their research, which would attract the best and brightest.

The science of today is the economy of tomorrow. Let us invest in our futures together.

[Translation]

FINANCE

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, interest on the debt is exploding. The debt will continue to rise as long as spending remains out of control. The Bloc Québécois continues to support these centralizing Liberal policies, which are driving up the cost of living. For example, on December 13, the Bloc Québécois voted in support of over \$20 billion in spending.

When will the Prime Minister, supported by the Bloc Québécois, stop his wasteful spending so Quebecers can start living with dignity again?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to finally have a question about the economy, as it gives me the opportunity to share some good news from the Governor of the Bank of Canada. Today, he said that we have come a long way in the fight against inflation and that recent progress is encouraging.

This is the message I want to send to Canadians: We are getting closer to our goal. This is good news, and it is thanks to the hard work of Canadians.

I thank the member for this opportunity.

● (1455)

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Minister of Finance that 48% of Liberal voters think that their government is mismanaging public finances. That was in a Leger poll that came out recently. Worse still, the Bloc Québécois is pretending to be critical and to defend the interests of Quebec. It voted for \$500 billion in additional budgetary allocations. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is certainly costly. It is the party that is propping up this country's fiscal disaster.

When will the Prime Minister, supported by the Bloc Québécois, stop his out-of-control spending and give Quebecers a break?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague talks about mismanagement. Has he ever been told that in the entire term of the Leader of the Opposition, when he was the minister responsible for housing, he only built six affordable housing units in the entire country? In my colleague's riding alone in the past few months, and I have the updated number, 222 affordable housing units have been built. That is 222 units in his riding alone compared to six units during the entirety of the Conservative leader's term as minister responsible for housing.

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I am speaking to the Laval University professor or the Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

Oral Questions

After nine years of this Prime Minister, the cost of living has never been higher. People are struggling. Mortgages, housing, food, everything costs more. This Liberal government is not worth the cost and neither is the Bloc Québécois.

As a small reminder, it is the Bloc Québécois who voted for a \$500-billion budget. We are talking about \$500 billion in central and inflationary spending supported by the Bloc Québécois.

When will this Prime Minister stop his wasteful spending so that Quebecers do not have to turn to food banks and can live in dignity again?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is another opportunity to talk about the economy. First, we have a responsible fiscal policy. We also have a AAA credit rating, the highest there is. I just quoted the Governor of the Bank of Canada, who talked about the good progress being made on inflation.

The Conservatives' only policy is austerity, cuts and more cuts. I am talking about cuts to child care, cuts to the school nutrition program, cuts to Radio-Canada, which is so important to Quebecers.

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of budget chaos, this government, supported by the Bloc Québécois, continues to promote inflationary spending and throw money out the window. The Bloc Québécois talks about the importance of health transfers, but it is voting for \$500 billion in centralizing spending. The interest on that will be more than total health transfer amounts.

The more this government spends, the more the Bloc Québécois supports it. When will the Prime Minister stop wasting Canadian taxpayers' money?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians listening to us today understand that they have a choice to make. On one side of the House, they hear the voice of a party that has no ambition, no vision and no plan for the future.

On this side of the House, they know they have a Liberal government, a government that has a vision for the future, a government that has a plan for future generations, a government that has ambition for our country. I am telling Canadians to listen to what they are hearing. They will realize that those of us on this side of the House are going to fight for them every day.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have learned that greenhouse gas emissions increased between 2021 and 2022. They are going up when they should be going down.

The worst part is that they are going to keep going up because Ottawa just opened Trans Mountain yesterday. The Minister of Environment has just completely turned on the dirty oil tap. An additional 600,000 barrels a day are being siphoned out of the oil sands for export.

Can the minister explain how his dirty oil pipeline will help us reduce our emissions?

• (1500)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question and remind him that, in 2022, greenhouse gas emissions were 44 million tonnes lower than they were in 2019, before the pandemic. That is the equivalent of taking 13 million cars off our roads.

In fact, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions are the lowest they have been in 25 years, since the O.J. Simpson trial and the birth of hockey player Connor McDavid. Things are going very well in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, I agree with my colleague that there is still a lot of work to be done.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Greenpeace told CBC that a missing link in the federal climate plan is a cap on emissions from the oil and gas sector. The minister must be glad that there is no cap because, with Trans Mountain, he would have smacked his head, and hard.

This serves to remind us that Canada is the world's fourth-largest oil monarchy. With Trans Mountain, it is consolidating its ranking, between Russia and Iraq, at the top of the list of the worst polluters. We know the minister never imagined that he would be a "petromonarch", so will he ever put an end to his country's greed for black gold?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague was quoting Greenpeace.

In that same interview, Greenpeace acknowledged that progress was being made in Canada and that this year's results were very encouraging, but that more needed to be done.

I would like to remind my colleague that there is just one country in the entire G20 that has eliminated fossil fuel subsidies. That country is Canada, and we are committed to going even further by eliminating public funding, something no other country in the world has committed to doing. The cap on greenhouse gas emissions is coming. We are the only major oil producer in the world that has proposed putting a cap on these emissions.

* * *

FINANCE

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the Bloc Québécois and the Prime Minister are not worth the cost.

The Bloc Québécois has always sided with the Liberals when it comes to government spending. We are talking about \$500 billion in centralizing, inflationary spending here. Ouch, that hurts. This spending increases the cost of living and keeps interest rates high. Because of this Liberal government, backed by the Bloc Québécois, Quebecers are going hungry, are struggling to afford housing and cannot make ends meet.

When will this Bloc Québécois-backed Prime Minister stop wasting money so Quebecers can afford housing and food again?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really pleased to have another opportunity to quote the Governor of the Bank of Canada, who shared some very good news with Canadians today. He said, and I quote, “The message to Canadians is, we are getting closer”. He also said that it is our government’s fiscal responsibility that has stabilized inflation and will allow us to reduce the key policy rate.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, the employment minister has been caught in shady lobbying, and we can see that the Prime Minister and his government certainly are not worth the cost or the corruption.

The minister was caught cashing cheques from a lobbying firm that was lobbying his own government, his own ministry. How much taxpayer cash did this minister and his company shove in their pockets? How much was it?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. government House leader has the floor.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has always followed the very strict ethics rules that apply to him as an elected official. Canada has one of the strictest ethics regimes in the world for elected officials, and that is exactly what Canadians expect. The minister has always conducted himself in an ethical manner that follows the spirit and letter of those rules.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, we know the fish rots from the head down, and the Prime Minister was twice found guilty of breaking ethics laws, along with multiple members of his front bench and his backbench.

We know the minister tried to hide that he was getting money from his company that was lobbying his own government, even his own ministry, but he got caught. Global News reported it, and now we are asking him about it.

Instead of having the government House leader protect him from his own accountability, his own actions, will he stand up today and tell us how much money he took?

• (1505)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just gave that answer.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Red Dress Day is coming up. It is recognized for being an important way to raise awareness of the alarming rates of violence.

[English]

There are growing calls for the introduction of a red dress alert system. This system would be crucial in promptly informing the public whenever an indigenous woman, girl or two-spirited person goes missing.

Can the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations share with us what measures are being taken to address this critical issue?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the advocates, families and survivors working tirelessly to press our government for urgent action. That includes the member for Winnipeg Centre, the member for Oakville North—Burlington and folks like Sandra DeLaronde, Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, Leslie Varley, Angela MacDougall, Gladys Radek, Lorna Brown and Denise Halfyard, who are advancing the implementation of a red dress alert system. Their efforts are crucial in bringing indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people home safely.

I thank the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her advocacy. Leveraging the \$1.3 million in budget 2024, our government will put an end—

The Speaker: The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the sole Liberal minister from Alberta is at the centre of two corruption scandals. It has been reported that the minister is tied to a lobbyist who received a staggering \$110 million in federal contracts, and the minister is the director of the company that received a further \$8 million of government contracts and is engulfed in allegations of fraud and wire fraud.

How much money did the minister and his companies receive from these shady contracts?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier in response to our other hon. friend, the minister has always followed the strict ethics rules that apply to him as an elected official. Canada has one of the strictest ethics regimes in the world for elected officials, and that is exactly what Canadians expect. The minister has always conducted himself in an ethical manner that follows the spirit and letter of those rules.

Oral Questions

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister has been on the take with taxpayers' money. The minister retains a 50% stake in a company that is engulfed in allegations of fraud, and the minister continues to receive payments from the lobbying firm that received \$110 million in federal contracts.

Will the minister finally have the guts to stand in his place and tell Canadians how much he pocketed off taxpayers?

The Speaker: I will come back to this matter later, but I do warn members, please, to be very careful about what they say about other hon. members.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this House, all members are entitled to be treated by other members with a presumption of being honourable. That is not what this member has just done. I would invite him to carefully consider the words he just employed while doing a speech into a television camera, one that he would never do were we outside this chamber. I would invite that member to be very, very careful with his words in the future.

• (1510)

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, yet another Liberal minister is embroiled in an ethics scandal. The employment minister continued to serve as the director of a company that secured over \$8 million in government contracts. His former lobbying firm got direct access to the Prime Minister's Office and the finance minister's office, everyone who has their hands on the purse strings.

The Prime Minister is not worth the cost or the corruption.

I have a simple question: How much did the minister or his companies receive since he has been in cabinet?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have answered that question.

I would once again invite members from all sides of this House to be very, very careful with the words that they utter.

* * *

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2024 proposes funding for Canada's first-ever action plan on combatting hate, which would support community outreach and law enforcement reform, tackle the rise in hate crimes, enhance community security, counter radicalization and increase support for victims. This plan was drafted way before Canadians realized that the leader of the official opposition was cozying up with white nationalists.

Can the minister please tell this House what impacts far right extremism has on our community?

Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, combatting hate is a responsibility of everyone in this House. Anything otherwise is shameful and, frankly, appalling. When the Leader of the Opposi-

tion decided to cozy up to far right extremist supporters, that was unbecoming of an elected official, much less the leader of a major political—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: When the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton was asking his question, the Chair was quite happy to make sure that he had free time to be able to ask his question. I would ask the hon. member to please hold back his comments while the minister is answering.

The hon. Minister of Diversity, from the top, please.

Hon. Kamal Khera: Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition decided to cozy up to far right extremist supporters, that was unbecoming of an elected official, much less the leader of a major Canadian political party. Canadians expect their leaders to stand up for Canadian values. That is why we are investing \$270 million in the budget for Canada's first-ever action plan on combatting hate. That is leadership.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday 10,000 Canadian rail workers voted to strike, in part because Canada's two largest railway companies want to undermine key safety measures in their collective agreements. The safety of rail workers, the safety of rail communities and the safety of our environment are all at stake.

Will the minister ensure that the parties remain at the bargaining table until a fair, safe and equitable agreement is reached?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is happening right now is a cooling-off period. It is a normal part of the collective bargaining process. Our facilitators and conciliators remain closely with both parties at the table. We remain committed on this side, as I know the hon. member is, to making sure that they remain at the table. The best deals are made at the table.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, even for the Liberals, this is really something. It is a hat trick: three times, three different platform promises broken in one omnibus budget bill. First up, they broke the commitment to have UNDRIP honoured and consult with indigenous people. Second, they used their omnibus budget bill to change environmental legislation. Third, once again, they failed to fix the Environmental Assessment Act.

Let us make it simple: Environmental assessment under Mulroney's law worked. Harper repealed it. It still does not work. This draft, in this ways and means bill, will go down to defeat at the Supreme Court once again.

Fix it, once and for all, and use the environmental expert panel to guide the government's actions.

• (1515)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Supreme Court asked us to do, we have brought changes to the Impact Assessment Act of Canada to ensure that the federal government will do what the federal government is supposed to be doing while provinces do their part in impact assessment, and we are confident that this will help us to move forward.

I would remind my hon. colleague that at the time Bill C-69 was adopted, we did not have clean fuel standards, we did not have zero-emission vehicle standards, we did not have regulations on methane and we were not working on a cap on oil and gas emissions or clean electricity standards.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In question period, we repeatedly heard Conservatives from Alberta refer to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions with false titles, and I know you will be ruling on that, but this is despite that overdose deaths have gone up 319% since Conservatives got elected—

The Speaker: I thank the member, but this is veering into debate.

I appreciate the member's comments with respect to false titles. He is indeed correct. The Speaker will be coming back to the House on this.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government House leader to inform the chamber as to what we will be debating for the rest of this week and the week ahead.

Also, as I did not get an answer from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, perhaps the government House leader can inform the chamber of the following: The Government of British Columbia has specifically requested something that only the government can do. It has asked the Prime Minister to recriminalize the use of hard drugs in public spaces, such as hospitals, parks and public transit. On what day will the government inform the chamber that the use of those hard drugs will once again be illegal in the province of British Columbia?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on that question I can assure the hon. member that whatever we do, we will do with the elected premier of British Columbia and not the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

On the Thursday question, this afternoon we will continue with debate on Bill C-49, the Canada—Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic accord implementation and offshore renewable energy man-

agement act, which has had great support obviously from my colleagues from Atlantic Canada.

Tomorrow, we will call Bill C-20, concerning the public complaints and review commission act.

[Translation]

On Monday, we will begin debate at second reading of Bill C-69, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024.

I would also like to inform the House that Thursday, May 9, will be an allotted day.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, during the debate pursuant to Standing Order 66 on Motion No. 54 to concur in the eighth report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair and at the conclusion of the time provided for debate or when no member rises to speak, whichever is earlier, all questions necessary to dispose of the motions be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred pursuant to Standing Order 66.

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

It is agreed.

All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As I think we have a collegial environment prevailing, and consultations have occurred, I would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to table my private member's bill now.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

• (1520)

BOOSTING CANADIAN ENERGY AND MINING PROJECTS AND UKRAINE'S MUNITIONS SUPPLY ACT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-388, An Act to fast track energy and mining projects and to facilitate the provision of munitions to Ukraine and develop its munitions industry.

He said: Today I am tabling legislation to support our friend and ally Ukraine in its existential struggle against the ongoing illegal and genocidal Russian invasion.

Points of Order

The abduction of children, the systemic sexual assault, the attempted destruction of all Christian churches except ones subservient to the Putin regime, the indiscriminate killing of civilians and the crime of aggression itself all require a strong response. Moreover, they have received such a response from the brave Ukrainian people. However, for too long, people in western capitals have wrapped themselves in the language of solidarity, while they have failed to see the urgency of delivering vital support.

Bill C-388 would address two critical issues. The first is the need for more weapons. My bill would significantly streamline the process for delivering weapons to Ukraine by removing red tape. It would further require the government to send surplus military equipment to Ukraine, and it would require EDC and BDC to look for opportunities to support investment in Ukraine's domestic munitions industry. These measures address significant gaps in the Government of Canada's follow-through when it comes to delivering promised weapons.

The second issue the bill deals with is energy security and sanctions. While the government is granting yet another major sanctions waiver to support the Russian titanium industry, this bill would require the government to fast-track Canadian energy projects as part of an overall strategy to displace Russian exports and stop fuelling Russia's war machine. It is time to kick Putin's gas and kick Putin's titanium. Urgent energy development in Canada would allow us and our allies to tighten and consistently enforce our sanctions.

This bill focuses on core and urgent issues required for Ukrainian victory: weapons and sanctions. It is time to axe the attacks, rebuild the homes, fix the sanctions and stop the crime.

Finally, I have been so impressed by the courage and resilience of the Ukrainian people that I would like to take this opportunity to wish one resident of Zaporizhzhia, Svetlana Ostrovska, a very happy birthday.

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

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

DECORUM IN THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to add some comments to the point of order that you are currently considering, specifically in response to the question raised on April 18 by the deputy opposition whip. This was related to the use of a false and derogatory title in the House by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment.

On Monday afternoon, the NDP House leader rose and made a substantial intervention concerning references to the “NDP-Liberal government”. Given that he has essentially hijacked the point of order before you for his own political concerns, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to rise to offer some brief comments in response before you rule.

The point of order raised earlier this month urged you to apply your views about fake titles, as mentioned in your October 18, 2023, statement, which you often quote, Mr. Speaker. I will read the specific sentence from page 17585 of the Debates. It states, “This includes coming up with fake titles for members in order to mock them or making comments that question their courage, honesty or

commitment to their country.” That is exactly what the parliamentary secretary had done when he used a false and derogatory title for the Leader of the Opposition, which the deputy opposition whip brought to your attention.

An example of another false title would be if I were to, for example, describe the member for New Westminster—Burnaby as the deputy government House leader. While my colleague certainly does yeoman's work carrying the government's legislative agenda here in the House, encouraging and supporting so many time allocation and closure motions that Stanley Knowles would roll over in his grave, he does not actually get paid for that work. Therefore, to describe an NDP member as the government House leader's deputy would, indeed, be incorrect.

The NDP House leader is, however, seeking to expand the scope of the Speaker's earlier ruling to suppress debate in the House on a matter of increasing political sensitivity to him and his party. In his argument, the NDP House leader cited the Deputy Speaker's ruling on March 29, 2022, at page 3689 of the Debates. This was delivered after the Liberal Party and New Democratic Party entered into their agreement for a parliamentary arrangement, the so-called supply and confidence agreement.

I will read other passages of that ruling, which my colleague appears to have overlooked. It stated, “Fundamentally, the agreement in question is a political one. It is not the Chair's role to interpret or give meaning to such agreements between parties.... In the current case, it is not for the Chair to determine if this agreement between the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party is a coalition.” In other words, the characterization of the agreement is a matter of debate in terms of what it is, what it means and how government decisions are understood and held to account.

The facts are simply that, in the present Parliament, no single party holds a majority of seats in the House of Commons and our Westminster system of government requires the government to command the confidence of the House. Therefore, if one party does not have the votes to achieve that alone, the votes have to come from somewhere else. In the present Parliament, New Democrats and the Liberals have voted together approximately 92% of the time. If we remove Private Members' Business and opposition day motions from that mix, that percentage rises to something in excess of 97%.

If New Democrats are feeling the heat about their decision to prop up the tired, broken and broke government and are concerned about having to defend their choices on Canadian doorsteps soon, they could have simply shown us all the ultimate act of opposition and voted against the federal budget. Asking the Speaker to instead censor speech, which, as uncomfortable as it may be for the NDP, reminds Canadians of why the government remains in office every day longer that it does so, is simply not right. Fundamentally, the concerns of the NDP House leader are not a question of order. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that it also goes beyond your remit of maintaining order and decorum in the chamber.

As you said in your October 18, 2023, statement, Mr. Speaker, “The House is a place where freedom of speech is primordial and where views are strongly held and vigorously defended.” Moreover, “the Chair must allow the widest range of individual expression possible”. Later you added, “Going forward, I will be fair and will ensure that all members, regardless of which side of the House they sit on, can freely speak their minds, vigorously hold the government to account, challenge each other’s ideas and thoroughly consider public business.” Conservatives are vigorously holding the government, and those who sustain it in office, to account.

The very essence of our responsibility as parliamentarians is to speak for our constituents and help them understand how and why decisions are made. Put simply, Mr. Speaker, you must deny the NDP House leader’s request to censor political debate in the House of Commons.

• (1525)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

The hon. member for Guelph is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent to revert to the tabling of reports part of the rubric.

The Speaker: Does the member have consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Science and Research, entitled “The Security of Research Partnerships Between Canadian Universities, Research Institutions and Entities Connected to the People’s Republic of China”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

We thank the clerk, the analysts, the witnesses and all the members who contributed to this report.

• (1530)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Yellowhead is rising with respect to a dissenting report.

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this report needs to be started over because of repeated Liberal delays to hide from parliamentary scrutiny. Canada urgently needs a foreign influence registry. Universities do not have the capacity to make

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proper decisions on safe partnerships, and the committee has not had the opportunity to look into the new guidelines because of the government’s delays in releasing them. Since the end of the study, the CSIS director has called PRC efforts to steal our technology “mind-boggling”. We need to look into this further.

Liberal stalling means we could not adequately scrutinize the new policies that came out right after our report closed. What are the Liberals hiding from Parliament and from Canadians?

POINTS OF ORDER

DECORUM IN THE HOUSE

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I will be very brief. This is just a reaction to my colleague, the member for Regina—Qu’Appelle, who seemed to censor the intervention I gave on Monday on the issue of using false and misleading titles. What he censored was that Conservatives have been using the false and misleading title in French of “the Bloc-Liberal government”. This false title is something that the Conservatives have raised repeatedly in the House and it is something that applies as part of your considerations, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that the Conservatives are misleading Canadians by using a different false and misleading title in English than they are in French.

The Speaker: I appreciate that the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby was using the opportunity to respond to an issue that was raised by the member for Regina—Qu’Appelle, but I am glad he made it brief so that we did not get into a debate in terms of what had already been discussed and what the Chair has already heard.

PRIVILEGE

STATEMENTS BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS—SPEAKER’S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised on April 10, 2024, by the member for St. Albert—Edmonton concerning allegedly misleading statements made by the Minister of National Defence.

The question of privilege is based on his reading of the 63rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on April 10, 2024. According to the member, the testimony provided by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service director, David Vigneault, and by former deputy minister Rob Stewart in regard to an issues management note on foreign interference efforts and the content of the briefing note itself contradict the minister’s persistent denial of receiving the said note. As such, the member argued that the minister deliberately misled the House and the committee.

Government Orders

[Translation]

For his part, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader countered that the minister had not misled the House, and that his statements in committee and in the House had remained consistent. The parliamentary secretary also noted that the 63rd report made no reference to contradictory statements provided to the committee concerning this matter.

I have mentioned, in my ruling of February 15, 2024, at page 21158 of the Debates, that three elements have to be established when it is alleged that a member is in contempt for deliberately misleading the House, namely:

It must be proven that the statement was misleading; it must be established that, when making a statement, the member knew it to be incorrect; and finally, it must be demonstrated that the member intended to mislead the House.

[English]

Like my predecessors, I have also remarked in a ruling on a similar matter, on December 13, 2023, that these three conditions are a very high threshold, and rightfully so. The charge of deliberately misleading the House or one of its committees is a serious one as it touches on the integrity of the member.

With these observations and established conventions in mind, I have carefully examined the statements that were made concerning this matter, as well as the entire content of the 63rd report.

The Chair must acknowledge the fact that the minister has been consistent in his statements that he did not receive the note in question. This is an assertion that the CSIS director seems to accept, based on the committee's report. According to the report, at page 85, "Mr. Vigneault's understanding...that it was clear that [the minister] never saw the IMU and that he had no reason to doubt [the minister] on that point."

[Translation]

Faced with a similar situation, on April 29, 2015, at page 13198 of the Debates, one of my predecessors said:

With no evidence presented to the contrary, the conventions of this House dictate that, as your Speaker, I must take all Members at their word. To do otherwise, to take it upon myself to assess the truthfulness or accuracy of Members' statements is not a role which has been conferred on me, nor that the House has indicated that it would somehow wish the Chair to assume, with all of its implications.

• (1535)

[English]

The ruling continues by quoting Speaker Milliken's words from page 10462 of the April 16, 2002, Debates. They are worth repeating:

If we do not preserve the tradition of accepting the word of a fellow member, which is a fundamental principle of our parliamentary system, then freedom of speech, both inside and outside the House, is imperilled.

It appears to the Chair that the current matter is a dispute as to the facts and that it constitutes a matter for debate, not a question of privilege.

The Chair wishes to make one final observation in relation to a comment made by the member for St. Albert—Edmonton in his April 10 intervention. He suggested that by including a document in his party's supplementary opinion, the House would now be

seized with it. To this, I would refer members to *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 995:

Committees are not responsible for the content of these opinions. They are not, strictly speaking, part of the report. The authors of these opinions alone are responsible for their content.

I appreciate the efforts invested by the member for St. Albert—Edmonton and his colleagues from the procedure and house affairs committee in considering the question of privilege related to the member for Wellington—Halton Hills and to other members. They obviously did not take their responsibility lightly.

[Translation]

I thank members for their attention.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA-NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR ATLANTIC ACCORD IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada—Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is always a privilege to rise in this place and bring the voice of my constituents who are back home in Nova Scotia. Today we are debating really important legislation—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is the hon. member asking a question? It is questions and comments for the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

The hon. member for Kings—Hants.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I apologize. I thought I was up on debate, but I am happy to ask the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby a question.

The question is on his take on the Conservative Party. The Conservatives talk about "technology, not taxes". This legislation is all about enabling billions of dollars of clean energy investment, which is good for jobs, it is good for the economy and ultimately it is good for the environment. The Conservatives talk about technology, not taxes, yet they are standing in the way of crucial legislation that matters for Atlantic Canada.

Could the member opposite comment on his disappointment in the Conservative position and perhaps explain why the NDP is in support of jobs, notwithstanding that the Conservatives are against this.

Government Orders

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, the real slogan of the Conservatives should be “tackiness, not technology”, because we saw in Alberta Danielle Smith blocking \$33 billion worth of clean energy projects, which would have meant so much for energy workers in Alberta. We know that other jurisdictions around the world are making the investments in clean energy. In Conservative-run provinces, it is an absolute lockdown on any new technology that actually provides for clean energy. Now we see their fervent opposition to clean energy in Atlantic Canada by their blocking of Bill C-49, which they have been doing now for months.

The reality is that we are talking about a party of Luddites within the Conservative caucus. They simply refuse the clean energy prosperity that comes from making the investments in clean energy. Bill C-49 is one of the first steps that need to happen.

• (1540)

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, as I remember, in Alberta in the last two weeks, there was a notification of two solar projects being moved along and approved. Therefore, I am not sure where he is getting these six months. They took a period to look at not being approved on irrigated farmland, but they are approving them, two in my riding. We are talking 30 megawatts, big ones. I think he is a little incorrect in his statement.

Would he like to revise that statement about what is occurring in Alberta? I know from my riding that he is absolutely wrong.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I always appreciate my colleague. I enjoyed working with him on the Canadian heritage committee.

I would certainly say that a lot of investments came from the former NDP government in Alberta under Rachel Notley, which really made a serious effort to provide for those clean energy jobs. Of course, many of those projects were ultimately approved.

Danielle Smith then did the lockdown, and \$33 billion in additional clean energy projects have basically been stalled.

I know that the member knows his riding well. I think the difference between us is that he might try to attribute it to the Conservative government. I certainly attribute it to what was the best government in Alberta's history, the government under Rachel Notley, which made such a difference. It helped to reinforce the education sector and health care sector and it made a real difference in terms of good governance in Alberta. I know that for many Albertans they are hoping that day will come back again, when they can hope that there will not be the gutting of health care and education that we have seen, the stalling of clean energy projects.

The reality of farm receipts in Alberta is that they are among the worst in the country. The Danielle Smith government, the UCP government, has been devastating for Alberta.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like my colleague to explain the way he sees things.

In committee, the Bloc Québécois proposed amendments that were extremely reasonable and that sought, among other things, to

protect local communities and fishing groups, but they were rejected. Can my colleague explain his viewpoint? Did he agree with those amendments?

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, as I said in my speech, of course we are concerned about the fishers, who have raised some very legitimate concerns. When we look at the issue of clean energy and the future of clean energy across Canada, it is important that we consult and that the needs of the fisheries and fishers be taken into consideration. We support all of these elements to ensure that consultations with fishers take place. With respect to Bill C-49, there are some legitimate concerns that we think are important as well.

We think it is important to move forward with Bill C-49 and to have these clean energy projects. At the same time, we must ensure that consultations on this industry that is so important to the Atlantic provinces are taken into consideration.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have two provincial premiers who have come to the table expecting to see provincial legislation that mirrors the federal legislation. We have multiple parties, different levels of government, coming together, recognizing the potential that this legislation has with respect to the future prosperity for Atlantic Canada, and yet both the Conservative Party of Canada, the new far-right, and the Bloc are joining forces to try to prevent this bill from passing. I wonder if the hon. member could provide his thoughts in regard to why we see a lack of respect for the two provinces working with Ottawa to make this happen.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I am highly critical of the Conservative approach under the party's new leader, the member for Carleton.

The reality is that there used to be this ability in the House of Commons, particularly in minority governments, and the NDP, in minority governments, has pushed hard to make a difference. We have seen the results in universal health care, and are now looking forward to the results of dental care and of pharmacare for people with diabetes. Six million people across the country, 17,000 in each and every riding, would finally have their diabetes medication, which costs over \$1,000 a month in many cases, being paid for. All of those things, as well as anti-scab legislation and affordable housing, were all blocked by the Conservatives.

Government Orders

The Conservatives seem to have taken an approach of blocking everything that comes before the House. It is almost like they do not want to see any benefits going to their constituents. I find it surprising. I find it tragic that parliamentarians elected with the commitment, as we all make during election campaigns, to come to the House of Commons and do the best for their constituents, would do the exact opposite.

Then we come back to Bill C-49, where there is a notable benefit to start moving forward with clean energy projects. There are 1.5 million new jobs in the United States, and in Canada, we are talking about tens of thousands of new well-paying jobs that could come from those good investments. We did not see any under the Harper regime.

Tragically, we have not seen any from the Liberal government. However, at least with Bill C-49, we are seeing the foundation that would allow for the investments to be made, so we would be able to create those jobs.

In the end, Conservatives will have to defend their record when they go back to their ridings when the next election happens.

• (1545)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, what an interesting question we just heard from the member for Winnipeg North. He said that, if several premiers come together in thinking a policy is good for their provinces, why would that not be allowed to pass. It is almost like he has forgotten that seven out of 10 premiers were against raising the carbon tax on April 1.

The NDP House leader just said that, if premiers came together and agreed, we should pass that bill because premiers know what is best for their provinces. Ironically, I would ask him the same question about the raise in the carbon tax on April 1. I think of all of the premiers who came together to say the Liberal government should not do that. How would one be good, but not the other? Could he square that circle for me?

While I am on the topic of health care, the NDP government in Saskatchewan closed 52 hospitals when they were—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to give the member for New Westminster—Burnaby a chance to answer the question.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I find it tragic that governments in Alberta and Saskatchewan, in the wake of the opioid crisis, are seeing the highest rise in the death rate in Canada in those two provinces. In Saskatchewan it is a 23% increase. I am surprised the member is unaware of this. He represents a Saskatchewan riding, and he is unaware of the massive increase in opioid deaths—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kings—Hants.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will try this again. It is great to be here in the House. It is always a privilege to be able to bring the voice and perspective of my constituents from Kings—Hants, from rural Nova Scotia, to the floor of the House of Commons. Today, we are debating a piece of legislation that really matters to the region I represent in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada: Bill C-49.

Over the next 20 minutes, I have a great opportunity to highlight the importance of the bill and where it is coming from. It is also a great opportunity to perhaps address some of the misconceptions that might be held within the House by some of the members I have heard speak to the passage of this bill and to talk about why it really matters and draw a contrast. That is part of what we do here. We present, to Canadians, different options about the pathway forward, and I hope to be able to draw some of those points out.

Before I get too far, I will mention that it is Gaelic Nova Scotia Month. I am proudly wearing my Nova Scotia tartan tie, and I have a Canada Scotland pin on to show the connection between Canada and Scotland, and our Gaelic culture and history. Nova Scotia is the jurisdiction with the most Gaelic speakers outside of Scotland itself. It is a great pride.

[Member spoke in Gaelic]

[English]

It is Gaelic history month and Gaelic awareness month in Nova Scotia, and I am very proud to be able to say just a couple words in Gaelic here in the House.

What are the Atlantic accords? I mentioned Bill C-49 would amend the Atlantic accords. Let us go back into history and understand the jurisdictional dynamic. It would have been begun in the late seventies, early eighties, with the discovery of offshore oil in Atlantic Canada. There was some uncertainty about the constitutional dynamic of who was responsible for managing that resource. This was a period of uncertainty. Brian Mulroney was the prime minister at the time. There was an idea that there should be a co-management of that resource in the Atlantic offshore.

The Minister of Labour and Seniors has talked about the Atlantic accords and the importance to his province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Although it was actually before my time, I will say, in Nova Scotia, it carries the same level of reverence in terms of what it means for our region. Ultimately, two things came of the Atlantic accords. One was shared management in how the offshore activity took place and how permitting would go forward, and the other was the revenue sharing of the resource development in Atlantic Canada. Of course, it has been extremely important for our region, for our communities and for our workers, and it is a program that has worked.

We have tremendous opportunity in Atlantic Canada. It is often windy in our part of the country. We have an opportunity in the development of offshore wind, which goes toward green hydrogen and toward renewable electricity. These are the types of technologies that are becoming available, that are becoming cost affordable and can help drive our transition toward a lower-carbon economy. For offshore wind to be approved, we actually need to give the legislative licence for that to happen. There are existing bodies: the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board.

What this legislation proposes to do is quite simple. It would allow those boards to have the authority to approve offshore wind projects, and the opportunity to harness wind to drive renewable energy. I have to be honest, I remember when this bill was being tabled in the House, I actually thought we would get unanimous consent, that we would find all members of Parliament from all corners saying that this makes sense and we do not want to duplicate the regulators.

The Conservatives often talk about reducing red tape. I do not know what their plan is to permit this type of activity, but they do not want to see this type of initiative move forward. I guess they want a secondary body. We are of the view that we already have an entity that works, that has permitted in the offshore. Let us allow that to be the entity to also move forward. It also has buy-in from the provinces.

Some of our western colleagues will talk about tension between federal and provincial relations around resource development. That is not at play here because, as has been mentioned in the debate, two provincial governments and two legislatures are in support of this piece of legislation. We have the Premier of Newfoundland, Andrew Furey, and the Premier of Nova Scotia, Tim Houston. Andrew Furey is a Liberal and Tim Houston is a Progressive Conservative. They are both calling on all parliamentarians in Ottawa to help pass this legislation.

• (1550)

Perhaps not to my surprise, there has been fierce opposition from the Conservative Party. I had the privilege of sitting in on the natural resources committee during the appearances of two natural resources ministers, and I listened to the arguments put forward by the Conservatives. To say it best, they have been weak. They have essentially been non-existent about why this legislation is bad.

I have said it before; I will say it again. The Conservatives are standing against Atlantic Canada today by continuing to oppose this legislation. When there are two provincial governments begging parliamentarians here to move this as quickly as possible, they have delayed the piece of legislation. They have stood in its way. In fact, the amendment to Bill C-49 we are debating right now would send it back to committee.

Is it not ironic? I believe the amendment is not even from a member of Parliament from Atlantic Canada. They want to actually send it back. A member of Parliament who is not from our region, who has no connection, thinks they know better than two duly elected premiers from Atlantic Canada. It is disgraceful what this represents.

Thankfully, we have the NDP who, in this case, believes in jobs, believes in clean energy and believes in investment in Atlantic Canada. There are billions of dollars of potential investment, and the Conservatives want to stand against that.

Technology not taxes, my rear end. I hope that is not unparliamentary. I will withdraw if it is.

An hon. member: Come on. You know it is.

Mr. Kody Blois: Okay, I withdraw.

Government Orders

Madam Speaker, they say, “Technology, not taxes.” I am disappointed the Conservatives put out those slogans and do not actually have a credible plan on how to bring it forward. This is technology. This is the ability to leverage billions of dollars of clean energy investment, and they are gatekeeping it. They are gatekeeping against Atlantic Canada.

I am one of the younger members of Parliament in the House. About 10 years ago, when I was coming through university, there was frankly a large exodus of young people who were going elsewhere in the country, and they were going out to western Canada. I have great affinity for the resource economy in western Canada. It matters to the entire country. There are people I went to high school with who went, and it helped them to build their early careers. They either still live in western Canada or have been able to come back and start a family.

I have nothing against western Canada, but if there were an opportunity to have good-paying jobs in the trades in this sector, why would we not want to make sure people have an opportunity to stay home in Atlantic Canada and have a good job in a good industry? That would be a difference, not only at home, but also around the world.

First and foremost, this is about jobs. Second, it is about important investment in our region. Third, it is also about the environment. We want to reduce emissions. We know climate change is real and that companies around the world are driving the technology that is needed. We need to make sure they have the legislative runway to do this. That is why I stand here proudly to say the government, and thankfully a majority of parliamentarians in the House, are going to see this piece of legislation through.

I anticipate that at some point I will listen to the member from central Newfoundland, who will stand up and suggest he is against this and talk about the fisheries. The fisheries are an important component of Atlantic Canada. It is a crucial backbone to our economy and our rural communities. I heard suggestions from the Bloc that the reason its members may not be supporting this is because somehow there is not enough protection for the fisheries.

I want all colleagues in the House to know there is an ongoing process right now with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada working with fishing groups to identify ocean parcels that are appropriate for offshore wind development. We will not be able to move forward and undermine a traditional industry. That is not what is on the table.

Notwithstanding some of the fearmongering that might be going on, there are processes in place. Allowing this legislation to move forward would give further authorities for that consultation to continue to happen if we are serious about creating the energy opportunity that exists for Atlantic Canada.

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This is not just for Atlantic Canada, by the way. I stood here proudly and talked about what western Canada resource looks like. Potash in Saskatchewan and oil and gas in Alberta and Saskatchewan matter to our country, so this is not just about Atlantic Canada. Yes, I stand here proudly, and this will matter for our region, but this matters for the whole country. This matters for everyone in that the investment matters to this country. Again, the Conservatives stand here and stand in the way.

• (1555)

[Translation]

I hope that my Bloc Québécois colleagues will understand the importance of this bill. I hear a lot of talk in the House about the importance of renewable energy, clean energy, clean electricity and a transition away from fossil fuels and the oil and gas industry.

This bill is the very important foundation of our economy in Atlantic Canada, but it is also an opportunity to work with Quebec.

[English]

I really hope that this will be something that the Bloc reconsiders, because at the end of the day, Bloc members do stand up in the House to talk about the importance of green transition. I heard questions about that in question period today.

I really hope that at the end of the day, they can take a harder look at what is on the table and understand that it will not be a threat to coastal communities. It will be an opportunity to leverage economic opportunities for our coastal communities, for the Atlantic region but also for the region of Quebec and east of Quebec.

[Translation]

I certainly understand the importance of the fishing industry and our fishers.

The Impact Assessment Agency will work with fishers and with industries and organizations to ensure that the approach that is taken strikes a balance between the wind industry and the fishery. The traditional fishing industry is more important and vital for our communities, for Nova Scotians, for Newfoundlanders and also for Quebeckers.

• (1600)

[English]

Again, I want to fundamentally talk about the work on the environment and how the environment and energy go together. It does not have to be one or the other. In fact, smart parliamentarians need to say that we have to tackle both at the same time.

[Translation]

It is vital that the Conservatives see how important progress is for the environment but also for the clean energy industry and our communities across Canada.

[English]

They are not really identifying this.

I mentioned the Progressive Conservatives. Premier Houston is a Conservative, but he is a moderate Conservative and believes in the opportunities that are available in Nova Scotia for a clean energy

future. The Conservatives here in Ottawa want to stand in his way of creating those economic opportunities. They are going to reference, I expect, during questions, the former Bill C-69, which was the Impact Assessment Act. As part of the ways and means motion, and I give a compliment to the government, there are actually provisions to address the constitutionality of that particular piece of legislation. We do need to be able to make major projects happen in this country more quickly.

Conservatives will often reference that and say that this is why they do not believe in the bill before us, but there is something fundamentally different between Bill C-49, the Atlantic accords and the tension I mentioned between the jurisdictions where provinces are responsible for resource development on land, and what we are talking about here today. The difference in what we are talking about here today is that the provinces would be in the driver's seat. They have worked the legislation with the Government of Canada. They are in full support, and yet the Conservatives want to stand in the way.

I just want to draw the attention of Canadians and maybe the attention of some of my newer colleagues in this place back to the history of the last Conservative government in the country, the Harper government.

The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester at the time was a guy named Bill Casey, who was a Conservative. One will note that he withdrew from the Conservative Party, sat as an independent and then ultimately joined the Liberal Party. For those who might ask themselves why, it was because Harper did two things. The last Conservative government actually tried to amend the Atlantic accords to reduce the revenue available to our provinces, and Casey fundamentally disagreed and voted against it. He was then subsequently booted out of caucus.

Harper and the Conservative Party also said that Atlantic Canadians have a “culture of defeat”. Think about that for a second. The Conservative Party of Canada, in its current form, has told Atlantic Canadians that they have a culture of defeat. Here we have an opportunity with billions of dollars attached to it that can create good jobs and a clean energy future, and allow Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and indeed the entire region to export clean energy across the world. That is extremely important. That does not sound like a culture of defeat to me. That sounds like progress. Guess what? The Conservatives are standing in the way of it. What would they say then? Would they say they know better than Atlantic Canadians? That is amazing to me.

We do our work here in the House. Canadians are going about living their lives every day. They are worried about getting by. They are taking their kids to sports tonight. They are going to see a loved one. I will make sure that I remind my constituents, indeed every Atlantic Canadian I can, that the Conservative Party has stood against progress in Atlantic Canada. Conservatives have stood against two elected governments, and they have not been willing to actually see them go forward.

That begs the question: What is the Conservative environmental plan? It is lacking, non-existent frankly. For the last two elections that I have been a part of, when I went door to door in my riding and my constituents raised the prospect of needing to do more on the environment and to be a part of the global solution, one of the things that was a constant was that they highlighted the fact that the Conservatives did not have an environmental plan. I see some disagreement, perhaps, on the opposition benches. We will see; time will tell. That is ironic because, of course, the Conservatives have disavowed carbon pricing but all ran on a price on carbon. Each of the 121 Conservative members in the House actually ran on that platform in order to be here.

In conclusion, I have a couple more points. We have to talk about indigenous reconciliation at the same time. I have the privilege of representing three indigenous communities in Kings—Hants: Sipekne'katik, Annapolis Valley and Glooscap first nations. One of the best examples of how the potential offshore and the wind to hydrogen play in Atlantic Canada is the way in which companies have been working and partnering with indigenous communities, creating important revenue opportunities for those communities, important economic opportunities.

I think about companies like EverWind. I think about World Energy GH2 in Newfoundland and Labrador. I think about companies like Bear Head. There are tremendous opportunities. There is DP Energy and SBM, which are world-known companies in terms of their involvement. They want to invest in Atlantic Canada. They want to spend hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars, on projects, but we have to get the legislation through. Every day that the Conservatives continue to delay hurts Canada's global competitiveness. We hear the Conservatives talk about competitiveness in other contexts, but I guess in clean energy and I guess for Atlantic Canada, that need not apply. Why not support the bill?

For fisheries, we have a plan to make sure that there is constant engagement and that turbines will not happen in crucial fishing zones without there being proper scientific belief in terms of what is possible and what is not. There are premiers who have helped to develop the legislation. The bill would not be opposing the premiers; it is actually something that would make a difference and that the premiers want.

The Conservatives suggest that the bill would be somehow a backdoor way for the government to stop oil and gas development, the same government that approved Bay du Nord and actually built the Trans Mountain pipeline. Now I will go completely in another way. Renewable energy is important, but we are the fourth-largest oil producing nation in the world. How many pipelines did the Conservatives build in their time? Zero.

Despite the distaste for the Prime Minister and the government that the Conservative opposition members may have, they should at least be applauding the pipeline because we have actually made sure there is a crucial piece of infrastructure to get our resources to market. We will do it on that side. We will also focus on this transition as well. We are focused on energy across the board, and the Conservatives want to stand in our way.

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I look forward to questions. I know that the member from central Newfoundland is chomping at the bit and I cannot wait to be able to take his question and engage. Here we go.

• (1605)

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the member for Kings—Hants as he gave his speech about Bill C-49 and why Liberals think it is the be-all and end-all for Atlantic Canada.

The member mentioned a regulator. Max Ruelokke, with over 40 years in energy regulation in Atlantic Canada and throughout the world, the chair and CEO of the C-NLOPB for six years and an outstanding authority on offshore petroleum, put forward an amendment that said that Bill C-49, if enacted in its current form, would be the death knell of Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore petroleum industry. I challenge the member to contradict Max Ruelokke.

The member said we were fiercely opposed. He called us weak. Will he stand up and tell the fishing industry in Nova Scotia that it is weak, that people we were fighting for in committee, the members of The Maritime Fishermen's Union—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member will have time for his speech very shortly, but I have to give the hon. member for Kings—Hants an opportunity to answer.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, the member opposite is certainly bombastic and passionate in his approach.

However, there are a couple of things he may have missed during the discourse. There are processes in place to make sure that the fishing industry is protected and is consulted, and that the new emerging opportunities in the offshore wind industry do not injure, in any way, the fishing industry. That is our promise here today. The member has heard it from me, and I want him to take that back to his constituents in Newfoundland and Labrador.

With respect to Max Ruelokke, there may be one opposing view out there that does not believe that this might be the best pathway. I talked to the chair of the sitting Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, who has said this is really crucial legislation and who wants to see it move forward.

On offshore energy, oil and gas, we have approved Bay du Nord. We have actually limited and reduced the red tape. In the Harper years, it took almost 900 days to be able to get a permit for offshore development. We have brought that down to 90 days.

We are supportive of the oil and gas industry in Newfoundland, and we will be in the days ahead as well.

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● (1610)

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, with all due respect, I find my colleague's speech manipulative and Manichaeian. He is rising here to say that if we are against the oil industry in Alberta, we are against Alberta, and if we are against the oil industry in Atlantic Canada, we are against Atlantic Canada.

The Bloc Québécois is in favour of the transition. We support the transition in the east, in the west. We agree with the fact that Quebecers have decided not to go ahead with deepwater drilling. This bill will allow Atlantic Canada to double its oil production within six years.

What did the Liberals do? First, they removed the word “oiler” from the title and added the word “transition”, even though this is an oil-producing bill. Then what did they do? They voted against all the amendments proposed in good faith by the Bloc Québécois to include transition elements in the bill. They voted against every single one of them.

How can they then rise in the House and tell us that we are acting in bad faith and that we are against the Atlantic provinces? They torpedoed every opportunity they had to work with the opposition parties.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, let me be crystal clear. The purpose of this bill is to create a regulatory regime for the wind energy sector in Atlantic Canada. This is not for Quebec; it is for the Atlantic, for coastal Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador. This bill is very important—crucial, even—to the development of this industry. It is also crucial to achieving our environmental goals and having a green economy.

Yes, I understand the concerns people might have. I also understand the importance of ensuring that the fisheries sector is part of the conversation. We are still consulting with that sector.

This bill is crucial for our region and for Canada's clean energy sector. The Bloc Québécois is usually in favour of this industry and proposals like this one, but it is going to vote against this bill in the House of Commons. Unfortunately, I am very disappointed because this bill is very important for Atlantic Canada and the future of clean energy.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, if it was me, I would not be bragging about approving a project like Bay du Nord. The Liberals are clearly talking out of both sides of their mouths.

Still, we think that Bill C-49 is worthwhile. It provides for the development of offshore wind farms, which is compatible with the energy transition. Compared to the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries, Canada lags behind a bit when it comes to offshore wind farms. I think this is a step in the right direction. Wind farms can coexist with the fishing industry and fisheries. I think we can draw from the European models and do both things at once: respect fishers and operate wind farms in maritime zones.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I agree that this bill and the wind farm industry are important.

Of course, other jurisdictions such as those in the European Union and the United Kingdom are ahead of Canada in this area. That is precisely why we have this bill, which seeks to amend the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord and ensure that companies and businesses have some certainty about future investments.

I am very pleased to know that the NDP will support this bill for jobs, investment and the environment.

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague from Kings—Hants and I have never compared notes, but we went to the same law school. I am drawing on my experience as a proud graduate of the Dalhousie University school of law to say that the current government has completely bungled impact assessment and has bungled repairing the impact assessment law. He referenced it in his speech. Therefore, I want to put to him that we had extremely effective federal environmental assessment laws, starting in 1975, concretized in 1993 in a statute brought in by Brian Mulroney, and they were destroyed by Stephen Harper in the spring of 2012 in a budget implementation act.

The current Liberal government promised to repair the law to what it was before 2012, and instead, it continued with Harper's approach, which is why the legislation was struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada. The designated project list approach was far too discretionary and untethered from the federal jurisdictional, clear guidance that existed under Mulroney.

I would ask my hon. colleague from Kings—Hants if he could exert his influence over the people who were not trained at law school, such as the Minister of the Environment, to fix the Impact Assessment Act, but not through this quick, dirty and flawed approach in the ways and means bill.

● (1615)

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I too have a law degree from Dalhousie University. It is a wonderful institution. When I was in law school, not too long ago, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands came and gave a presentation, so it is nice to be able to join her in this place now, debating the laws of the country.

The member referenced Brian Mulroney. I want to say a couple of things. He was a Progressive Conservative, and there was a moderate Conservative vision for what this country could be. I would encourage any member who sits in the Conservative Party to take inspiration from Mr. Mulroney and what he brought to this country.

The member is right about how Stephen Harper's approach was undermining credibility and the belief of Canadians in the due diligence of the process. We have sought to make sure there are proper channels in place to balance the really important need to drive major projects in this country, including those that help with decarbonization. The Supreme Court has ruled that certain elements of the government's approach were unconstitutional. That is exactly why the ways and means motion in the budget includes some measures that would try to address those particular points.

The last thing I would say is this. I know the hon. member across the way, and I tip my cap to her for her advocacy for environmental action. She knows the urgency of the work that needs to happen. Whether with respect to critical minerals or major projects to decarbonize, we need to make sure these projects can happen. We need to balance, of course, not only the environmental protections, but also the ability to action those projects that would help reduce emissions in this country and indeed globally. I think that is the balance the government is seeking to bring forward in this debate and in the budget ways and means motion.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Atlantic accord has delivered powerful things to Newfoundland and Labrador and to Nova Scotia. I heard the member for Kings—Hants reference the late prime minister Brian Mulroney, who said that he was not afraid to inflict prosperity upon Newfoundlanders. The NDP-Liberal coalition has a completely different stance toward the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and toward those who make their livings in the fishing industry and in the offshore petroleum industry.

It is a privilege to stand in this place and speak to Bill C-49, which would destroy the original intent of the Atlantic accord. It would make changes to laws surrounding the offshore oil and gas exploration off Nova Scotia and off Newfoundland and Labrador, and the development of the same. At the same time, it sets out a necessary framework for the development of an offshore wind industry.

We are way behind the rest of the world. After nine years of the NDP-Liberal coalition, we are in last place in renewable green energy in the G7. That is where we are sitting. The government has quite the record on greenhouse gas emission reductions. We are almost at the bottom of the countries that were laid out in COP28.

At the same time, while laying out a framework for the development of offshore oil and gas, Bill C-49 attacks our offshore oil and gas industry.

Common-sense Conservatives are going to push back against the proposed legislation. We have been doing it ever since it was tabled. We have been in contact with the stakeholders in the fishing industry and in the offshore petroleum industry from day one, and these stakeholders have voiced their concerns. They have come to committee, and they have submitted written briefs. We have been there for them.

Contrary to what the member for Kings—Hants just said in debate, that we are weak and disgraceful, standing up for the largest industry in that member's province of Nova Scotia—

• (1620)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Kings—Hants is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, it is important, when we are in this place, to make sure of the facts in what is being said about what another member has said. I just want to be very clear, so it is in Hansard, and it can be checked by the table staff. I said that their position was weak and disgraceful, not the Conservatives themselves nor the hon. member.

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I recall hearing that, so it is in Hansard.

The hon. member may resume his speech.

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, let us be clear, common-sense Conservatives stand with the fishing industry and with the offshore petroleum industry, as well as with those workers and those families, and those industries that rely on the spinoffs from those powerful Atlantic Canada industries.

Stakeholders like the FFAW, Brazil Rock Lobster Association, Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association, the Nova Scotia Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement, the United Fisheries Conservation Alliance, the Maritime Fishermen's Union, just to name a few who presented at the natural resources committee a few weeks ago.

We heard from Katie Power with the FFAW, which represents 14,000 people who make their living from the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. She shared a critical perspective with the rest of the fishing industry stakeholders who appeared, who submitted briefs and who were from Atlantic Canada, which is that offshore wind energy expansion will have direct impacts on fish harvesters, who will be faced with having to compete with the offshore wind energy sector for ocean space. Space for fishers who have to harvest their catch is not unlimited space; it is a finite space.

When Dan Fleck of Nova Scotia's Brazil Rock 33/34 Lobster Association was asked how many lobster traps could fit in a proposed 4,000 square kilometre wind farm, just east of Cape Breton, he told us thousands and thousands. Chances are there would be 50 to 60 independent owner-operators displaced, and the crews who depend on them for their livelihood, and all their families, would be impacted, as well as the local coastal communities that rely on the spinoffs. Dan simply echoed the concerns of Katie.

Very little consultation was had with the fishing industry. We heard the testimony. However, there was a bit of a difference of opinion among NDP and Liberal members on the committee. They felt that they had consulted heavily with the fishing industry, but that was shot down solidly when we had those stakeholders appear.

We took the testimony of the fishing industry stakeholders, and we set out to make amendments to try to ensure that the development of offshore wind does not destroy livelihoods in the fishery. In fact, we consulted directly with them, coming up with those nine amendments, which we tried to get votes on here today, and a number of other amendments that were shot down in by members of the natural resource committee, including NDP members who voted against amendments that were written for us by Unifor. Again, across the way, they tout their wonderful relationship that they have with organized labour.

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Unifor, one of the biggest unions in Canada, provided common-sense Conservatives with amendments to support the FFAW to protect the livelihoods of those members of the FFAW in Newfoundland and Labrador who feel threatened because they are not a part of the process. They have not been a part of the process. If someone wants to get up here and challenge me on that, they can go back and look at Hansard and all those committee meetings where those fishing industry stakeholders came to committee and pleaded with the costly NDP-Liberal coalition to bring in amendments to support them and to give them peace of mind so that they would not feel that their livelihoods were threatened.

I am very saddened that the NDP and the Bloc did not support the stakeholders in these existing industries. The bird in the hand is worth two in the field. The bird in the hand is the petroleum industry offshore, and it is our fishing industry. They are proven. The fishing industry is over 400 years old in Atlantic Canada.

• (1625)

I am very saddened, but what saddens me the most are the six Liberal MPs across the way from Newfoundland and Labrador and the eight from Nova Scotia who did not support the amendments put forward by people in their own ridings who earn their living from the sea. They did not support amendments that would recognize and mitigate the harmful effects that wind energy can have if we do not have the right consultations with the fishing industry. These industries can coexist. Conservatives are not against wind energy. The only copper mine in Atlantic Canada is in my riding. Every wind turbine uses 1.5 tonnes of copper for every megawatt produced. My goodness, what is the world coming to?

Conservatives tried to get amendments through to support the stakeholders who pleaded with us, and the costly coalition shut it all down. Our amendments to Bill C-49 would have ensured that conflicts between the offshore wind energy and the fishing industry would be kept at a minimum. This would have increased investor confidence in the development of offshore wind and would have given the fishing industry assurance that it would have a viable seat at the table throughout the development of this future renewable resource.

Bill C-49 was void of details on compensation for fishers who could be displaced from their fishing grounds, and displacement will be inevitable without proper consultation. Our amendments aimed to address this. Common-sense Conservatives worked hard on behalf of the fishing industry and the offshore petroleum industry to amend Bill C-49 so we could support it. We do not want to have to vote against something that could be good, but if it is going to kill two industries for another one, it does not make sense. The NDP-Liberals slapped the FFAW-Unifor and its 14,000 members in Newfoundland and Labrador right in the face and did not consider the amendments they wanted.

There was great testimony from the fishing industry, but, in addition to that, there was expert witness testimony from the offshore petroleum industry. One such witness was Mr. Max Ruelokke, with a career of nearly 50 years in the offshore oil and gas industry. Mr. Ruelokke obtained a vast amount of knowledge from working in the Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia offshore oil and gas industry and through his interactions worldwide. It cannot be

denied that he is a pre-eminent expert in the offshore petroleum industry. Most pertinent to his experience is the fact that he served as the chair and CEO of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board for six years.

In his submission to the committee, he made some pretty strong statements. I will read Mr. Ruelokke's testimony into the record today in this place. It is entitled "An Informed Opinion on Certain Aspects of Bill C-49", and it states:

I have studied Bill C-49 from the perspective of my 40+ years engagement in the offshore oil and gas industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Gulf of Mexico, the North Sea, offshore Brazil and offshore India. Details of my engagement are contained in my CV, which accompanies this document.

The offshore oil and gas industry is a very competitive business on a world-wide basis. Operators such as the major oil and gas companies decide where and when to invest in exploration and production activities based on a variety of factors. One obvious factor is the potential existence of sufficient resource to allow for production. Another is the viability of production on an economic basis. The resources offshore Newfoundland and Labrador have been proven time and time again to meet both of those tests.

• (1630)

Another significant factor is the existence and certainty of an appropriate regulatory regime. Up until now, we have met that test as well. However, with the potential passage of Bill C-49, this situation will change drastically. Specifically, Section 56 of this Bill puts any and all offshore areas at risk of being rendered unusable for resource development, even though such activities may already be underway, and with appropriate regulatory approval.

Corporations have to risk assess any and all potential investments to ensure that such investments made can deliver appropriate returns. In the case of the offshore oil and gas industry, these investments range into billions of dollars.

This is where it gets interesting. He says:

If Bill C-49 is enacted, it will ring the death knell for any potential future offshore oil and gas developments in Atlantic Canada.

That is pretty powerful, "the death knell". I will talk a little bit more about what a "death knell" means for Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore petroleum industry. He says:

This will be the case since no corporation will risk investing in an area where their exploration or production activities can retroactively be banned simply because Governments believe that the area in which they are occurring may, at some point in time, require environmental protection. This is a terrible piece of legislation!

These are the very words of Mr. Max Ruelokke. He goes on to say:

If we do not continue to explore for, find and produce the relatively environmentally friendly oil under our seabed, we will have to rely on oil and gas from other, much less stable and more environmentally risky areas. The International Energy Agency's 2022 Report estimated that, in 2050, the world will still need approximately 24 million barrels of oil per day. Those of us in Atlantic Canada deserve the opportunity to provide our fair share of those 24 M BBL/day. Please remove Section 56 from Bill C-49 to make this possible!!

Respectfully submitted.

Max Ruelokke

What does a “death knell” mean for Newfoundland's offshore petroleum industry? Let us take a look at it. The offshore petroleum industry in Newfoundland and Labrador contributes 25% to 30% of our GDP every year, depending on the price of oil as it fluctuates. It is an industry that supports nearly 25,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs, nearly \$2 billion of labour income, \$1.4 billion of consumer spending and \$1.4 billion of tax and royalty revenue to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am quoting 2017 figures, when oil was only about \$30 a barrel. Today, it is \$90, so one can imagine what that does to these figures.

It certainly is an industry that we cannot risk destroying by the amendments that Bill C-49 would make to the original Atlantic Accord.

Many in the industry feel that we are seeing the effects of this legislation already. Bill C-49 was tabled last spring and, at the time, there were about 10 companies that were looking at putting together bids to explore in our offshore. However, whatever happened, last year, with a record number of offerings, we received zero bids. Historically, there have been bids up to or even exceeding \$1 billion per year to purchase land leases for exploration.

• (1635)

This strikes me as a little peculiar, but not for Mr. Ruelokke. He says this is because of proposed section 56 creating so much uncertainty, basically stating that if an area may be deemed as a future environmentally sensitive area, the government can pull past, current and future exploration and development permits. With the amount of uncertainty created by Bill C-49, especially with proposed section 56, it is a disaster. It is absurd.

While we received no bids in our offshore for parcels for exploration, the U.S. Gulf of Mexico had its largest auction since 2015. I will put it in Canadian dollars: \$523 million of bids were taken.

We tried to get that horrible proposed section 56 out of the bill, and we were shot down completely. The uncertainty is brewing with Bill C-49, together with Bill C-50, Bill C-55 and the unconstitutional Bill C-69, for which the government has had six or seven months now to come forward with something. The bill that we are going to be voting on mentions Bill C-69 over 70 times. How can this bill be valid? How can this bill be deemed constitutional?

I challenge the members opposite from Newfoundland and Labrador and from Nova Scotia to vote with us and the Bloc—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to go to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Kings—Hants.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want folks in Newfoundland and Labrador, and indeed in Nova Scotia, to know that this government is extremely supportive of the offshore sector, and oil and gas. It was our government that actually took the permitting process from 900 days down to 90 days. It was 900 days under Harper, and it is 90 days under our government. The Conservative Party has called Atlantic Canadians a “culture of defeat”.

Here is a piece of legislation that would allow for there to continue to be a successful offshore oil and gas industry, for there to be a

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successful fishery, and drive new energy opportunities in clean energy, for which Newfoundland and Labrador is in a prime position.

I just want to read one quick quote:

As a major harvester in the offshore fleet, we know that any forthcoming plans for offshore wind development will be developed thoughtfully and to fully protect this and any other sensitive areas.

That is from Chief Terry Paul in Nova Scotia, who is part of the ownership of the largest offshore fishing company in Atlantic Canada.

I listened to the member's speech. He talked about proposed section 56, which is actually there to protect existing traditional industries, like oil and gas and the fisheries. He stands against the Government of Newfoundland, its prosperity and Atlantic Canada.

Why is the member against what the premiers, the provinces and industry want?

• (1640)

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague from Kings—Hants and his costly coalition have quite the track record of destroying the offshore oil and gas industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. With Bill C-49, they will continue right down that path.

This morning, I heard the member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl talking about all the people who were trained in our offshore. Yes, they were trained in our offshore, but does the member know where 5,500 of them have gone since the government took power in 2015? They have become international offshore petroleum workers. They commute all over the world and use the skills they learned in our offshore petroleum industry.

I listed quite a lengthy list of industry stakeholders in his province, from the largest industry in Nova Scotia, and the member made fun of us, ridiculing us in his speech earlier. He ridiculed us for standing up for the fishing industry. I cannot believe it.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks. I explained a little earlier in the debates that the Bloc Québécois members, in good faith, voted in favour of the bill at second reading. We went to committee with an open mind to work constructively, as we always do, which should not come as a surprise to anyone. However, all of our amendments were rejected outright.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks of these amendments, which sought to improve environmental assessment and also to include language meant to reduce fossil fuel development.

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Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from the Bloc for voting for my bill, Bill C-251, to bring in a pin-niped management solution, which the NDP-Liberals all voted against.

I feel sorry for the Bloc members, with all the work they put into their amendments just for them to be all shot down, as were ours. I also feel sorry for the people in this country and from Quebec who think that we are going to have a dollar to buy something with. Chief economists say, without the petroleum industry in Canada, Canada would have a 37¢ dollar against the U.S. dollar. What would that do to inflation? What would that do to buying power? What would that do to the price of groceries?

We would be destroying the number one export that Canada has. We would destroy that industry, destroy our currency, destroy families and pocketbooks and wipe everything out here.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I was quite surprised to hear my colleague say in his speech that the oceans are not big enough. I understand that the oceans are not infinite, but they are quite large. My colleague says he is concerned about the coexistence of wind farms and fisheries, when Europe has been doing it for a long time with maritime zones that are much smaller than what we are talking about right now.

However, for the Conservatives, there is no limit to producing oil and gas, building highways, consuming or manufacturing big, gas-guzzling cars.

I would like to know, are we living on a planet with finite or infinite resources?

[English]

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, my colleague from the NDP misunderstood the context. The fishing industry and the offshore petroleum industry are competing for the same space in the ocean. It just so happens that fish like to hang out on the shoals and that is where wind power usually gets built. It gets built because it is cheaper where the water is more shallow. There are limited amounts of fishing ground. People fish where the fish are. If that is where they are going to put wind farms, there will be nowhere to fish.

There is lots of ocean out there that is poor fishing ground and, if the industries work together, they could put the wind farms on the poor fishing ground and not on the rich fishing ground. That is the difference.

For the record, I am not against offshore wind. I am for collaboration between industries so that we can make it work for everybody.

• (1645)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech, and it was a wonderful speech. He did mention that a couple of years ago there were 10 applications for offshore oil in Newfoundland and Labrador in his area, but this past year there were zero. Ironically, the member for

Kings—Hants ran in breathlessly and said they have lowered the application time for approvals. Well, if there is no one who applies, who cares how long the approval time is? I wonder if my colleague has a few comments on that.

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Regina—Lewvan makes a lot of common sense. He is exactly right. The red tape that would come in as a result of Bill C-49 is driving investment out of our offshore petroleum industry already. It was proven last year in the number of bids that were sold. I would also like to point out that the NDP-Liberals are saying that they have changed the processing time from 900 days to 90 days. I would like to let the people of Canada know that the 90 days is for exploration projects and the 900 days is still in place for development.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Canada exported so much oil and gas that the value of the Canadian dollar rose. Canada's manufacturing heartland in Quebec and Ontario was decimated as a result. Tens of thousands of jobs were lost. This has been documented by leading economists here at the University of Ottawa and elsewhere. When Canada exports too much oil, it kills the manufacturing industry in Quebec and Ontario. This is called Dutch disease, and it is taught in economics 101.

My colleague expressed nostalgia for the days when oil exports killed manufacturing jobs in Quebec. Would he like to say that again so Quebeckers can hear him?

I am not sure I understood correctly.

[English]

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from la belle province. He is a great guy.

There were thousands of manufacturing jobs in Quebec that were shipping out components. The buses that used to bring people from Fort McMurray out to the oil sands were all produced in Quebec, providing jobs in Quebec. There were also royalties from the petroleum industry. Who gets the transfer payments that result from the offshore oil and gas industry, from the oil sands and from Canada's natural gas industry?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would like to advise members to be very cognizant of how gestures can effect the interpreters' health.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, Fisheries and Oceans; the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton, Democratic Institutions; the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Indigenous Affairs.

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before going any further, I want to acknowledge that I am sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

It is a pleasure to rise to join in the debate tonight on Bill C-49, an act to amend the Canada—Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

The bill will enable the development of offshore renewable energy by expanding the federal-provincial offshore regulatory regimes in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Nova Scotia. This is really critical because it will not only create an incredible opportunity in the clean economy by enabling offshore wind electricity as well as the massive opportunity in green hydrogen Atlantic Canada has at its feet, but it will also allow us to take important steps in decarbonizing our economy and fighting climate change.

The imperative to act has never been clearer on fighting climate change. Last year, 2023, was the hottest year on record and each of the last eight months were the hottest such months we have ever seen recorded. Last year was the worst wildfire season that Canada has ever had, with wildfires from coast to coast to coast, some of which were never extinguished over the winter. We are already seeing the makings of what could be a very bad year for droughts. In my home province of B.C., we had the lowest snowpack ever recorded, and next week we are going to see water restrictions come in.

Over the last few years, we have seen some of the most devastating natural disasters, fuelled by climate change, such as hurricanes in Atlantic Canada, atmospheric rivers in British Columbia and much more. Therefore, we need to act to ensure that we prevent the worst outcomes of climate change from occurring, because Canada is one of the top 10 largest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world and because, in acting, there are incredible opportunities for investments, the economy and jobs.

Just last year, the International Energy Agency noted that clean energy added \$320 billion to the world's economy in just one year and that, by 2030, we are going to require \$4.5 trillion in global investments to meet our climate targets. In the offshore wind industry alone we know there is an opportunity for \$1 trillion by 2040. This represents the greatest economic opportunity of our lifetime.

Canada has a huge potential to seize an outsized share of these investments and jobs. We have the critical minerals, whether copper in British Columbia or lithium in Quebec. We have the manufacturing know-how in Ontario so that we can build a full value chain for battery production and electric vehicle manufacturing.

We are the only G7 country that has free trade agreements with every other G7 country. We have a world-class potential for clean electricity that would allow us to leverage our legacy of hydroelectric power and supplement it with the cheapest electricity in the world right now, which is solar and wind energy, provided we do what we can to ensure the infrastructure can be built.

We are also seeing a massive interest in Canadian green hydrogen, which is hydrogen produced using renewable electricity. We need to be able to meet that demand.

Bill C-49, along with the 150 measures in Canada's emissions reduction program, are helping Canada seize these generational economic opportunities. Just in the last year, we became the number

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one per capita recipient of foreign direct investment and the third country in gross terms behind the U.S. and Brazil. We have seen massive investments in electric vehicle manufacturing from Stellantis, Volkswagen and most recently Honda, which is the largest private sector investment in Canadian history. There are also multi-billion dollar opportunities in the hydrogen sector in Atlantic Canada alone.

We are helping to attract this investment through targeted incentives, including through investment tax credits in clean technologies, clean manufacturing, clean hydrogen and clean electricity. It is clear that these measures are not only creating jobs and growing the economy, but having a material impact on reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.

● (1650)

Earlier today, Canada tabled its greenhouse gas inventory, which shows what greenhouse gases were in 2022 and that they have been reduced by 44 million tonnes since 2019. This is the equivalent of taking 13 million cars off the road, and it is the lowest that Canada's emissions have been since the O.J. Simpson trial or the year Connor McDavid was born.

The Canadian Climate Institute says that this shows “clear evidence that Canada continues to decouple emissions from economic growth”, but we still need to do more. This includes by finalizing some important regulations that would advance climate action, including the regulations on methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, the cap on emissions from the oil and gas sector, the electric vehicle availability standard and the clean electricity standard.

However, despite having the longest coastlines and some of the best wind speeds in the world, Canada does not have a single offshore wind project to date. This is due, in part, to the lack of a comprehensive lifestyle regulatory regime, which has led to uncertainty and impeded the pace of development. That is where today's bill comes into the spotlight, because Atlantic Canada is well positioned to be a leader in offshore wind energy and in green hydrogen.

The Public Policy Forum says, “Offshore wind could be for Atlantic Canada what oil was to Texas or hydro power to Quebec. We are talking here not of something incremental, but monumental.”

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To help address this gap, the Government of Canada introduced amendments to the accord acts to expand the existing joint management regimes established with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador to include offshore renewable energy. These amendments would also modernize the existing petroleum land tenure regime, align the accord acts with the Impact Assessment Act, further support Canada's marine conservation goals and allow for increased consultation with indigenous peoples. This would help us to seize this tremendous opportunity.

It is hard to understand why any party would be against such a measure. Why would anyone not want to create thousands of jobs in Atlantic Canada, attract investment in wind energy and help meet Europe's demand for hydrogen as it rapidly decarbonizes?

However, we see that the Conservatives are opposed to this investment in jobs. In fact, they have filibustered this legislation for seven weeks, blocking it from even being discussed at committee. We see this with the amendment they have tabled today that would simply send it back to committee, where they would continue filibustering again.

When I ask why, the only reason I can see is that the Conservative Party is diametrically opposed to any measures that would reduce Canada's reliance on the fossil fuel sector. Its members want Canadians to be subject to the commodity roller coaster of prices and to deny Canadians the benefits of lower and more stable heating bills from clean electricity. They will not even admit that climate change is happening or that it is caused by humans.

While filibustering the bill, the member for Red Deer—Mountain View described warnings of increased hurricanes, floods and wildfires as a “narrative”. He said that this narrative leads people to believe in climate change, but the “facts don't bear it out.”

The Conservatives even invited the leader of the official opposition's close ally and adviser, Ches Crosbie, to tell the committee that human-caused climate change was “bogus”.

Let us call it like it is: The Conservatives do not believe in climate change or in the benefits of climate action, and their obstructionism is holding us back, not just in Parliament and not just in Atlantic Canada, but right across the country.

In Alberta, we recently saw Danielle Smith imposing a hard stop on renewable energy projects, jeopardizing \$33 billion in investment and far and away the cheapest form of electricity out there. The recent proposals from the Alberta government would make it nearly impossible to get renewable energy built across the province.

As such, we see what a Conservative government would do. They do not believe in climate change. Moreover, they will do anything to stop renewable energy projects from breaking the hold that the fossil fuel industry has on Canadians. They put forth that the only way Canada can contribute to reducing emissions is by producing and burning more fossil fuels.

They say it is “technology, not taxes”, but this is greenwashing. Actually, just a couple of days ago at the finance committee, we passed forward some amendments that would require companies, when they make an environmental claim, to provide the evidence to

back it up. I just wish the same measure would apply to the Conservatives, because then we could have an honest debate.

• (1655)

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I really want to correct some of the facts in my colleague's speech. He is saying that Alberta has made it impossible to develop renewable energy. In my riding in southern Alberta, there are three solar projects and close to 600 wind turbines. We are very proud of our renewable projects.

To ensure my colleague has his facts straight, we put a pause, which has now been lifted. Why we did so is that 75% of the renewable projects that have been built in Canada over the last few years have actually been built in Alberta. However, close to 25% to 30% of the agriculture land in Alberta was identified for wind turbine or solar projects, which would put food production at risk.

Does he not think there has to be a balance between building renewable energy projects and ensuring that we protect agriculture land and arable land for food production?

• (1700)

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, quite frankly, Alberta has the greatest potential for renewable electricity in the entire country. It was having a massive boom in renewable energy production and investment until this moratorium came into place. I know there are these projects there. The problem here is that this moratorium put a hard stop on it. To put forward these false arguments that somehow renewable energy is going to kill food supply in Canada is just beyond the pale.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, just because they write “renewable energy” in a bill and greenwash the title, it does not mean that it is an environmental bill. As I was saying earlier, the Bloc Québécois voted in good faith at second reading.

I would like my colleague to explain to me why they rejected all the amendments that were reasonable, well researched and based on the testimony of the people we heard in committee, including people from coastal communities, people from the fishery.

How can we accept such things as environmental assessments being optional? That is outrageous.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I was not there for the committee study, so I cannot say why certain amendments were or were not adopted.

However, I know that this bill will promote the renewable energy sector in Atlantic Canada, particularly wind energy, and I think that is an important step we must take. I also know that fishers did testify and that this bill was drafted with the Atlantic provinces to address these issues.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, speaking of renewable energy, a very worrisome report came out this morning about the success in achieving greenhouse gas reduction targets.

We might be happy that we are eventually getting new offshore wind farms, but we all know that the Liberals' record is no match for the climate crisis and that although there has been a slight 7% decline in greenhouse gas emissions since 2005, most of that has to do with the economic slowdown that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without that, the decline would not even be possible.

If we managed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by only 7% in 19 years and we want to achieve a 45% reduction by 2030, then what is the government going to do to reduce emissions by 38% in only five and a half years?

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I know that there is a lot we need to do to fight climate change.

In the report that came out today, we can see that we are making a lot of progress. We need to do even more. That is why I said in my speech that we just need to finalize the rules that are going to make a difference with the cap in the oil sector.

Our economy grew a lot in a short amount of time. Now, our emissions are starting to go down for the first time. The space that was—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to resume debate.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Bill C-49 was introduced quite a while ago. I would have honestly thought that even the far right Conservative element would get behind and support this bill. I am quite surprised that the Conservative Party today, along with its friends in the Bloc, have decided to vote against Bill C-49. I have a question for each and every member, particularly those from Atlantic Canada: Whom are they listening to?

I would like to provide some quotes. Maybe members can guess who said them. In regard to the bill, someone said, "Bill C-49 is a necessary first step in unlocking our energy potential. There will be many steps along the road but we are hopeful that Bill C-49 passes so we can get started." Who would have said that?

An hon. member: Tell us.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: To my Conservative friends, yes, I am going to tell them.

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Madam Speaker, it was a Progressive, and I underline the word "progressive", Conservative government member in Nova Scotia, Premier Tim Houston. He is the individual who said that. We have to wonder why the Conservative Party of Canada is not listening to what the Premier of Nova Scotia, a Progressive Conservative, is saying.

There is another quote I would like to share. It states, "Newfoundland and Labrador is perfectly positioned in the green energy transition.... We continue to support the Government of Canada on Bill C-49 and urge the other federal parties to do the same." We have another premier of a province who is saying that all members should get behind and support this legislation, Bill C-49.

The legislation deals with and highlights two Atlantic provinces specifically: Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador. Both premiers of different political stripes are saying that they want this legislation to pass. We have the NDP and Liberals trying to get the legislation passed, and we have the Bloc and Conservative coalition trying to prevent it from passing.

I do not fully understand the Conservatives. They are obviously not listening to the premiers of provinces that are directly impacted and what they are saying. It does not surprise me, because they are more interested in organizations such as Diagon.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Well, think about it—

• (1705)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have a point of order.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Mr. Frank Caputo: Madam Speaker, this is extremely problematic. It has been said so many times. I ask the member to reflect on that organization; I am not even going to repeat it. It said things about the spouse of the Leader of the Opposition—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are not going to enter into debate, but I will remind members that it has been agreed that we are going to concentrate on the administration of government in this House. Referring to things that happen outside the House and the government has no place in the House.

I remind the parliamentary secretary of that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, let us think about it. The member stands up on a point of order because he is upset that I mentioned a group, which the leader of the Conservative Party, instead of listening to the premiers on this issue—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I remind the hon. member that we are trying—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

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Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I cannot believe the reaction from the members opposite, when there is a responsibility for the leader of the Conservative Party to do consultations, to look at ways in which legislation is impacting Canadians. Instead of listening to premiers, he is visiting trailers and dealing with issues of Diagonon. That is the reality. The leader of the Conservative Party is more concerned about what the extreme far right has to say than what the premiers have to say on important pieces of legislation. Bill C-49—

• (1710)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Frank Caputo: Madam Speaker, the member is using unparliamentary language and making unparliamentary connections. He should withdraw now, both times.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I did not hear any unparliamentary language. At this point, the member was making a comparison, and I have asked the member to be very prudent in the way he uses it. He was making a comparison about people who are being listened to.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member is trying to censor me because I am saying the word “Diagonon”, whereas the leader of the Conservative Party visits the association at the person's trailer. He is not upset with that, and he asks me—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are not going to start that debate. The member made a comparison about who is listening to whom, but let us keep it at that and continue with the speech, please, on the point in question.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would be inclined to apologize if in fact the leader of the Conservative Party would stop the jellyfish attitude and actually apologize to Canadians for his attitudes in dealing with—

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

How is this relevant?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There is a lot of room for latitude but, in this case, that is an appropriate question.

[English]

Let us bring it back to the subject at hand.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is an interesting process. We are talking about Bill C-49, substantial legislation that would enable the potential development in Atlantic Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in things such as wind energy. I was quoting two premiers who want the House of Commons to pass the legislation, and talking about the frustration members no doubt have because the Conservative Party, instead of listening to the premiers of the provinces, has chosen to listen to far right-wing organizations, extremists, and not allow the legislation to pass.

To demonstrate that, let us talk about what Conservative Party has done. The legislation has been on hold in committee. Bill C-50 was just ahead of it, and the Conservatives used AI to come up with 20,000-plus amendments on Bill C-50, which delayed the clause-by-clause of Bill C-49. When we finally got it through the committee stage, they attempted to bring in amendments at report stage, which were accurately ruled by the Speaker as being out of order. Then the Conservatives brought forward an amendment that would kill the legislation, while at the same time—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Brad Vis: Madam Speaker, it is a simple question of relevancy. He is talking about another bill processed through the House of Commons, and not about Bill C-49.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): However, it is a bill that was processed through the House of Commons that may have a certain link to the current bill.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I cannot believe the sensitivity of the member, since 99.5% of everything I said is absolutely relevant to the legislation. The Conservative Party of Canada is so determined to prevent the legislation from passing, and the question that needs to be asked of the Conservatives is what they have against Atlantic Canada that they are preventing legislation from passing that would enable the region to achieve a much higher potential.

The Conservatives do not have to believe the government. All they need to do is listen to the people of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador and, in particular, the provincial leadership. They are calling upon the Conservative Party of Canada not only to recognize that the bill is positive legislation but also, at the very least, to allow the legislation to pass. The Conservative Party is doing whatever it can to prevent that from happening, and I find that disrespectful to the people of those provinces.

I suggest that, at the end of the day, economic development is important. Economic development in Atlantic Canada is good for all of Canada. When we look at the behaviour of the Conservative Party today, the attitude of Joe Clark, Kim Campbell and Brian Mulroney about it is right, which is that the Conservative Party today has amputated the progressive nature of the party. It is not me who is saying that; it was former prime ministers of Canada who were real progressive Conservatives. The current leadership of the Conservative Party has fallen so far to the right that they have amputated the progressive nature—

• (1715)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There is a point of order by the hon. member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Madam Speaker, as far as I am aware, the debate is about Bill C-49. The member has been going on for a couple of minutes now about Joe Clark, Brian Mulroney and Kim Campbell—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Members know there is a lot of leeway, and the member has been debating Bill C-49 too.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I should get some bonus time for the interruptions from across the way. It is 100% relevant. I do not quite understand how the Conservatives do not see the relevance to the issue.

Members opposite need to recognize the damage they are causing to Atlantic Canada because of their filibustering. It means MOUs could be signed that are not being signed, because the provinces need the legislation to pass. If the Conservatives want to support economic activity and Atlantic Canada, they need to at least get out of the way. If they do not want to vote for the legislation, they should not vote for it, but they should allow the legislation to pass. That is what is in the interests of Atlantic Canada and all Canadians. Conservatives are standing in the way because they are listening to the far right as opposed to what is in the best interests of Canada, specifically Atlantic Canada.

I would encourage members opposite to think about what they are doing, to think about their Atlantic colleagues who sit in the Conservative caucus and will, ultimately, have to go to the polls in 2025 when they are going to be asked why they filibustered and stalled Bill C-49, a bill that has been encouraged by two premiers, the government and New Democrats. Ideally, Conservatives should support the legislation, but if they are not going to, they should step aside and allow it to pass. This way, the potential of the legislation's impact on economic development could be realized.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I do not know whether I am ever going to get that time back in my life, but that was pretty bad, even for the member for Winnipeg North.

I will ask a question regarding something that has been on my mind and has been talked about in conjunction with the debate about energy renewables and the need to have critical minerals. The government has spent over \$50 billion recently on subsidizing environmental lawbreakers like Volkswagen in the creation of new power plants.

In the opinion of the member, how much time should Parliament allot to the study of contracts, when \$15 billion is going to Volkswagen, \$15 billion is going to Stellantis and \$2.5 billion is going to Honda? How much time should Parliament be allotted to study and review those expenditures accordingly?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I did not plant that question. It is amazing; not only do Conservative Party members want to put economic development on hold and kill it in Atlantic Canada, but that question demonstrates that they also want to kill it and do what they can to stop it in the province of Ontario.

Volkswagen, Honda and Stellantis are going to be creating good, solid, middle-class green jobs. What is it with today's modern Conservative Party that its members are so against economic development? They do not understand how important it is for the government to directly get involved and support these types of industries.

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These are the types of industries that are going to provide good-quality, middle-class jobs.

With that kind of an attitude coming from Conservatives today, they are going to be lucky if they can win 50 seats in the next election.

• (1720)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, first, the Liberals have been woefully weak when it comes to actually making the investments around clean energy so we can do the transition. Look at the Inflation Reduction Act in the United States. We can see that 1.5 million jobs have been created from President Joe Biden's investments in clean energy. When is the Canadian government going to step up on those kinds of investments?

Second, I found it a little rich to hear a Conservative colleague talking about scrutiny, when the Conservatives, during the dismal decade of the Harper regime, gave \$116 billion in liquidity supports to banks. They gave \$30 billion each and every year, \$300 billion total, a third of a trillion dollars to overseas tax havens through the infamous Harper tax haven treaties, and then, of course, massive subsidies to oil and gas CEOs.

I want to ask my colleague whether he finds it rich that Conservatives, after all of their fiscal mismanagement, are trying to give others lessons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we always have to take things with a grain of salt when it comes to economic development. If my colleague wants to reflect on the Harper years, one needs only to take a look at the damage that was caused in the manufacturing industry in the province of Ontario, for example, where hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs were lost under Stephen Harper, not to mention the overall deficit in terms of international trade in many different ways, again under Stephen Harper.

In terms of the environment, I, along with many members of the House, recognize that there is a thing called sustainable development, a universal principle held by progressive-minded people. It means working and thinking about our environment and jobs, and about how we can make the transition to providing good quality, middle-class greener jobs into the future. I see that as a positive thing. That is the reason why I see investments in Volkswagen and Honda as a good thing, contrary to the member opposite. By the way, Doug Ford seems to agree, because he is putting up a lot of money too.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, even by the member from Winnipeg's standards that speech was something else. He did not talk about the bill at all.

I listened to the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame's speech. He is from Newfoundland and Labrador. There were a lot of people he consulted with, like those from the united fishermen's associations and a lot of people on the ground. He said a representative group of 14,000 fishermen had concerns with the bill, and they put forward amendment no. 56 so that it could work for both the fishing company and renewable resources.

Private Members' Business

I am wondering why those peoples' voices do not matter to my colleague and he listens only to the ones in his head.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I suspect that the real challenge for many Conservatives might be the back and forth going on in their own heads. For me personally, the individuals I listen to are provincial premiers and my caucus colleagues from Atlantic Canada. Contrast that to the extreme right that many Conservatives and, in particular, the leader of the Conservative Party listen to.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is pretty tough to follow the production we just saw from the member for Winnipeg North. He is something else. We will just leave it at that.

I am a member of the natural resources committee, and I think it is really important that we talk about the process by which we have arrived here today.

There were two bills that were sent to our committee: Bill C-49 first, and then Bill C-50. What is important here is this. For a number of years, across multiple parliamentary sessions, Conservatives have been warning the government about its unconstitutional Impact Assessment Act, and over time the Liberals kept denying it and saying it was not unconstitutional. Then the Supreme Court comes along and in a reference case ruling says that the Impact Assessment Act, Bill C-69 from a previous parliament, is largely unconstitutional.

It is important to note and make mention here that in the history of Canada no government has ever ignored a reference ruling from the Supreme Court. As we have this debate here today, I think it is extremely important that we start out with that particular point. I think if we were to ask my colleague from Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, when he gives his speech after me, because I will be splitting my time with him, he might even agree that for a very long time the government has ignored this particular point.

The government needs to take this opportunity at report stage to be absolutely clear about the date and time when it will fix the Impact Assessment Act, because a big part of the issue around Bill C-49 is that it contains no less than 35 direct references to the unconstitutional parts of the Impact Assessment Act. It is as if the Liberal government has a desire to pass unconstitutional legislation and regulations. We have seen that with its plastics ban, which was also ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Conservatives also warned that it would be a problem.

When we are tasked with passing a piece of legislation that is required for Atlantic Canada to be able to develop its offshore wind resources, we need to make sure that we are passing a piece of legislation that is abundantly clear and would create all the absolute certainty that is needed in Atlantic Canada.

Of course, there is a consultation process that needs to go on. At committee, all we heard from witnesses, one after the other, was that they were not consulted. This is particularly true of people who are in the fishing industry, which as we know is the absolute staple industry of Atlantic Canada.

That is an important place where we need to start. I hope that at some point here we will get some clarity and certainty from gov-

ernment members about when that will happen. We gave them many opportunities at committee to tell us when, yet we never got an answer from them.

I want to go back to the fishing organizations that spoke at great length to us at committee.

I will start off by quoting Katie Power from FFAW-Unifor, who stated:

To clarify, FFAW, in its representation of the owner-operator fishery in Newfoundland and Labrador, has not been consulted or engaged, by governments or otherwise, on Bill C-49 but serves to be directly impacted by it. In the absence of the appropriate consultation framework not currently built into this bill for adherence, undue conflict amongst fisheries stakeholders, other ocean user groups, future investors and developers of offshore wind energy is inevitable.

FFAW has been thoroughly engaged in the ongoing regional assessment for offshore wind. Participation on both a staff and harvester level has been immense, reflective of the magnitude of potential impacts and indicative of a desire to be involved. However, this regional assessment has no application in this legislation, and the recommendations of the regional assessment committee to governments are not legally binding.

This, coupled with the complete lack of communication from local governments, leaves the fishing industry with no reassurance, no safeguards for mitigation and an overall lack of trust or faith in the process as it is presently being pursued.

I have another quote, from Ruth Inniss from the Maritime Fishermen's Union, who stated:

The bill, as it stands before us, is sorely lacking in protections for the fishing industry, the aquatic species we depend on and the livelihoods that depend on fishing. Simply put, while we support the expansion of clean energy, it should not be at the expense of the fishing industry.

• (1725)

I have more quotes that I would like to read, but I realize I am near the end of my time for today. I will finish with one quote, quickly. Ms. Inniss added:

Rushing poorly thought-out legislation to govern an industrial marine development that remains largely in an experimental stage for Atlantic waters, and legislation that lacks proper safeguards to ensure a sustainable, viable and resilient coastal economy, is extremely irresponsible.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[English]

COMBATING MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT ACT

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC) moved that Bill C-379, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (motor vehicle theft), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank a lot of people who were involved in the creation of this piece of legislation. The member for Fundy Royal did a lot of work in the background, and I appreciate his guidance and effort in this. He has been a great shadow minister and a great friend. It is something that he spent a lot of time on, and of course there is the staff and the people within the OLO who helped us out to get the bill exactly the way we wanted it.

This is a piece of legislation that I think all members in the House can actually get behind. They can go back to their ridings and tell their constituents that we are doing something when it comes to auto theft. We are actually going to do something that is going to reduce the number of auto thefts and put the people who are committing auto theft in jail, where they belong, instead of back out on the street, where they are committing more and more thefts every day.

What I am proposing is basically a very simple process, which is three years for a third offence, especially when it is tied to a criminal element like an organized gang or organized crime. Why do I say three years at three and not right off the bat? First of all, we do not want to go after that 16- or 17-year-old who just did something stupid one night, stole the neighbour's car and went for a joyride. That is not who we are after in this situation. They made a stupid mistake. They should be scared, they should be dealt with and made scared, but we do not want to create a situation that they regret for the rest of their lives.

However, by the time people do their third offence, they consciously know what they are doing. They are actually involved in and part of an organized crime ring or a gang and are doing something because they know that this is what their career and their choices are going to be. Therefore, we need to actually put a dent in it when it comes to dealing with these people, which is what we are doing in this situation. We are saying that on a person's third offence, if they are convicted and if they are tied to organized crime, they are going to do at least three years and up to 10 years. There is a lot of leeway for the judge to do a proper process, apply the law and get the thieves behind bars so that they do not reoffend.

We met with police chiefs and some police units. I remember talking to a police unit out in Vancouver, and I want to thank them for their guidance and help in moving forward with this bill. One of the frustrations they had was the fact that people are committing crimes over and over again. They would arrest them, and then they would be released. They could not get the prosecution or the judges to actually put these people behind bars.

In the riding of Prince Albert, when we do our rural crime watch meetings, we fill the hall relatively quickly. When we talk about rural crime and theft, auto theft definitely comes up in those conversations. In those meetings, we have members of the police force, the city police and the RCMP. We have defence lawyers and prosecutors. It is amazing that we have everybody but the judges sitting there listening, talking to constituents and hearing the concerns they have in regard to rural crime, theft and auto theft.

One of the things they always say, and what the police were saying at the last meeting we had up at Crystal Lake, was that they kind of know who these people are, because it is the same ones doing it over and over again. I remember a police officer from Prince Albert saying that they know where to look when catalytic converters are disappearing, because it is the same guy stealing catalytic converters from cars all the time. They know him, but what frustrates them is that they know it, they arrest the person, they have all the evidence to put him behind bars, but they do not get the conviction. That is the frustration that I think a lot of Canadians are facing in their communities.

Private Members' Business

I will give some interesting stats around this, just to show how bad it has gotten. I will look at 2015 to 2022. Auto thefts are up 35% across Canada, 120% in New Brunswick, 190% in Moncton, 59% in Quebec, 105% in Montreal, 122% in Ontario, 122% in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, 216% in the greater Toronto area and 62% in Winnipeg. If we look at 2021 to 2023 across western Canada, Atlantic Canada and the prairie provinces, the numbers are up substantially, too. This is something going on right across Canada.

Now, when we talk to people in the sector, they blame the Port of Montreal as being the place where the cars that have been stolen are put in containers and then shipped out to northern Africa, the Middle East and other lucrative markets. They talk about the fact that it has really created an impact in regard to the cost it has had on individuals. In Ontario alone, auto theft has added \$130 a year to insurance costs. There was over \$1.2 billion in payouts in 2022 alone. That is a substantial amount of money, and that is a substantial amount of pain. It is impacting people at home. For the mother who has her vehicle stolen, how is she supposed to take her kids to day care or go grocery shopping? For the guy who wants to go to work, how is that supposed to happen when his vehicle has been stolen?

● (1735)

We have also heard about, and maybe this is something the committee wants to talk about a little more, the violence that is attached to auto theft when there is a home invasion to get the keys or there is a carjacking on the street. Maybe there should be even more attached to this type of legislation that would penalize these folks when they do that type of conduct while stealing a car.

There is lots to talk about regarding individuals. Everybody has a story. There is a car stolen roughly every five minutes. Everybody in this chamber, whether they are sitting in here today or not, knows somebody or has had a car stolen in the last few years. I could refer to the Minister of Justice, who had his car stolen. He is a really great guy, but he must have been frustrated when he came outside, realized his car was not there, and he needed to get to his next meeting. The Minister of Emergency Preparedness also had his car stolen.

This is happening to people right across the board. It is happening at home. It is happening at work. It is happening in a variety of different areas. It is something that definitely needs to be addressed.

In doing this, we would take repeat offenders and put them behind bars. We would actually save a lot of people a lot of money over time in a reduction in insurance costs. We would make it safer for people through not having these offenders on the street.

Again, when they are stealing a car, there can be a high-speed chase when police are pursuing them. We saw the results of high-speed chases this week in Ontario when some innocent people were killed on the highway because of a high-speed chase. It was not necessarily a vehicle theft, but there probably was one in the background.

Private Members' Business

This matter is very important for the people in the riding of Prince Albert. When we look at auto theft in Prince Albert and Saskatchewan, it is not like in Ontario. In the Ontario theft, the vehicle is being taken and shipped through Montreal on to markets. In Saskatchewan, there is a combination of older vehicles, of vehicles that are being taken for parts. Having said that, even the Port of Vancouver is saying that, if there is a clampdown at the port of Montreal, it would start to see some cars flowing out of Atlantic Canada and eastern Canada into the port of Vancouver. That is also a problem that has to be addressed.

We have talked about having the scanners, the tools and instruments put in, as well the border guards, and having the resources in place to inspect these containers, making sure we are clamping down on these individuals and taking away any ability for them to gain profit from the theft of vehicles.

There are lots of things that need to be done. I know the government had its focus group. It had a big summit on auto theft. There were some ideas in that summit. This is one of the ideas to come out of that summit that could actually be acted on right now. This is a chance for the government to show some activity. It is a chance for all members of Parliament, through a private member's bill, to participate, and to go back to their constituents to say, "We are clamping down on auto theft. We are going to do something that will actually make a difference."

I suspect every party in the House is going to be supportive of this piece of legislation. It is a very simple bill. I look forward to questions members may have. I look forward to seeing this get to committee. If there are any other good ideas that members may want to attach to it, I would be very open to those ideas as well.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a very complicated issue with jurisdictions and different actions from different organizations. I do not use the word "organizations" lightly.

I am interested in what the member has to say. From 2006 to 2008, we had huge numbers of automobile thefts. We were virtually double, on a per capita base, any other province in the country. What ended up happening is that Manitoba Public Insurance, MPI, came out with promotional material. The province worked with Ottawa. We were successful in being able to bring the numbers down.

I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts on how the legislation would encourage and support that sense of co-operation. It is not just governments.

• (1740)

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, the member has some good ideas. This, alone, would not do it. We need a combination of approaches. We need to look at different types of measures to deal with auto theft, theft in general and rural crime.

This bill would be one piece of that puzzle. At least with the guys who are committing a third offence, we would know that we were getting those people off the streets and this would not be reoccurring. If we can do that, it would make a dent in the numbers being reported for auto theft. I think it will make a huge difference.

That does not mean we should not keep doing other things. In the summit a few months ago, there were some other ideas of what we could do together, such as vehicle immobilization and new security techniques. Those are all good ideas, and working together, we could bring the numbers down even more.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and his bill.

I think this is an issue that deserves careful consideration. However, I get the impression that the bill, as it stands, will not solve all the problems. Would my colleague be willing to make amendments and perhaps even discuss it in a little more depth, particularly with respect to the issue of exports?

Montreal's police force is asking for stiffer penalties, for one, as my colleague proposed. However, it is also asking that we add exporting stolen vehicles to the Criminal Code. I am not certain whether we could do that with this bill. I do not know whether that would be admissible or not.

I am hoping my colleague can expand on that.

[English]

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I am always open to good ideas that would make this legislation stronger and reduce auto theft, so if the member has some ideas that would make this bill stronger, the committee would be a good place to bring those ideas forward. If it involves making some amendments to make it a stronger piece of legislation that would have more impact on auto theft, I think we would be in favour of that, and I definitely would be in favour of that. I look forward to working with the member.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate my colleague's sincerity on the issues, and I appreciate his openness for ideas. There is no doubt about it that this is an important issue. The member did say this was across Canada, but there is an exception.

As members are well aware, British Columbia, under the B.C. NDP government, has actually seen, year after year, a decrease in the number of auto thefts. The police with the integrated crime units have been particularly good at breaking down gangs that have tried to come into British Columbia from elsewhere in Canada. We have a bait car program, which has been very successful in making sure that criminals are actually caught.

Private Members' Business

As my colleague is listening, I would like to add both the fact that the auto manufacturers need to upgrade their technologies to make sure that auto theft is headed off and the fact that 12 years ago there were cuts to CBSA. The Liberal government has never restored the number of positions that we need to ensure that these stolen automobiles are actually caught before they are exported. Would the member agree that what the B.C. government has implemented, including the bait car program and integrated crime prevention, are the kinds of ideas that we also need to incorporate to make sure that we can drive down auto theft rates elsewhere in Canada?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, it is whether they can do it in this piece of legislation or it is part of other things that they do to bring down total crime. That is why we went out to Vancouver and talked to the police union. We listened to it. There are some good ideas out there about more of a holistic package to reduce auto theft. One thing we were told was that, if we were going to do just a quick piece of legislation that we thought we could get through the House, let us put the guys who are repeat offenders behind bars. That is why this is such a critical piece of legislation.

The number of thefts is going down in British Columbia, as the member said, and they have had some good results with some of the provincial legislation and provincial programs. Maybe some of those ideas should be brought across Canada. Maybe they should be brought up in committee and talked about in committee as these are things that we should be talking about right across Canada. If they are under provincial jurisdiction, it would be up to the provinces to take them on. However, if they are under federal jurisdiction, we should see what options we have.

If the true goal is to reduce auto thefts, which is what my goal is here, and the members bring forward ideas to do that, we should have an intelligent and mature conversation about that and see how we can do it together.

• (1745)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for such a timely bill. What I am hearing about in my community is the concern about escalation. Some people think that this is really a victimless crime. However, in Toronto, it is getting so violent that police are even saying to just put the keys on the dashboard and let it go. Why is it so important that we have a deterrent and that the House move forward as quickly as possible with passing this bill?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I am going to thank the member for his hard work. He comes from a great automotive town, and I know he takes this issue very seriously. The carjacking joint task force revealed that 25 car thieves have been released on bail. That revolving door, the task force said, is creating more chaos and allowing more cars to be stolen all the time.

The insurance industry pays out \$1.2 billion every year in insurance costs for auto theft. That translates to \$130 per person in insurance fees. These are substantial numbers, especially at a time when people do not have a lot of extra cash. Therefore, this would be not only a way to get some of these thieves behind bars, but also, if we can start bringing down those insurance costs, a way to leave some cash in people's pockets to spend somewhere else.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the pressing concern of motor vehicle theft, which significantly impacts Canadians across the country. Motor vehicle theft remains a persistent and troubling problem across the country and across my region of Durham. It is one of the top issues affecting thousands of Canadians each year.

The Government of Canada is deeply concerned with this issue. It is imperative that the government takes action to respond to motor vehicle theft, and I am proud to say that our government is proposing effective solutions that would actually crack down on auto theft, as opposed to the Conservatives, who are trotting out the same failed policies we know, and, frankly, they know, will not work.

Why is that? Mandatory minimum penalties do not work to deter crime. There are many studies that have demonstrated, time and time again, that when criminals go out to commit a crime, they do not think about the consequences of their actions or the penalties they may get, and they do not plan to get caught.

We know that one of the main drivers of auto theft is organized crime, and we are seeking to target the actual problem. This is why our government announced in budget 2024 its intention to move forward with amending the Criminal Code to provide additional tools for law enforcement and prosecutors to address auto theft, which are contained in the recently tabled budget implementation act. This includes new criminal offences related to auto theft involving the use of violence or links to organized crime, possession or distribution of an electronic or digital device for the purposes of committing auto theft, and laundering the proceeds of crime for the benefit of a criminal organization, as well as new aggravating factors at sentencing if an offender involved a young person in committing an offence under the Criminal Code. This is in addition to the effort on the part of all tiers of government, industry partners and law enforcement agencies to collaborate to address this issue in a coherent and effective manner.

Together, we have the power to combat motor vehicle theft and create safer communities for all Canadians. The Canada Border Services Agency will play a pivotal role by disrupting criminal activity before it even reaches our borders. With increased investment of \$28 million, it is ramping up efforts to intercept stolen vehicles and crack down on criminal networks. The RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, coordinates intelligence sharing among police forces across the nation, ensuring a unified front against auto theft. Leveraging the border integrity program, it is fortifying our borders to combat inbound and outbound threats, standing vigilant against organized crime at every port of entry.

Private Members' Business

Transport Canada is leading the charge in modernizing vehicle safety standards, incorporating cutting-edge technology to deter theft. It is conducting targeted security assessments of port facilities to identify vulnerabilities and implement robust security measures. Lastly, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is collaborating with industry partners to develop innovative solutions to safeguard vehicles and aid in recovery efforts. This includes changes to the Radiocommunication Act through the budget implementation act to ban devices which are used to steal cars.

I will now touch on the flaws with the Conservative Party's approach, which relies on failed policies that we know do not deter crime and contribute to the overrepresentation of Black and indigenous people in our justice system.

Bill C-379 proposes to increase the mandatory minimum sentence of imprisonment for a third or subsequent motor vehicle theft from six months to three years. We know that mandatory minimum penalties restrict a court's ability to consider the unique circumstances of a case. We also know, and really, the Conservatives know, that they do not work. The Conservatives believe in slogan-based policy, not actual solutions, and they are misleading Canadians when they propose this as a solution.

We also know that mandatory minimum penalties can be vulnerable to Charter challenges. We should not forget that judges, in appropriate circumstances, are also able to impose lengthy prison sentences. I am concerned that the measures in Bill C-379 risk disproportionately penalizing vulnerable individuals, and I do not believe they would effectively address the root causes of motor vehicle theft.

• (1750)

Ensuring that people in Canada feel safe in their communities is a top priority. Canada has a robust criminal law framework to address auto theft at various stages of the crime, as well as its links to organized crime. This is why the Minister of Justice made a commitment to examine potential amendments to the Criminal Code to further strengthen the legal framework related to auto theft, including by reviewing existing offences and penalties. The result is that the proposals in the budget implementation act would be effective at combatting organized crime and auto theft, whereas this legislation would likely have the opposite effect.

This is why on top of the amendments to the Criminal Code on auto theft, we are also bringing forward further measures that would combat money laundering, which helps support organized crime. This is part of a holistic effort to actually address the causes of crime and, in particular, organized crime.

We believe in addressing the root causes of crime, not using known failed policies and deceiving Canadians that we are solving the problem. We know criminal organizations are using young people to commit crimes. The solution is not to drive those youths further into a life of crime by locking them up and throwing away the key, as the Conservatives propose, but to go after those who are using those youths, which is what we propose.

As I wrap up, I want to quote a former Harper legal adviser Ben Perrin on the Leader of the Opposition's reckless plan, which would not actually address crime. He stated the Conservative leader's

"idea may actually backfire, leading to more crime in the long term." He went on to say, "If history is any judge, mandatory minimum penalties may not be worth the paper they're printed on." He also stated that MMPs "are a grave policy failure and cheap politics."

We know various other Conservative and right-wing politicians have regretted their positions on mandatory minimum penalties, including Newt Gingrich. It is really a shame Conservatives cannot see evidence that even Republicans can see and start to propose smart and effective criminal law policy, rather than the same tired, failed policies they have tried for years.

This is why our side has brought forward a responsible and effective plan, and we look forward to the support from the opposition on our plan to effectively combat auto theft.

In the collective effort to fight auto theft, it is important to send a clear message to criminals that their days of preying on our communities are numbered. We must be strong together and be united in our resolve to safeguard our communities, to defend our borders and to uphold the safety and the security of everyone who calls Canada home.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is good to see you again. It has been a little while since I have spoken here. It is the end of the day, so there is only a small audience. I prefer to speak at 10:15 a.m. or 12:30 p.m., when there are a few people around. Right now, there is no one. However, I have colleagues who are on their way. They are coming to support me.

Vehicle theft is a serious crisis. It is a scourge, an important issue. I commend the initiative of my Conservative Party colleagues for introducing a bill to try to resolve this crisis. We are not convinced that Bill C-379 is the answer to this crisis. There will certainly be a way to improve what is before us. In any case, we definitely need to address that. I will have the opportunity to talk about that and provide some figures. Of course we need to tackle this problem, this crisis. In fact, our position right now could be "neither yes nor no, quite the contrary".

We think there is a way to work on this in committee. We are just not sure that tougher sentencing is the way to go. I also have to say that I think auto theft is at least partly related to the post-pandemic situation we are in. Inflation is skyrocketing, there is a housing crisis and seniors are struggling. Seniors may not be feeling the pain of auto theft as much, but people are having a hard time making ends meet right now, and crime may appeal to some people. In short, I think the causes of auto theft are fairly easy to identify.

In a way, Bill C-379 is an answer to that. It is not a final answer, but it is an answer to the problem of auto theft, particularly in Montreal. It is important to talk about Montreal because Montreal is a hub. It has a port from which cars can be shipped in containers to Africa, the Middle East, Asia and South America. That makes Montreal important. We do not really know why, but we think fewer cars are being shipped out of Vancouver, British Columbia. Regardless, a significant number of cars pass through the port of Montreal.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruptions in global supply chains, resulting in a shortage of the essential microchips used in automobile production. This situation increased the demand for used cars and their price, prompting criminal gangs to specialize in vehicle theft and exports. The thieves use sophisticated methods. For example, they use relays to amplify the signal of smart keys inside homes. In fact, it happened to me.

My car was not stolen, but I was robbed three times. They stole from my car, but did not steal my car. They got away with lots of things, including my wallet and credit cards, but they left my car in front of the house. I should have noticed a lot sooner: they were stealing the signal through the window. It is a very effective system. The first time it happened to me, I was amazed that such a thing was even possible. Then I switched things up a little by keeping my keys in a different spot in the house. In short, they do that and they steal cars.

Once stolen, cars are often temporarily stored in discreet locations to avoid detection, then exported abroad using fraudulent serial numbers to fool the authorities. Despite how easy it is to detect the fraudulent use of serial numbers, the CBSA apparently does not conduct systematic checks. It is not clear why, but that does not happen. Car manufacturers do not seem too concerned about car theft either, as insurance companies cover replacement costs. They are not overly bothered by it; it is not a major concern for them. However, insurance premiums have risen considerably as a result of increasing car theft. That is a problem.

There has been an alarming increase in the number of car thefts in Montreal in recent years, from 6,500 in 2021 to 12,000 in 2023. There was talk of a post-pandemic crisis attracting young people to crime. That is certainly part of it, as is the microprocessor issue, which was mentioned earlier. In Canada, approximately 500 vehicles are stolen every day, and that helps fund gangs who use part of the proceeds to buy illegal firearms, among other things.

The Longueuil police service is facing a series of growing security challenges, including a spike in auto theft and property crime. This is happening in Longueuil, in my community. A lot of cars are being stolen from the parking lot at the Promenades Saint-Bruno shopping centre. In Longueuil alone, auto theft has increased at an

alarming rate. In 2022 and 2023, 3,000 vehicles were stolen in the greater Longueuil area. That is huge. Longueuil is not that big. It is the fifth-largest city in Quebec. That is a much higher average than in previous years. This trend can be explained in part by the precarious economic situation facing some families, as I mentioned earlier.

• (1755)

Bill C-379 does not adequately respond to the main demand of the Montreal police service, which is that sections be added to the Criminal Code specifically to address the exportation of stolen vehicles. Nevertheless, this bill is an important step in the fight against auto theft and its repercussions. Despite the large number of containers that leave the port of Montreal every year, only a fraction of them are searched. That is a problem. Roughly 700,000 containers are shipped annually, which is a huge number, but checks are limited because of legal constraints. This is a major problem.

According to the Montreal Port Authority, the law does not allow employees or the port authority to open a container unless someone's life is in danger or there is a serious environmental hazard. According to the port's director of communications, by the time the containers arrive at the port, it is already too late to do anything. This creates an opportunity for criminals to export stolen vehicles undetected, which contributes to the growing problem of auto theft in Montreal and beyond.

Containers remain sealed unless law enforcement intervenes for specific reasons. They need a warrant to open a sealed container, which also requires probable cause. Police forces have access to the port and can intervene, but they do not patrol there, since the Montreal Port Authority already has its own security. The police are somewhat stuck. There is a territorial dispute, in a way. Customs is responsible for controlling goods destined for export and can open them, but the lack of personnel makes it really difficult. There are five agents who inspect containers in Montreal, which is not very many. I said earlier that there were 700,000 containers and there are five agents. Obviously, that poses a problem.

Anyone can rent a container by simply filling in an online form to declare it to the shipping company. They can make changes to that form up to 48 hours after shipment, so it is easy enough to cover their tracks once the goods are on their way to Europe or anywhere else in the world. This gives rise to all kinds of crooked dealings. Criminals fill in these forms using numbered companies.

Private Members' Business

In 2023, a total of 779,111 containers left the port of Montreal compared to 871,000 in 2022. The Journal de Montréal reported that only five CBSA officers were tasked with inspecting the containers. According to the Customs and Immigration Union, only 1% of all containers that leave the port of Montreal are searched. It is easy to see where that can lead.

In fall 2015, an Auditor General's report stated that export control at the border is ineffective and that only one in five high-risk containers was inspected by the CBSA. That means that the government has been aware of this problem for a long time but has not fixed it. Now it is blowing up in our faces.

There are more legal consequences to crossing the border with four kilos of cocaine than with stolen vehicles. That is intense. Both crimes pay big dividends to criminal groups. Young thugs run less of a risk if they steal a Jeep Wrangler than if they sell narcotics on the street.

Organized crime's takeover of the auto theft market is changing the dynamic. Money from auto theft is funding other criminal activities, such as firearms trafficking or human trafficking. Thieves currently face four to six months in prison for stealing a vehicle. Obviously, this is also a problem that needs to be addressed.

I am almost out of time. As I said, the Bloc Québécois is not sure that this bill is an effective response to this serious problem, which is a major scourge in Montreal and across Canada. We do, however, think that the bill should be studied in committee so that we can discuss it and find truly effective solutions to this problem.

• (1800)

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Prince Albert for bringing this forward. I know that he is very sincere, having worked in Parliament with him for a number of years on this issue.

I will get into some reasons a little later on as to why I do not think this bill is the response that is needed, but I want to start off by talking about British Columbia and the British Columbia difference. We have been talking a lot about car thefts. Why is it that in British Columbia there has been an opposite result from what we are seeing in other parts of the country?

I would like to thank the integrated crime prevention services for their work, the New Westminster Police, the Burnaby RCMP and a wide variety of law enforcement from across the Lower Mainland and British Columbia who worked very carefully with the B.C. NDP government to ensure the rapid increase we have seen in so many parts of the country is not reflected in B.C. Gangs have attempted to come to British Columbia and have been pushed back and arrested. That is fundamentally important.

The bait car program, the fact that we have integrated law enforcement on this issue and the anti-gang strategy that the British Columbia government has been a very strong proponent of have all made a difference. We need to make sure that we continue to act to ensure that we are not subjected to the same rise in auto thefts in British Columbia that we have seen elsewhere in the country.

I want to come back to the rest of the country. Particularly in provinces with a Conservative government, we have seen a rapid increase in the number of auto thefts. This is very unfortunate. Having bait car programs and integrated law enforcement can help make a difference, but the federal government has a responsibility. Where I think the federal government can play a role is in providing supports so that the provinces do the right thing, as British Columbia has done. I think we will see the new Manitoba NDP government take similar types of action to help bring down the crime rate.

The reality is that we need to ensure we have an anti-gang strategy, and that includes ensuring that money laundering is not present. As members know, the NDP has long been an advocate of a publicly accessible beneficial ownership registry that ensures criminals cannot hide behind numbered companies. This is something I brought forward under the Harper government and was rejected by the Conservatives at the time. The Liberals have moved very slowly on this, but it is absolutely essential.

Law enforcement knows about this and so do so many Canadians. Having a publicly accessible beneficial ownership registry would ensure that people cannot hide behind numbered companies. An anti-gang strategy and ensuring criminals cannot launder money are absolutely fundamentally important. Canada is known as the snow-washing capital of the world because there have been successive Conservative and Liberal governments that have not taken action on this. An NDP government would make sure that we no longer have criminals hiding behind numbered companies.

I also want to talk about the importance of having the auto industry and auto manufacturers take action to ensure there are new measures to improve security features in automobiles. This made a big difference about 10 years ago. There was an evolution in technology 12 years ago, and we started to see the high rates of auto theft come down. There needs to be a similar requirement that auto manufacturers improve security features. That would make a fundamental difference.

We also need to ensure that we are funding programs that prevent youth from reoffending. This is where the funding cuts to Canadian crime prevention centres, including the B.C. crime prevention centre, are so regrettable. This happened under the Harper government. The Liberal government did not restore that funding. It is critical to have crime prevention programs in place to ensure that we can crack down on crime before it occurs. Part of that is funding programs for youth at risk to ensure that they are not subject to the kind of recruitment that, sadly, we are seeing in eastern Canada right now and on the Prairies.

• (1805)

There was a very regrettable decision by the Harper government to slash CBSA officials. We lost over 1,200 positions. This was over a dozen years ago and we are still bearing the consequences of this. When we talk to people in port authorities across the country, this is something that continues to be a problem. We do not have border enforcement in place, because of the cuts that occurred under the Conservatives and have been continued by the Liberals, to ensure that, if an automobile is stolen, it cannot be exported. This is a fundamental issue that has to be dealt with by the current government; it cannot be ignored.

We need all these measures that I am talking about: comprehensive crime prevention, an anti-gang strategy, and ensuring that criminals can no longer hide behind numbered companies and money launder through a publicly accessible beneficial ownership registry. We need to ensure that CBSA is staffed up so that the border agents who work so hard on our behalf have the resources to do the job they are supposed to do and that successive federal governments have not let them do because of chronic underfunding. We need to force auto manufacturers to actually put security measures into place. Often, we are talking about an automobile that costs \$50,000 or \$60,000 that is protected by a relatively cheap security system of a couple hundred bucks. This is not an appropriate way of ensuring that we can bring down the level of auto theft. All of these measures are really important.

I wanted to come back to the member for Prince Albert and his bill. Again, I do not, in any way, question his sincerity; it is quite the contrary. I know he is somebody who upholds the principle of effective representation. However, he has presented a bill that really does one thing: It re-establishes mandatory minimums. The reality is that, as we have seen and when speaking with Crown prosecutors we get this sense, if what we are trying to do is to have a comprehensive strategy to crack down on criminal gangs, then we need to make sure we get the gang leaders.

The way to ensure that is to be able to talk to the lower levels in the criminal organizations. The way to ensure that co-operation is not through mandatory minimums. There is nothing to deal with. The mandatory minimums mean that the hands of prosecutors and law enforcement are tied in terms of getting the co-operation that is so vital to getting to the leadership of these gangs. That is what we need to see right across the country, and mandatory minimums stop that. It is actually counterproductive in terms of how we can crack down on the auto theft that, outside of British Columbia, is becoming epidemic.

We will not be supporting the bill at second reading, though I thank the member for bringing this forward. I believe this is an important debate. The NDP believes in the kind of comprehensive strategy that we have seen work in British Columbia. Though auto theft is still high, it is lower than in the rest of the country. That is because of the comprehensive approach of integrated law enforcement, ensuring an anti-gang strategy, ensuring that we are moving to crack down on money laundering and ensuring that we are staffing up CBSA officials, so we can stop the exports of stolen automobiles at the border points that we are simply under-resourcing right now.

Private Members' Business

We need to ensure that automobile manufacturers have a responsibility to improve the security features of the vehicles we spend tens of thousands of dollars to buy. These are all actions that can make a huge difference in bringing down the auto theft rates, which are far too high in the rest of Canada. We need to bring them down to what we are seeing in B.C. All these measures taken together have had a noticeable impact and have stopped it. We will continue to work hard to make sure that they are maintained to stop the chronic rise in auto theft we are seeing in the rest of the country.

• (1810)

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate the member for Prince Albert for what is a fantastic and timely bill, one that is focused on the real issue of auto theft and on the criminals who are conducting auto theft throughout our country.

I listened to the Liberal and NDP speeches very intently, hoping to hear some measure of common sense. If it were not such a serious issue, it would be laughable. They seem to suggest that everything is good the way it is and that they have the answer—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

• (1815)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, that is a falsehood, and the member should withdraw it.

The Deputy Speaker: I did not hear what was said there, so I will ask the hon. member for Fundy Royal to rephrase that last one. I am not quite sure what was said.

The hon. member for Fundy Royal has the floor.

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, I guess the truth hurts. The hon. member who just protested was proclaiming that he has all the answers and that, in British Columbia, auto theft is not an issue. Did colleagues know that in Victoria, British Columbia, an individual was arrested for auto theft? He was let out on April 21. On April 22, he was arrested for auto theft and let out again. Then, on April 23, he was arrested for breaking into a house in Victoria to steal an automobile. In three days, he had three arrests and was out on bail. The facts run contrary to the suggestion that the Liberals and the NDP have all the answers.

There has been a 216% increase in charges in Toronto from 2015, when the Liberals took government, to today. There have been increases of 190% in Moncton, New Brunswick; 122% in Ottawa; and 105% in Montreal. Toronto has seen a 300% increase in vehicles stolen. In the last few years, the automobile that is used to transport the Minister of Justice of this country has been stolen not once or twice, but three times. The Minister of Emergency Preparedness has had his vehicle stolen. The minister for the CRA had their vehicle stolen, and it is still not recovered.

Private Members' Business

For colleagues to suggest that everything is okay and that we do not need a bill such as the one that the member for Prince Albert has proposed is completely wrong. Canadians are listening. They understand that auto theft is an issue across the country, in every province, whether one lives in an urban centre or a rural community. As well, crime is an issue. Since the Liberal government took power in 2015, just nine years ago, violent crime is up 39%; homicides are up 43%, for the highest rate in 30 years; gang-related homicides are up 108%; violent gun crimes are up 101%; assaults with a weapon are up 61%; sexual assaults are up 71%; and sex crimes against children are up 126%. I already gave some of the statistics on the subject matter of this bill, which is auto theft.

We are not going to turn to the failed policies of the NDP and the Liberals for the answers. We need common sense, and this is a common-sense piece of legislation. Let us talk about what it would do. The members opposite falsely claimed that it introduces a new mandatory minimum penalty. It does not. There is a six-month mandatory penalty in the Criminal Code for the third offence of stealing an automobile. Most Canadians would agree with this: It would increase the mandatory penalty to three years if someone is arrested, charged, convicted and then commits an offence again; they are arrested, charged and convicted, with the full benefit of the charter, and then there is a third offence.

The police tell us the number of Canadians stealing vehicles is not large. Quite the contrary, a small number of criminals are stealing a lot of vehicles. If those individuals are taken off the street, then they will no longer do so. That is why the police in Victoria laid blame for the out-of-control incident that happened there and said it is the fault of the Liberal government; it is the fault of Bill C-75, legislation that allows for catch-and-release. I mentioned this incident earlier, where an individual was arrested three times in three days for stealing automobiles.

The police do their job. They investigate; they catch the criminal. They have done a fantastic job, but the Liberal justice system has been letting those people back out onto the streets. That is no way to keep Canadians safe or to have a justice system.

We had a victim of crime at our justice committee who said that, in Canada, we do not have a justice system anymore; we have a legal system. That is how Canadians are feeling and why they are looking for answers. That is why the member for Prince Albert has put forward this tremendous piece of legislation. As I mentioned, on a third offence, an individual would receive a mandatory penalty of jail time for stealing a motor vehicle. It would remove the eligibility for house arrest if someone is convicted of a motor vehicle theft by way of indictment. That would be a more serious case of motor vehicle theft.

• (1820)

Who in the world would think it is a good idea that, when a serious criminal steals automobiles, is caught by the police, and is charged and convicted in our system, a judge should be able to sentence them to serve their sentence in their own home in the community where they stole the vehicle? No one would think that is fair.

However, that is a direct result of the Liberals' bill, Bill C-5, which allows for house arrest for such issues as arson, theft

over \$5,000, motor vehicle theft and sexual assault. These are all serious offences that people should get serious jail time for.

The member for Prince Albert has rightly said that is wrong. If one is a serious auto thief, one should serve time not in the comfort of one's own home and one's own community, not where one could revictimize members of the community, but in jail.

Finally, as has been mentioned, organized crime is increasingly active in motor vehicle theft in Canada. We hear the cases where individuals' vehicles are stolen and show up in the Middle East, across the ocean. That is organized crime. This legislation would create an aggravating factor in sentencing if the offence of motor vehicle theft is committed for the benefit of organized crime.

We all increasingly have examples of the victimization from motor vehicle theft. In fact, two out of five Canadians have either had their vehicle stolen or know somebody who has had their vehicle stolen. As a matter of fact, every member of Parliament knows at least one person who has had their vehicle stolen. We know the Minister of Justice has had his stolen three times. There is absolutely no doubt that this is an epidemic in Canada.

In my home province of New Brunswick, there was a situation where someone stole a motor vehicle. The police did their job and arrested him. He was brought before a judge in Saint John, and because of the Liberal legislation, Bill C-75, the judge had to let him out. How was he going to get back home? Of course, he stole a motor vehicle in Saint John and drove it home.

These are the kinds of things happening across the country, and only one party seems to be serious about doing something about it. We hear a lot of victim blaming. We hear that people should pay more money and have more expensive theft deterrents. We even hear from police that we should probably keep our keys right at the entrance of our home rather than inside so we do not end up in a conflict with car thieves in our home.

That is not a Canada any of us wants. We want a Canada where people are safe and the Canada where people used to leave their doors unlocked. We are a long way from that now. We need a Canada where we take crime seriously, where we have a true justice system and where Canadians do not go to bed wondering if their car is going to be in the driveway in the morning.

I commend the member for Prince Albert on a fantastic private member's bill, and I am happy to support it.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for those who were around an hour ago, I was trying to draw a comparison about who the leader of the Conservative Party was listening to. I do not want them to get overly sensitive this time around, but I am going to try this.

Prime ministers have what they call legal advisers, who are there to provide advice. Stephen Harper had a legal adviser, and his name was Ben Perrin. I am sure many members of the Conservative Party recall Ben Perrin. After all, he was the legal adviser.

I want to tell the House what the legal adviser to Stephen Harper had to say. According to Ben Perrin, “MMPs are a grave policy failure”, meaning they do not work. He also called them “cheap politics.” That is what he had to say about the type of legislation that is being proposed.

Can members imagine the Conservatives playing cheap politics on the issue of crime? I can. Actually, they are developing their crime bumper stickers now. They have been doing it for the last few months.

Ben Perrin further said that the leader of the Conservative Party's “idea may actually backfire, leading to more crime in the long term.” This is not me or the Liberals saying this; this is the former legal adviser to Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

It raises the question of who the Conservative Party is actually listening to today, but in an attempt to keep more order in the chamber, I will not tell members who it is. Suffice it to say, there is a far right element.

Let me try to enlighten some members. It was not that long ago, when Stephen Harper was the prime minister, that we actually had record-high numbers of automobile thefts in the province of Manitoba. It was a very serious issue. I was actually an MLA at the time. I had raised the issue, and we found that, on a per capita basis, no province even came close to Manitoba in terms of automobile thefts. In fact, we could double the number of automobiles that were being stolen in the province of Manitoba and, on a per capita basis, we still had more than any other jurisdiction.

We found that the best way to resolve the issue was to work with the different stakeholders. That meant the province at the time brought in MPI, Manitoba Public Insurance, and it worked with the federal government; we were very successful at dramatically decreasing automobile thefts. We are talking about thousands of vehicles.

I put it in that fashion because I ask myself what the government is doing. We are not waiting for provinces; we are actually taking a very proactive approach, in terms of having a summit, taking a look at all the different stakeholders and hearing what they have to say. We will find that there have been actions by the government to deal with this very important issue. There were pre-budget initiatives, and even things within the budget, that support law enforcement agencies, non-profits and the provincial governments, in terms of trying to deal with this issue.

We have to take a look at it. It is not necessarily from an individual, per se; even though it is an individual in the vehicle, it is often crime gang-related. That was the case in Winnipeg. We found out that it was like a gang initiation. They had to steal a certain number of vehicles, and we had serious issues with gang problems at the time. That was helping drive up the automobile theft in the province of Manitoba. It was relatively unique.

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In Ontario, the number of stolen vehicles being exported through ports is a very serious concern. We are actually investing in Canada border control. I contrast that with what the previous government did, which was to make cuts in that area. I know some people might question that, but that is the reality, and we know that. We have been hearing that for years now.

• (1825)

At the end of the day, we are talking about tens of millions of dollars allocated through this particular budget, the very same budget that the Conservatives are committed to voting against. On the one hand, the Conservatives would bring in a policy that the former prime minister's legal adviser said would not work, and on the other hand, they are voting against budgetary measures to support reducing the number of automobiles being stolen.

I appreciate the fact that there are stakeholders out there who also need to step up, including the automobile industry. Given modern-day technology, there is a lot more that can be done to incorporate anti-theft protection into the make-up of the vehicle itself.

• (1830)

[Translation]

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

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[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATIONAL DEFENCE

The House resumed from April 10 consideration of the motion.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I get started, I will let you know that I will be splitting my time with the member for North Island—Powell River, an incredible representative for the many people in the CAF who live in her riding.

We are here today to debate the motion that we unanimously passed at the Standing Committee on National Defence about the incredibly out-of-touch decision to raise rents for on-base housing in the midst of a recruitment and retention crisis. As the New Democratic Party's spokesperson for National Defence, I have been fighting every day to support the women and men in the Canadian Forces and their families, as they face—

The Deputy Speaker: There is a point of order from the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the understanding of the parties that the Bloc would be starting the discussion.

The Deputy Speaker: On our list, which was in consultation with the whips' offices, it is the NDP that is starting. Let me just confirm.

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Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe that you will find that you have already recognized the member for London—Fanshawe; she has begun her speech and is 40 seconds in. I would urge you to allow her to continue the speech and ensure that the next speaking order is addressed to the other parties.

The Deputy Speaker: I have conferred with the Table. The Table tells me that the email was sent at 6:30 p.m. By that time we had started, before we got it. It was a little late arriving.

I have already acknowledged the hon. member for London—Fanshawe, so the sequence is to still continue with her. Then maybe there can be some further consultations regarding who is next on the list, but normally there are two speakers from one party before we go to the next party. Therefore there could be some negotiations among the parties that will come after the New Democrats speak. I am going to have to recognize the hon. member once again, and hopefully the Table can come up with a solution for us.

The hon. member for London—Fanshawe.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: Mr. Speaker, I hope that this does not have any sway on how excited the members in the House will be to actually hear what I have to say. I will continue.

As the NDP's spokesperson for National Defence, I have been trying to fight every day to support the women and the men—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot is rising on a point of order once again.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Mr. Speaker, if you confer with the Table, I think you will learn that in discussions this morning with the Table, it was agreed that the first Bloc spot would be given to the Conservative Party, where the time would then be split. I hate to keep coming back to this, but certainly it is the understanding that was reached and agreed to this morning.

The Deputy Speaker: Let me just confer once again.

This is what we run into when we work on lists provided by whips' offices. The whips' offices sent us the note only at the last possible minute. This is something that was talked about during the day, but of course was not completed, from what I understand.

I am going to continue with the hon. member for London—Fanshawe.

• (1835)

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: Mr. Speaker, I hope that is the last interruption.

I am working hard to support and fight for the women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces and their families as they face the rising cost of living and the Department of National Defence, which is not meeting the urgency that this moment requires.

I look forward to discussing our ideas on how we could support CAF members and their families, but first I want to put today's debate into context. Since I first took on the role in 2021, I have greatly appreciated the maturity and seriousness that all my colleagues bring to the Standing Committee on National Defence. Members from all parties do understand that we are there not just to criticize the government of the day. As parliamentarians in general and as members of the defence committee, we have a sacred obligation to

the women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces, and we must prioritize supporting them over our partisan interests. At the committee, we look at a lot of big generational questions, questions that are not siloed to the government of the day and questions that do not always make the evening news.

Successive governments, Conservative and Liberal, have failed to grapple with defence procurement reform, with Arctic security and sovereignty, with recruitment and retention, with meeting our international commitments on peacekeeping, with combatting sexual misconduct in the military and with the supply of military housing. These are big questions that cannot be tackled in a day, and that is why the defence committee's work is so important.

We can work together across party lines to study these big, generational questions and to propose solutions for government, which is why I find it so disappointing that I have to tell the House today that the committee is not immune to the tricks that have come to dominate Parliament as of late. Particularly since the change in the leadership of the official opposition, I have seen the committee stray from our sacred obligation in favour of obstructive tactics and rage-farming clips.

That brings me to the debate today. At a time when Canadians are being forced to decide between filling their prescriptions or buying groceries, the NDP was able to fight for a national pharmacare program. Parliament was due to debate the bill, but the Conservatives used procedural tricks and tactics to delay the important legislation from coming forward by moving the concurrence motion before us.

Let me be clear: I want Parliament to study military housing and to find the solutions that CAF members and their families need. That is why I worked with all parties to ensure that the Standing Committee on National Defence undertook a study on the lack of housing availability on or near bases, and the challenges facing military families when they are required to relocate. The motion was moved for debate while the committee was meeting to hear from officials on the very subject. We should have all been at committee to work on finding real solutions for this really big question, but there was a deliberate choice to weaponize the military housing crisis as a procedural tool against pharmacare and, I would say, against Parliament.

When it comes to supporting military members and their families, we need to put the partisan games aside. I want to share an example of how this could be done. In December, the Nova Scotia Legislature heard testimony that military personnel in that province were living precariously and some may be homeless. Canadians were shocked by this, and as parliamentarians, we knew we had a responsibility to investigate the matter further.

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I tried to coordinate a joint letter from all opposition parties to the Minister of Housing, asking him to engage in a whole-of-government approach to tackle the housing crisis. I wanted to take the partisanship and games out of this tragic situation, and instead focus on finding answers to this really big question. I am deeply grateful to my Bloc colleague, the member for Saint-Jean, for sending the joint letter to the minister with me. The Bloc and I were able to set aside partisan differences that we may have on other things and collaborate on this important issue. I am disappointed to say that the Conservative Party could not do the same.

Regardless, I am happy to share some of our ideas on military housing. I have heard about the horrific state of Canadian Forces real property portfolio. The buildings on bases, whether it is military housing, child care buildings or mess halls, are falling apart. According to the government's response to an Order Paper question that I put forward, there are 51,586 open work orders for repairs across the country. There are bases where buildings are being demolished without any plans to replace them, and there are countless incidents of military members being exposed to hazards from old buildings.

• (1840)

A major part of the problem is the mess of maintenance and service contract procurement by the Canadian Armed Forces. According to a 2018 report by the assistant deputy minister of review services, the real property operations group is completely unequipped to make a value-for-money analysis on maintenance and service contracts. It is not equipped to measure the success of individual contracts in order to inform future business with contractors.

I have heard of constant examples of base contracts being handed out to contractors with no oversight, only to have more damage be done by poor craftsmanship, which is then fixed by department public servants. In effect, we are paying for many repairs twice, once to the contractor and then again through the salaries of the department staff brought in to fix the mess and do the work properly. When I hear from CAF members, one of the largest concerns we hear is the mess of properties on base.

Building housing and base properties was a large part of the defence policy update published last month. Billions of dollars were earmarked to be spent on military housing and property maintenance, but I have two concerns that I want to raise about that plan. First, of the \$295 million promised for building military housing, we will see only \$7 million earmarked for the next five years. When I asked the minister about this, he stated that the previously existing funding for housing is enough to carry them for those five years. However, we know that the current status quo approach is not enough. There is a shortfall of 7,000 housing units, but in the last two years, fewer than 40 new units have been built.

Second, I am concerned that we will not be able to tackle the military housing crisis without fixing the overreliance on contractors on bases. The department knew its approach to contracts was a problem, so it ended up hiring Deloitte on a major contract to audit its real property portfolio. However, as a New Democrat, and after all the discussions we had in the chamber last year on the growing reliance on big consultants, I am incredibly skeptical that this major contract was made with the best intentions. The government should

be seeking recommendations for solutions from public servants, not from for-profit consultants.

The audit by Deloitte proposed solutions to work more closely with the private sector, and I fear that the government listened based on its new vision for military housing. It has proposed leasing DND properties to develop P3 housing near bases. Instead of cutting down on the problematic contractors in military housing, we will be fronting the cash for private, for-profit developers to become the landlords for CAF members. The Department had the option to partner with not-for-profits to deliver housing or for that build to be public, to be federally run, and I hope that at committee we can continue to push that forward in terms of that solution.

In closing, there are so many more aspects of military housing that we have not been able to discuss in this concurrence debate, which is exactly why I worked to get the issue studied at committee, where we can work collectively and productively towards the production of a report to present to the House. I am proud of a lot of the work that we have been able to accomplish at committee to date, and I invite all committee members to stay committed to our obligation to CAF members and not be distracted by the political gamesmanship.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the member who just spoke has a scintilla of conviction in what she just said about the lack of funding for the military, why is she going to be voting in favour of the budget and propping up the government that has nothing but disdain for our troops?

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: Mr. Speaker, “scintilla” is not a word I hear a lot. I appreciate the vocabulary from the member, although the tone is certainly not appropriate. I want to do everything I possibly can to work together, as I said in my speech, to ensure that things are better.

Was the budget an NDP budget? If the member had maybe caught my speech a couple of days ago about the budget, I was very clear that it was not. However, the division that we consistently see, the trying to tear down this institution, is unhelpful. I will do everything I possibly can to honour the institution and to work as hard as I possibly can to ensure that people in the armed forces get what they need. It may not be perfect, but we need to move forward, and we need to do that together.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for her advocacy of Canadian Armed Forces members and for her work on the national defence committee.

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As the mother of two serving members, one of whom is living in a PMQ, this is something that I take very seriously.

I would like to get some insight from the member. We are allocating additional monies in the budget for military housing. During her research at the national defence committee, has the member been able to identify which bases and wings would be of top priority?

• (1845)

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, that is a tough question because there are so many, but I do appreciate the member's question. Again, it is with that desire to work together, so I want to highlight that as well.

It is really problematic, however, that we are going to be waiting so long to see the increase in spending that we need in devotion to housing. I have spoken to officials who have raised this for the bases in Halifax and in Wainwright, but it is across the board. Further to the study we have done at committee, we need to really focus much more on this.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am confused and actually troubled by part of the tone of the member's speech. I am quite aligned with the member on most of the underlying issues. The housing crisis in our armed forces is one we agree on. I do not understand why she used such bizarre terminology, calling a debate on an issue that desperately needs attention the weaponization of housing. She said that she is concerned about an attack on our institutions when using the tools available to us to have the debate. How on earth is this anything other than an exercise in Parliament, doing what it is supposed to do, which is to improve upon legislation and the lives of Canadians through debate, getting ideas and points of view across, and to hold the government to account?

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. member, as he was at committee when a lot of this took place, what I was referring to. Continuously, while we had witnesses in front of us at committee, giving us their time and offering us their expertise, which is so valuable, we ended up debating motions on issues, which is important. I said, very clearly, that this is important, and that is why I supported this motion. However, it takes time away from the studies that we need to continue.

In fact, this study was proposed and was used in concurrence to deliberately halt conversations that we, as the NDP, believe are very important to the provision of pharmacare. That is why it was proposed, and that is why it is being used. It was not to talk about the importance of housing, but to be used in a weaponizing style. That is what I am referring to.

I am glad the member needed the clarification.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am so incredibly proud to stand here as the representative of 19 Wing and speak to this issue that profoundly matters, which is housing for the folks who serve us in the military, for those who serve us so bravely, not only in Canada, but also across the whole world.

Today, this is a concurrence motion. We could talk about the political reasons that it was used, but this one was based on a study, a

motion, that just said, "Given that, rent for Canadian military personnel living on bases is increasing this April, at a time when the military is struggling to recruit and retain personnel, the committee report to the House, that the government immediately cancel all plans to increase rent on military accommodations used by the Department of National Defence." That is the report, that one part there.

Therefore, I am here to talk about it. This is a concern for my riding. I have had a lot of time to talk to the wing commander about this issue, and I really want to thank him for his incredible work. He will only be with us until July, and I have really enjoyed working with Colonel Gagnon.

My concern is very clear. I am going to talk about 19 Wing Comox, which is on the territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, and I really appreciate the work that is happening there to build a relationship between those two organizations.

We know that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation recently let us know that the rental vacancy rate for Comox is at a low of 1.4%. Of course, when one has that kind of low rental rate, one also recognizes that we have some of the highest costs of housing in our region as well. The people who are coming to our area, who are recruited into our area and who are serving in our military, are often in a very vulnerable position. That is very concerning to me.

I think it is really important for all of us, as Canadians, to understand that they need to be close to the base, because when they are called, they cannot drive two hours from their homes to get there for what they are required to do. Especially for somebody at a more entry level, the cost of rent and of housing is becoming so burdensome. We know that a healthy rental market requires vacancy rates that are between 3% to 5%, and we know that the housing on the base is simply not enough.

We are very proud in our riding, at the base there, that we have the search and rescue training facility. It has been a huge benefit to our community. We see folks from all over the country coming to get training at that facility. They are trained by some of the most amazing people I have ever met in my life, who are able to go out in dire circumstances and to save people, rescuing them from things that most of us would run away from as quickly as we possibly could. I am really happy that it is there.

They also built accommodations for the people coming to get the training, and that was very frustrating for me because I was hearing stories from so many of our serving members who could not find anywhere to live. They saw this facility built, and only people who were training were able to stay there.

Nobody begrudges that. We want to make sure that when people come and get trained, they have appropriate housing. That makes sense. However, if they do not have somewhere for the people who live there to stay, it becomes this issue of challenge that I do not think any of us want to see because everybody involved is there to train and to serve our country.

I do know, based on some conversations I have had, that some of those units have now gone permanently to people who are serving at the base, just because there is just not enough.

Again, when we ask people to serve, when they have to move from one part of the country to another part of the country, and when it costs a lot and there is nothing affordable for them to live in, we are really deterring people from providing the service that we need.

It reminds me of something I heard from the CAF ombud, Gregory Lick, at one of the national defence committees. He said to those of us who were there that how we are treating our military families is becoming an “issue of national security”. This is very concerning. This is not a direct quote, but it was similar, a paraphrase. When he said that, I thought that was great and that the whole world was going to hear it. Canada would hear that and think about what we could do differently. I just did not see the response. I have not seen it from the Liberal government, and I did not see it, quite frankly, from the Conservative government before.

● (1850)

We are really underfunding the men and women who serve us. We have to make sure they have the equipment they need to do their jobs. We need to make sure they have the housing they need, and we need to support the family. When we hear things like this, it really does tell us that we need to start looking at this.

The housing needs report issued in May 2020 by the Town of Comox indicated that it was going to need 7,665 unit by 2025 to meet its needs. That is next year, and we are nowhere near that. A lot of our serving members are the people who rely on that housing.

I have written letters. I have talked to the minister about this issue. I hope he will come out and meet with me in my riding to hear the stories of our serving men and women. They need the housing and that stability. When we look at the number of people recruited into our military, we are seeing the numbers start to go down. I think part of the reason is there is not any safety of housing for people. At the beginning, military members are not making as much money, so if they are spending 60% of their income on housing, how do they fulfill their dreams in the military?

One thing I appreciate so much about representing Comox and 19 Wing is their incredible work. The folks who serve in our military, they not only do great at their work, but also do volunteer work and do great things in our community. I also want to recognize that it is the 100-year anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force. That is something we should all recognize in our communities and be grateful for the amazing people who do this tremendous work.

The Comox Valley Air Force Museum has been working so hard. It has a beautiful spot right by the base, where tourists come to look at planes from different wars and different times throughout the air force's history. It is a beautiful place. A lot of people go to see it, and during the Christmas season, it is decorated with lights and is quite dynamic.

In 2001, I believe, 19 Wing received a Vampire. It is a beautiful plane that is an artifact, and it is made out of wood. It has a great history, and it is so important for the Royal Canadian Air Force. We want to make sure it is displayed with the other planes. I want to thank David Mellin, who has been such an asset for me; he has kept

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me updated. I thank the amazing volunteers at the Comox Valley Air Force Museum who are working so hard.

The museum is raising \$1 million to build a pavilion, which is basically a display case, that would surround this wooden airplane and would allow it to be accessible and to be seen outside with the other planes that can weather the beautiful Vancouver Island rainy weather. I certainly hope the government finds it in its heart to find a bit of money to support this, to recognize the 100 years of service and to recognize 19 Wing and all the tremendous work it does.

I thank my constituents, especially those who serve our country, for the great work they do and for continuing to educate me. However, what we really need to see is money for housing. We need money for housing on bases so that people can have a safe, affordable place to call home, so when they serve our country, they have that stability. If we do not do that, we are going to see fewer people offering to do this tremendously important work.

I look forward to answering some questions.

● (1855)

The Deputy Speaker: It is great being here tonight and talking about the sister base of 14 Wing in Greenwood. It is nice to be a part of the discussion here this evening.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I cannot say enough about how hard working my colleague from North Island—Powell River is, and I will mention the advocating she has done for veterans and for the people at 19 Wing in Comox. I also represent Courtenay in the Comox Valley, where many military veterans and military personnel live. I also represent the CFMETR navy base at Nanoose. From all of us, I want to thank all those who serve, and their families. I think we can all agree that we appreciate the work they do.

Ombud Lick highlighted, in his report, the serious situation that the military is facing. He cited that how we treat military families and military personnel is “an issue of national security”. We know, during the decade under the Conservatives, that there were cuts and that the treatment of our military and of veterans was appalling.

I hope my colleague can speak about how the government has also failed and how we need to urgently repair the damage done to those military personnel and their families, and speak about how we owe it to them to ensure they have a safe place to live.

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Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I really enjoy sharing a border with the member, and we work together collaboratively on all the issues that face the military folks in our region, because it is really important.

It is important for us, as Canadians, to understand what our military does, the great work it does both nationally and internationally, and to understand that, if we do not start looking at military as a whole family, like Ombud Lick said, we could get to a point where we do not have enough people to serve our country. It could very quickly become an issue of national security.

It includes housing and includes working with families. We know a lot of spouses really have a challenging time moving from place to place and keeping their seniority in the work they do. We have to look at what military families need and do much better by them.

• (1900)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is correct about Ombud Lick; he did say this. Another important voice to be heard on this is that of the chief of the defence staff, who has cited the crisis of retention and recruitment as perhaps the most critical crisis of the Canadian Forces, among the many crises facing the forces. We know family issues are one of the key drivers of people out of the forces, with housing being probably number one on that list.

I know the member serves and represents a military area, so if she would like, I will ask her to talk about how these family issues, especially when postings change, create a trigger point for many members to leave the CAF.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I am the spokesperson on the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, and one of the things we just finished studying and we are now working on the report for is around women veterans. It was so interesting to hear from them about when they had that moment of making the decision to stay or to leave and what the impacts were.

One of the things I have had frank conversations about is the fact that we are not back in the fifties or the forties anymore. It is a totally different world. We need both people in the family working to sustain ourselves, so how do we make sure both people have an opportunity? Child care comes up and housing comes up. Things that matter to everyday Canadians matter to military people. Their work is very unique and we have to honour that and find ways to support them, and government needs to be a key part of that. If it is not, it is obviously never going to get done.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

On page 17 of the defence policy update that was tabled a few weeks ago, it states:

A career with the Canadian Armed Forces is a source of unique pride and confidence among those who have the privilege to serve. Defence will seek to inspire a wider audience of prospective members to consider the opportunity of a life in service to Canada.

Let us look at that excerpt in today's context. Unfortunately, it is fair to say that that is a farce. The people who read that are likely thinking, "Give me a break".

Why am I saying that? I served in the Canadian Armed Forces for 22 years during a different time, and I can say that military service is a personal and family commitment. It is a commitment to wear a uniform, to wear the Canadian flag on one's shoulder and to serve one's government. Regardless of the party in power, when a person serves in the Canadian Armed Forces, they must be loyal to their government and they must respond to the orders they receive. It is a commitment unlike any other in a civilian job.

For that reason, the government has a major responsibility to its personnel. That is where we have a big problem right now. The purpose of today's debate is to talk about a report on a situation concerning the cost of housing on Canadian military bases. It is important to understand that large military bases across the country provide housing, known as Permanent Married Quarters, for military personnel. This could be apartments, semi-detached homes or single-family homes that military personnel can rent and live in, either on their own or with their families.

As I was saying, when someone signs up to serve their country, they come prepared to do what is asked of them. They are asked to deploy. They are posted somewhere in the country on a military base and they have to go. They go wherever they are told to go, with their family.

This country now has a big problem. First, the cost of military housing on base has increased. Apart from that, however, at least 4,500 military personnel and their families are without housing because of shortages. Not only are the bases short on housing, but 20% of the existing stock is in disrepair. There are mould problems. No one can live there. No one wants to bring a wife and children into these buildings. They could get sick. That is outrageous.

The housing shortage is also exacerbating the situation. We are asking our military personnel to find housing in the civilian community. As everyone knows, costs have gone up. Royal Canadian Navy personnel are being told they will be stationed in Halifax or in Esquimalt, on the west coast. They do not have much choice. When they get to Esquimalt, there is no housing on the base. Where do they go? They look for something in or around Victoria. That is not affordable on a military salary.

Yes, there are cost-of-living allowances, but those allowances do not come close to covering today's housing costs. That is why some of our personnel are sleeping in tents or in their car. I am not making this up; these are facts reported by the Canadian Armed Forces ombudsman. There are even some in Halifax who are forced to deal with unscrupulous people as they search for housing or do things that are not necessarily legal, because they do not know what else to do. They have to somehow find a way to keep a roof over their heads.

This has been going on for the nine years this government has been in office. We always seem to hear the same fine words about how the military is important and they are proud of our military personnel. However, when we look at the reality, in some cases, the government cannot even do the minimum. As I was saying, the minimum is to provide a living environment that is part of military life, which is very different from civilian life, especially given the way military personnel have to be deployed or posted. That environment has to be there. Without that kind of environment, we end up with a situation like the one we are in today, where the Canadian Armed Forces are 16,000 members short. People are leaving in droves. Everyone is leaving, and no one wants in.

Young people today do not want to join the Canadian Armed Forces because they have heard the horror stories about the lack of housing and the lack of equipment. Fifty percent of the Canadian Armed Forces' equipment is broken and non-operational. They do not get the sense that the current government really cares about the military.

• (1905)

Lip service is one thing. How we deal with this issue is another. Right now, people are turning their backs on the Canadian Armed Forces. At the beginning of my speech, I mentioned the fabled phrase in the government's update. It talks about pride and happiness. That is baloney, because I have never seen military personnel less well taken care of.

It has been over 30 years since I enlisted. Morale is at a 30- or 40-year low. Members of the military I know who are still in the system, as well as those who have just left or who have left in the past few years, are all saying the same thing. There are a number of reasons for this. Housing is one reason, but it is not the only reason. The work environment is no longer appealing, and the pride we talked about at the beginning is gone. It is not because people do not want to be proud. When people enlist, that is what they are looking for. They want to be part of this big family, this big defence team that is there to protect Canada's interests at home and abroad. That is the job in a nutshell. We cannot ask a soldier or a young officer to come into the system and end up in situations like this.

I do not want to get too personal, but I just wanted to say that my son is in the armed forces and he is going through truly outrageous experiences. I see what is happening and we are just in a different place. Unfortunately, if we do not help out, young people are going to quit and move on. People in the army call it "being in the system". I have to say that the system is no longer there. The system has lost its purpose, and that is why we are short 16,000 military members and why Canada is unable to carry out its missions. Canada looks like a bit player on the world stage.

Yesterday, during a meeting about NORAD, the Minister of National Defence was very honest; I will give him that. NORAD is the organization responsible for the aerospace and maritime defence of Canada and the United States. Canada needs to strengthen its defence capabilities because we know that the Chinese and the Russians are trying to enter Canadian waters by air and by sea. We must watch and protect those areas. During this public meeting, the minister said that he was unable to convince his cabinet colleagues to do more for defence. In saying that, the minister admitted that

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this was not just a matter of money but, rather, a lack of real political will to help our military. Fine words mean nothing. The facts are there. We heard the real story from the mouth of the Minister of National Defence himself. He said that his own people did not want to. They do not care. Nothing is going to improve for the Canadian Armed Forces with a Prime Minister who does not send a clear, strong message.

Money is one thing, political will is another. When it comes to pride, it is clear that our military is always able to hold its own. They are proud people at heart. They want to serve proudly. When a government can show that there is political will, when a government says it is really proud of its forces and is making efforts to effect change, soldiers adapt and co-operate. Conversely, when they feel there is no political will, they lose morale and get discouraged. I experienced that in the 1990s under the Chrétien government. The Canadian Forces were a laughing stock. Vehicles could not climb hills. Everything was in shambles. In times like that, military personnel need to be self-motivated. They need a government that does not just talk the talk with defence updates but actually shows up to take care of its people. We need to stop paying lip service and start taking concrete action.

Budget cuts are happening throughout the Canadian Armed Forces, and we found out today that Canadian soldiers are going to be deployed to eastern Europe without going through training first. That is how bad things are. Our soldiers cannot even be trained before they leave for a mission because the government is no longer capable of doing it and is not managing things properly. What we want is personnel who are ready for combat, who are ready to safeguard national security. However, we need to begin by figuring out how to put a roof over our soldiers' heads. Canada, as a country, is currently unable to do so. That is embarrassing. I hope this government will use the time it has left to come up with solutions quickly.

• (1910)

[*English*]

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what does the member think needs to happen before the Liberal government finally takes the security of our nation seriously?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question from my colleague. I thank her for her question and for her years of commitment to the Standing Committee on National Defence. She is also extremely committed to NATO. Her riding is home to a Canadian Forces base, including a special forces unit, so she knows what she is talking about.

As I said in my speech, what is needed is for the government to stop spouting empty rhetoric and to start taking real action. Considering what we heard yesterday from the Minister of National Defence and the entire cabinet's lack of interest in the Canadian Forces, I would say it is a lost cause.

The next Conservative government will fix this.

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Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I like the member, but quite frankly, I am concerned when he talks about what a future Conservative government will do.

We saw what the Conservatives did for veterans. They closed about 20 offices that provided services to veterans. People had to drive hundreds of kilometres to get any kind of service. The Conservatives cut services for veterans. They treated veterans with a total lack of respect. I have a lot of respect for the member, but quite frankly, we saw the contempt with which the Conservatives treated veterans under the Harper regime.

The Conservatives treated veterans terribly under the Harper regime. Can the member explain how the Conservatives will in any way treat veterans better if ever they take office?

• (1915)

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, but today I am talking about those who are in it to fight.

Let us think about the Afghanistan era. When we were in government, our soldiers urgently needed proper equipment. The Conservative government was able to provide that equipment, purchase the planes to deploy the troops, and supply everything needed for ground combat in Afghanistan.

I was serving at the time, and we were proud to have a government that took military operations seriously and understood that soldiers were dying on the ground. In an emergency, the Conservative government acted quickly to help soldiers, and soldiers were proud at the time.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I salute my colleague, and I thank him for his service. We worked together on the Standing Committee on National Defence.

In budget 2024, we allocated money specifically for military housing, child care and so on. Before the holidays, there were 30 hours' worth of votes in the House. Those votes included votes to increase military salaries and investments for them.

Having voted against military spending before the holidays, will he now vote in favour of the budget and military spending?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, we understand what our job as the opposition in this place is all about. We vote against the estimates or the overall budgets when they generally make no sense.

Obviously, I am always going to support helping the Canadian Forces. As I said before, I hope that can be done responsibly and, above all, effectively, to restore the pride of Canadian Forces members and, above all, to encourage young people to enlist and become proud members of the Canadian Forces.

[English]

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the report we are debating called upon the government to reverse the rent increase on our forces members. While this may seem like a small thing, it just seems to be what is typical of the government's approach. The utter neglect of the forces has precipitated a crisis of

recruitment and retention, yet the government has pressed ahead with the rent increase.

I wonder if the member would like to comment and connect these seemingly small things with the near-catastrophic state that our national defence is in right now.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. As I said in my speech, military personnel are in a controlled environment. The government has complete control over the environment. Then why is it that this government decided not to increase spending on military housing for its defence team?

At some point, if rents increase, salaries have to increase. If we can maintain the environment by keeping rents the same and providing normal salary increases, it creates less pressure for everyone. That could easily have been done.

[English]

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the women and men serving in the Canadian Armed Forces in the Ottawa valley, across Canada and abroad.

In February, the Standing Committee on National Defence passed its eighth report. The report said, "Given that, rent for Canadian military personnel living on bases is increasing this April, and at a time when the military is struggling to recruit and retain personnel, the committee report to the House, that the government immediately cancel all plans to increase rent on military accommodations used by the Department of National Defence."

Unfortunately, for those living and serving in the CAF, the NDP-Liberal government could not be bothered to read that. April 1 came and the rent went up. Along with the higher rents, our fighting forces also had to pay the higher Liberal carbon tax.

The official policy of the Liberal Party is to make life unaffordable. While Canadians saw taxes on energy go up 23% across the country, the average rent for Canadians in uniform went up 4.2%. If the socialist coalition had its way, CAF members in Ontario would have seen a 6.8% rent hike. It was only thanks to the Ford government in Toronto putting a cap on rent increases at 2.5% that the NDP-Liberal cash grab was prevented.

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The same thing happened in Nova Scotia. The radical extremist government wanted to hike rents by 9.3%. Instead, the province capped rent hikes to 5%. CAF members in Newfoundland and Labrador were not lucky enough to have a Conservative premier. Their rents went up 8.3%. In Yellowknife, rents were up by \$111 a month. In Iqaluit, rents went up by \$131 a month. A Bay Street lawyer renting a fancy penthouse in downtown Toronto, paying \$5,000 a month, would have seen a smaller rent increase than a soldier stationed in Iqaluit. Under Chrétien and Martin, we got the feeling that Liberals were largely indifferent to the Canadian Armed Forces, but this bunch treats them with disdain.

These punishing rent hikes reveal the true ideology of the socialist coalition. It is intentionally underfunding the armed forces, driving serving members out of the military and discouraging new recruits from joining. They want to see the fighting force atrophy and eventually die, so that they can replace the military with a climate corps focused only on disaster response. Even the stuff the old Liberals used to prefer the military to focus on, such as so-called peacekeeping is now outsourced to the Communists who control China.

The latest Liberal cuts to defence budget spending are putting our women and men at risk. Normally, before being stationed abroad, our armed forces undergo combined arms training. Every unit that had been sent to Latvia as a part of Operation Reassurance had undergone combined arms training, until now. Thanks to the latest round of Liberal austerity, combined arms training has been cut. Former Liberal member of Parliament and retired general Andrew Leslie told the CBC today that cuts to military training were dangerous, saying he was “not aware of any other [NATO] army which will be deploying troops to the front line of a possible confrontation with Russia, who are not 100 per cent trained according to a variety of battle test standards.”

It is not just the army facing cuts. The far left, socialist Prime Minister is outsourcing fighter pilot training. Now the second-largest country in the world cannot even train its own fighter pilots. For anyone with a passing knowledge of Canadian history, the loss of pilot training under the socialist coalition is heartbreaking. Canada was home to the Commonwealth air training program. Between 1939 and 1945, over 130,000 pilots and aircrew from around the world were trained here in Canada. Many of those pilots fell in love with Canada or a Canadian and then came back here after the war and helped build this great nation. Few Canadians even know we once had an aircraft carrier, until it was scrapped by Pierre Trudeau. The anti-military apple does not fall far from the Marxist tree.

I almost wish the Prime Minister's military dismantling was part of a hidden agenda, but it is not. It is a very public agenda and young Canadians are paying attention. They see the news stories about higher rents for CAF members. They see the news stories about poor equipment and cuts to training. They see what the government is doing and they want no part of it. Recruitment will continue to decline because the government and the Prime Minister have done everything they can to drive it down. Fewer serving members in the CAF means less money for the defence department and more money for buying votes from special interest groups.

● (1920)

The recent budget reveals the government's real priorities. It plans to spend zero dollars on military housing this year and zero dollars next year, but two years from now, watch out, because it plans to spend a whopping \$1 million on military housing. That is the same year these socialists have budgeted to spend over \$500 billion on program expenses. Despite Liberal inflation, \$1 million still sounds like a lot, but in a half-trillion dollar budget it comes out to 0.0000002%. That \$1 million was not a rounding error, but that was about three zeros ago. One million dollars for military housing two years from now is an insult. Compare that to the \$400 million the government plans to spend this year on housing students seeking asylum at Conestoga College. That is money the CAF could use today to make desperately needed repairs to military housing.

As the member of Parliament for the largest army base in Canada, I have seen first-hand the state of some of the housing. Asbestos, black mould, peeling paint and leaky pipes are just some of the ongoing issues on base. The government has never put that on recruiting posters. However, as bad as some units are, many soldiers will happily take whatever they can because the cost to rent off base has exploded under the current Prime Minister. It used to be that a serving soldier was earning enough to buy a house, but now they have to reach the rank of general to afford buying a home.

With yesterday's confession by the Minister of National Defence the truth is out. He stated, “Trying to go to cabinet or even to Canadians and tell them that we had to do this because we need to meet this magical threshold of 2%...don't get me wrong, it's important, but it was really hard to convince people that it was a worthy goal, that it was some noble standard we had to meet.”

Recent polls have shown that a majority of Canadians support much higher defence spending. Canadians would have needed no convincing had the Minister of National Defence made the case to them, but he never tried. His description of the NATO defence pledge as a “magical threshold”, a “worthy goal” or a “noble standard” is revealing. It hardly sounds like someone who could make a persuasive case to a group of pacifists and socialists. Russia is waging a war on Ukraine. China is threatening to invade Taiwan. Iran is funding terror worldwide and launching drone attacks on Israel. Not since the Korean War has the case for increasing defence spending been more obvious, yet despite the state of the world, the NDP-Liberal government is cutting defence spending.

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This is not the first time the Liberals have led the CAF into a decade of darkness, but this time it is different. Even under the Chrétien Liberals' cuts in the 1990s, Canadians were still eager to join up. Those days are gone. That is because an entire generation of Canadians have spent the last nine years hearing the Prime Minister downplay our once proud country. Why would any young person risk their lives for a post-nation state? Why sign up for a country whose own prime minister would rather apologize for?

When members of the socialist coalition look at the country all they see is a racist colonial oppressor, full of neo-Nazis hiding behind every truck trailer. They have hired an army of ideological storm troopers to lead re-education camps. They use every opportunity to erase symbols of our proud history. The truth is that the NDP-Liberal government is ashamed of Canada. Why would anyone want to serve their country when the very people running it do not like it?

It is not only that these socialists do not like Canada. They do not think much of those of us who love Canada. They do not like the kind of people who are proud to wear the uniform bearing our national flag. For the current Prime Minister, they are all just a bunch of racist misogynists and an unacceptable fringe minority. The truth is that these radical far-left Marxists across the way are the fringe minority of government.

After nine years, Canadians are tired of a Prime Minister who constantly apologizes for our country's very existence. He is just not worth the cost to our security.

• (1925)

The Deputy Speaker: I just want to make sure the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is okay. I saw him whack his head on the back of the desk so I just want to make sure.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I did find the speech quite stimulating, but my head is fine. I hope, for the hon. member who just spoke, it is the same.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to that speech. It is great the way the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke does not pull punches. We all know how she feels, and I really find that refreshing in the House.

As the member said in her speech, she represents the largest base in the country. I think she would know better than anyone in this place how the housing costs affect the morale of the forces and how it is a factor in the crisis of recruitment and retention, which has been identified from the chief of the defence staff on down as the most important crisis facing the forces.

Can the member talk about this from her experience representing the people so affected by these things, such as the rent increase we are talking about?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the increases in pay are not keeping up with the pace of increases in the cost of living, none the least of which was this recent increase in rent. They are calling me and telling me that they are having to leave the forces because they just cannot afford to live there anymore. They need a job with more pay. They would love to serve, but they cannot afford it.

• (1930)

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, in her speech, stated that the government will replace the Canadian Armed Forces with a climate corps.

Now, I am happy to support my PMB on the introduction of a youth climate corps, which would generate more training and job opportunities for young people in a clean energy and conservation type of economy. However, I know that the member loves conspiracy theories and that she does not necessarily believe in climate change. I cannot even count the number of times she said “socialist”, which I happen to think is a good thing, but could the member actually point to any proof she has that the creation of a youth climate corps, and this socialist plot of the government, would actually replace the Canadian Armed Forces?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, let us get something straight from the beginning. We all know that climate change occurs. It happens over thousands of years. The member prefaced her so-called question with some false statements.

Now, I am unaware of any plans to make a youth climate corps, but where in this budget are the Liberals going find the money to do something like that when they cannot even set aside the money to keep Canadians safe and secure by funding our military?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member another question because there was a lot to unpack in her speech.

The condition of housing is critical as well. The member knows, from her experience representing the largest base, about the really deplorable condition of barracks and, in some cases, PMQs and residential housing units. Can she talk about what she has heard right on the ground from the forces about the condition of their living conditions, and the working conditions, because it is the buildings beyond the housing units as well.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, it is true that the buildings they work in sometimes have wires hanging from the ceiling. I know that the military police station has not been kept up in decades. However, there is a place that is even worse than what we have seen in some of the barracks in Petawawa, which is Shearwater. Apparently, there is black mould and peeling paint. The mattresses were so bad, and looked like they were full of lice, that they had to be pulled out before the troops could sit in there.

Now, all of this tells a potential person who is willing to put their life on the line for their country that this government does not really care about them. If it does not care about those who are signing up, training, going through the harsh conditions and putting their lives on the line, they wonder what will happen if they are injured. Is the government going to take care of them?

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Insofar as the housing, there are several houses that are uninhabited because the government has not put the effort into fixing them up.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are debating the eighth report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, which addresses the rent increase that took place in April. This is what was reported back to the House: “Given that, rent for Canadian military personnel living on bases is increasing this April, and at a time when the military is struggling to recruit and retain personnel, the committee report to the House, that the government immediately cancel all plans to increase rent on military accommodations used by the Department of National Defence.”

This was something the committee agreed to unanimously. There was no dissent at committee over this point. All four parties at committee agreed that we should report this back to the House. We have now had a chance to debate this, and every member in this chamber will have a chance to vote on this. I am curious to see whether the Liberal support at committee will spill over to an expression of support in the chamber.

April 1 has come and gone, and Canadian Forces members did not get rent relief, so the housing crisis in the military continues, and the retention and recruitment crisis continues. There are 16,000 vacancies in the Canadian Armed Forces. There are 10,000 under-trained and undeployable personnel in the Canadian Armed Forces. We are in a crisis of retention and recruitment. This has been observed by the chief of the defence staff and everyone on down, who have testified at various points over the last year and a half at committee. This crisis of personnel is affecting Canada's national security. It is affecting our ability to be a meaningful ally to our partners in NATO and throughout the world.

There are a number of crises facing the forces, including the production and supply of ammunition. Troops are unable to train due to lack of equipment and supplies. We do not have enough trained forces and equipment to be able to deploy and accept deployments on behalf of allies. Increasing the rent of our soldiers on base at a time like this, when so many members are facing the cost of living crisis across the board for food and everything else, it is like we are asking the troops to tighten their belts a little more, among all of the other ways our troops are shortchanged of training opportunities and the things they joined the forces for. Our forces want to deploy. They want overseas and domestic deployments. They want to train. They do not want to go on an exercise and shout “bang” rather than actually fire training rounds. That is not what our troops want to do.

The statement that the committee reported to the House was amid reports that began in a committee of the Nova Scotia legislature. Erica Fleck, the director of emergency management for the Halifax Regional Municipality, testified, “we have active serving Regular Force members who are still couch surfing who were posted here in the Summer who cannot find a place to live. They are regularly now going to food banks.” She went on to say, “Again, I mentioned the food banks. People are coming to work hungry. Young soldiers are coming to work hungry, and leaders are trying to feed them as best they can, using their own money.” This is testimony in a provincial legislature. This is not an unverified news report or rumour that there are hungry or homeless troops.

● (1935)

At the same committee, Craig Hood, the executive director of Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command for the Royal Canadian Legion, testified, “What I came across was some startling information on serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces being posted here: living rough in tents, living out of their vehicles, couch surfing, engaging in interpersonal relationships for the purposes of securing housing - which oftentimes puts them as victims to domestic violence.”

This happened in December 2023, when this explosive testimony occurred in the Nova Scotia legislative committee, and what was really startling was that, when asked about this in the House of Commons, in response to a question from the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman to address these allegations and to ask what was being done and why the government was failing our troops, this is what the minister had to say about that testimony: “Mr. Speaker, of course, the member opposite is once again badly misinformed. In fact, when this was reported in the press, the Canadian Armed Forces in Nova Scotia canvassed all of the members of the armed forces and determined that all of them were properly housed and that the reporting was false.”

The minister of defence actually said those words in the House of Commons. He dismissed the reports of the executive director of the Royal Canadian Legion for Nova Scotia and Nunavut Command and the director of emergency management of the Halifax Regional Municipality. He dismissed them and called their claims false. That is quite astonishing, and it was in no small part because of this that we really dug into the issue of housing in the military.

Fortunately, there are two Halifax-area MPs on the defence committee, and neither of them presumed to deny what was going on in their own city because they know. It is a fact that there is homelessness in the Canadian Armed Forces. There is food insecurity in the Canadian Armed Forces. This is the state of the armed forces under the government and the cost-of-living crisis faced by millions of Canadians that is being acutely felt in the Canadian Armed Forces.

We have been studying the crisis of housing on base, and we have had alarming testimony at the defence committee from ombudsman Lick:

I've heard from a member's dependent, who shared with me they had been homeless for five months. I've heard from families using food banks. I've also heard from some who are one paycheck away from not paying their rent or needing to make a hard decision between food and rent.

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He continued, “While members do not expect a lot from their barracks, I was shocked to see some deteriorating single quarters on base that are not acceptable for any human in any situation.” This was from the military ombudsman. He also said, when he asks, “Do you know someone who is at risk of being homeless or at risk of accessing a food bank?”, everybody nods. Everybody knows someone.” This was his testimony at committee.

Amid all of this, we have a denial from the minister of defence that there is homelessness and food insecurity in the Canadian Armed Forces, so we have examined this quite thoroughly at committee, and we will have a report in due course with recommendations to Parliament, but we have found that it is not even just the residential housing units. It is the RHUs, the PMQs and barracks. We have heard of toilet facilities not up to standard by any means, mould on various walls and ceilings, and so on.

We have heard time and time again that it is things like this, such as the lack of access to a home, that drive people out of the Canadian Armed Forces at a time when we need our men and women so much. At a time of elevated need, we have a crisis of retention and recruitment.

● (1940)

In response to an Order Paper question that I had asked, we have confirmation that recruitment is not keeping up with people leaving the forces. We have 16,000 vacancies and 10,000 people under-trained, and the forces are shrinking. It is getting worse, not better.

We have seen the shortages and how the wait-lists of personnel to obtain a home are sometimes longer than the postings. When members of the CAF have to re-post from one end of the country to another, this is a trigger point. This is where military families have to decide whether they can continue in the forces or not. If personnel have to transfer from Halifax to Esquimalt, maybe they own a home in Halifax already or maybe they have access to a residential housing unit that is not terrible, that is not falling apart and that has a working toilet, and they would be going to another posting where they might be on a waiting list for five years. Then they would have to go on the market and find a place to rent or buy in an expensive place like Esquimalt.

Every place is an expensive place in Canada after nine years of the Liberal government. In nine years of the government, we have seen rents double, as an average, across the country, more than double and almost triple in some large cities. We have seen the price of housing across the country double. Interest rates are high and are being fuelled by deficits, which trigger inflation, which triggers higher interest rates. We have seen no restraint from the government. We have seen no balance and no ability to rein in or do anything about the crisis of housing and access to housing across Canada.

When it comes to our armed forces, the least the government could do is not boost up the rent on the small group of people who are fortunate enough to even have a base house, never mind the plight of forces members who are on multi-year waiting lists. There are thousands of CAF members waiting for access to base housing.

We have actually called upon the housing minister to come to committee, housing being one of the triggers that are causing peo-

ple to leave the forces and presumably a factor in the difficulty of the forces to recruit. The minister has not come to committee to answer for this.

We note that the budget the Liberals just tabled contains exactly zero dollars for additional housing on base. There is zero dollars next year, too. There is \$1 million the year after that, if I remember correctly. As far out as we can see, in the budget projections through to 2029, I think there is eventually a total of some \$14 million for military housing. They are short thousands of units. How are they going to fix this problem without budgeting for it? The government is not even going to start to address the backlog and the shortfall in construction for base housing, not with zero dollars this year and zero dollars next year.

Under the existing funding, they are building about 20 homes a year. Let us think about that. There are thousands of people waiting for a home, and 20 homes a year are being built. They are decommissioning close to that number anyway. They are barely keeping up with the ones that have fallen apart to the point that they cannot even be used anymore. These properties, as we have seen from testimony, are pretty rough to begin with.

There is also nothing to address this issue in the defence policy update that was just tabled. In fact, it is a misnomer to even call it a defence policy update. It is full of exploring options and reaffirming existing policies. There is literally nothing concrete that is new policy, unless it was formerly the policy not to consider options.

● (1945)

This is assuming the Liberals were ever going to consider options to replace our submarines, undertake and see through NORAD modernization, or build and procure any of the kit we need. Unless it was the Liberals' policy not to consider options before, a new policy of considering options is hardly a policy.

Taking it back to housing, there is nothing in there respecting housing. This seems to be such a small thing. I have heard the Liberals ask, “do the Conservatives not know the rents are capped at 25% of the forces member's salary?” This is capped, so they can afford it. However, their wages are not keeping up with the rest of the cost of living increases. The military members' budgets are already stretched, so now even any increase is going to reduce the standard of living for that family.

We have heard time and again that it is all these other factors that drive people out of the forces. It is the difficulty with repostings and the way that affects families if they are established in a community. They may already have a family doctor in a community and kids in school, and the serving member's spouse has employment, and then they are told they have to be reposted across Canada. Maybe the spouse's job is not transferrable. Maybe their credentials are not recognized in another jurisdiction. Maybe they are going to be waiting five years to find a doctor in that community and, oh, by the way, they cannot afford a home there. They may lose the base housing if it is a family in a PMQ and would not receive the same accommodation in the new post. These are all factors that affect retention and recruitment.

The government has a crisis of retention and recruitment. The forces are, in the words of the defence minister, in a death spiral of crises of retention and recruitment. Why not do the easiest thing that the Liberals could have done, even if it is only symbolic? It is by no means suddenly meeting the 2% of GDP obligation that we have to our allies, but it would be something. It would send a signal to the troops that they do not bear the cost of the \$950 million of cuts that are taking place and that the Liberals announced.

I have said enough on this for now. I will take any questions.

• (1950)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for advocating for military veterans and their families. It is greatly appreciated.

I want to go back to 2015. I recall knocking on doors and meeting military personnel living in the Comox Valley in my riding, and they could not find housing. People were struggling then.

It takes long-out planning and thought, and the Liberals have failed to do that. They inherited a failed plan or no plan, if one wants to call it that, when it comes to housing for military personnel.

Does my colleague regret that his government did not put more foresight into building housing units for military personnel? What would he do differently, moving forward, so that we could honour those people who are serving our country?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I will say that the government does not have a monopoly on non-investment in the forces. That is not to say I agree with the premise of his question. I would go back to a previous Liberal government. We had a decade of darkness. We had the Prime Minister's father, who decimated the military and really even firmly withdrew us from the orbit of the western defence system. If we want to keep going back in time, I guess we can, but I am going to focus on the government that is here.

I came here in 2015 when the current government was elected, and it has systematically ignored national defence and national security. It is about time that we had a government that takes these things seriously, becomes a meaningful and willing ally to our alliance, takes our national defence seriously and stands by our troops.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, interestingly

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enough, the member and I have not had the chance to work together. We were elected the same year, but we have not had a chance to work together. I would like to thank him for the work he is doing on the national defence committee.

I wanted to talk to him about postings. He did talk about postings and the difficulties with respect to finding homes for our military families when they move every two or three years, depending on where they are being posted. I think the member knows I have two children serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, so I know very well the challenges that families face. He mentioned there was no money in the budget for military housing. Page 307 does have information with respect to the commitment made.

Could the member give us an example of something he heard during the study on maybe extending the length of time for postings? Rather than having a posting every two or three years, maybe that could be expanded to five or six years, instead of having to move around so frequently. I am not sure if that is something he heard during the study.

• (1955)

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, we have heard that in multiple studies that we have undertaken. Any time we are talking about factors that affect morale, recruitment and retention, that comes up. It has always been thus, but with the cost of living being what it is, many people are rooted in a community in a way that earlier generations were not, because of connections to employment that do not transfer very well or housing. If somebody bought a house 10 years ago in one community and then gets re-posted across the country, that creates a significant hardship. Yes, I think there is a lot of awareness at the committee, if that is what the member is asking.

I do not have a copy of the budget with me, but if the member is referring to the chart that I am thinking of, it is zero dollars this year, zero dollars next year, \$1 million the year after that, and \$14 million by 2029. That is not going to build enough houses to make even a dent in the backlog in housing.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, picking up on the point made by the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, about 4,500 units need to be built to house the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces on bases across Canada.

We saw the government deliver its latest budget, which provides \$61 billion in unfunded deficit spending, yet when it comes to investing in housing for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces for this coming year, the government is providing a big fat zero, a big fat zero the following year, and then a mere \$1 million in the third year.

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What does that say about the government's priorities when it comes to its lack of support for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I think it says everything about priorities. We have had testimony at the defence committee from the chief of the defence staff and others who have clearly stated that we are perhaps in the most dangerous times since the Second World War, in the words of the chief of the defence staff.

However, there is dithering over all of these critically needed changes that have to be made, like critical procurements. They seem to be problems one would think we could solve, like ammunition production, yet we dither away. We produce fewer artillery shells in a month than the Ukrainian army fires by lunchtime. It desperately needs these supplies. We do not even have enough to ramp it up and replace and fully stock our own supplies, never mind being a meaningful exporter to allies who also need this kind of kit.

We have production issues, and we have the retention and recruitment crisis. There is no commitment from the government. The defence minister himself has said that his own cabinet colleagues shrugged their shoulders and did not listen to his plea for more money. We are under an obligation within our alliance to spend 2% of our GDP. That is a minimum commitment within the alliance that underpins Canada's security, and there is no plan to get there.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, I asked earlier and I just want an answer. What would the Conservatives do in terms of offering a plan?

We want to work with the Conservatives on this to ensure that we build housing for military personnel and their families and, of course, for those who have served, our veterans, whom we are always indebted to for the remainder of their lives. Does my colleague suggest an idea or a plan that he would like to present or discuss in the House that we could possibly work together on?

We would like to see public lands kept in public hands. Those public lands should absolutely be prioritized for military personnel, veterans and indigenous peoples. Does my colleague agree with that?

• (2000)

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, the member will have to wait for our platform. I am in no position to launch it today, nor do I have a plan to table. This is not the place for it.

There is a commitment from our party, from our leader, to finally take defence seriously. There will be a plan tabled to ensure that the men and women in our forces get the respect they need, get access to the housing they need and get the kit and equipment they need for training opportunities and to be ready to deploy if necessary.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we gather here in the House, I would like to take the opportunity to paint a picture of the issue brought forth by the Conservative shadow minister for national defence concerning the recent rent increase in military housing.

Imagine a brave active military member serving at the arms depot in Dundurn or at 15 Wing air base in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Military members serve this country proudly and have faith that the government is working cohesively to fight the affordability crisis. Just with that thought, their military housing rent goes up, along with the carbon tax.

I am disappointed that we need to have this debate today. Military housing in an opportunity for serving members to be able to afford a place to live despite their salaries being too low and the cost of living being too high. We, as a government, should be prepared to provide them accommodations that reflect their sacrifices.

The cost of living crisis is hurting everyone, and the brave people who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces are no exception. It is a fact that the high cost of living has brought stress upon Canadians above all other issues, and our brave men and women are not exempt from this. We need to be more mindful of the negative impacts this stress can have on their work, thereby impacting the security of our country. We need to look at this from a holistic point of view and understand the required synergies, or basic needs, for our military personnel to function best.

Sitting on the veterans affairs committee, I have heard far too many stories about our heroes, who are serving or have served, struggling to get by and often ignored by the government, which says they are asking for too much. This is certainly not a good reflection at all and does not create an incentive for people to join the military, especially at a time when recruitment is facing record lows that are dangerous to the sustainability of defending our nation. It has been noted as a death spiral.

Instead of retaining the fighter training program here in Canada, the Liberal government recently exported our fighter pilot training program to some of our allies. This affects Moose Jaw and Cold Lake. The government has sent our military members to Italy, Finland, Australia and the U.S.

The government has added insult to injury, where we have lost training placements that are normally reserved for Canadians in the NATO jet training program down in the U.S. This is seriously reducing the capability of training our front line fighter pilots to defend our borders, leaving our northern airspace vulnerable.

Whether one is serving or has served, it is clear that the Liberal government has ignored the importance of putting personnel first.

Earlier this week, a veterans advocate spoke to our committee, sharing her thoughts on veterans homelessness. Rima Aristocrat said, “I cannot find any excuse, and I believe each and every one of you will say the same. There is no excuse. For somebody who gives us the life we have here, liberty and freedom we are so proud of. It did not come by itself. That took a lot of sacrifice, people's sacrifice.... Their families are unsung heroes. They sacrificed so much with them. And what do we do? Once a year we say thank you to them.... How about the rest of the time when they cannot afford to pay rent? How about the time when they cannot feed or clothe their children? How about the time we have to pick up homeless veterans from the street freezing there? There's no excuse for it. Our country is too great. We are too powerful. We are too kind to let this happen”.

● (2005)

Ms. Aristocrat, along with others, recognize the financial desperation our military members and veterans are experiencing. It is a truly heartbreaking situation when those who fought for our country and saw their friends and comrades make the ultimate sacrifice are left behind or are unable to get by. Today, we are talking about how those who are currently serving are being squeezed.

I was shocked to see that, on April 1, the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force, a day which we should be celebrating, not only did the government hike its inflationary carbon tax, but it also raised the rent for our military personnel. What kind of thanks for their service is that?

Recently, the military ombudsman appeared at the national defence committee talking about this issue. He said that it would be “tone deaf” for the government to increase rent on the Canadian Armed Forces at a time when we hear of them struggling to find proper accommodations and make ends meet. However, that is exactly what we have come to expect from the current government: tone-deaf policies.

Liberals see people struggling to feed and house their families and decide that they still need to raise the carbon tax. Only when their east coast members' seats are in jeopardy do they decide to provide a small bit of relief from this tax grab. I am sure those residents are happy, but when Saskatchewan argues that the same policy should be fairly applied to all Canadians, the Prime Minister decides to have the province audited by the CRA. Again, we have tone-deaf policies from the government.

Our military personnel in Dundurn, Moose Jaw, and those serving coast to coast to coast should have all the possible support they need to keep our country safe and prosperous. We are too kind a nation to allow the military members I mentioned before, who are fighting for their country bravely, to suffer alone in this housing crisis and be seen as another source of an increase in revenue for the government rather than a vital part of our country's defence.

The Liberal government's track record, whether it is national defence, supporting our veterans or building homes, is a complete failure. Liberal promises are like unicorns. They are not real; they are just fairy tales. Once again, I urge the government to come back to the real world, to wake up, to do what is right and to roll back this rent increase to ease the cost of living crisis for those brave people who put their lives at risk for us.

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In closing, I would like to take a quick moment to thank a young lady, Lora Laleva, who helped me write this speech. She is a young lady who believes in this country. She was sitting in this gallery earlier today and sat in the gallery all day yesterday, listening to our democratic process. I met with her, brought her to the office and said, “I want to see what you are capable of.” That young lady is going to be a future leader in this country, and we need to provide an opportunity for people like her to live in a prosperous nation.

It is time to axe the tax. It is time to roll back the rent increase on our military personnel. It is time to send the right message to the people of this great nation that we live in that there is hope and opportunity for the next generation.

● (2010)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his service to our country as an officer in the Canadian Air Force. His office is right across the hall from mine, so we spend a lot of time together, and I appreciate his work.

We know that no veteran should be living on the street. Someone who has served our country should not be homeless. We know that 67% of homeless people in my community of Port Alberni are indigenous. As my colleague from Churchill—Keewatinook Aski just raised, even if we were to double indigenous housing right now there would still not be enough housing to house indigenous people. That is absolutely shameful in a country like ours.

I have talked about, and the government talks about this in its budget, using public lands, but they have to be in public hands. It should prioritize military personnel, veterans and indigenous peoples.

I asked this question earlier, and a Conservative colleague said Conservatives were waiting until their platform gets rolled out in the next election. I get stuff done here all the time. I am not waiting for the next election to get things done. I think we can work together now. I do not think we can wait until an election next year.

I am putting my hand out and extending an olive branch to my colleague in the hope that he will work with me to put pressure on the government to do the right thing when it comes to public lands and getting our priorities in order. Will my colleague accept that olive branch instead of waiting until an election is called?

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge my colleague from across the hallway. We have had some great chats walking to our offices. I do not think we have ever shared a coffee or a donut, but that could happen.

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I was thinking about the question the member posed to my colleague earlier on. One thing I have noticed is that there is a cyclical problem that happens. What happens is this: A Liberal government comes into power and creates a problem. It reduces the money spent on the military. Then Conservatives come along and invest, but it takes a long time to dig ourselves out of the hole it has put us into.

I would ask my colleague to recognize that Conservatives have always put the military first, that we care about those personnel and that we care about the defence of our country. When in power, we would deliver on the promises we are making right now.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have not had a chance to work with the colleague opposite. I want to thank him for his service to this country.

I have been here nine years this fall, and I think I have developed a reputation in the House for not taking personal potshots. I do not heckle. I work across the aisle. I think everyone who has worked with me knows that.

When we talk about our military and talk about veterans, I think we almost all agree in the House that we need to support them. However, here we are having a debate, and included as part of that debate are personal potshots. Imagine what we could do for those same people who we all claim to love if we worked together. It is a crazy idea, I know, but that is what they want us to do. They do not care if it is a Liberal government. They do not care if it is a Conservative government. What they care about is that we work together for them because they are there to defend us.

Does the member opposite agree? I look forward to working with him on a defence file. Does he agree that it is time to put away the partisanship and work together for our Canadian Armed Forces?

• (2015)

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her recognition of my service.

One of the things I would ask of you—

The Deputy Speaker: Members are to speak through the Speaker.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Mr. Speaker, through you, I would ask my colleagues across the aisle to hear what we are saying. We are talking about the issues that those who are serving or have served are bringing forward. They are not just bringing them to us, they are bringing them to the Liberal government and asking for a change. They are asking for it to recognize what they are doing and experiencing. Every time we do that, the pressure is turned up. The carbon tax is increased. Inflation is getting out of control, and the cost of living crisis is getting out of control. Therefore, I would ask them to hear what we have to say and then acknowledge what we are saying.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is good and well for the Liberal member opposite to talk in platitudes about working together. However, at the end of the day, the government has a nine-year track record that includes giving the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces a double

whammy on April 1, with a 23% increase of the punitive carbon tax coupled with a hike in rent. It is also coupled with a government that has spent untold amounts of money building the size of government, growing the bureaucracy, but seeing fit to actually make cuts to the Canadian Armed Forces.

I would submit that when it comes to the Canadian Armed Forces, the current government is one that puts the Canadian Armed Forces last. Would the member agree?

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Mr. Speaker, my simple answer is that yes, I would agree.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, I will never not take the opportunity to again stand up for military families, the important role they play and the important work they do. We all owe them a ton of gratitude.

A report that just came out from the ombudsman made it very clear that it is actually a national security threat that we do not take care of our military personnel. We need to really elevate the conversation, and we need the government to act.

One thing I continue to talk about is that one opportunity is using public lands and using them urgently. We have them at bases. We have them in communities right around our country. It actually would be prudent for the government to act on developing a plan and getting started right away to ensure that our military personnel have a safe and affordable place to live. They should be able to save money when they are in the military and actually put money aside for their retirement so they can have a good retirement. We want them to have a good retirement for the sacrifices they have made.

Does my colleague support using public lands for prioritizing military veterans, service members and their families?

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that on military bases, a lot of the housing is substandard. What I believe our party is asking for right now is upgrades, for the housing to be improved so people's quality of life is improved. It is not just military members living in these accommodations; their families are also living in them. While members are deployed overseas, there are plumbing issues, ceiling leaks and holes in the floors. There are all sorts of issues they are dealing with. It is just a recycled problem.

I know that my colleague recognizes that this affects not just the member serving but also the whole family whom they live with. When members are deployed, their concerns are increased, although their minds need to be on their job. They have a buddy system where other people's lives depend on them, and if they are not focused on the job, then people's lives are at risk because their families are at risk.

• (2020)

The Deputy Speaker: There being no further members rising, pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion is deemed put and a recorded division is deemed requested.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 66, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, May 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and speak on behalf of the people of my riding.

However, it is 8:20 on a Thursday night, and I really do not want to be here, actually. I am here because of the mess that is being created in Union Bay, in my riding. We have an outfit that is ship-breaking and that is not in a proper facility. It does not have a floating dry dock. It is not meeting international standards, because we do not have them in Canada when it comes to ship-breaking. In fact, we could be a leader when it comes to ship-breaking in our country, the proper, responsible ship-breaking, taking apart ships and recycling them properly. We do not do that.

We have a really incredible group of people in our riding who are taking on the role of government, really, because the government is lacking in providing regulations to protect them. The Concerned Citizens of Baynes Sound has been active on this. Marilynne Manning, Ray Rewcastle, Ashlee Gerlock and so many others have been advocating for the government to stop the ship-breaking outfit, because it is a threat to the sensitive ecosystem of Baynes Sound, and also for the Comox Valley Regional District to seek an injunction to stop them. Daniel Arbour, the local area representative, who is phenomenal, has been working with international organizations, trying to bring ideas to the government to fill the regulatory gaps that are there.

The K'ómoks First Nation has asked for this to immediately stop. The Province of B.C. has an abatement order against this company. We also just got a letter from Tla'amin Nation asking that this outfit stop its activity. They are on the other side of the Salish Sea.

There is no support and no social licence in our region for this. The federal government actually named Baynes Sound an ecologically and biologically sensitive ecosystem back in 2012. It cited that it needs protection. This is an absolutely critical area when it comes to jobs; 50% of B.C. shellfish are actually produced there, in this area, in my riding. It is also the last herring spawning fishery on the whole coast of British Columbia. It is absolutely critical that we protect it.

DFO is actually ignoring its own research and recommendations by allowing this hazardous, polluting industry to continue doing what it is doing in Baynes Sound. It is going against its own studies and recommendations. Again, there are no European ship-recycling regulations, something I tabled a motion calling for.

Adjournment Proceedings

I am going to read a quote from Chek News:

Deep Water Recovery, the company taking apart derelict vessels in Union Bay, has been hit with a pollution abatement order from the province.

The company is illegally allowing toxic effluent to run off into Baynes Sound and the marine environment, B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has found.

Discharges from the ship-breaking operations are collected in sump pits, which occasionally overflow with untreated effluent. Testing of that runoff confirmed high concentrations of pollutants, including copper, iron, zinc and cadmium.

A letter came out from Nathan Cullen, our former colleague here in the House, who is now B.C. Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, and George Heyman, B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Strategy. They are calling on the government to take action. They said, "the Province cannot act in isolation. Direct and immediate action and engagement is required by the federal government". They also said, "In a multi-jurisdictional framework such as this, it is critical that municipal, provincial, and federal agencies work together to ensure that the interests of the public, First Nations, and the environment are protected".

Guess who is missing: the federal government. It has been missing in action while this is taking place.

● (2025)

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada recognizes that safe recycling processes are vital to ensure the careful and secure handling of environmental hazardous substances such as asbestos, heavy metals, hydrocarbons and ozone-depleting substances.

Canada aims to ensure that ships are recycled safely at the end of their operational lives without posing unnecessary risks to human health and the environment.

Ship recycling in Canada is recognized as the most environmentally sound method to dispose of ships that have reached their end of life. Many provisions affecting ship-recycling facilities are governed by provinces and territories, such as environmental and waste management and workplace occupational health and safety. Overall, Canada has some of the strongest laws and regulations across federal, provincial, territorial and municipal jurisdictions, and we remain committed to working with all levels of government to make sure that Canada's ship-recycling facilities remain among the safest in the world.

The Canadian Coast Guard has received numerous inquiries about the vessels that are intended for deconstruction at the Deep Water Recovery recycling facility in Union Bay.

Adjournment Proceedings

The Coast Guard has undertaken several assessments of the area where the vessels are awaiting deconstruction at Deep Water Recovery. If pollution enters the marine environment from a land-based spill, the Coast Guard will report the pollution to the Ministry of Emergency Management in British Columbia and provide assistance where required. The Coast Guard has reminded the deconstruction company of its responsibility under the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, to prevent any release of oil or other pollutants from reaching the marine environment.

The Government of Canada is taking action to reduce the number of vessels of concern in Canadian waters and to minimize their impact on coastal communities, the environment and the public under the oceans protection plan.

As of January 24, 2024, the Government of Canada has removed 584 wrecked, abandoned or hazardous vessels across the country. The Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act was adopted in 2018 and came into force in 2019. The objectives of the act are to strengthen owner accountability and to enable more proactive government action to address the risks posed by problem vessels.

Specifically, the act increases marine safety by, first, prohibiting vessel abandonment, unless authorized by law or in case of marine emergency; second, prohibiting owners from allowing their vessels to become wrecks, either by neglect or deliberate action; third, prohibiting owners from leaving their vessels adrift in Canadian waters for more than 48 hours without taking action to secure them; and, fourth, prohibiting owners from leaving a dilapidated or poorly conditioned vessel in the same area for more than 60 days without consent. This prohibition is important since dilapidated vessels are at a greater risk of becoming abandoned or wrecked.

Under the Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act, an owner is prohibited from allowing their vessel to become a wreck due to failing to maintain it. Under the Canadian law, vessel owners are responsible for their vessels at all times. They must take all necessary actions, including repair, salvage and prevention or cleanup of leaking fuel or oil.

Vessel owners must contact the Canadian Coast Guard if their vessel is sinking, has sunk or is a threat to discharge marine pollution. When a report of pollution is received, the Coast Guard begins the marine pollution response process by assessing the potential risk posed by that vessel. Some factors considered include the risk to human life and the risk to the environment and public safety, as well as the type and size of vessel, its location and how much fuel is on board.

In situations where a vessel is at high risk to release pollutants in the marine environment, the Coast Guard will work with response partners toward immediate action.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, they are tearing apart a boat in a sensitive fish habitat zone right now in Union Bay.

Back to the letter from the Province of British Columbia, it cites that:

Direct and immediate action and engagement is required by the federal government as it relates to potential discharge to the marine environment, protection of marine habitat, and the transportation of vessels to this site. In particular, measures must be implemented to ensure that ships are not transported to facilities that lack the capability to handle them properly and safely.

It calls for immediate action from the federal government. This letter was written in February. We are in May.

The Tla'amin are alarmed by the potential environmental impacts of this operation, the lack of regulatory oversight that allows its placement in an ecologically sensitive area and that they were not consulted on any permitting related to this operation. I will be giving this letter to the parliamentary secretary after this debate.

It is time for the federal government to act. I have not seen anything like this in almost nine years as a member of Parliament. It is absolutely shameful.

• (2030)

Mr. Mike Kelloway: Mr. Speaker, ship recycling is a complex multinational industry. It has been a growing area of focus for the International Marine Organization, which has been working over the course of the last two decades to support safe and environmentally sound ship recycling worldwide. Canada maintains some of the strongest rules for global ship recycling. As a member of state to the International Marine Organization, Canada has contributed to the work, the important work, to improve ship-recycling practices worldwide.

As the government has stated before, many of the legislative provisions that govern safe and environmentally responsible ship recycling fall under provincial jurisdiction. We are committed to working with the provinces and territories to ensure we have the safest recycling facilities in the world.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to follow up on a straightforward question that I posed to the Liberals recently during question period and did not get an answer to. That question is this: Which top Liberal broke the law by leaking classified CSIS information?

In an explosive story, The Globe and Mail reported, based upon a top national security source, that during the 2019 election, the member for Don Valley North was tipped off that he was being monitored by CSIS. Recently, at the public inquiry into foreign interference, it was confirmed that three top Liberals, all connected closely to the Prime Minister, received a classified CSIS briefing during the 2019 election that Beijing interfered on behalf of the member for Don Valley North to secure the Liberal nomination.

One of the top Liberals briefed, then briefed the Prime Minister's top adviser and the then national Liberal campaign director Jeremy Broadhurst about the contents of that classified briefing. It is important to note that Mr. Broadhurst had the appropriate security clearance to receive that information. Broadhurst then briefed the Prime Minister.

We know that five top Liberals, including the Prime Minister himself, either received a classified CSIS briefing or were informed about the contents of that classified briefing. It follows, therefore, that it is almost certain that one of those five Liberals, perhaps the Prime Minister himself, leaked the classified information that led to the member for Don Valley North being tipped off that he was being monitored by CSIS.

The leaker within the Prime Minister's inner circle committed something that is very serious in terms of what they did. They compromised CSIS's sources and methods, undermined an intelligence operation into Beijing's interference in our democracy, violated their oath of secrecy and committed a serious offence for which they could be punished and sent to jail for up to 14 years under the Security of Information Act. Someone in the Prime Minister's inner circle broke the law by putting the partisan interests of the Liberal Party ahead of Canada's national security.

Which top Liberal broke the law? Who is the criminal leaker? I would like a name, please.

• (2035)

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have all been closely following the proceedings of the public inquiry into foreign interference in Canada's democratic institutions. As members of the House will recall, in fact, our government convened the inquiry with the support of every party leader in this very House, and we all recognize how important it is to maintain the integrity of our democratic institutions.

This week we heard from the Prime Minister and his staff, as well as senior public servants and intelligence officials, as they outlined the various ways intelligence is shared and used within the government to keep Canadians safe.

The story here is quite simple. As the director of CSIS outlined on Friday, CSIS has been talking about foreign interference and foreign threats for many years, both inside and outside government, to officials, to ministers and to Canadians. It has always been clear that foreign interference is a serious threat to Canadian democracy. In response to those warnings, the government has taken several decisive actions, beginning with a plan to protect democracy before the 2019 election.

Over the course of the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, the security and intelligence threats to elections task force coordinated efforts against foreign interference by assessing threats, sharing intelligence and briefing the panel, the ministers and political parties.

Most recently, our government has been consulting Canadians on possible legislative amendments to ensure that we have the right tools and authorities to keep Canadians safe. To ensure that the measures we have taken are the right ones, we convened the public

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inquiry and asked Canada's national security review bodies, NSIRA and NSICOP, to look into the matter.

Our government has supported an unprecedented level of transparency about sensitive national security issues. As members know, however, the protection of classified information is of the utmost importance.

On Friday, the director of CSIS noted that an intelligence service must be able to protect the information it collects in order to succeed in protecting Canadians. Therefore, any leak of classified information is dangerous and something the government will never tolerate.

Members also know that it would be inappropriate to discuss national security investigations in the House. That is not how we will ensure the protection of sensitive information. The government has confidence in security services, and we must let them perform their work.

Foreign interference in Canada has not been a secret. The government and our intelligence officials have been telling Canadians about this for years, and we have taken decisive action to counter it and to continue to bolster our response. We are being as transparent as possible with Canadians about this challenge. The public inquiry and national security review bodies are ensuring our responses are appropriate.

All Canadians have to play a role in countering national security threats, such as foreign interference. That includes members of the House, and I look forward to continuing to work together accordingly.

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, the government has been anything but transparent. Indeed, since the Globe and Mail story broke, the Liberals have been in full cover-up mode. We know that a top Liberal leaked classified CSIS information, undermining an intelligence operation. It is a serious criminal offence to do so, punishable by up to 14 years behind bars. One of five Liberals likely leaked the classified information: Azam Ishmael, Braeden Caley, Mathieu Lafrance, Jeremy Broadhurst or the Prime Minister himself.

As such, which top Liberal is the criminal leaker? Is it the Prime Minister?

Mr. Mike Kelloway: Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate the seriousness with which the government is addressing the threat of foreign interference.

We have great confidence in the work of the government agencies and departments charged with protecting our democratic institutions. Their intelligence and the information they collect and share have enabled us to have a good understanding of the challenges foreign interference poses to Canadians.

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I will also reiterate how important it is that CSIS and the security and intelligence community are able to protect that sensitive information. Our national security, the safety of sources, the advantage from our trade craft and the future of our partnerships depend on it.

At his previous appearance at the foreign interference inquiry, the director of CSIS spoke about how unauthorized releases of classified information are dangerous in several ways. Not only do they make it difficult for intelligence services to do their work, but the release of specific pieces of information does not paint a complete picture. This leads to misinterpretations or incorrect conclusions.

Members know it would be inappropriate to discuss media allegations and unsubstantiated information in the House, and I would urge them to keep this in mind.

• (2040)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have a bad habit of dodging serious questions, as we just saw. We will see whether that happens again with mine. At the very least, I am glad to have the opportunity to raise an important issue for indigenous communities.

The reality is that indigenous people are overlooked by the NDP-Liberal government. Regardless of all of the rhetoric and ideology behind the Liberals' so-called just transition that threatens to get rid of thousands of jobs for indigenous workers, that is what indigenous leaders are calling out. President Dale Swampy of the National Coalition of Chiefs believes that the so-called just transition picks winners and losers while driving away billions of dollars of potential investment in indigenous communities.

As indigenous communities have invested more and more into the oil sands region, rising by \$9 million between 2017 and 2019, the government is doing its best to shut it all down. It is something important to keep in mind whenever the Liberal government brings forward policies against the energy sector. At the end of the day, we are talking about good-paying jobs and the benefit they bring to the workers and their communities, including indigenous communities.

The Liberals have talked a lot about Bill C-50, for example, but would their appointed counsels and useless secretariats really represent the voice of energy workers? They probably would not. Considering the track record of the government across the aisle, they would be filled with more of the same overpaid and underworked bureaucrats who do not understand the way of life outside their big city. In this case, they might even think that they know what is best for all indigenous people, even if there are indigenous groups that are telling a different story.

I want to take a moment to read what Dale Swampy told the natural resources committee when we were studying the so-called just transition:

I want to end by pointing out the high costs of a poorly planned energy transition and the crisis we now face in first nations. Many of our communities rely on diesel generation. People have to drive for hours to get to doctors appointments or a grocery store. A lot of people aren't on the grid, and even those who are don't have the electricity capacity to add charging stations in garages they don't have. You won't find any electric cars on the rez.

Most people in Canada do not have the luxury of living in a downtown condo, with a Tesla charging in their heated underground parking garage. However, that might be the lifestyle of someone working on one of these panels who wants to make decisions and enforce a just transition on an indigenous community that does not want it. The disproportionate impact that the Liberal government's unjust transition would have on indigenous communities would be devastating.

Indigenous people deserve more control of their resources, not less. Decisions are best made when those who will be most impacted by them have the greatest say. Consulting at the local level is the key to sustainability across all sectors, especially oil and gas. Otherwise, having high-and-mighty bureaucrats and politicians imposing their one-size-fits-all agenda on a country as large and diverse as Canada is sure to leave people behind. Time and time again, indigenous voices ask the government for a greater say and greater investment in the resource sector, but it falls on deaf ears in the current PMO.

I can say that Conservatives want to take a better approach. We supported an initiative like the first nations resource charge, which is an optional policy that would give more control over resource dollars for indigenous communities. It would offer them more input and would help to avoid the slow and painful process of negotiating with the federal government. As I said, we support it. Will the Liberal government ever support economic reconciliation for indigenous people?

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will note his original question with regard to working with first nations on accessing and developing economic opportunities in the resource and energy sector, addressing the systemic barriers that have excluded indigenous peoples, including first nations, from prosperity and decision-making for too long, must be addressed.

That is why budget 2024 announced the investment in the indigenous loan guarantee program. This program would provide up to \$5 billion in loan guarantees to indigenous groups, unlocking access to affordable capital for indigenous communities and governments who want ownership stakes in natural resource and energy projects. The budget contains another \$3.5 million to help indigenous communities undertake their own investment analysis and due diligence, so they can have the confidence that they are investing in viable projects. On top of that, there is another \$2.4 billion in the budget for indigenous communities, which would go toward more safe and affordable housing and investments in education.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives are pledging to hold back these vital investments and initiatives, including the very same indigenous loan guarantee program that was widely endorsed by the First Nations Major Projects Coalition.

This is no surprise coming from the party led by a leader who is ideologically opposed to reconciliation. This is the same Conservative leader who voted against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and in favour of taking away indigenous peoples' rights to free, prior and informed consent. The leader of the Conservatives has also said that residential school survivors need a "stronger work ethic" and has cozied up to residential school denialists, even speaking at an event for the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, which runs paid campaign ads that try to deny the impact of residential schools.

As a minister in the Harper Conservative government, the Conservative leader gutted environmental protections and failed to consult meaningfully with indigenous peoples on major projects, making it harder, not easier, for projects to get built. Frankly, these Conservatives have an awful track record and it is not a surprise they are trying to gut the vital mechanisms that are investing in indigenous-led projects, such as the Canada Infrastructure Bank. On this side of the aisle, we are always going to invest in indigenous-led solutions.

• (2045)

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: Mr. Speaker, we found out at committee that, for Bill C-49, the Liberals did not even bother to consult first nations when they were pushing the Atlantic accord bill through. It is no surprise.

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If we look at what Canadians think, 65% of Canadians think the government does a very poor or a poor job at developing a shared long-term vision for Canada's energy future. This is from a survey that was released just today.

Liberals are out of touch.

The Indian Act also takes control away from indigenous communities by giving reserve land and all dollars to the federal government, so they have to go begging to the federal government to get access to those funds from projects on their own land.

The first nations resource charge is something that can make a huge difference for communities who decide it works for them. Conservatives want to deliver this for indigenous people. Will the government?

Mr. Mike Kelloway: Mr. Speaker, continuing on the theme of indigenous-led project development, I would like to highlight some of the many exciting projects that are taking place across this country.

In Ontario, the Six Nations is developing one of the largest battery storage projects, called Oneida Energy Storage. In New Brunswick, the Tobique first nation is delivering the Burchill wind project near Saint John, one of the largest in my region of Atlantic Canada. In Northwest Territories, the indigenous-led Denendeh exploration and mining company received \$5 million in support to transform an older silver mine into a critical minerals facility.

In the member's own province of Saskatchewan, we worked hand in hand with the Cowessess first nation to deliver the Awasis solar farm and the Bekevar wind project, which are creating hundreds of good construction jobs and ensuring long-term revenues go back to the first nations.

Unlike the Conservatives, our leader takes economic reconciliation very seriously.

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:48 p.m.)

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