



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

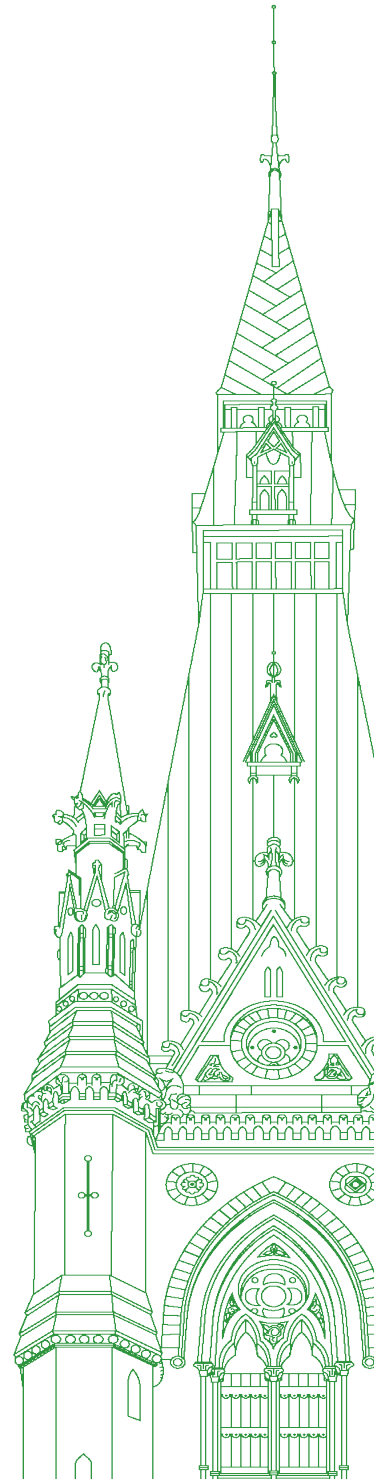
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House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

● (1400)

[English]

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

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

2024 GRADUATING CLASS

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to all graduates of 2024, especially those in my riding of Richmond Centre, the graduates of J.N. Burnett Secondary, Richmond Secondary, Hugh Boyd Secondary and Steveston-London Secondary, as well as graduates from BCIT, Trinity Western University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University. The graduates should let this hard work and important milestone be the start of their journey to explore a world full of potential.

I would like to thank all the parents, family members and education professionals who played an important role in supporting our graduates in their path of dreams. Graduation marks the culmination of years of dedication and perseverance. It signifies the beginning of a new chapter filled with infinite prospects.

Congratulations to the 2024 graduate class. I wish every graduate all the best in their future achievements and look forward to celebrating their continued success.

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MEADOW LAKE ATHLETE

Mr. Gary Vidal (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to rise and recognize Niki Ens, an accomplished athlete who grew up in my hometown of Meadow Lake.

As a young person, Niki was a provincial champion track athlete, a lifeguard at a local swimming pool and, amazingly, rode across

Canada on her bike in 32 days. In 2014, just after starting her career as a nurse, a motor vehicle accident left Niki confined to a wheelchair. Her positive attitude and resilient spirit have allowed her to become a role model that we can all be inspired by.

She recently qualified for the Paris Paralympic Games by winning gold in the 50-metre backstroke at the Canadian trials in Toronto. This will be Niki's second Paralympics. In the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, she set personal bests in all of her races. Niki has always appreciated the tremendous support of her family. I know her parents, Rod and Monica, will be in the stands in Paris supporting her.

Together with the whole community of Meadow Lake, I ask that this House join me today in cheering on Niki Ens.

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CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no one will be surprised to know they did it again. We will remember back in 2015 when the Conservative Party voted against the wealthiest 1% being taxed a bit more. It did it again yesterday. Yesterday, the Conservative Party, or should I say the Reform Party, voted no against the capital gains tax. What does it have against fairness? Why is it that the Conservative Party is more in favour of supporting lobbyists as opposed to Canada's middle class and individuals who need the support from government?

Why is it that the Liberal Party, on the one hand, demonstrates a caring, compassionate attitude and the Conservatives, on the other hand, consistently talk about cuts, cuts, cuts and do not understand the word "fairness"? Shame on them.

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● (1405)

[Translation]

FRÉDÉRIC BROUÉ

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my dictionary defines the word "visionary" as being able to anticipate, having true insight into the future.

Statements by Members

Frédéric Broué, mayor of Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, was named a municipal visionary by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities last April. Under his leadership, the town of Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts is transforming at lightning speed. Frédéric Broué entered the 2021 mayoral race as someone with extensive experience in the municipal public service under his belt who could bring with him the collaborative values that are key to success. He is a mayor of action who is fighting for more housing, for investment in green infrastructure and for regional public transport. He is recognized by his peers.

Today, I am proud to pay tribute to him and to shine a spotlight on his dedication to the citizens of Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts.

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[English]

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in June 1984, a seismic event struck northeastern Ontario, leading to the devastating collapse of Falconbridge Mine in my riding of Nickel Belt. The tragedy claimed the lives of four miners, members of the Mine Mill Local 598. We remember Sulo Korpela, Richard Chenier, Daniel Lavalée and Wayne St. Michel.

This June 20 marks the 40th anniversary of the first Workers Memorial Day to honour these brave people.

[Translation]

It is the day we pay tribute to all fallen, sick and injured workers. The goal is to build a future free from such tragedies, a future where every worker in every industry goes home safe and unharmed at the end of the day. On this, the 40th annual mine, mill and smelter Workers Memorial Day, let us remember the past and commit to a safer future.

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THREE MUNICIPALITIES IN THE BELLECHASSE RCM

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to announce three venerable anniversaries taking place in 2024: the 175th anniversary of the municipality of Saint-Lazare-de-Bellechasse, the 200th anniversary of Sainte-Claire, and the 275th anniversary of the founding of Saint-Charles-de-Bellechasse. These three municipalities in the Bellechasse RCM are among the oldest in my riding, each with a rich and impressive history.

The sons and daughters of these three villages cleared and settled the land, building farms, schools, convents and businesses whose renown extends beyond our borders, including Versaprofiles, Prevost and duBreton.

Some of them achieved show business stardom, such as Marthe Laverdière and Noémie O'Farrell. Others made a name for themselves in professional sports, like Christian Laflamme.

This summer, thousands of former residents will be coming back to the villages they once called home for a big reunion. The festivities will have something for everyone, as each municipality has a wide range of activities planned.

I extend my heartfelt wishes to these three municipalities for a happy anniversary and joyous celebrations.

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[English]

DENTAL CARE AND HEALTH CARE

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, dental care is an essential part of our health, and this government is taking important steps to support Canadians. As of today, over two million Canadians have successfully signed up for the Canadian dental care plan. Just within the first weeks, this program helped over 150,000 seniors get dental care.

Our pharmacare plan will also ensure Canadians can live healthy lives. Years of advocacy for people with diabetes resulted in this government tabling the national framework for diabetes in 2022. Earlier this year, we built on this progress by tabling the national pharmacare legislation that includes coverage for diabetes medications.

One in five people in Brampton is diabetic or prediabetic, and this legislation is going to not only help Canadians live healthier lives, but also make life more affordable.

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● (1410)

[Translation]

EID AL-ADHA

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I want to congratulate the Muslim community as we approach Eid al-Adha. This holy feast of sacrifice and generosity reminds us of the values of sharing and solidarity.

As the proud representative of Alfred-Pellan, I have the pleasure of spending time with the great North African community that enriches our riding. Its solidarity, generosity and joie de vivre are a true source of pride.

During this festive period, I wish all Muslims in Alfred-Pellan and across Canada a happy and blessed holiday. May this celebration be filled with peace, happiness and prosperity.

I encourage the House and all Canadians to join me in recognizing and celebrating the wealth that cultural and religious diversity brings to our country.

Eid Mubarak to everyone.

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are new developments in the hunt for red-handed Randy. The minister and the Liberals have refused to reveal the true identity of Randy, but they have plenty of theories to try to distract Canadians. They claim that there could be multiple Randys, or no Randys at all, or maybe his name is really Randeep. Who are these Liberals trying to fool?

Leaked text messages from the minister's business partner, Stephen Anderson, revealed the existence of red-handed Randy, a public official and powerful partner who demanded half a million dollars in payments. The Minister of Employment is a 50% shareholder in Global Health Imports, a company mired in numerous cases of fraud, including from the time that the minister was actively involved. He even shares a name with red-handed Randy.

Canadians want to know, if the Randy involved is not the Liberal minister, then who is Randy? No matter how much these Liberals try to cover this up, they cannot avoid this simple question: Who is Randy? Why are they working so hard to protect red-handed Randy and his fraudulent company? Is it because there is no other Randy?

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DENTAL CARE

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that over 62% of dental care providers in the province of Quebec are now registered to participate in the Canadian dental care plan.

[Translation]

More than 200,000 seniors have already received care through this program, and with more than 694,000 Quebecers registered and accepted, we can expect that number to keep going up.

We can be very proud of supporting our seniors. Many of them have never had access to the care they needed, and they are sharing their relief and joy at finally being able to receive essential health care.

[English]

The Conservatives and the Bloc voted against it. Now the Conservatives are trying to pretend it does not exist to avoid having to explain and admit that they would cut it, and the Bloc completely ignores it. However, the program is working, and it is improving the lives of Canadians. Let us keep up the great work.

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ETHICS

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another day, another scandal. What is new after nine years of the Liberal-NDP government? On Monday, Parliament passed a motion calling on the government and the Auditor General to hand over all documents related to the Prime Minister's green slush fund to the RCMP. Not surprisingly, every Liberal, including the Prime Minister, voted against our motion to give the RCMP the information it needs to investigate potential criminality and to expose just how

Statements by Members

deep the rot is. What is known is that Liberal insiders greased their palms with millions from taxpayers, yet here we are again with another attempted cover-up by the Prime Minister and his caucus.

It is shameful. It is no wonder the Liberals want to cover this one up, as 123 million dollars' worth of contracts were given out inappropriately, 90 cases did not follow conflict of interest policies and \$76 million was spent on projects connected to Liberal friends. The Liberals are not fighting for fairness for all. If this were true, why are they lining the pockets of their friends while everyday Canadians continue to struggle?

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● (1415)

TAXATION

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister is scrambling to bring in yet another tax hike to pay for uncontrolled inflationary spending. After nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, it is not worth the cost of falling standards of living. As a result of Liberal economic vandalism, capital has been driven out of Canada, and Canadians are worse off. They just do not get it. Taxing farmers drives up food costs. Taxing doctors means it is harder to find one. Taxing home builders means fewer homes get built. Taxing small businesses means fewer paycheques.

“To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield,” said Lord Tennyson. Common-sense Conservatives will unlock the potential of our strivers, inventors, builders, entrepreneurs and workers. We will restore the promise of Canada, where hard work earns powerful paycheques and pensions to buy affordable gas, food and homes in safe neighbourhoods. Let us bring it home.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness about the dire human rights situation in Iran. While the world's eyes were on Iran following the murder of Mahsa Amini, we must not stop fighting for justice and accountability to support the “women, life, freedom” movement. The flagrant human rights violations occurring in Iran are extremely concerning to me and to the Iranian community in my riding of Fredericton—Oromocto.

Statements by Members

I have heard from constituents that the situation is only getting worse, especially for women, girls and gender minorities. Far too many Iranian women are being subjected to the use of lethal force, torture and sexual assault, only because they are daring to stand up for freedom and autonomy. According to a recent UN report, the Iranian regime has cracked down even further on women and girls since Mahsa Amini's death. Penalties have become heftier. State-sanctioned surveillance and intimidation have been amplified. Gender segregation is expanding into public spaces. Authorities have threatened to deprive women of education and health care if they do not comply. This is a blatant violation of human rights.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on upholding democracy, gender equality and the rule of law. We must ensure that these values are upheld not only here and at home, but also across the world. I call on all my colleagues in the House to support, and to raise their voices for, freedom for women and girls in Iran.

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WOMEN VETERANS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is an important day, one when Parliament will finally have a report that lays out the issues of women veterans. This matters because it is the first of its kind. Over a year ago, when I put forward a motion to study women veterans, with my friend from the Bloc Québécois adding a section on MST, I found out that there had never been a study focused solely on women veterans before. Twenty-three sessions later, today, that report will be tabled, and the women veterans will be seen.

I hope this place is listening to the women who served us and who spoke repeatedly about being made invisible. The recommendation set a baseline that women veterans will be watching closely.

This place needs to move forward with action. I want to thank every witness who came forward. I want to thank every person who wrote to the committee. I want to acknowledge the dedication and the solidarity of the women who came to stand with one another. Their strength and dignity has made me a better parliamentarian.

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[Translation]

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MAISON D'HÉBERGEMENT DÉPANNAGE DE VALLEYFIELD

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to highlight the 40th anniversary of the Maison d'hébergement dépannage de Valleyfield, or MHDV. Forty years ago, a group of community builders decided to help people experiencing homelessness and in crisis.

I would be remiss if I did not highlight the invaluable contribution made by Émile Duhamel, one of the community builders behind MHDV. He has dedicated his life to improving the lives of others, especially those most marginalized in our society. His involvement over the past 40 years has been unwavering. Most importantly, he has helped create services beyond MHDV, such as the emergency shelter, the Vestibule de Marguerite, the La Maisonnée shelter for families, and Habitation Chez nous. He also contributed to important projects like Halte Chaleur.

The key to MHDV's success is that their skilled team firmly believes that every human being deserves respect, consideration and dignity. The solidarity they demonstrate is needed now more than ever.

I wish the Maison d'hébergement dépannage de Valleyfield many more years of success.

* * *

● (1420)

[English]

CARBON TAX

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberal government is just not worth the cost of food. With food prices out of control, it is bewildering that Liberals choose to attack the farmers and the ranchers who grow and raise Canadian food. First, they imposed a costly carbon tax, causing a food price crisis. Then, they threatened fertilizer reduction mandates. Now, they are hiking taxes on farmers. This latest tax hike is an attack on Canadian farm families and on their ability to keep producing food, something that will inevitably drive costs up. It will be the wealthy hedge funds and the foreign investors who benefit from this policy because they will buy up our farmland and our food processors.

The Liberals are driving farmers and ranchers out of business. I am being asked by these folks whether this is a calculated policy or pure and simple economic stupidity. Either way, Canadians and Canadian farmers deserve better. Common-sense Conservatives have a plan that would bring together everyday Canadians and would bring home a tax system that actually lowers taxes. That is just common sense. Let us bring it home.

* * *

AIR CADETS

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, at the Princess Margaret Secondary School, I attended the sixth annual ceremonial review of the 278 Cormorant Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron led by Commanding Officer, Captain Amar Tiwana, and the chair of the sponsoring committee, Simar Pabla.

The ACR is a significant event for young cadets, showcasing their skills and achievements acquired throughout the past year. These cadets are learning valuable skills, such as leadership and teamwork, which will have a positive lifelong impact.

Please join me in congratulating and thanking the 278 Cormorant Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron, including their parents and the volunteers, the Whalley Legion and all supporting businesses, for their dedication and service to this community, which makes Surrey—Newton and all of Canada a better place for all of us.

The Deputy Speaker: Just a quick reminder to hon. members not to acknowledge the people who are visiting. We are happy they could come and visit us today, but the rules state that we are not supposed to acknowledge them. It happened on three different occasions during S.O. 31s today, so I just want to remind hon. members of that.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Bloc Québécois voted for another Liberal tax hike that will take Quebecers' money and give it to this Prime Minister's centralizing government. After the vote, the Prime Minister literally thanked them by giving them a thumbs-up.

Is that what the “Liberal Bloc” is all about: less money for Quebec home builders, business owners, doctors and entrepreneurs, and more money for the massive Liberal federal government?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government understands the importance of fairness. We understand that a teacher should not pay tax at a higher rate than a multi-millionaire. We also understand that our decision will give Quebec an additional \$3 billion that it can use to invest in health care, for example.

The Conservatives do not like health care. They do not like government investments.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Bloc-backed tax hike is taking money away from doctors, forcing Quebec doctors to move away. Quebec's regions will lose doctors.

During a cost of living crisis and a food price crisis, the Bloc Québécois voted to tax farmers even more. The Bloc Québécois voted for a tax on home builders.

Why does the “Liberal Bloc” want to tax Quebecers more, just to hand more money over to a big centralizing government in Ottawa?

• (1425)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers understand the importance of fairness. They understand that it is very important for a nurse not to pay tax at a higher rate than the ultrarich. They also understand that we need revenue to invest in health care and child care. Quebec needs these revenues too. That is why the province has decided to do the same thing we are doing at the federal level.

Oral Questions

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nine years ago, the Prime Minister promised that taxing and spending more would make everything fair. Since then, Canada has had the worst growth in the G7, the worst in Canada's history since the Great Depression. Housing costs have doubled, rising faster than any other G7 country, so 76% of youth believe they will never be able to afford a home. One in 10 people is eating at food banks in Toronto, where there are 256 homeless encampments.

Have the Liberals not learned that taxing away doctors, taxing away home builders and taxing away the entrepreneurs who make paycheques is economic “wacko-ness”?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all certainly learned something yesterday. After eight weeks of dithering and evasion, we learned which side the Conservatives are on. The Conservatives had a chance to be very clear and say that a teacher or a welder should not pay tax at a higher rate than a multimillionaire, but they just could not help themselves. At the end of the day, the Conservatives are always on the side of those at the very top and always against working people. That is what we saw yesterday.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member mentions welders. Welders start businesses, which are among the 300,000 small businesses that are targeted by the tax, according to the minister's own published documents, so those welders will pay a 66% tax on their investments. The same welders who build the homes that we are going to need—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I am having trouble hearing the question, and I am having trouble hearing the answer, so I am going to ask hon. members to allow the questions and answers to happen.

From the top, the hon. leader of the official opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the member mentions welders. Welders incorporate. They start small businesses, welding businesses that build things. They weld products that go into apartment complexes in which people live. Therefore, when the member taxes the small businesses that help us build the housing, she not only kills jobs for those welders but she also actually kills housing when we are in a housing shortage.

How could the minister possibly think it is a good idea to tax homebuilding in a housing crisis and farmers in a food crisis?

Oral Questions

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for one thing, the Conservative leader should get his facts straight. Of course, what we are talking about is a two-thirds inclusion rate, not a two-thirds tax rate, but he never bothers to actually get his numbers straight.

The Conservative leader also does not bother to actually stand on the side of working people. He has been faking his support for workers, but yesterday workers learned where he really stands, and that is not with them.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, taxing farmers during a food crisis, taxing home builders during a housing crisis, taxing away doctors during a health care crisis and taxing small businesses during an economic growth crisis is economic vandalism and nothing less.

That is precisely why the minister has given us the worst growth in the G7, the worst growth for the next 40 years projected by the OECD and 256 homeless encampments in her hometown. Is that not the predictable result of her disastrous policies?

• (1430)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, do members know what the average income in Ottawa-Carleton is? I do; it is \$58,400. The average person in Ottawa-Carleton could only dream of earning \$250,000 in a given year, but the Conservative leader thinks his average constituent should pay tax on their hard-earned salary at a higher rate than someone who is earning more than \$250,000 in capital gains alone. Whose side is he really on?

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The Liberals want to tax the wealthy's capital gains, but their simplistic definition of who is wealthy includes Quebecers who are small investors or individual entrepreneurs.

The Bloc Québécois will propose amendments to correct the situation, such as offering these ordinary property owners, who are not real estate speculators, access to a higher one-time lifetime exemption instead of the annual exemption of \$250,000.

Is the government committed to working with us to avoid over-taxing the assets of Quebecers who are not ultrarich?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Bloc Québécois for its vote on tax fairness yesterday. They understand the importance of social solidarity and fairness, just as Quebecers do. They understand that a teacher should not pay tax at a higher rate than the ultrarich.

It is such a shame that the Conservatives do not understand that.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is simple. We say yes to raising taxes on the gains of the ultrawealthy, but no to raising taxes on the savings of self-employed workers without retirement funds who have invested everything in a triplex.

These people have nothing to do with the real estate bubble. They have nothing to do with the problems that first-time home-buyers—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

I thank members for keeping it down. The hon. member for La Prairie may begin his question again.

The hon. member for La Prairie.

Mr. Alain Therrien: Mr. Speaker, it is simple. We say yes to raising taxes on the gains of the ultrawealthy, but no to raising taxes on the savings of self-employed workers without retirement funds who have invested everything in a triplex.

These people have nothing to do with the real estate bubble. They have nothing to do with the problems that first-time home-buyers are experiencing.

The Liberals have a choice to make. They can work intelligently with us, or they can harm Quebecers who are not ultrawealthy to score political points against the Conservatives.

Will they make the right choice?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to once again point out that we have made an important decision. The House supported an important measure, a measure for fairness that will fund extremely important investments for Canada and Quebec.

Through this measure, Quebec will receive \$3 billion. I think that, in terms of health care, Quebec will be really pleased—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is wreaking havoc everywhere. Elderly people are sleeping in their cars. People are unable to pay the exorbitant amounts being charged for rent. A recent report tells us why.

Affordable housing is disappearing at an alarming rate across the country. Simply put, there is little to none left. The Liberals, like the Conservatives, turned their backs on social and affordable housing. It was not making enough money for their speculator friends. However, people need a roof over their heads.

What good are these two tired old parties if they cannot even guarantee a basic need like the right to housing?

• (1435)

Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague that one of the measures in the last budget we tabled was praised by people like those at FRAPRU. This housing rights group noted that we invested \$1.5 billion to take housing out of the market.

What does that mean? It means securing and reserving affordable rents, off the market, for people who need them. That is exactly what we have done.

We are going to work with every not-for-profit organization and municipality to achieve this, to increase the number of affordable and social housing units.

[English]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tenants at Thorncliffe Park and across the country are rising up against corporate greed, which is causing skyrocketing rents and resulting in evictions and rising homelessness. Renters cannot keep up with the costs of unfair corporate practices, and the Liberals themselves are partners in making rental units unaffordable. This is a violation of the human right to housing.

Why is the Liberal government partnering in exploitative practices and causing harm to Canadians?

Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member and to all Canadians who are watching that the current government was the first government that made historic investments in housing. Not only that, but we also recognize the human right to housing. We have, for the first time, named a commissioner to defend the rights of tenants, and we will continue to work with all provinces and municipalities to defend those rights.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is now condemning the same tax hike it just voted for. Talk about flip-flopping.

[English]

The minister says that welders would not have to pay the tax; only the 0.13% wealthiest would. Well, all the economists contradict that. The fact that there are 300,000 businesses that she admits would be taxed, and all of their owners would be taxed, contradicts that as well.

There is one way we can solve this controversy. Will the minister commit to putting in law that no one in the bottom 99.87% would pay any new taxes?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a moment ago, the Leader of the Opposition already demonstrated his financial illiteracy. He does not understand how the capital gains inclusion rate works.

Oral Questions

However, I want to offer him an opportunity to continue his economic education.

Yesterday, the IMF published a report on the Canadian economy. The IMF commented on our capital gains move and said it makes the system more fair, and it also said it would have no impact on investment or productivity. That is the IMF.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think we should just put aside the disagreement and even the debate on this. Let us come to a resolution here that will bring a lot of calm to the millions of Canadians who are worried about their taxes going up. The minister claims that only the 0.13% wealthiest Canadians would pay, so why not just enshrine that in law?

Will the minister commit today to passing an amendment to her tax bill stating that no one whose income is in the bottom 99.87% would pay any new taxes at all?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to quote some interesting words that were stated in the House of Commons: “The monstrous increases in capital gains...[are] making the rich vastly richer and creating a kind of aristocratic feudal economy”. Do members know who said that? The member for Carleton did.

We agree the current system is unfair. We are pushing against it. What made the member, after eight weeks of dithering, change his mind?

• (1440)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are simply asking the minister to put her words in law. She has claimed that no one who earns less than the top 0.13% of income in the country would be affected.

Once again, will she amend her bill to say that no one who is in the bottom 99.87% of income earners would pay any new tax increase whatsoever, yes or no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us review what we have learned so far in question period today. First, the Leader of the Official Opposition does not even understand how the capital gains inclusion rate works. That is a problem. Second, the leader of the official opposition disavows his own words in the House about capital gains. However, probably the most important thing is that the average income in Carleton is \$58,400. Carleton's MP is not on the side of working people earning that wage in his own riding. That is shameful.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am just quoting right now from the minister's own budget speech, where she said that for 99.87% of Canadians there will be no extra capital gains tax.

She put it in her speech, so why will she not put it in the law?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for about 20 years, the Conservative leader has been skulking around this place without really much contact with the outside world. In the nine years that the Conservatives have been over there, they have voted against a child benefit, a dental plan, a prescription drug plan and a child care plan. Every time Canadians look to him to stand up for their interests, for fairness in Canada, he takes a seat.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I see they have pulled the finance minister off the ice. She cannot answer a question.

The minister will not guarantee in law that the bottom 99.87% of Canadians will pay nothing, so let us make it a little bit easier for her. She claimed that she does not want welders to have to pay more.

Will the minister amend her bill to ensure that not a single welder anywhere in Canada would be forced to pay the tax increase, yes or no?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives. Generational fairness is key to Canadians. That is why, in the last budget, we presented measures to build this country, measures to invest in our economy, measures to invest in the middle class and measures to help Canadians. Our capital gains tax change would help Canadians.

On this side of the House, can members believe the Conservatives voted against tax fairness? On this side of the House, we will fight for Canadians; we will fight for the middle class.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, are they okay over there?

An hon. member: They are a little wacko.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: I will not call them wacko, Mr. Speaker; that is unparliamentary.

I just have a very simple question. This is for the finance minister, if she is not still in hiding. The finance minister said she does not want welders to have to pay more. Will she put an amendment in her tax bill to say that not one single welder would face a tax increase?

• (1445)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in any given year, 0.13% of Canadians will pay a modest increase in their taxable gains. However, I hear the leader across, who has never seen a support for a single Canadian that he is prepared to vote for, talking about sidelining people. He sidelines that entire caucus in every single question period. We hear from him, yawning and yawning, giving misinformation all the time. He should unchain the rest of the people over there.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning, La Presse described the fiasco surrounding the app used by the Canada Border Services Agency, known as the assessment and revenue management system, or CARM. CARM is like ArriveCAN, an app with cost overruns amounting to \$300 million and counting.

Like ArriveCAN, the Canada Border Services Agency is behind its development too. Just like ArriveCAN, the Coradix company, now suspended from submitting government tenders, had a small contract in that. In short, it is a different app, but the same fiasco, the same entity responsible and the same government.

It sure seems like the wild west over at the agency, so what is the minister doing to set it straight?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we clearly understand the concerns of exporters and other Canadian businesses that deal with the Canada Border Services Agency. That is why we delayed a certain aspect of the app's rollout.

I am well aware of the concerns, and I am going to make sure that the CBSA does things the right way.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the CARM app is like ArriveCAN. It is a money pit. However, it is also like Phoenix in that it does not work. Enough is enough.

This is serious, since the app is supposed to collect duties at the Canada-U.S. border. Some 3.5 billion dollars' worth of transactions take place every day at the border. Imagine the chaos if it fails.

That is why, back in March, the Standing Committee on International Trade asked the Canada Border Services Agency for documents, including contingency plans in case the app stops working. It is now June, and the committee has not received anything.

Will the minister force the CBSA to hand over the documents so that the fiasco can be fixed?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will see to it that the CBSA provides the Standing Committee on International Trade with all the appropriate documents, that is, the requested documents.

I have also had a number of discussions with CBSA officials to ensure that the scenario the member is raising does not happen.

I will also continue to work with the CBSA.

[English]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Liberals are demanding I stop asking questions. I can understand why; the finance minister has gone into hiding and stopped answering them. She has claimed that no one except the richest 0.13% will pay any new tax, but the greatest university economist in Canada, Jack Mintz, has reported that 1.25 million will pay. Let us not dispute who is right or wrong.

Will the minister accept an amendment to her bill to ensure that not a single plumber will have to pay any extra taxes under this proposal?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can see how nervous and how anxious the Conservatives are. They spent eight weeks terrified of saying anything about capital gains, and today the Conservative leader is so anxious that he does not trust a single member of his caucus to say a word. I have sympathy for them because they have shown how phony they are. They have had a chance to be on the side of working people, on the side of fairness. They have shown whose side they are really on.

• (1450)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, will the finance minister exempt all carpenters from her tax increase, yes or no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we presented every single member of the House with a very clear and, actually, really easy choice. Do they think someone who makes a salary of \$58,000 a year, such as a person in Carleton whose only income is their wage, should pay tax at a higher marginal rate than someone earning capital gains of more than \$250,000 a year? It is not complicated, but it is complicated for them.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a lot of restaurant owners will pay this tax increase on their very first dollar of investment gains inside a company. That is a fact. They earn \$58,000 a year. It is a very simple question. If what I am saying is wrong, there is a very simple solution.

Will the minister commit to amending her bill to say that any retiring restaurant owner who has been earning \$58,000 a year will be fully exempt from any of these tax increases?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was once a Conservative prime minister. His name was John Diefenbaker. He was from the Prairies, like me and like the Conservative leader. He set up a royal commission on taxation, and Ken Carter led that commission. Ken Carter memorably said, “a buck is a buck is a buck.” He thought that all one’s income, whether it is a capital gain or is made through hard work, should be taxed. However, these Conservatives have shown their true colours. They are just not on the side of working people, and they are embarrassed.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, John Diefenbaker is from Saskatchewan, where there are lots of farmers. The member will not commit to amend her law to

Oral Questions

exempt carpenters or plumbers or retiring modest-income independent restaurant owners, so I have a very simple question.

Given we are in a food price crisis, will the finance minister amend her proposal to say that no farmer will pay higher taxes under this plan?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader is squirming. The Conservative leader is nervous, and I know why he is nervous. It is because we presented him with a very clear choice yesterday: One can be on the side of someone who sweats every day, who earns all their money through their paycheque, or someone who is earning more than \$250,000 in capital gains every single year. We know whose side we are on. Now we know whose side they are on, too.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, everyone wants to avoid a shutdown at Canada’s two biggest railways, and rail workers deserve the time needed to negotiate a fair deal. However, CP and CN seem to be trying to orchestrate a simultaneous work stoppage in order to force the workers’ hand. Now, the union has suggested staggering the negotiations in order to minimize the impacts. This seems to be in everyone’s best interest, but the companies have rejected it outright.

What will the minister do to support the union’s very reasonable request?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will make sure that both sides remain at the table and that they are fully supported by our federal mediation and conciliation service, which has a 96% success rate in preventing work stoppages and strikes. We stand with them. They are well supported at the table.

* * *

JUSTICE

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, for 30 years, Johannes Rivoire sexually abused children in Nunavut when he was supposed to be their priest. Instead of being tried for his crimes, Rivoire escaped to France. The churches failed the victims. The RCMP failed the victims. Now the federal governments keep failing the victims. He died before justice was ever served. People are still hurting. When will the government act to ensure the victims of Rivoire get the justice they deserve?

Oral Questions

• (1455)

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the sad history surrounding the abuses in the north with Reverend Rivoire is devastating. Many people have been impacted, and I have been able to speak to many survivors. He passed away recently, yet that does not bring justice to those who are seeking justice. We will continue to work and support the families and those who survived.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Winnipeg's downtown is full of historical buildings. One of our most iconic is the old Hudson's Bay building located at the corner of Portage Avenue and Memorial Boulevard. It holds a storied history for Winnipeggers. A vibrant downtown is vital for a strong economy. Over the past few months, our government has been working closely in collaboration with local first nations to revitalize the Bay building. The ability for first nations themselves to be at the forefront of such a development is critical.

Can the Minister responsible for PrairiesCan update the House on the co-operative work under way?

Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honour to make an announcement of a \$31-million investment into the former Hudson's Bay building in downtown Winnipeg. The plan that was developed by the Southern Chiefs' Organization includes over 350 affordable housing units, assisted living units for elders, a child care centre and amazing public spaces. What the Southern Chiefs' Organization, led by Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, is doing in Winnipeg stands as a prime example of economic reconciliation that the entire country of Canada can be proud of.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a wonderful grandmother, 93-year-old Liz Diachun, is severing a few lots off her long-time family farm to give to her kids and grandkids so that they can have a place to live in this terrible housing crisis. She was surprised to learn she is going to be paying this latest Liberal tax increase. She was asked, "Are you rich?" She said, "Are you kidding me? I am on a pension."

Will the finance minister amend her bill so that low-income grandmothers who are passing on a bit of land for their kids to live on will not be hit by this tax increase?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to share another quote: "the wealthiest 1% who own the most expensive and luxurious real estate and have in their portfolios the most stocks and bonds...will continue to see their net worth expand, having done nothing, by the way, to deserve that expanded net worth." That is a quote from the member for Carleton, but that was when he was being a fake populist. When they sell those assets, they accrue a capital gain. We think more of it should be taxed.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liz Diachun is not among the wealthy one per cent the member just described. She has a pension of probably \$45,000 a year. She is a grandmother who is simply trying to sever off a few lots so that her kids and her grandkids can have a place to live. Those lots have enough value that they will be hit by capital gains tax, and they are over \$250,000, so she will pay the 66% tax. Very simply, will the minister amend the law so that this wonderful grandmother does not have to pay higher taxes?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the Conservative leader is a bit confused; he seemed to think that the words I quoted were mine. I was, in fact, quoting him. I was quoting his words about the wealthiest 1% and their stock portfolios and luxury real estate, but that was back when the Conservative leader was pretending to be a friend of working people. He was pretending to be on the side of the little guy. Yesterday we learned that is just not true, but we are on the side of fairness.

• (1500)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is true that this government has unjustly enriched the wealthiest 1% with its inflationary policies. So, let us just make sure that no one else pays the bill for that. Will the minister accept an amendment to her proposal to ensure that the 99% of lowest-income earners do not pay this tax increase so this wonderful grandmother does not have to pay the bill?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader opposite has spent the entire question period talking about electricians, farmers, fishers and carpenters—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. government House leader can start from the top.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, the leader opposite cites electricians, carpenters and plumbers. I come from a family, as do many of us, of farmers and electricians and people who bring home a T4 slip at the end of the year. These people who earn an honest paycheque, what do they expect from their government? They expect tax fairness. We are asking all those who gain \$250,000 on their investments in a given year, 0.13% of the population, to pay a little bit more. I do not know any electricians who are in that category.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if that were true, then the Liberals would be prepared to put in writing, in the law, that no farmer, fisher or electrician will pay any new tax under this increase. Will they?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what will be in the law is that anyone who makes a capital gain over \$250,000 in a given year, the first \$250,000 being exempt, 50% inclusion rate, will pay 66%. That is less than what Brian Mulroney asked them to pay. It gets us closer to the fairness that is being asked for by the electricians, the farmers, the teachers, the nurses, the fishers, the people in Canada who expect us to stand up for tax fairness, and against that.

* * *

*[Translation]***JUSTICE**

Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker,

Allah, take care of these Zionist aggressors. Allah, take care of the enemies of the people of Gaza. Allah, identify them all, then exterminate them. And don't spare any of them.

That is what Adil Charkaoui said in Montreal on October 28, 2023.

He did not suffer any consequences because, in Canada, the law allows a person to ask for the extermination of an entire people under the cover of religion. The RCMP is calling for the modernization of the Criminal Code so that it will be better equipped to deal with hate crimes. The Bloc Québécois is proposing that this religious exemption be repealed.

Will the minister support us?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no form of hatred will ever be tolerated. Our government will always fight any form of hatred, whether it be discrimination, racism, Islamophobia or anti-Semitism. Religion must not become an excuse for spreading such hatred.

That is why the government introduced its bill to address online hate. I hope that the Bloc Québécois will support it.

Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government tells us that Canada is secular, but that is not true. The religious exemption is the opposite of secularism. It allows for the commission of a crime that would otherwise be punishable under the law. Hate speech incites violence.

Is it normal to be able to hide behind a god? Should the Criminal Code include religious exemptions, as in the current case, that justify calling for the extermination of people in the form of a prayer?

We know that is preposterous. The RCMP knows it. The government knows it.

Will the government vote in favour of the Bloc Québécois's bill and abolish the religious exemption?

● (1505)

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a secular country, a secular society. No form of hate speech will be accepted or tolerated. We have always fought against it and that is precisely why we introduced a bill to combat online hate, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and all forms of discrimination because hate, whether online or in the street, hurts individuals and society. I hope that the Bloc Québécois will vote with the government.

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister proposes this new tax increase on every single dollar that a fisherman earns inside of his small business. There is no \$250,000 exemption for him. Even if he just earns \$1,000, he will have to pay the tax increase. We forget that it is not just our wonderful farmers who feed us, but also our fishermen.

Will the finance minister amend her bill to ensure that there will not be a single fish harvester anywhere in Canada who will face a tax increase?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I grew up in Atlantic Canada. I grew up as the grandson of two dairy farmers. I grew up around an awful lot of fishers. I grew up around people who worked with their hands and did not think that electricians got electricity from the sky, but rather by plugging into the wall.

What I would like to challenge the leader to do is this. He should gather all of the electricians who think they should not pay for capital gains of over \$250,000, and I will get together all the electricians who think that a buck is a buck is a buck, and we will compare—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. leader of the official opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, will the Liberals exempt electricians from this tax hike?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the past couple of years, the Conservative leader has been cosplaying as a friend of union workers, but yesterday we called his bluff, and Conservatives know it.

Here is what the president of the CLC said: “With this vote [the Conservative leader] has shown that he believes that an ordinary worker flipping burgers for a living should be taxed on 100% of their income while his CEO friends making millions of dollars from flipping stocks should be taxed only on half of that income”.

That is what the Conservatives believe, and it is shameful.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are many union workers who have rental properties that they invest in. Will the minister make the commitment that no union worker will have to pay this tax increase?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know which union workers the member has been talking to, but the union workers I talk to, those we talk to and have dialogue with, and whom the finance minister just quoted, are people who believe in solidarity, who believe in caring for others, who believe in dental plans, child care, the Canada child benefit and every other single thing that the leader has voted against, the very things that this fairness tax measure will pay for.

Oral Questions

Therefore, yes, we accept the leader's challenge. Let us talk to union members and see what side of the equation they come down on.

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSING

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. We know that people in vulnerable situations struggle to find affordable housing that meets their needs. We need to build more homes and make the housing market fairer for everyone.

Can the Minister of Veterans Affairs tell us what the government is doing to ensure that Canadians can access safe, affordable housing?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague for his important question.

Our government is working hard to get more affordable housing built. This year, I had the privilege of announcing \$6.7 million in funding to build more housing in my beautiful riding of Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe. This funding will help people experiencing homelessness as well as women and children fleeing domestic violence to have access to housing. Our government will always be there to support Canadians.

* * *

● (1510)

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, would the minister accept an amendment to her proposed tax hike to exempt carpenters, plumbers, electricians and farmers, yes or no?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that fairness is at the core of who we are as Canadians. The people of Shawinigan, like the people of Ottawa and Carleton, understand that equity is fundamental in a fair and equitable society. That is why we made it the basis of what we presented in the last federal budget.

That is why the changes to capital gains will allow us to reinvest in the economy, reinvest in our workers and reinvest in housing. Lo and behold, the Conservatives are against tax fairness. Who would have thought it? They are against tax fairness.

On this side of the House, we will always side with workers, we will always side with the middle class, and we will always side with Canadians.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, using Statistics Canada data, Dr. Jack Mintz calculated that 50% of those who will pay this tax increase earn less than \$120,000 a year and that 10% earn less than \$18,000 a year.

We do not have to dispute these numbers. Why do we not just make it simple and make it clear?

Will the minister accept an amendment to exempt anyone who earns less than \$120,000 a year from this tax increase, yes or no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, actually, there is a \$250,000 threshold, so the new rate kicks in only after one has made \$250,000 in capital gains in a given year. I do want to continue to help educate the Conservative leader. I am going to point him to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I cannot hear any of that, so I am going to allow the Deputy Prime Minister to restart.

The hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful, because it does seem that the Conservative leader, who for baffling reasons wants to take all the questions, maybe to show off his ignorance, does not actually understand—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to retract that and finish. I gave enough grace to allow her to repeat.

The hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I retract that. Let me just say that it was baffling to me that the Conservative leader is taking all the questions to show that he does not really understand what we are doing, but it gives me a chance to explain it to him.

It only kicks in after \$250,000 of capital gains, this new level.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just gave that minister more than 20 opportunities to prove that what she was saying was true. I asked her, and she refused, if she would give an exemption to her tax hike to carpenters, farmers, fishermen, plumbers, union workers, restaurant owners and electricians. She said no. She said no to exempting people who earn less than \$120,000 a year. Why? It is because we know that that is exactly who she is going after. She is going to rob the people who pay the bills in this country, to pay for her obese and out-of-control spending.

Why will she not finally end the rip-off?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, our government gave every single Conservative MP a chance to stand on the side of working people, of teachers, of nurses, of electricians, of carpenters and of welders. They cannot wiggle out of the shocking position they took. They took a position on the side of multi-millionaires, against working people and against fairness. Now, all Canadians know where they stand.

HOUSING

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I come from a community that is filled with good, hard-working people. The small city realities do not always look the same as that of someone who lives in big urban centres, but they do face many of the same challenges when it comes to housing. I am proud that our government has stepped up to tackle the housing crisis. This challenge requires bold, outside-the-box thinking, including seeking innovative ideas—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1515)

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to take a break here. I will allow the hon. member to restart.

The hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay has the floor.

Mr. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, I come from a community, Saint John—Rothesay, that is filled with good, hard-working people. Their small city realities do not always look the same as that of someone who lives in big urban centres, but they do face many of the same challenges when it comes to housing. I am proud that our government has stepped up to the plate to tackle the housing crisis. This challenge requires bold, outside-the-box thinking, including innovative ideas from all corners of our country.

Can the Minister of Rural Economic Development and ACOA tell us how our government is ensuring that smaller regions can play a role in the team Canada approach to housing solutions?

Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my friend from Saint John—Rothesay is right. Innovative housing solutions are all across the country, and that is why our government is investing in companies, such as Kent Homes in New Brunswick, that are doing state-of-the-art home manufacturing. Our regional development agencies, such as ACOA, are helping to turbocharge innovative construction. Through budget 2024, the agencies are investing in new building technologies, such as panelized 3-D construction modular homes.

Canadians have rejected the opposition leader's weak, do-nothing approach to housing. We are getting houses built. We have a real plan in place, and we are getting the job done.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, just three years after a London family was murdered in an Islamophobic attack, another London family's home was set on fire. The police are investigating this crime as hate-motivated, as the family had publicly expressed support for Palestinian human rights.

Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian racism and all forms of hate must be condemned wherever it occurs, and the government needs to do more to root out racism so people can feel safe. Will the Liberals finally step up to provide support to my community and all those impacted by hate-motivated attacks?

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over these past eight years,

Oral Questions

we have worked extremely hard to make sure that we are combating racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism among all of our communities all across the country. We have had so many great achievements, including what is now our anti-racism strategy.

We will continue to work with partners in all levels of government, including civil society, to ensure that we are supporting communities such as the member's.

* * *

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, the government repeatedly said that the Canada disability benefit would lift hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty. In doing so, it gave the disability community hope, but now we know it was all a charade. Documents recently tabled show, by the government's own estimates, that less than 2% of folks with disabilities will be lifted above the poverty line, and not until 2028.

How does the Deputy Prime Minister justify extinguishing this hope, and will she right this wrong?

Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the first time in Canadian history, we have a federal disability benefit that is going to strengthen the financial security of more than 600,000 persons with disabilities. The initial investment of \$6.1 billion in budget 2024 is the next step to get this benefit out to Canadians.

We know that there is more to do. We are committed to doing this work alongside provinces and territories to make sure that there are no clawbacks. We are committed to this, and we are going to get it done.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following—

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I am already hearing a number of noes.

The hon. leader of the official opposition has the floor.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I do not even know what the member is asking for. I cannot hear him.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Private Members' Business

The Deputy Speaker Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot hear anything, so I would not know whether it is in order or it is not. The leader of the official opposition has the floor until I say otherwise.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House call on the Liberal government to enshrine into law that the bottom 99.8%—

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I will consult for a second here.

I guess we do not have consent, so I apologize to the hon. member.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1520)

[*English*]

NATIONAL STRATEGY ON BRAIN INJURIES ACT

The House resumed from June 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-277, An Act to establish a national strategy on brain injuries, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 3:20 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-277 under Private Members' Business.

Call in the members.

● (1530)

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

(*Division No. 812*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultair
Albas
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerice
Bragdon
Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings
Carr
Casey
Chagger

Aitchison
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barlow
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Berthold
Bezan
Bittle
Blanchette-Jonas
Block
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brassard
Brock
Calkins
Caputo
Carrie
Chabot
Chahal

Chambers
Champoux
Chen
Chong
Collins (Victoria)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Damoff
Davidson
DeBellefeuille
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Doherty
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Green
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfner
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Jivani
Joly
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khanna
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Kwan
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Majumdar
Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)

Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper
Coteau
Dalton
Dancho
Davies
Deltell
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Dowdall
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ehsassi
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Falk (Provencher)
Ferrerri
Findlay
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Gaaney
Garrison
Gazan
Genuis
Gill
Godin
Gould
Gray
Guilbeault
Hallan
Hardie
Hoback
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Jeneroux
Johns
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khalid
Khara
Kmiec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maguire
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)

Private Members' Business

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of the motion that Bill C-332, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (coercive control of intimate partner), be read the third time and passed.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-332 under Private Member's Business.

● (1545)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 813)

YEAS

Members

Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Murray
Muys	Naqvi
Nater	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Patzner
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Poilievre	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rood
Rota	Ruff
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seebach	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shiplay	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weiler	Wilkinson
Williams	Williamson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 324

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Blair

Gallant — 2

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

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

Routine Proceedings

Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Rayes	Redekopp
Ferreri	Fillmore	Reid	Rempel Garner
Findlay	Fisher	Richards	Roberts
Fonseca	Fortier	Robillard	Rodriguez
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Rogers	Romanado
Fraser	Freeland	Rood	Rota
Fry	Gaheer	Ruff	Sahota
Gainey	Garon	Sajjan	Saks
Garrison	Gaudreau	Samson	Sarai
Gazan	Généreux	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Genuis	Gerretsen	Scheer	Schiefke
Gill	Gladu	Schmale	Seeback
Godin	Goodridge	Serré	Sgro
Gould	Gourde	Shanahan	Sheehan
Gray	Green	Shields	Shipley
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Hallan	Hanley	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Hardie	Hepfner	Singh	Small
Hoback	Holland	Sorbara	Soroka
Housefather	Hughes	Sousa	Steinley
Hussen	Hutchings	Ste-Marie	Stewart
Iacono	Idlout	St-Onge	Strahl
Ien	Jaczek	Stubbs	Sudds
Jeneroux	Jivani	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Johns	Joly	Thériault	Thomas
Jones	Jowhari	Thompson	Tochor
Julian	Kayabaga	Tolmie	Trudel
Kelloway	Kelly	Turnbull	Uppal
Khalid	Khanna	Valdez	Van Bynen
Khera	Kitchen	van Koeverden	Van Popta
Kmiec	Koutrakis	Vandal	Vandenbeld
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Vidal	Vien
Kurek	Kusie	Viersen	Vignola
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Villemure	Virani
Lake	Lalonde	Vis	Vuong
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux	Wagantall	Warkentin
Lantsman	Lapointe	Waugh	Webber
Larouche	Lattanzio	Weiler	Wilkinson
Lauzon	Lawrence	Williams	Williamson
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Yip	Zahid
Lehoux	Lemire	Zarrillo	Zuberi— 324
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)		
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert		NAYS
Lightbound	Lloyd	Nil	
Lobb	Long		PAIRED
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)		Members
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)		
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Maguire	Majumdar	Blair	Gallant— 2
Maloney	Martel		
Martinez Ferrada	Masse		The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)		(Bill read the third time and passed)
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)	Mazier		[English]
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)		The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because
McGuinty	McKay		of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be ex-
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean		tended by 24 minutes.
McLeod	McPherson		
Melillo	Mendès		
Mendicino	Miao		
Michaud	Miller		
Moore	Morantz		
Morrice	Morrison		
Morrissey	Motz		
Murray	Muys		
Naqvi	Nater		
Ng	Noormohamed		
Normandin	O'Connell		
Oliphant	O'Regan		
Patzer	Paul-Hus		
Pauzé	Perkins		
Perron	Petitpas Taylor		
Plamondon	Poilievre		
Powlowski	Qualtrough		

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, 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 seven petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the following five reports of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, respecting its participation in the 68th Annual Session in Madrid, Spain, from November 18 to 21, 2022; the Bureau Meeting and Joint Meetings of the Defence and Security Committee, the Economics and Security Committee and the Political Committee in Brussels, Belgium, from February 19 to 22, 2023; the Bureau Meeting and Spring Session in Luxembourg, Luxembourg, from May 19 to 22, 2023; the 69th Annual Session in Copenhagen, Denmark, from October 6 to 9, 2023; and finally, the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities' in Boston, Massachusetts; New Haven, Connecticut; and New York, New York, United States of America from March 11 to 15, 2024.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present, in both official languages, two reports of the Canadian branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for the following activities: the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians workshop on Champions for Gender Equality held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from December 6 to 8, 2023; and the Bilateral Visit To Barbados and Saint Lucia from March 3 to 9, 2024.

[Translation]

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the following reports of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, or APF, respecting its participation at the meeting of the APF Cooperation and Development Committee and Symposium on Scientific Information in Parliaments held in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, from May 24 to 26, 2023, and at the bureau meeting of the APF held in Brussels, Belgium, from January 25 to 28, 2024.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament entitled "Certificate of Nomination of Christine Ivory to the Position of Parliamentary Librarian".

• (1550)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 19th report of the Standing Committee on International Trade, entitled "A Canada-Ecuador Trade Agreement: Selected Canadian Priorities".

LIAISON

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 107(3), I have the honour to

Routine Proceedings

present, in both official languages, the 9th report of the Liaison Committee, entitled "Committee Activities and Expenditures April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024".

This report highlights the work and accomplishments of each committee and details the budgets that fund the activities approved by committee members. It is a very interesting report of all the work that all of the different standing committees have done in the last year.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, entitled "Invisible No More. The Experiences of Canadian Women Veterans".

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

[Translation]

On behalf of the committee members and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the women veterans who appeared before the committee and told us their stories. By tabling this unanimous report with its 42 recommendations, we hope that women veterans will no longer be invisible and that they will no longer feel invisible.

I thank the committee members for working on this study in a collaborative, non-partisan manner. The committee would like to sincerely congratulate analyst Jean-Rodrigue Paré, who did an outstanding job.

[English]

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a veteran myself, I am honoured and privileged to present a supplemental report on behalf of the common-sense Conservative members of the veterans affairs committee.

This historic report on the experience of women veterans has long been overdue and covers many important issues that face the women who answer the call of service. We were disappointed, though, that there were parties at the committee who intentionally avoided issues that reflected poorly on the government by omitting testimony and recommendations on the issues of the housing crisis and the cost of living crisis affecting more veterans each year; the unique medical needs of women veterans and all veterans; the backlog at Veterans Affairs keeping our women veterans and all veterans from receiving the care and support they needed; and education, training, and family support for women veterans, all veterans and their families.

These issues are important, and the women who had the courage to come and share their experiences with the committee on these issues deserve to have their voices heard, even if the government does not want to hear them.

Routine Proceedings

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent for the Bloc and the NDP to present their supplementary opinion to the report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs entitled "Invisible No More. The Experiences of Canadian Women Veterans."

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am truly honoured to have participated in this study. I am also very pleased with the participation of the 100 or so witnesses whom we brought in. Approximately 40 or 50 of them are here in the gallery today. They spoke on behalf of 75,000 Canadians, including 15,000 Quebecers.

What remains to be done is the most challenging, most demanding, most important and most crucial step: implementing these 42 recommendations. Among other things, I personally would like to see a work of art erected to honour women veterans. This is one of the report's recommendations.

The Government of Canada has only contributed one work of art, whereas there are closer to 100 for male Canadian veterans. We hope that the government will take a step in this direction. We hope that these women, who were once invisible, can now take their place with honour.

• (1555)

[English]

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I apologize. I inadvertently missed the first vote, and I am seeking unanimous consent to have my vote counted.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have consent to have his vote recorded?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. minister, how will you vote?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Mr. Speaker, I vote yea.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on a personal level, the study has been one of the most painful and beautiful studies I have ever been part of, but we have to remember that the study exposes how women are treated by systems they committed themselves to in order to serve us all.

When women were finally allowed into the CAF, there was no work done to include them. Inclusion matters, and the lack of inclusion created invisibility, a wound that has not yet been healed. This violated women's safety. It made them targets. They were wearing uniforms and equipment made for men, not for women's bodies. Little access or research for medical care for women was included, and there was no space created for military women to have a safe place to report military sexual trauma. This limited their ability to thrive. I want to be clear that they still fought for Canadians.

I hope every Canadian reads the report, listens to the voices and makes visible what was invisible for so long. I call on the government to complete all recommendations. We cannot squander the hope of the beautiful women who reported to us in this place.

STRONGER SENTENCES FOR SAFER STREETS ACT

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-394, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (importing, exporting and producing certain substances).

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the stronger sentences for safer streets act. Drug overdoses kill 22 Canadians per day, and 82% of those deaths involve fentanyl. Producers, importers and exporters of dangerous drugs are benefiting from Liberal soft-on-crime policies like Bill C-5, which eliminated mandatory jail time for those who prey on vulnerable Canadians suffering from addiction.

The Prime Minister has sent a clear message to criminals and criminal organizations that they can operate in Canada with near impunity. The bill before us would target the criminals who are fuelling an industry that is built on pain, misery and death. The stronger sentences for safer streets act would reinstate mandatory jail time for criminals who produce, import and export dangerous drugs like meth, heroin, cocaine and fentanyl. It is impossible to address the opioid crisis in Canada without acknowledging the growing criminal involvement.

The bill is common-sense legislation to combat crime and crack down on criminals who are peddling poison in our communities.

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

* * *

• (1600)

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-395, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (public transit workers).

She said: Mr. Speaker, 10 year ago, lawmakers took a crucial step to support frontline transit workers by broadening sentences for assaults on drivers. However, even at that time, we acknowledged that there was more work to be done.

Each year, thousands of on-duty transit workers face violence while serving our communities. They ensure that our trips are smooth, safe and comfortable, and yet each day we hear stories from these workers saying that they are victims of assaults that range from verbal abuse to life-altering physical attacks.

The bill would extend protections to essential transit workers who were left out in 2014. Constituents within the riding of Waterloo and across the country expect the House to act. Together, let us give the legislation the smooth journey that transit workers strive to give us every day, because doing our jobs means protecting transit workers and their jobs.

[Translation]

I hope that everyone will work together to support this bill.

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

* * *

[English]

STOPPING THE TAX ON THE CARBON TAX ACT

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-396, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act (carbon pollution pricing).

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table my private member's bill, the stop taxing the tax act.

A growing majority of Canadians are frustrated with the ever-increasing NDP-Liberal carbon tax, but they are furious to know that, in addition to having to pay the ever-increasing carbon tax, they are forced to pay the GST on top of it. That means there is a tax on a tax.

We know the government has a tax obsession when it taxes a tax. The independent Parliamentary Budget Officer has done the estimation, and \$600 million per year right now is being collected from taxing the carbon tax with GST. That revenue will go up to \$1 billion per year in the coming years as the NDP and Liberals plan to quadruple the carbon tax from its current rate. That means that between now and the end of March 2031, Canadians will be out-of-pocket \$5.7 billion.

After nine years, Canadians are struggling. They cannot afford an ever-increasing carbon tax, and even more than that, they cannot afford to be taxed on that tax when it comes to their gas, groceries and home heating.

I look forward to debating the common-sense Conservative bill that would end the crazy idea of taxing a tax.

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

* * *

EXCISE TAX ACT

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-397, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Department of Employment and Social Development Act.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to table my first private member's bill.

Routine Proceedings

In 2020, I was in the U.K. when my mother passed away. As members know, when a loved one passes away there are a lot of administrative processes people have to go through. The private member's bill I am proposing is based on a U.K. model called "Tell Us Once", where, rather than going to many different places to cancel government services, people can go to the Onestop Solutions website, where they can report the passing of a loved one and all services are cancelled at once.

In addition to that, it would remove all of the GST, the federal tax, from anything to do with the passing of a loved one; funeral costs, a tombstone or anything to do with the cost of a funeral would be exempted from the federal portion of the tax.

I would like to thank the seconder of my bill. I also thank the House for this opportunity.

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

* * *

● (1605)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam 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, special order, or usual practice of the House, when Bill C-70, An Act respecting countering foreign interference, is called later today, it shall be disposed of as follows:

(a) the report stage motion in amendment, standing on the Notice Paper in the name of the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, be deemed adopted;

(b) the bill, as amended, be deemed concurred in at report stage with a further amendment;

(c) the bill shall be taken up immediately at the third reading stage and a member of each recognized party and a member of the Green Party each speak for not more than 10 minutes followed by five minutes for questions and comments, provided, if required, that Government Orders be extended to complete the said stage of the Bill; and

(d) at the expiry of the time provided for the debate at third reading later today, or when no member wishes to speak, whichever is earlier, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment, and a recorded division shall be deemed requested and deferred until tomorrow after Oral Questions.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

Routine Proceedings

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

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS**STRIPED BASS FISHING**

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Madam Speaker, the mission of the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs is to represent and defend the interests of Quebec hunters and fishers.

I would like to commend its president, Marc Renaud, and Mathieu Martin, the sponsor of petition e-4831, which was signed by nearly 6,000 people who are calling on the government to authorize striped bass fishing in the St. Lawrence and the Saguenay River to ensure the survival of various species. The reason is simple. The reintroduction of the striped bass was successful and its population in the seaway and the Saguenay river is now abundant and stable. Allowing this species to be fished will contribute to biodiversity conservation, which is essential.

As a small reminder, hunters are not criminals. The government is off the mark.

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I rise to table a petition signed by members of the Sikh community across the country. They petition the House to formally recognize the state-organized and sponsored killing of Sikhs in India in 1984 as a genocide. As well, they petition the House to recognize this genocide this year, as it is the 40th anniversary of this genocide.

They also ask that the House confirm its belief in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and affirm that India must use all measures available to ensure anyone responsible for this genocide is held to account, including criminal prosecution.

ACCESS TO MEDICINES

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am rising to table a petition on behalf of residents from my community of Kelowna—Lake Country and the surrounding region.

To summarize, cystic fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease, affecting 4,338 Canadian children and young adults, and there is no cure. Trikafta is a life-changing medicine that treats the basic defect of cystic fibrosis, not just the symptoms. It can treat almost 95% of Canadians with cystic fibrosis, but not all can access it.

Therefore, petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to, first, improve access to rare disease medications by empowering Health Canada to expedite use of patient and laboratory in vitro data to expand access to drugs for rare diseases mutations where clinical trials are not feasible, and second, develop a regulatory model

that would permit bulk approvals of gene mutations that can respond to precision medicines such as Trikafta.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to present today. The first petition is from Canadians who are very concerned with the case of Hassan Diab, who spent three years mostly in solitary confinement in France without charge.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to formally declare that Canada will neither accept nor agree to any second request from the French government for Hassan Diab's extradition.

● (1610)

GAZA

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, the second petition I am tabling today has over 17,000 signatures, and it is from Canadian citizens who are very concerned about the war crimes and the crimes against humanity since October 2023.

The people who have signed this petition are asking for sanctions on the Government of Israel and for the return of all hostages. They note that there is generational trauma being caused by this occupation, and they ask for the Government of Canada to please take action.

The final petition I am tabling today is calling on the Government of Canada to continue funding for UNRWA amid the horrifying crisis we are seeing in Gaza and to make sure the support for humanitarian principles is expressed very clearly by the government.

BIRD WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am rising to present a petition from concerned residents of Nova Scotia, so not my riding, but they have reached out to me concerning a land-based testing facility being built by the Department of National Defence. It threatens a forested area where there is a bird observation site, which is the nesting and feeding ground for thousands of migratory birds. The public consultation was rushed, and the petitioners urge that the House review what the Hartlen Point development would do. They are asking for a full and transparent consultation, inquiry and review before building these DND facilities.

Mr. Gord Johns: Madam Speaker, this is a timely petition, given that the last five summers children in my riding have had to deal with smoky skies due to forest fires as we see a warming climate. The petitioners call on the government and all members of Parliament, regardless of party lines, to consult with secondary or elementary school leadership, student councils or environmental youth groups—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that they need to have a tie on in order to rise in the House.

CARBON PRICING

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

The first petition draws the attention of the House to, after eight years, it being clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost, the crime, or the corruption. The petition goes on to say that this failed Prime Minister and his failed NDP Liberal government have increased the cost of everything and have failed to take responsibility for their failures. The petitioners further note that crime, chaos, drugs and disorder are filling our streets due to the failed policies of the Prime Minister and his NDP-Liberal government. Therefore, the petitioners call on the House to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, stop the crime and, further, to hold a televised carbon tax conference.

I know members across the way are enjoying this. They should listen as they could learn something.

The petitioners finally call on the House to immediately voice its non-confidence in the failed NDP-Liberal government and bring about a carbon tax election in which Canadians would be able to vote to end the carbon tax everywhere and for good.

Of course, I table petitions in the House regardless of whether I personally agree with them or not, but I am happy to put this petition before the House.

The second petition I am presenting draws the attention of the House to the Liberals' imposed carbon tax and how it will continue to drive up the cost of home heating for Canadians. In Canada, heating one's home in the winter is not a luxury. It is a necessity and, after eight years of the Liberal government, Canadians now must decide whether to heat their homes or put food on their tables. Petitioners further say that never before in Canadian history have Canadians paid more in tax than under the Liberal government and that inflation has caused massive increases to costs faced by non-profits and registered charities, which are further compounded by the carbon tax.

Therefore, the petitions, citizens and residents of Canada, call upon the House to cancel the tripling of the carbon tax on home heating, ensure no new taxes for Canadians and ensure that Canadians are being put first, for their families, their paycheques, their homes and their futures.

This is another petition for members across the way to reflect on, and all members of the House, I am sure.

• (1615)

FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the next petition that I am tabling is in support of a private member's bill, coincidentally put forward in the House by me. The private member's bill is Bill C-257. This is a private member's bill that would add political belief and activity as prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The petitioners note that our country is better off when people are free to be politically active without fear of reprisal for their po-

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litical activities. They call on the House to support Bill C-257 and to defend the rights of all Canadians to peacefully express their political opinions.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the next petition is signed by members of the Eritrean community. It highlights a number of different human rights abuses that have taken place and are taking place in Eritrea. It notes that Eritrea has been ruled by an authoritarian, brutal dictator under a totalitarian system for the last 30 years with no constitution, no elections, no parliament, no freedom of the press and no freedom of movement or association. Eritreans continue to flee indefinite military conscription, religious persecution and political repression, causing them to take asylum in various places around the world.

In addition to human rights abuses happening in Eritrea, petitioners highlight concerns about foreign interference here in Canada driven by the Eritrean regime, particularly the harassment and intimidation of members of the freedom-loving Eritrean diaspora who have fled to Canada. The petitioners also note that the Eritrean dictator is part of an axis of like-minded hostile authoritarian countries and collaborates with the Putin regime and other hostile belligerent states.

Therefore, petitioners call on the government and the House to engage Eritrean political and human rights activists and pro-democracy groups to take a leadership role among western allies, to challenge the Eritrean dictator's malicious conspiracy with Putin, to investigate foreign interference of Eritrea in Canada and to take the appropriate action, including rejection of entry visas and the denial of event permits against all front organizations, individuals and events enabling their interference. They also call on the government to enforce Canada's asylum laws against those who explicitly provide material and political support to that regime and to advocate for the release of a number of imprisoned journalists and Eritrean parliamentarians, namely Dawit Isaak, Petros Solomon, Mahmoud Ahmed Sherifo, Haile Woldense, Ogbe Abraha, Hamid Himid, Saleh Idris Kekya, Estifanos Seyoum, Berhane Ghebregziher, Astier Fesehazion, Germano Nati and Beraki Gebreselassie. Finally, they call on the government to strengthen sanctions against human rights abusers in Eritrea.

I want to thank the community for working hard on this petition, and I am honoured to share their concerns with the House.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. Seriously, there are other members who are waiting to present their petitions. We have a 15-minute period. We cannot let one member monopolize the entire petition time.

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All members know full well that, when presenting petitions, hon. members should be providing a brief summary of what their petition is about. Therefore, I would hope that the hon. member who has the floor is able to finish his petition. He does have a variety of petitions, so I do appreciate the fact that he is presenting those. I know that there are lots of members wanting to table petitions, but the hon. member has the floor and I will let him table his petitions. Again, I ask that he summarize them briefly, as is described in the policy.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, it was my understanding that I had been called on last. However, if there are others, I also have dozens of—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This is not an opportunity for debate. There are others who want to present petitions, but I will allow the hon. member to finish presenting his petitions.

FALUN GONG

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will continue.

The next petition I am tabling is regarding the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. Petitioners draw attention to the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong practitioners by the Chinese Communist Party, and they outline in this petition various aspects of the history of that persecution. The petitioners call on Parliament and the government to condemn that persecution, to continue our work to combat forced organ harvesting and to take additional steps to stand up for those who face this persecution in the People's Republic of China.

• (1620)

WOMEN'S SHELTERS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the next petition that I would like to table is regarding funding cuts to women's shelters, which the NDP-Liberal government has chosen. The petitioners note that, at a time when we are seeing a dramatic increase in spending on bureaucracy and outside consultants, the government chose to cut \$145 million of funding to women's shelters. This demonstrates a strange prioritization when it comes to government spending. Petitioners call on the government to restore funding for women's shelters in Canada.

Next, I am tabling a petition—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, we have a practice in the House, as members know, that when there are multiple petitions, one member presents two or three petitions and then it moves on to other members. There are other members waiting to present petitions.

Madam Speaker, you have the ability to cut that member off. Otherwise, we could all bring a stack of 100 petitions and monopolize

the entire 15 minutes. There needs to be a sharing of time during petitions.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It has not been the practice of the House to cut members off.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Gord Johns: Madam Speaker, I can tell you that I have presented petitions and been cut off at the one-minute mark multiple times.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is now becoming more of a point of debate. I just want to remind members to please be mindful that there are others who want to present petitions.

I would ask others not to incite members while I am speaking to them about whether they are going to continue on their petitions, but I do want to ask the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to briefly summarize his petitions so that others can present theirs as well.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I was intending to wrap up shortly, but I am tempted not to because of the badgering of the formerly tieless member from the NDP—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I know that there are points of order. The hon. member is well aware that one member attempted to present a petition but did not have a tie on, and that has put things back for that particular member. I want to remind members to please be brief on their summaries.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have one petition, and I will endeavour to conclude it with time remaining in spite of the rude interruptions of my colleague from the NDP. This petition is regarding a previous call by a witness before a committee to legalize euthanasia for babies.

The petitioners are deeply horrified by the suggestion that the government might consider legalizing euthanasia for children. They call on the House to recognize that infanticide, the killing of children, at any age and stage is always wrong, and they call on the Government of Canada to block any attempt to legalize this in Canada.

I have many more petitions, but I will leave it there and return at a future point for those.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would just like to ask for unanimous consent to make sure that the remaining people who want to present petitions are able to do so today.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is there consent?

An hon. member: No.

GAZA

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will try to go quickly because, unlike the Conservatives, I am actually concerned about other members in the House.

Hundreds of constituents in the riding of Waterloo are petitioning the House of Commons, drawing to its attention what is taking place in Israel and Gaza, which has resulted in thousands of deaths. They are calling on Parliament to do everything in our power to bring an immediate and permanent ceasefire to that region. They are asking that we impose a two-way arms embargo, including arms trades via the United States and so forth.

They are asking Canada to do whatever we can to end the situation in Gaza. There have been a lot of lives lost, and it is important that these voices be heard. I am proud to represent them through this petition in the House.

* * *

• (1625)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 2583, 2590, 2596 and 2597.

[Text]

Question No. 2583—**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:**

With regard to Health Canada (HC), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and any communications in 2020 or 2021 regarding mask exemptions, COVID-19 vaccines, medications to treat COVID-19, or any other public health messaging about COVID-19: (a) did (i) the Minister of Health, (ii) the Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Steven Lucas, (iii) the Chief Public Health Officer, (iv) the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, (v) the Chief Medical Officer at Health Canada, (vi) any personnel from HC, (vii) any personnel from the PHAC, (viii) any personnel from the NACI, (ix) any firm contracted by or through HC, PHAC, or NACI, communicate or correspond, directly or indirectly, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO); (b) if any of the answers to (a)(i) through (a)(ix) are affirmative, (i) when did these communications occur, (ii) what are the summaries of those communications; (c) did any of the individuals or agencies in (a)(i) through (a)(ix) of (a) communicate with the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC); and (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, what are the summaries of those communications?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a)(i), (ii), (v), (vi) and (ix), the Minister of Health and Health Canada officials did not communicate or correspond, directly or indirectly, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario or the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council in 2020 or 2021 regarding mask exemptions, COVID-19 vaccines, medications to treat COVID-19, or any other public health messaging about COVID-19.

In response to (a)(iii), (iv), (vii) and (ix), no officials from the Public Health Agency of Canada communicated or corresponded, directly or indirectly, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario or the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council in 2020 or 2021 regarding mask exemptions, COVID-19 vaccines, medications to treat COVID-19, or any other public health messaging about COVID-19.

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In response to (a)(viii) and (ix), the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, NACI, is an external advisory body that provides independent, expert advice to the Public Health Agency of Canada on the use of vaccines authorized in Canada. Neither NACI nor any personnel from NACI communicated or corresponded, directly or indirectly, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, nor communicated with the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council in 2020 or 2021 regarding mask exemptions, COVID-19 vaccines, medications to treat COVID-19, or any other public health messaging about COVID-19.

In response to part (b), the answer is N/A.

In response to part (c), see part (a).

In response to part (d), the answer is N/A.

Question No. 2590—**Mr. Tim Uppal:**

With regard to the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB): (a) what are the details of all advertisement campaigns by the CPPIB since November 4, 2015, including, for each, the (i) title, (ii) name of the advertising campaign, (iii) objective, (iv) total costs associated with the advertisement campaign, (v) breakdown of the costs; and (b) for each advertisement campaign in (a), was it (i) website based, (ii) paper based, (iii) radio based, (iv) television based?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that the CPPIB is neither a department nor an agency of the Crown and therefore does not fall within the same guidelines for disclosure. The CPPIB is subject to disclosure requirements as set out in the CPPIB Act and reports to federal and provincial finance ministers and Canadians.

Question No. 2596—**Ms. Louise Chabot:**

With regard to Site 06875001 – Camp Bouchard, Ex Ammo Dump, on the Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory: (a) what measures are currently underway to decontaminate the site; (b) what is the plan and timeline to decontaminate the site; and (c) what amounts have been allocated to decontaminate the site?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, federal contaminated sites are located on land owned or leased by the federal government, or on land where the federal government has accepted responsibility for the contamination. The Government of Canada has taken action through the federal contaminated sites action plan, FCSAP, and remains committed to properly managing those contaminated sites for which it is responsible. Through the FCSAP, National Defence is investing resources to clean up historical contamination and minimize future environmental impact from military activities.

Per the annually updated federal contaminated sites Inventory, there are 4,455 active sites, of which 944 are identified as low priority for action, including Camp Bouchard. As a low priority for action site, Camp Bouchard is not a risk to human health and safety. There is currently no ongoing soil contamination at Camp Bouchard, and a timeline for remediation has not yet been determined. The site's groundwater quality is also periodically tested, with the last tests conducted in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2597—Mr. Glen Motz:**

With regard to the Canada Border Services Agency's (CBSA) decision to have Employment Professionals Canada (EPC) as their permitted offload and reload service provider: (a) what are the details of the arrangement between the CBSA and EPC that requires truckers to use EPC's services during examination, including (i) when the agreement was signed, (ii) what the terms of the agreement (financial and otherwise) are, (iii) who at the CBSA authorized the agreement; (b) is the CBSA aware of the reports alleging that EPC is engaging in price gouging and charging some truckers thousands of dollars for re-loading services that were previously available to truckers, and, if so, what was the CBSA's reaction to these reports; (c) is the government concerned that the increased costs to truckers resulting from the use of EPC's services will be passed on to consumers, and, if so, what action will be taken in response; (d) does EPC provide the offloading and reloading services itself in all cases, or does it subcontract these services to other parties; (e) if EPC's services are subcontracted to other firms, why did the CBSA decide to pay a middleman rather than directly paying the vendor who provides the loading and offloading services; (f) does the CBSA pay EPC to be the provider or does EPC pay the CBSA for the right to be the exclusive supplier, and how much is being paid; (g) what measures, if any, has the CBSA put in place to ensure that truckers are not being charged more than the fair market rate for loading and offloading services; (h) prior to this arrangement with EPC, who provided these services and at what rate; (i) was there a conflict of interest analysis completed given EPC's involvement with other businesses within the supply chain space, and, if so, what were the results of that analysis; (j) do EPC's employees have the proper security clearance to provide these services, and who at CBSA is responsible for regularly ensuring those clearances are valid; and (k) was this a sole source contract?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a)(i), the current national offload agreement was signed on January 26, 2023.

In response to (a)(ii), this agreement is valid from February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025. This is a zero-sum agreement; therefore, there are no financial impacts nor financial gains/losses for the CBSA.

For more details pertaining to the national offload agreement, please visit National Offload Services - Tender Notice.

For the CBSA's policy on offload services for highway examinations, please visit the offload policy for highway examinations.

In response to (a)(iii), the agreement was authorized at the assistant deputy minister level by the CBSA's finance and corporate management branch, procurement and contracting division, in collaboration with the commercial and trade branch, commercial operations division.

In response to (b), the CBSA's current agreement with Employment Professionals Canada, EPC, was established following a competitive procurement process and utilizes set fees. Although inflation and other factors have contributed to price increases in all goods and services in recent years, the CBSA is presently working to tender a new agreement. The new agreement will incorporate a new fee structure, similar to that of the United States, U.S., which will allow for more pricing flexibility, for example, pay per pallet versus one flat fee. The new flexibilities within the fee structure are expected to alleviate many of the concerns expressed.

In response to (c), the CBSA remains mindful of impacts on internal and external stakeholders. The CBSA is working on adding new provisions in the new agreement to allow for more pricing flexibility for clients who choose to use the on-site service provider at designated commercial offices.

In response to (d), it is the sole responsibility of the carrier to present the goods for examination upon request from the CBSA within the prescribed timelines. In these cases, if the carrier avails themselves of EPC's services, then it will be the responsibility of EPC to offload the goods, present them for examination, then reload the goods. As per the agreement, the supplier must request and receive confirmation in writing of the contracting authority, in the CBSA, before the use of any subcontractors. The CBSA has not received any request from EPC and has not issued any confirmation to EPC related to the use of subcontractors.

In response to (e), the CBSA is not aware of EPC using subcontractors in the current context of this national offload agreement.

In response to (f), the CBSA's national offload contract is a zero-sum agreement; therefore, there are no financial obligations nor any gains/losses for the CBSA.

In response to (g), the CBSA used a competitive process to ensure fair price and open and transparent procurement. The resulting agreement utilizes the offloading rates defined within the policy for highway examinations to ensure cost remains the same regardless of where the service is being provided across Canada. If the carrier avails themselves of the service provider EPC, then all fees are charged and collected solely by EPC. Carriers are not obligated to use services provided by EPC.

In response to (h), prior to the current agreement, the CBSA ran multiple competitive bidding processes for the offload contract since 2015. EPC has been the provider since 2015. The rates have varied from agreement to agreement and were established by the service provider during the competitive bidding process.

In response to (i), this process was competitive and posted on the government tender website, Buyandsell, for any supplier to provide a bid, which included a ceiling price per service required. A conflict of interest analysis was not completed.

In response to (j), EPC resources have been validated and confirmed by the CBSA security division. Only a resource with a valid security clearance can perform work on this agreement. The service provider is responsible for initiating the security clearance process and will work with Public Services and Procurement Canada, PSPC, for the issuing of all employee security clearances. It is the responsibility of the service provider to maintain all security clearances to ensure they are valid. The CBSA is not involved in the security clearance process.

In response to (k), this process was competitive and posted on the government tender website, Buyandsell, for any supplier to provide a bid, which included a ceiling price per service required.

Routine Proceedings

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 2584 to 2589, 2591 to 2595 and 2598 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately in an electronic format.

[Translation]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2584—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to the Minister of Rural Economic Development's announcement on improving connectivity in rural Saskatchewan made on March 17, 2023, since the announcement: (a) how much of the \$37 million in announced funding has been spent to date; (b) what projects, if any, have received funding; and (c) have any of the Hanson Lake Road projects been approved for this funding, including (i) Hanson Lake Road A UBF-3500, (ii) Hanson Lake Road B UBF-3501, (iii) Hanson Lake Road C UBF-3502, (iv) Creighton UBF-3503, (v) Hanson Lake Road UBF-3506, (vi) other projects?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2585—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency, broken down by tax year since 2019: (a) how many trusts and corporations assessed and paid capital gains and what was the total amount of capital gains collected from this group; (b) how many trusts and corporations assessed and paid taxes on capital gains (i) of less than \$50,000, (ii) between \$50,000 and \$100,000, (iii) between \$100,000 and \$250,000, (iv) of more than \$250,000; and (c) for each group in (b), what was the total amount collected in taxes on capital gains?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2586—Mr. Eric Melillo:

With regard to the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, and the Auditor General of Canada's report entitled "Report 3 - First Nations and Inuit Policing Program": (a) what is the breakdown of the \$930 million in funding, referred to in paragraph 3.21 of the report, by province and territory; (b) how is the funding broken down by (i) self-administered police service agreements, (ii) Community Tripartite Agreements; (c) why, according to paragraph 3.23 of the report, didn't Public Safety Canada disburse about \$17 million of the \$196 million program funds available in the 2022-23 fiscal year; and (d) why, according to paragraph 3.24 of the report, didn't Public Safety Canada verify whether the funds transferred to the RCMP were being used for program costs, as opposed to other police services?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2587—Mr. Eric Melillo:

With regard to the National Trade Corridors Fund administered by Transport Canada, as of April 2024: (a) of the projects funded, how many (i) have not started, (ii) are underway, (iii) have been completed; and (b) for each project, what is the (i) timeline, (ii) objective, (iii) location?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2588—Mr. Eric Melillo:

With regard to government contracts with McKinsey & Company and the report from the Office of Procurement Ombud, entitled "Procurement Practice Review of Contracts Awarded to McKinsey & Company": (a) what are the details of the 25 non-competitive contracts listed on page four of the report, including, for each, (i) the date of the contract, (ii) the title, (iii) the file number, (iv) the value of each contract, (v) the department, (vi) the reason for sole sourcing, (vii) who authorized the sole sourcing, (viii) the purpose of the contract and services provided; (b) what are the details of the seven competitive contracts listed on page four of the report, including, for each, the (i) date of the contract, (ii) title, (iii) file number, (iv) value of the contract, (v) department, (vi) purpose of the contract and services provided; and

(c) why did the government change their procurement strategy to allow two contracts to be awarded to McKinsey & Company when they were originally ineligible, in the instance outlined on page six, paragraph 26 of the report?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2589—Mr. Tim Uppal:

With regard to government payments: how many recipients of (i) the Canada Pension Plan, (ii) Old Age Security, (iii) the Guaranteed Income Supplement, (iv) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (v) Employment Insurance benefits, (vi) the Child Tax benefit, (vii) Survivor's Pension, received their payments, broken down by method of receipt (e.g. direct deposit, physical cheque mailed by the government, etc.), by province or territory (or abroad, if applicable) and by year, since 2015?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2591—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to the number and value of contracts awarded to GC Strategies and Coredal Systems Consulting, from January 1, 2011, to February 16, 2024, that were provided by the Treasury Board Secretariat to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates on April 16, 2024: what are the details for each deliverable associated with the contracts, including, for each, the (i) date that the deliverable was finished, (ii) title, (iii) summary of the recommendations, (iv) file number, (v) website where the deliverable is available online, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2592—Mr. Richard Bragdon:

With regard to the government's participation in the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in Nairobi, Kenya: (a) what are the total expenditures incurred by the government to date related to the assembly, broken down by type of expense; (b) what was the total number of attendees that the government paid for, including the (i) official title and department or organization of each individual, (ii) total expenditures incurred for each entity in (i), broken down by type of expense; (c) for the delegation's accommodations in Kenya, (i) what hotels were used, (ii) how much was spent at each hotel, (iii) how many rooms were rented at each hotel and for how many nights, (iv) what were the room rates paid at each hotel and the number of rooms rented at each rate, (v) who stayed in each of the rooms in (iv), broken down by room rate; (d) what were the details of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's accommodation expenditures, including the (i) daily rate, (ii) accommodating venue; (e) what are the details of the total hospitality expenditures, broken down by (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) location, (iv) name of any commercial establishment or vendor involved in the hospitality activity, (v) number of attendees, (vi) the description of the event, (vii) the description of goods and services purchased; (f) what are the details of all ground transportation expenditures, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) vendor, (iv) point of origin, (v) destination, (vi) make and model of each vehicle used, (vii) type of vehicle (e.g. gas, electric, hybrid), (viii) whether a chauffeur or driver was included, (ix) names and titles of the passengers or individuals who incurred the expense; and (g) what are the details of all expenditures on gifts related to the assembly, including, for each, the (i) value, (ii) description, (iii) vendor from whom it was purchased, (iv) recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2593—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to the Community Futures Program, since 2019: outside of core funding, what are the details of all additional funding which has been given to organizations which implement the program such as the Community Futures Development Corporations, including, for each instance, the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) purpose of the funding, (v) program under which the funding was provided?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2594—Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to loans provided directly by regional development agencies under the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund: what are the details, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) advanced loan value, (iv) location of the borrower, (v) amount still owing?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2595—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the communities which comprise the federal electoral district of Courtenay—Alberni, since the 2005-06 fiscal year: (a) what are the federal housing investments, including direct transfers to the municipalities and First Nations, for the communities of (i) Tofino, (ii) Ucluelet, (iii) Port Alberni, (iv) Parksville, (v) Qualicum Beach, (vi) Cumberland, (vii) Courtenay, (viii) Deep Bay, (ix) Dashwood, (x) Royston, (xi) French Creek, (xii) Errington, (xiii) Coombs, (xiv) Nanoose Bay, (xv) Cherry Creek, (xvi) China Creek, (xvii) Bamfield, (xviii) Beaver Creek, (xix) Beaufort Range, (xx) Millstream, (xxi) Mt. Washington Ski Resort, broken down by fiscal year, total expenditure, and project; (b) what are the federal housing investments transferred to the (i) Comox Valley, (ii) Nanaimo, (iii) Alberni-Clayoquot, (iv) Powell River, Regional Districts, broken down by fiscal year, total expenditure, and project; and (c) what are the federal housing investments transferred to the Island Trusts of (i) Hornby Island, (ii) Denman Island, (iii) Lasqueti Island, broken down by fiscal year, and total expenditure?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2598—Ms. Kirsty Duncan:

With regard to duty of care of athletes and athlete accidents, injuries, concussions, eating disorders and mental health challenges: (a) does Canada have a duty of care to carded athletes, and, if so, what is the policy; (b) do (i) coaches, (ii) medical personnel, (iii) other individuals on an athlete's team, have a duty of care to carded athletes, and, if so, what is the policy; (c) do any of the provinces and territories recognize a duty of care to (i) young people participating in organized sport in school, (ii) athletes and young people participating in organized sport outside of school, and, if so, which provinces and territories, and what are their respective policies; (d) does Canada have a duty to report any abuse of athletes, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) is it immediate, (ii) is it direct, (iii) is it ongoing, (iv) does it address confidentiality, (v) does it require documenting action, (vi) what is the policy; (e) do any of the provinces and territories have a duty to report any abuse of children participating in organized sport in school, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) is it immediate, (ii) is it direct, (iii) is it ongoing, (iv) does it address confidentiality, (v) does it require documenting action, (vi) what are any policies; (f) do any of the provinces and territories have a duty to report any abuse of athletes and young people participating in organized sport outside of school, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) is it immediate, (ii) is it direct, (iii) is it ongoing, (iv) does it address confidentiality, (v) does it require documenting action, (vi) what are any policies;

(g) does a registry of athlete accidents and injuries in Canada, for carded athletes, exist, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) the physical and mental health injuries being tracked, (ii) the period for which injuries are tracked, (iii) the number of injuries, broken down by sport, (iv) the time lost from training, (v) the time lost from education, (vi) the time lost from work, (vii) the treatments required, (viii) whether the full cost of necessary treatment is covered, and by whom, (ix) any cost to the athlete for treatment, (x) long-term health impacts, if any; (h) do registries of athlete accidents and injuries in Canada exist at the provincial or territorial level, and, if so, what are the details, including, the (i) physical and mental health injuries being tracked, (ii) period for which injuries are tracked, (iii) number of injuries, broken down by sport, (iv) time lost from training, (v) time lost from education, (vi) time lost from work, (vii) treatments required, (viii) long-term health impacts, if any; (i) have any sport deaths occurred in Canada, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) the number of deaths, (ii) the year, (iii) the sport, (iv) the cause of death, (v) was there an investigation, (vi) were there recommendations to prevent similar accidents in the future; (j) have any sport paralysis cases occurred in Canada, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) the number of cases, (ii) the year, (iii) the sport, (iv) the cause of paralysis, (v) was there an investigation, (vi) were there recommendations to prevent similar accidents in the future;

(k) have any severe brain injury cases occurred in Canada because of sport, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) the number of cases, (ii) the year, (iii) the sport, (iv) the cause of the brain injury, (v) was there an investigation, (vi) were there recommendations to prevent a similar accident in the future, (vii) were there long-term health impacts, and, if so, what were they; (l) does a registry of concussions for carded athletes exist, and, if so, what are the details, including, (i) the con-

cussion rate among carded athletes, broken down by sport, (ii) whether the concussion rate is increasing or decreasing, broken down by sport, (iii) in which sports are concussions most prevalent; (m) how is "safe" defined with respect to head injuries; (n) are head injury protocols designed to be safe, broken down by sport; (o) how is "reasonable action" defined with respect to head injuries; (p) what National Sport Organizations (NSOs) take reasonable action to protect athletes from permanent injury caused by repetitive concussive and sub-concussive blows; (q) which, if any, NSOs have a policy regarding subclinical hits; (r) which, if any, NSOs have a policy regarding (i) head injury education, (ii) prevention of head injury, (iii) injury assessment, (iv) injury management; (s) do preventive head injury protocols exist, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) the sport, (ii) the protocol, (iii) how it reflects the best available science;

(t) what, if any, certification, and training is required of (i) coaches, (ii) trainers, (iii) members of an athlete's team, regarding mental health; (u) what, if any, work is being done to look at the mental health of carded athletes, including, but not limited to, (i) the creation of safe spaces, (ii) the consideration of stress, anxiety and depression, (iii) the consideration of cumulative impacts of injury, overtraining and uncertain futures, (iv), support before, during and after major competitions, (v) recognition of athletes' efforts; (v) what, if any, certification and training is required of (i) coaches, (ii) trainers, (iii) members of an athlete's team, on physical development, including basic needs, cognitive development, social development, risk, and resilience; and (w) is any tracking done regarding disordered eating rates among carded athletes, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) the rates, broken down by sport, (ii) whether eating disorders are increasing or decreasing, (iii) what, if any, work is being done regarding power dynamics and culture of dietary practices, (iv) who has the medical training to provide nutritional advice, (v) what, if any, work is being done regarding body shaming, (vi) what, if any, work is being done regarding reducing stigma?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

COUNTERING FOREIGN INTERFERENCE ACT

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (for the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs) moved that Bill C-70, An Act respecting countering foreign interference, be read the third time and passed.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak in support of Bill C-70, which proposes, among other things, to amend the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act.

I hope that the report stage amendment offered today has the support of all parties. The amendment would permit CSIS to disclose, as part of a disclosure for the purpose of building resiliency against threat to the security of Canada, information specifically about a company to that company. The amendment would allow CSIS to be more candid and transparent with Canadian corporations and entities by disclosing information around specific threats and vulnerabilities affecting them. An example of this would be information about a foreign state's interest in acquiring the company's unique and proprietary information or technology. The reason the amendment is important is that this precision would ensure that companies, community organizations and universities have parity with individuals. The amendment is needed to ensure that the information sharing provisions found in the bill are the same for individuals and entities.

As members know, on May 30, we passed a motion that sped up the committee's study and clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-70 at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. Events moved quickly, and when one part of the bill was amended to provide enhanced information sharing authority for individuals, the same was not done for companies or community organizations and universities, as there was not enough time to properly craft the appropriate amendment. As such, there now exists an imbalance in the legislation, and this important amendment addresses it. It is essential that we pass this report stage amendment to ensure that CSIS can make authorized disclosures to both individuals and entities to better equip Canadians and Canadian society with the information and tools they need to build resiliency against foreign threats. We know that state actors exploit Canada's vulnerabilities by targeting federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous governments; our open academic systems; private enterprises; and even communities and individuals.

The government has no obligation more important than the protection of its citizens. Unfortunately, we have seen a rise in the number of Canadians being threatened and harassed by foreign state actors, as well as a rise in foreign interference in our democratic institutions and our economy. The government's priority remains to protect Canada and Canadians against activities that undermine democratic values, economic interests, sovereignty and national security. In order to combat foreign interference, a whole-of-government and society response is required. The first step to com-

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batting foreign interference is detecting it, which is why the bill introduces amendments to the CSIS Act.

CSIS is mandated to protect Canada's national security. The CSIS Act came into force in 1984, well before the prolific use of digital technology that we see today. Technological innovations make it more difficult to detect and identify threat actors, including those engaged in foreign interference activities. These innovations have created new avenues for threat to interfere in Canadian society and institutions, especially in the online space. The bill introduces several new powers to assist CSIS in its investigation of foreign interference. These will close gaps in CSIS's authorities, which have become more acute with the global shift towards digital communication and technology.

Throughout the consultation process, the government heard that we need to do more to protect vulnerable communities that are the targets of harassment and intimidation of foreign state actors. At the same time, we heard that any changes to the law need to be based on a real need and to continue to respect Canadian values. These changes do just that. In addition to the safeguards built into the bill itself, there are still robust review and oversight measures to which CSIS is subject. These were brought in by the government in 2019.

• (1630)

Both the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians provide a robust review function of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's activities to ensure they are effective and compliant with the law. The two objectives of effectiveness and compliance with the law are guiding the government's response.

While technology has brought enormous benefits to society, it has also changed the way threat activity is conducted and how information flows. That is why, in addition to these new powers, the government is making other changes to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act to ensure we have the intelligence we need. This means updating the foreign intelligence provisions of the CSIS Act to account for changing technology. It also means we are making sure that CSIS can effectively use data to identify patterns of hostile activity, which may not be immediately obvious.

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Finally, this means introducing a requirement that Parliament review the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act every five years. This would ensure that we are continually evaluating the tools we have and the ones we may need, as well as that we have a robust and open public debate about them. Such a debate would allow Canadians to weigh in regularly to ensure that we are meeting our two objectives of effectiveness and compliance with the law.

The threat of foreign interference is complex, but in order to counter it, we must detect it first. That is why these changes to the CSIS Act, when considered as part of a whole-of-government response to foreign interference, are so important.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, the member talked about priorities. She said that it was very important for the government to take action on this issue.

Let us go back in time a bit. A year ago, the Prime Minister did everything he could to slow things down. Instead of calling for a public inquiry, which all parties in the House were asking questions about, he launched an investigation into the CSIS leaks, calling them racist.

The bill we are studying, Bill C-70, is interesting. The Bloc Québécois brought forward some amendments that were adopted. We will be supporting the bill.

I have one question, though. Why was the security of Canada's democratic system not a priority for the government for six, seven, eight months?

• (1635)

[English]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Madam Speaker, I acknowledge the hard work that Bloc members did on the committee to bring forward the study and produce amendments. They worked diligently on the bill.

When it comes to the member's question regarding the work our government is doing, I take exception to that. It was in 2015, when we were first elected, that we began implementing measures dealing with foreign interference and strengthening our democratic institutions. That included creating the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, as well as creating the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force to monitor elections and introducing additional measures through the Canada Elections Act legislation.

This is not a stand-alone piece of legislation to deal with foreign interference. It is part of a building block, a foundation, to strengthen our democratic institutions.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, quite simply, why did it take the government this long to bring forward a piece of legislation to protect Canada's democracy? Why did it take so long to acknowledge that this was a problem and bring forward this legislation in the last days of our parliamentary sitting? Why did it delay? Why was this not a priority for the government?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I cannot accept the hypocrisy in the question from the Conservative

member. The fact is that it was in 2010, under Stephen Harper's government, that the alarm bells went off to alert the government to the issue of foreign interference. Mr. Harper did nothing to address it. In fact, he refused to create a committee of parliamentarians to review and provide oversight.

When the current opposition leader was democratic institutions minister, we asked him why he did nothing to strengthen and protect our democratic institutions. He essentially said that it was not politically advantageous to him at the time to do so.

Since we formed government in 2015, we have taken action while Conservatives have sat complicit. They have not provided a real approach to working with us and putting country over party on the issue of foreign interference.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, it was a long slog through committee last week with Bill C-70, and ultimately this legislation is needed. We need to bring up to speed our analog laws so that they can thrive in a digital era.

My question for my hon. colleague is this: The National Council of Canadian Muslims is publicly releasing a concerning statement about the definition of "intimidation" in the Security of Information Act amendments in the bill. I am just wondering if the parliamentary secretary could reply here on the floor of the House to those concerns from NCCM.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Madam Speaker, as I said in my speech, and I thank my hon. colleague for raising this, the balance that this legislation needs, not only in updating the tools for CSIS but also in creating those safeguards, is absolutely crucial. That is something we heard in testimony on this legislation at committee. I want to assure Canadians that these amendments are to apply to national security threats and risks, but in addition to that, we have ensured that the CSIS Act would, for the first time ever, have a five-year review so that parliamentarians and all Canadians can be part of this debate to ensure that the balance between national security and the protection of Canadians' rights and freedoms here in this country are paramount.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, now that Bill C-70 is back in the House for third reading, I would like to take this opportunity to outline the long journey it took to get to this point.

[Translation]

In 2018, the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, David Vigneault, advised the government about threats presented by the People's Republic of China. That year, he warned the Prime Minister that PRC activities related to the threat of foreign interference were an existential threat for Parliament and the elections.

• (1640)

[English]

Also in 2018, the government was advised that the measures then in place were not sufficient to counter these threats to Parliament and to our elections. We know that because it was the second finding of fact on page 73 of the NSICOP report.

Also back in 2018, national security agencies advised the government to introduce a range of measures to counter these threats, including new legislation.

It is also notable that in 2018, the CSIS director also advised the government of another threat from the PRC, which was the threat of espionage. We know that because, for the first time ever, the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service gave a public speech in December of that year. In that speech, he warned of serious threats from the PRC closely related to foreign interference, which were those of espionage. These threats came in the form of espionage targeting Canadian companies and Canadian universities in the five sensitive areas he outlined at that time: artificial intelligence, quantum computing, 5G telecommunications technology, biopharma and clean tech.

Subsequently, in 2019, the Clerk of the Privy Council sought the Prime Minister's approval for an action plan to protect Parliament and our elections. The Prime Minister did not approve that plan.

Again, a year later, in December 2020, the national security and intelligence adviser to the Prime Minister sought the Prime Minister's approval again for that action plan to protect Parliament and our elections. Again, the Prime Minister did not approve the plan.

For the third time, in February 2022, the national security and intelligence adviser resurrected this initiative, and again, the Prime Minister did not approve an action plan.

In all three occasions over several years, the Prime Minister did not approve actions that would have protected Parliament and our elections.

On November 18, 2020, the House adopted a motion calling on the government to produce a robust plan to counter foreign interference threat activities here on Canadian soil. Despite all of this advice, despite the call of the House of Commons to the government to enact a robust plan to counter foreign interference and to take additional measures to protect Canadian democracy, little was done.

Then, because the Prime Minister did not approve actions to protect Parliament and our elections, and because the government failed to heed the call of the House in the motion adopted on November 18, 2020, foreign interference threats increased from 2018 to present.

As Justice Hogue said in her initial report of May 3, the risk from the impacts of foreign interference will only increase as long as "sufficient protective measures to guard against it" are not taken.

Then, subsequent to all of this, in the fall of 2022, explosive media reports about foreign interference threats broke. These reports raised questions about what the Prime Minister knew, when he knew it and why he did not act on the intelligence and the advice he was given by the senior civil service. Further explosive revelations

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in the subsequent months followed in the media. Finally, on March 6, 2023, the government promised to look at introducing measures in law to counter these threats.

[Translation]

It took years for the government to take the advice of CSIS, the senior civil service and countless reports. It took years for the government to introduce legislation. Finally, after much urging, many controversies and a lot of work done by a great many people, the government reluctantly introduced Bill C-70.

[English]

That brings us to the debate today on Bill C-70 at third reading. Bill C-70 is a much-needed response to the existential threat to our democracy from foreign interference. It would modernize the CSIS Act, allowing CSIS to better obtain preservation and production orders, and national security warrants for obtaining information, records or documents, through a single attempt. It would better allow CSIS to collect, retain and analyze data for intelligence purposes. It would allow CSIS to collect foreign intelligence and to disclose classified information outside of the Government of Canada to provinces, municipalities, universities, companies and individuals being targeted.

It would create new criminal offences for those who would engage in foreign interference here in Canada on behalf of a foreign state, ensuring that we could better protect Canadians against these corrosive, clandestine, corrupting and coercive activities, especially Canadians in diaspora communities who have suffered for so long in silence and isolation. It would also make it easier to prosecute these offences by removing the requirement to prove harm to the interests of Canada when a Canadian is targeted by foreign interference.

It would create a new criminal offence that would better protect essential infrastructure in Canada, including stiff penalties for those who would sabotage essential infrastructure on behalf of a foreign state or a foreign government. It would amend the Canada Evidence Act and would make consequential to other acts so that it would allow information relating to foreign affairs, national defence or national security in Federal Court proceedings to be better handled.

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Finally, the bill would establish a foreign influence, transparency and accountability act, which would create a foreign influence registry and a new foreign influence transparency commissioner. The new foreign influence transparency commissioner would oversee a public registry containing information on individuals in Canada engaged in legitimate influence activities on behalf of a foreign principal.

The bill was strengthened in committee, particularly with respect to the appointment of a commissioner. The commissioner would be appointed by the Governor in Council after consultation with leaders in the House of Commons and in the Senate, and after resolutions in the House of Commons and in the Senate are adopted. This would ensure that while the commissioner is situated within the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, within the machinery of government, the commissioner would have a degree of independence to manage and to interpret the act, to issue notices of compliance, to issue administrative monetary penalties and to refer matters to law enforcement for criminal prosecution.

• (1645)

Time is of the essence. We must ensure that our democratic institutions and elections are protected from the threats of foreign interference. Inaction and delay cannot continue. As Justice Hogue noted in her initial report, the risk of the impacts from foreign interference will only increase as long as “sufficient protective measures to guard against it” are not taken. She also concluded that “foreign interference in the 2019 and 2021 [general] elections” undermined “public confidence in Canada’s democracy”.

As the general election draws closer, time is running out to strengthen the confidence Canadians have in our elections. Time is running out to combat the rising threat of foreign interference. Canadians need to be able to go to the polls in the next election and to be confident not only in the integrity of the overall election but also in the integrity of each of the elections that take place in each of the 338 electoral districts in Canada. This bill must pass, and I encourage all of my parliamentary colleagues, in this place and in the other place, to support this bill and to see its adoption into law before we adjourn for the summer.

Ms. Jennifer O’Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and thank my hon. colleague for his work on this legislation. I know he worked with the minister as well.

In his speech, the member mentioned some of the amendments at committee, in particular changes to the appointment of the commissioner, something Liberals supported as well. Could he speak about why this is so crucial to this process and why the committee moved forward with that amendment?

• (1650)

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Speaker, the hon. member points out amendments that were made to the bill that would see the commissioner appointed not only after consultations with the leaders in the House of Commons and Senate, but also after resolutions are adopted by the House and the Senate. I think that would strengthen the independence of the commissioner while also ensuring that the commissioner is situated within the machinery of government,

within the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

This is an incredibly important balance to strike, which I think the committee did strike during its study of the bill, because we have heard for so many years from so many experts that there are too many silos within the national security apparatus of the Government of Canada. This would ensure sufficient independence to issue notices of compliance, to levy administrative monetary penalties, to refer a matter to criminal prosecution to police of jurisdiction, while at the same time ensuring that the commissioner is in the bureaucracy communicating with all parts of the national security system so that she could enforce this foreign influence transparency registry.

[Translation]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have two simple questions for my colleague.

First, why did the Conservative Party refuse to support the Bloc Québécois amendments, including a three-year ban on working for a foreign state for former public office holders?

Here is the second question, the most important one: How can we trust the Conservative Party? This is the same party that allowed someone to enter the leadership race even though that person had collaborated with a company that collects data and collaborates with the Chinese regime. I am talking about Huawei. Jean Charest was a member of the Conservative Party during the leadership race, but he also worked and collaborated with the Chinese regime.

How can we trust the Conservative Party when it has welcomed people into its ranks who collaborate with the Chinese regime?

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Speaker, first of all, we disagree with the amendments regarding a three-year ban. This bill applies to every country in the world. There could be consequences for elected representatives who leave the House and go to work for organizations among our allies that were created to promote democracy or to protect Canada.

Second, according to the report, PRC officials engaged in foreign interference during both Conservative leadership races. However, we have no further information on the nature of the foreign interference. This is why we have asked for more information to be—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry. I must allow time for another brief question.

The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, in part 4 of the bill, which sets up the public registry, one of the key features of the registry is that it is country-agnostic. In other words, Canadians would be able to see how all countries' foreign principals are trying to exert influence in Canada: not only our adversaries, but also our friends and allies.

Can my hon. colleague comment on that feature of the registry, the fact that it is country-agnostic, and how that lends itself to accountability and transparency for Canadians to see?

Hon. Michael Chong: Madam Speaker, it would require people who are conducting legitimate influence activities on behalf of a foreign government or an entity associated with that foreign government to register. It provides a deterrent for those who would not register and who would conduct illegitimate, coercive, clandestine and corrupt foreign interference activities in Canada, and so I think it strikes a balance. It would be a useful tool to strengthen Parliament and to strengthen our general elections.

• (1655)

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Climate Change; the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Persons with Disabilities; the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, Carbon Pricing.

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I cannot begin my speech without thanking the member for Wellington—Halton Hills. Without him, many of these issues would not be on our radar. He led the way. I should also say, by the way, that he basically gave the speech I wanted to give.

Soon, there will be a new law. We all agree that it was necessary. It is a good law. Is it a great law? I am not so sure. Is it excellent? I am really not sure. In other words, this is the kind of law I applaud, but with only one hand.

This was an intense exercise undertaken in a very short period of time. The process included reviews of a number of laws, including some that amend the Criminal Code. There is no doubt that the need to get the legislation in place before the next election sometimes took precedence over the desire for a more in-depth or thorough reflection. Decisions were made by reflex rather than reflection in this case. At the same time, we have to be careful, knowing that this is a very serious issue. We are not doing this just for the sake of doing it.

I will briefly sum up the bill, because it amends four acts. Part 1 amends the Canadian Security Intelligence Act with respect to data collection. Part 2 amends the Security of Information Act to add new criminal offences. Part 3 amends the Canada Evidence Act. Part 4 creates the foreign agent registry, to ensure transparency, of course.

Again, it is good legislation, but getting to this point has been tough. There have been several reports over the years. There was the Rosenberg report. There were CSIS alerts before that. Then there was the special rapporteur who claimed to be independent. Fi-

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nally, there was the Hogue commission, which all four parties unanimously chose to engage with in order to shed light on this situation. Actually, it is more than a situation. It has become its own world.

What disappointed me when we got to that point was just seeing the culture of avoidance that is typical of the Liberal Party. If there is a problem, they close their eyes, turn away and pretend it is not there anymore. This culture of avoidance has caused major problems for us today, because while the Liberals were avoiding solving the problem, it was getting worse. Foreign interference is here today. It exists and it is still happening, even as we speak.

Still, there are elements to consider. Of course, the recent NSICOP report was a wake-up call for everyone. However, these revelations are the sum total of years' worth of observations. On April 30, the parties held a press conference, again nearly unanimously, with members of the diaspora here in the lobby of the House. On that occasion, I myself disclosed the fact that the Bloc Québécois was preparing a registry of foreign agents. Suddenly, as if by magic, Bill C-70 appeared. I think we kind of helped avoid the avoidance.

Still, when the bill was being studied, the Bloc Québécois had a few amendments to propose. There were not many, because, as I said before, the substance of the legislation is good. We presented a few points, four of which I am going to discuss here. The first had to do with what is known as two-party registration, meaning that both the foreign principal and the public office holder must register. That makes it possible to establish the relationship between the two. Obviously, if only the foreign principal registers, we have to take his or her word about who is at the other end. I do not think that is practical. I think the registry would have been simpler and more effective if it included two-party registration. Unfortunately, the public servants told us that it was a bit too complicated. However, we were studying the issue of foreign interference. To say that something is a bit too complicated is hardly an acceptable response. Considering the scope of the threat, I think that saying this would be too complicated is wrong.

We also wanted the legislation to apply to universities and Crown corporations. I must say that the universities were not enthusiastic about the idea. I think that certain foreign countries have a significant influence when it comes to research funding. Obviously, that amendment was not accepted. We also proposed a cooling-off period. The funny thing is that when we were discussing the amendment in question and the chair ruled it inadmissible, I could tell from the look on their faces that so many people were thinking about their post-election future. That made me smile.

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● (1700)

I believe that a cooling-off period is part of the culture in the business world. These are people who do not give anything for nothing. It is smart to say that a foreign country may want to invest in someone as a public office holder, but they cannot be there for three years. I think that would have provided extra protection.

The crux of the matter is the independence of the commissioner. The commissioner will definitely be independent, but not entirely, and that is a problem. It is a problem that was raised by CSIS and several witnesses. During a study on interference at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, several witnesses pointed out that if the commissioner is not independent, that is a problem. The commissioner will come under the Department of Public Safety. I am not suggesting that there was any bad faith, but I would have preferred the commissioner to be truly independent.

Whenever we talk about independence, I get the impression that the Liberal Party has a hard time with that term. I know that it is generally not fond of it. It had a hard time with the independent rapporteur. It had a hard time with the independent commissioner, too. As for Quebec's independence, we had better not discuss it. These amendments were rejected by the Liberals and the Conservatives. That bothers me a bit, because we had a common understanding of this bill. These four suggestions sought to amend and improve it.

However, we did manage to make one important improvement. The bill provided for a review of the act every five years, and we were able to change that to have the act reviewed one year after an election. When there is a minority government, like the one we have had for the past little while, there can be two or three elections in five years. We therefore had to move faster because the threat, like technology, is ahead of us. I think it would be rather foolish not to take note of the threat that is ahead of us.

One thing that is quite funny about the bill is that it is entitled the "Countering Foreign Interference Act", but it does not define foreign interference. What is foreign interference? It is when one nation interferes in the affairs of another nation. It is as simple as that.

It would have taken courage to accept the suggestions I put forward earlier. I was told that it was complicated, expensive, and many other things. That said, let us not forget that interference costs us billions of dollars a year. Courage can be a real issue at times. I am not saying there was no courage in this case, just not enough. That is not the same thing. "Reason and respect make lovers pale and lustihood deject", as Shakespeare wrote in *Troilus and Cressida*. I think we would do well to take a lesson in courage from some of our predecessors.

There is no definition of foreign interference in the bill. In my opinion, we have to name it, or it does not exist. Naming it gives it meaning.

In the same vein, I want to touch on the motion that was adopted yesterday, almost unanimously. The Bloc Québécois motion asked Commissioner Hogue to look into the recent revelations in the NSICOP report.

We cannot dissociate these two elements, because we are talking about foreign interference in both cases. I was pleased to see that, in light of this major threat, the House showed a lot of courage and decided to grab the bull by the horns, tackle the problem head-on and move forward.

In this case, I think that the decision made by the House yesterday was an honourable one. Unfortunately, Bill C-70 is somewhat lacking in ambition, and I am worried that that will come back to haunt us later.

Finally, there is the matter of overclassification. In the Winnipeg lab case, we saw that the redactions could have been reversed on many elements without harming national security. I always struggle with knowing that documents may have been overclassified.

I can say right away that the Bloc Québécois will support Bill C-70. We will support it, but we will applaud it with only one hand, because it is not great, but it is better than nothing.

[English]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his work on the committee and for his speech today on this important bill. He spoke about the independence of the commissioner and some of the areas where he feels the bill could go further.

Would he not agree that, with the reviews after the election, as well as the five-year review of the CSIS Act that is now happening, there are opportunities for Parliament to continue this work, to allow the commissioner to be set up and to come forward with recommendations to this House with respect to areas that may need to be changed in the future, and that that flexibility has been built into this legislation?

● (1705)

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question and for her work on the committee as well.

Of course, we had to start somewhere, but we can do better. We managed to ensure that the law will be reviewed after an election, so that should happen in the next two years or so. I think it will be a good opportunity to review certain elements.

I personally would have preferred to see those elements included from the outset, because I think they are fundamental. However, I can understand that decisions were made by reflex rather than reflection and it is better to have something than nothing at all. Still, I would have liked to aim for perfection, or at least aim a little higher. We had come up with some possible solutions, but those solutions were not even entertained in committee. They were thrown out after 30 seconds. I would have preferred the opposite.

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Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, according to the report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, the budget of the United Front Work Department, which engages in foreign interference, is \$2.6 billion U.S. per year. Furthermore, 23% of that budget is allocated to foreign interference targeting every country of the world, including Canada.

What does my colleague think about the fact that China has such a large budget to spend on foreign interference here, in Canada?

Mr. René Villemure: Madam Speaker, my colleague's questions are always relevant. The scale is plain to see. Concerning some of the proposed amendments, we were told that they would cost too much, even though the other side is spending \$2.6 billion. Of course, the amount is disproportionate, which is exactly why it demands our careful attention.

It is funny, because people wonder what purpose Chinese interference serves. Its purpose is to create chaos. Chaos is what we have been witnessing here for a while now, because we have been dealing with that for a long time, primarily because the government is dragging its feet.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, part of the NSICOP report's conclusions was that Canada is a “low-risk, high reward” place to operate in, so it is obvious that we need to meet this moment with these legislative safeguards.

I want to ask the member about the first part of the bill, the updates to the CSIS Act, because the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency came out with a pretty scathing review of how CSIS has handled its datasets, and we would do important upgrades here to bring what is essentially an analog law up to speed in a digital era.

Can the member talk about some of the safeguards that we would put into place with this legislation and the updates that we would put in place to make sure that CSIS is no longer violating the statute that it operates by?

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question and especially for his work, which he always does with openness and compassion.

It used to be that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS, acted alone and could not communicate with the other agencies. It acted alone and was its own master in a way. It ensured its own accountability.

I believe that sharing information with the other services will nonetheless contribute to limiting the actions of CSIS because it will not be alone in self-regulation. It will have to be accountable to the other agencies. I believe that simply sharing will contribute to improving the situation that, admittedly, relied on secrecy.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to join my colleagues and share a few remarks on Bill C-70, a bill that

I have become intimately familiar with over the last couple of weeks, given that I am a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Of course, that committee was seized with this bill last week, where we had meetings over four days, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of last week, with extended hours so that we could hear from witnesses, because of a programming motion from the House. I think that programming motion, and the fact that we have seen all parties in this place, usually a pretty partisan environment, put those differences aside to come together, I think underscores how important this legislation is and the realization from all political parties that this is a moment in time in Canadian history when we must meet the challenge united and with a clear purpose, because the threat is certainly there.

To put it into context, last week, of course, the report from NSICOP, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, landed with the force of a bomb and, of course, has been dominating the news cycle ever since. I will not talk about the allegations toward members of Parliament in that report. I think the other parts of the report that are especially pertinent to tonight's debate are the fact that NSICOP has found, through its briefings with intelligence officials, that our intelligence community feels that our foreign adversaries regard Canada as a “low-risk, high reward” place in which to operate and pursue their strategic objectives. There are a number of reasons for this. That same report was also quite scathing of the Liberal government's response to the dire circumstances surrounding foreign interference: too little, too late.

That aside, we are at this moment and we do have Bill C-70 before us. It is important to understand that the bill has some pretty consequential amendments to existing statutes while also setting up a stand-alone law.

It is important to remember that when we are talking about foreign interference, it can be broadly separated into the interference or influence that we see publicly, coming not only from our adversaries but also from our allies, and the malicious and very pernicious aspect of foreign interference, which is the parts that happen in a clandestine way, the parts that are deceptive and underhanded, where adversaries are trying to use all tools at their disposal to influence how our democracy functions, sometimes to cause chaos, sometimes to pursue strategic objectives. It really depends on the circumstances and the country involved.

While we have had a slow response from the Liberal government, it is also very clear that our outdated national security laws are not up to the challenge of meeting that threat as they are currently written. I have used the phrase a couple of times over the last few days, as well as today, that essentially many of our laws were created in an analog era and that we need to bring them up to speed to meet the threat in what is a digital era. That is a big part of what Bill C-70 does.

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What is in Bill C-70? The bill is divided into four parts. Part 1 deals with amendments to the CSIS Act. Many of those are in response to a pretty scathing report from NSIRA, which showed that CSIS has regularly broken its own statute's legislative guidelines in how it handles datasets. Again, when that law was crafted, back in 1984, the most advanced piece of technology in people's offices was probably a fax machine. We are a far cry from those days.

I think the other really consequential amendment to the CSIS Act is that it is now going to equip CSIS with the ability to share information with other interested parties, with parties that have a need to know some of this information. Under current laws, CSIS is very constrained in how it can share information. Again, if we are going to counter this threat with the seriousness it deserves, we need to equip our agencies with the tools that allow them to share this information.

• (1710)

Part 2 is also a very consequential update to the Security of Information Act. This part of the bill is really targeting the deceptive, clandestine nature of foreign interference. We all know that violations of any provision of the Security of Information Act come with hefty penalties, and in the bill before us, they are also there, because it underscores, again, how serious a nature these offences are. So, there are offences now for any foreign principals who are using violence, intimidation or threats to pursue strategic interests at the direction of, or in association with, a foreign principal, and there are hefty penalties going after anyone who is trying to influence governmental or legislative processes. Those are all spelled out in the Security of Information Act. Again, this is the part of the bill that is designed to go after the foreign interference that is not publicly known about, that is not going to be affected by the registry, which comes later on in the bill.

In part 4, there are also important updates to the Canada Evidence Act to really try to streamline the process. Evidence is often of a very sensitive nature and, again, we have heard a lot over the last two weeks of the gulf that exists between intelligence and evidence. However, when intelligence gets to a point where it can be used as evidence, we still need to handle it in a very secure way, and in a way that does not expose where our sources are, because, of course, that is of national interest to our country.

However, part 4, I think, is probably the part that has gotten the most attention in the bill. It would set up a registry so that we would have more accountability and transparency. It would be country agnostic, an important part to underline in this, so that even people who are working on the direction of, or in association with, friends and allies of Canada would still have to register if they are communicating with elected officials and if they are trying to influence some type of governmental process. It involves elected officials at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, and also with indigenous governments and organizations.

It is an important part, and I think the country-agnostic feature of the bill is also important. Canadians definitely have an interest in how our adversaries are behaving here on Canadian soil. We would like to see those persons registered, but we might also have a very legitimate interest to see how our friends and allies are operating here on Canadian soil, because we would be deluding ourselves if

we did not think that our friends and allies, in some way or another, are trying to influence how Canada makes its decisions, which has been a part of statecraft ever since there were states.

In the brief time that I have left, I realize that there still are concerns out there from some members of the community. I highlighted earlier the National Council of Canadian Muslims, which has concerns about some of the aspects of the bill that are not very well defined. However, in my opinion, the bill does achieve a balancing act. Again, because of how dire the situation is with foreign interference, we need to meet this moment with a strong legislative response. I think that this is us, in the House of Commons, and later on in the Senate, but the Parliament of Canada as a whole, giving notice to our adversaries that their activities are now on our radar. We are aware of what they have been doing in Canada for quite some time now, and we are going to meet that challenge with a challenge of our own. This is really putting our cards on the table and showing people that we are serious about meeting this.

I am happy that there was a pretty collaborative effort at committee with amendments. The Bloc did not get all of the amendments that it wanted passed, and neither did the NDP, but that is the way democracy works at committee. However, all in all, I am quite happy with the product that has been reported back to the House. I am glad to see that the House has come together to see the bill passed through by the end of tomorrow. I hope that the Senate will take the bill under way with the seriousness that it deserves.

• (1715)

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his work at committee.

The member raised, toward the end of his speech, something that I care deeply about, that I know he shares, which is finding that balance. It would ensure that, as he said, we meet this moment. However, we then, through legislation, must ensure that we keep the right balance for protecting Canadians' rights. In this, we took great care and concern. We asked our officials as well to ensure that this legislation would still have the oversight and protections to ensure that it is not misused, that it is to deal with foreign interference and national security measures and not regular, normal, domestic politics.

• (1720)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, a lot of my initial concerns with the bill, after I had the chance to speak with officials from Public Safety Canada, CSIS and the RCMP, were addressed. However I do have to admit, as a legislator, that if the bill passes, I would be putting a lot of trust in the executive's hands. We can be very glad that we have oversight bodies like NSICOP, NSIRA and the intelligence commissioner, because those are very important feedback loops to keep the agencies within the confines of the law they are operating under. Again, this is one small part I get to play in helping us as a country address foreign interference with the seriousness it deserves.

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague's speeches are always insightful.

I mentioned earlier that some aspects of the bill could have gone a bit further. Many of our amendments were rejected. I say that without bitterness.

I would like to ask this of my colleague. His colleagues had proposed several amendments as well. What more would he have liked to include? What does he think would have added value to the bill?

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, there was one amendment in particular submitted by my colleague, the member for Vancouver East, who, of course, has been personally and negatively impacted by foreign interference. She wanted to see an enhanced tier added to the registry part of the bill, still keeping it country-agnostic, but having an additional tier where the government could place people who were of direct concern because of the activities they were carrying out that were really quite harmful to the interests of Canada.

Having an enhanced tier would have strengthened the bill. Unfortunately, we did not get it passed. I know that my hon. colleague and the Bloc Québécois put forward a number of great amendments. One I particularly liked was giving public office holders a three-year window when they could not operate, but unfortunately that did not pass. Hopefully the Senate may take up some of our ideas. We shall see.

Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Madam Speaker, it was great to work with my colleague and get this thing done so quickly in our committee.

I want to bring up an issue and ask him what he thinks about it. One of the things we heard in committee was that implementation would take quite a while. I wonder whether the member has any thoughts on that, or any ideas about the timelines, if it is not implemented before the next election. We discussed this in committee, so I would like to know his thoughts.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, for part 1, part 2 and part 3, the coming-into-force provisions would be 60 days after the bill receives royal assent, which is a fairly reasonable timeline.

What I think my colleague is alluding to is part 4, for which the coming into force would really be left up to a date determined by

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Governor in Council. If we do want to have a registry set up and operational, that, I would submit, is where time is of the essence.

Public safety officials were not able to comment specifically on what kind of time frame they would need, but I think they understand from the questioning they received from members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security that we treat the registry with seriousness and that we have high expectations of that.

Again, I hope the other place, the Senate, understands the urgency and passes the bill so it can land on the Governor General's desk in short order.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place to speak to Bill C-70. A foreign influence registry is something we have wanted to have, but we also recognize that there are concerns that overbroad application of such a registry could in itself inadvertently result in stigmatization of diaspora communities within Canada. The bill needs to be carefully administered, and much of what remains of what we would be passing, in a breathtakingly expedited fashion, would be left to further regulations.

There are still a lot of questions as the bill moves forward. I have to say that, having the right, as any member of this place did, to say no to unanimous consent, I could have insisted that we have greater study. I have to say that I wish we did have greater study, but there was the timing and the consensus, and I am always inspired when I see members across party lines work together, because we do not see it often enough.

I know that the member for Vancouver East in the NDP is working with the Conservative and very hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills. We are working together, as was the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, also a New Democrat, so I stand here today very pleased that we are going to see the bill pass into law, but I am increasingly unnerved by the number of groups that have approached all of us.

Certainly, as the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, I have received numerous concerns from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, from the National Council of Canadian Muslims and from Democracy Watch, and their points are important. However, especially given the climate in which we find ourselves and the numerous delays in implementing changes to actually confront foreign interference, we have perhaps moved too quickly.

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I am going to say for the record that I feel concerned that a number of these concerns are quite valid. For instance, when we consider that in subsection 20(3), the penalties for violating the act, and we still have to deal with the fact that there is some vagueness in how we are describing the offences, can amount to as much as imprisonment for life, these are very serious consequences and have a potential for a charter violation problem, as identified by some of the lawyers and legal organizations that have reviewed the bill and are asking whether it was wise to so infringe on the time in committee.

The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford mentioned some amendments that the NDP would have liked but the Bloc did not like, but that is how democracy works in committee. As Greens, we were given a very short window, so short that we were not able to submit amendments in time to even have them voted down, with the expedited fashion in which we have studied the bill.

I want to put on the record that we will continue to monitor it closely. There is an improvement, as mentioned, from the first reading version where the bill would have received parliamentary review five years after passage. It would now be much sooner. However, having made the decision that it was very important given the degree of efforts at foreign interference in this country, which are well documented, the expedited passage of the bill is important because we are increasingly aware of the threat.

I should pause to say that we are increasingly aware of the threat because of some excellent work that has been done by colleagues from all parties in this place and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians. Their work is critical, and they have also been calling for measures such as those that are in Bill C-70.

As we go forward, though, in the development of regulations, and as the bill is further implemented, let us be mindful that the bill has received precious little study. I think it is important to say that I do not think I have ever seen a bill with so many substantial changes to critical areas of law pass so very quickly as this one.

• (1725)

The concerns are also not just that the bill would have potentially charter-violating implications, as raised by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. I was also taken by the commentary from Democracy Watch that we have left too many loopholes. If we want to deal with foreign interference, why have we left it possible for such issues as a foreign agent's using lobbyists as proxies and slipping past some of the scrutiny that would apply in other contexts? There are a number of points that Democracy Watch has made in relation to loopholes that should be closed.

We are looking at concerns about the way in which the legislation would be rolled out. We do hope that it will receive royal assent and get through the Senate, but we have asked the Senate also to expedite it. Again, as much as I support implementing a foreign influence registry and keeping track of the activity of hostile governments, I am left disquieted by, and we must actually pay attention to, the fact that we have gone perhaps recklessly quickly in bringing the bill forward and getting it all the way through to third reading and over to the Senate.

That, I have to say, I am concerned about, even though I had the ability to object, and one member's objecting ends unanimous consent. I did not want to take that step, but I want to put on the record that we are going to have to be very careful from here and take every opportunity to ensure that we are not violating charter rights and that we are not creating additional hazards for members of diaspora communities that we had not considered before we moved so very quickly.

Why are we concerned about foreign interference? Well, it is very clear that foreign interference, as in the case of the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills, has resulted in actual threats and intimidation of family members, things that any member of this place should not have to be concerned about as a Canadian citizen. Nor, for that matter, should a foreigner visiting our shores be concerned about them. We are not the only country, obviously, that is now recognizing that foreign governments interfere in our domestic affairs.

Recently, of course, reading over the report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians put something back in mind. It was so long ago I had almost forgotten it, in 1983. It was European money that interfered in the Conservative Party leadership race in 1983, with Karlheinz Schreiber delivering a lot of cash to the anti-Joe Clark forces to secure a nomination more palatable to the forces from Europe providing that money, by nominating and electing Brian Mulroney as the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

That was 40 years ago, and we still have not closed that loophole, even with the legislation before us. We need to pay a lot of attention to how foreign governments interfere in our affairs.

I take the point from the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford and wish to agree that it is one of the bill's strengths that it would be agnostic as to whether a foreign government is one we like or one we do not like. It is important to ensure that Canadian democracy for Canadians operates in the interests of Canadians. We will obviously have to take more steps going forward, but certain countries rise up in our concerns based on CSIS concerns, based on our intelligence operations. Those countries we know; they are named and they are understood by us as being interested in undermining Canadian democracy.

However, Canadian democracy is also undermined if we ignore our own values, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We must make sure that we have not gone too far with draconian measures in an effort to ensure that we control foreign interference.

I know this speech reflects my ambivalence, and for that I apologize. I know that I am very pleased that we will have a foreign influence registry. I would like to ensure that it is effective but also that it does not accidentally trespass into areas that we would later regret.

I thank my colleagues for the time to address these issues with regard to Bill C-70.

• (1730)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, part 1 of the bill has pretty significant proposed upgrades to the CSIS Act, particularly with how CSIS handles its dataset regime. That is following a fairly scathing report from the NSIRA, which showed that CSIS had regularly broken its legislative guidelines with respect to datasets.

As legislators, we are being asked to put a fair amount of trust into the executive branch and our intelligence agencies. I have no doubt that they do great work.

However, is my hon. colleague satisfied that our existing accountability mechanisms, our oversight mechanisms, such as NSICOP, NSIRA and the intelligence commissioner, are sufficient enough to maybe avoid reading another NSIRA report about how CSIS has breached its statutory guidelines in a number of years?

• (1735)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, whenever we have a CSIS report that makes earth-shattering accusations, and parliamentarians assume CSIS is right, I always remember that CSIS is sometimes wrong. The accusations and information provided to members of cabinet in one era in this country told them that Maher Arar was a bad actor and that it was okay to allow extraordinary rendition, where he would be tortured in another country. CSIS is not always right, and we must ensure that we protect Canadians and those who are on our shores from the actions that occurred in such a dreadful episode as that. I am not sure that we have not left ourselves open to that happening again.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her speech in the House and her insights on the bill.

I want to ask the member about the provision to have the CSIS Act regularly reviewed every five years. Given that the legislation is almost 41 years old, one thing I always found challenging was the fact that there had not been a significant review to keep pace not only with the changing threat nature of foreign interference but also with security and privacy issues all around.

Could the member comment on the ability to review this important legislation?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, it is important to be able to have periodic reviews, but I will not forget what we did in the Harper era, when we gave CSIS kinetic powers that it had not had before. That was a mistake, but we have left it that way.

The RCMP was supposed to act on intelligence; intelligence-gathering was the exclusive job of CSIS. We still have silos in this country between intelligence-gathering and law enforcement, and we need to break them down. We should also ensure that the executive branch does not have too much power over the way in which the intelligence and kinetic activities are orchestrated.

We need more parliamentary involvement, and I certainly think the work of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians is a welcome step forward in this direction.

Private Members' Business

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of Bill C-70, an act respecting countering foreign interference, are deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Thursday, June 13, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 5:54 p.m., so we can begin Private Members' Business.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

AMENDMENTS TO THE STANDING ORDERS

The House resumed from April 29 consideration of Motion No. 109.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of a motion put forward by my learned colleague, the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

The motion instructs the procedure and House affairs committee to undertake a study to consider a series of proposed amendments to the Standing Orders. The effect of these amendments, if adopted, would be to limit the ability of the government to amend the Standing Orders, absent broad consensus. This is consistent with a long-standing convention that the Standing Orders ought not to be amended absent a broad consensus among parties and members across the House. It is a convention that has been literally trashed by the Prime Minister, but it is par for the course from a Prime Minister who, over the past nine years, has demonstrated his complete and utter contempt for this institution. Then again, this is a Prime Minister who, after nine years, has broken just about everything in Canada and has worked very hard to try to break this great institution of democracy, the House of Commons.

Private Members' Business

It is a bit ironic because, during the 2015 election, the Prime Minister was criss-crossing the country, disingenuously selling Canadians on his so-called “sunny ways”, in which he said that he would set a new standard for respecting the institution of Parliament, if he was entrusted with the responsibilities of being the Prime Minister. It turns out that it was nothing more than phony election sloganeering. It did not take the Prime Minister long to break his word. Within months of the Prime Minister securing a majority government, he found himself in a situation where he almost lost a confidence vote.

The Prime Minister, no doubt, was embarrassed. He was angry, and his response was one of revenge, in which he attempted to abuse his majority in a power grab. He attempted to do so by way of a motion that would have made radical changes to the Standing Orders, the effect of which would have been to literally remove just about every tool available to opposition parties to hold the government to account. In the end, the Prime Minister did back down, but he only backed down in the lead-up to the vote on the power-grabbing motion, when the Prime Minister, in a fit of rage, elbowed a female member of Parliament, disgracing himself.

However, the Prime Minister was not finished in his attempt to abuse his power because, less than a year later, in 2017, the Prime Minister again sought to make a series of changes to the Standing Orders, unilaterally, the effect of which, again, would have been to remove, from opposition parties, tools available to hold the government to account. Fortunately, Conservative members at the procedure and House affairs committee fought back, standing up for parliamentary democracy and standing up against the Prime Minister's power grab. After two months, the Prime Minister finally backed down.

He, again, was not finished because, last year, the Prime Minister rammed through some of the most significant changes to the Standing Orders, to make the hybrid Parliament permanent, despite the fact that there was nothing near to a consensus among the parties. We know the Prime Minister did it so that Liberal MPs could mail it in. There are some members across the way whom I would barely recognize. Since hybrid Parliament came about, they participate in Parliament via Zoom from the comfort of their living rooms. They just do not show up for work. They just do not. It is a fact. That is an example of how the Prime Minister has worked to hollow out this institution.

● (1740)

Therefore, in the face of a Prime Minister who has demonstrated such utter contempt, who in an unprecedented fashion has three times disrespected a long-standing convention, who has attempted to abuse and has abused his power, this motion could not be more timely to put a check on that.

● (1745)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker clearly has a selective memory. He must be forgetting the time that he, along with the NDP and the Green Party, voted in favour of a motion to change the Standing Orders, on an opposition day nonetheless. That was to change the Standing Orders to allot each of those parties one more supply day in the supply period, so it is very interesting that my colleague is

selectively choosing what he decides to remember about trying to change the Standing Orders in this House.

I am glad to say that, like my colleague from Edmonton, we are going to vote in favour of this, because it is a really good proposal. There must be something in the Kingston water that encourages those from the area to present fair and reasonable solutions in this House, and that is what we are seeing here today. I want to congratulate my colleague from my neighbouring riding, the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, for introducing this motion, because I think that it is really important that PROC look at this issue.

There are things that are happening. We need to make changes to our Standing Orders, as the member for St. Albert—Edmonton mentioned before me, with respect to a hybrid Parliament. He went on to say that people are skipping work. I would disagree with that. I would say that people are not present for various reasons, including those who are on maternity leave, which I know has happened on all sides of the House. A hybrid Parliament gives an opportunity for members of Parliament to be reflective of the Canadian population, for it not to be a man's sport, as it was 50 years ago, but to be more inclusive and to encourage more people to be members of Parliament.

What we are seeing here with this motion is that it is asking PROC to study the changes that can be made. I look forward to inviting experts to PROC, as I sit on the committee, to hear some of the best practices on how we could move forward in a way that tries to take some of the partisanship out of the procedures. I come from a place where I believe that the procedures we have set up in this House should require unanimous consent in order to be changed. The reality is, what we have seen over the years, or at least what I have witnessed, and clearly I have a bias because I am going to reflect more on what I see from across the aisle, is delay tactics and tactics that are used in order to change procedure and allow things to occur. Not allowing opposition parties to, at will on a supply day when they are presenting an opposition motion, change the Standing Orders, like the Conservatives did with the help of the NDP and the Green Party a number of years ago, I think better serves our democracy and the functioning of this place.

I hope we can all be reflective of the fact that changes need to occur when we are talking about inclusivity, trying to be more diverse as a Parliament and looking for ways to encourage more people to get involved. Whether that is a hybrid Parliament, which the previous speaker spoke so negatively about, or different Standing Orders changes that allow us to better reflect the times we are in now, there needs to be a proper process in place to get us from where we are to there, hopefully removing a lot of the partisanship out of it.

I do not need to fill the full 10 minutes today on this, believe it or not. I know people hear enough from me, so I will leave it at that.

Private Members' Business

I thank my colleague from the neighbouring riding of Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston for bringing this forward. I think what he has proposed is reasonable. He has given good timelines to PROC in order to look into this. If we do get to vote on this and see it pass by next week, by my math that puts us somewhere around February for changes to be reported back from PROC. I think we could better serve Canadians and indeed the way this House functions by supporting this motion, so I will certainly be voting in favour of it.

• (1750)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be rising in the House today to share a few remarks on Motion No. 109, put forward by my colleague from Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston. This motion specifically looks at the Standing Orders of the House of Commons.

For constituents in Cowichan—Malahat—Langford who might be watching this debate, I realize that whenever we talk about the Standing Orders, to people outside of this place it is a bit of inside baseball. However, the Standing Orders are extremely important, not only to the members who serve in this House but also to our constituents, because they are essentially the bylaws by which we operate. They spell out the procedure and practice of this place and set up the rules for debate, how voting can occur, how motions can be presented, and so on and so forth. They are extremely important, because while many Canadians may not be intimately aware of them or familiar with them, they are very important to allow me, as a member, and all of my colleagues to do our jobs in this place. Those rules are important because, in order to do our job properly, we need those rules. I have to be able to effectively represent the constituents of my riding, as every member does.

The Standing Orders are important, and probably even more so for opposition members. When I was first elected to the House of Commons in 2015, my first four years in this place were in opposition to a majority government. The incredible amount of power that a majority government wields is quite awesome to behold because, of course, it has the votes to win on every motion and every bill. As the opposition, when we are faced with a majority government, knowing it has the votes necessary to prevail in every instance, the only thing we have left is the rules of the House, the Standing Orders.

Majority governments have to walk a fine line. They cannot just barge their way through everything, because the opposition can use the Standing Orders of the House to create a real logjam. For every action, there can be an equal and opposite reaction. I recall that frequently, during those first four years of my time in the House of Commons, when the Liberal majority government behaved too much like a bully, there would be a reaction where we could tie up the House of Commons in procedural shenanigans. That is one of the options that an opposition can use to make its displeasure felt.

One of the biggest instances of that would be back in 2017, which, of course, was the famous filibuster at the procedure and House affairs committee. At that time, the government was trying to unilaterally change the Standing Orders. We have often tried to change them based on a consensus model, but the changes that the Liberals were proposing to the Standing Orders at the time would have, effectively, neutered the opposition's powers to hold the gov-

ernment to account in this place. Of course, it was a non-starter for all of the opposition parties.

One of the ways in which we protested against these proposed changes to the Standing Orders was to use the Standing Orders to launch our protest. I remember that, at that time, the procedure and House affairs committee went through a filibuster that lasted, I think, over 50 hours. There were frequent times in the House of Commons when the legislative agenda of the day was interrupted through dilatory motions and vote calls. It was all in an effort to make the opposition's displeasure known to the government. The Liberals did eventually back down, so the Standing Orders are quite important.

I will now get to Motion No. 109 and what is being proposed by the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston. Essentially, several changes are being proposed in this motion, but it is really about improving the way the House can amend the Standing Orders by making it harder for the majority of the House to impose its will on the minority. It comes down to the model where a consensus is important. I am proud to support this motion. This is a very legitimate and proper motion being proposed on the Standing Order changes. We fundamentally believe that no one party should be doing this without the consent of the opposition.

• (1755)

Let us go through some of the details here. One of the first parts is that the government cannot use a provision that gives a minister the right to move a motion for which unanimous consent was denied. The government would not be able to use closure. A previous question could not be moved in order to prevent the tabling of amendments. The motion would also increase the amount of time in debate for concurrence of a committee report that contains changes to the Standing Orders. The motion would change how the House deals with private members' motions and opposition motions that propose amendments to the Standing Orders.

Instead of the House voting on the motion, the vote would be on referral of the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, otherwise known as PROC, which would then have 75 sitting days to report on the matter. Motion No. 109 itself is going to be referred to PROC to study these changes and report to the House on the matter within that time frame.

Again, all in all, this is a very reasonable proposal. For all the reasons I outlined, it is something that I am going to support. I realize that, for anyone listening to this debate, this is very much inside baseball. However, I can assure people outside the House of Commons that these kinds of changes are extremely important. They allow us to do our job, and I think that this is an important injection of fairness into how we amend the future.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the motion moved by the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston. I enjoyed listening to him speak in support of his motion.

Private Members' Business

When we look at the motion from a broader perspective, we see that it seeks to codify what has been done for decades, in other words, to systematically seek consensus when changing the rules of procedure of the House and, therefore, the rules that govern how we govern ourselves as a body.

This consensus, which has been the custom and tradition for decades, was hard-won through many battles. My colleague pointed that out, and I found it interesting. He referred in particular to the period from 1834 to 1837-38, to the Patriots and the battles they fought to win the famous system of checks and balances, to ensure that all members of the House have a role to play without being relegated to the position of mere advisers, for example, and that we never experience any kind of tyranny of the majority. My colleague reminded us that the gains we enjoy today have come at the cost of many battles.

Unfortunately, if we are debating this motion, if it needed to be moved, it is because we recently witnessed some major violations to this consensus which is so important. We saw this last year when, under closure, the rules of the House were changed significantly through the creation of the virtual Parliament.

I was surprised to hear the member for Winnipeg North, in his speech on Motion No. 109, brag that the creation of the virtual Parliament was an important change, the likes of which had not been seen in decades, even a hundred years. He practically bragged about having done so under closure, which showed the ingenuity with which the government changes the rules without consensus. It is precisely for this type of situation that we need a remedy like Motion No. 109.

While I am on my feet, I would like to correct some of the statements that were made during the first hour of debate. The member for Winnipeg North said that gag orders, in other words closure or time allocation motions, are essential, that they speed up the legislative agenda for government bills, while private members' bills are already scheduled, in a way. We know when they will be debated. A certain number of hours are allocated.

This motion is not intended to banish all closure or time allocation motions. We could have that discussion, but that is not the purpose of Motion No. 109. Motion No. 109 strictly concerns changes to procedure and seeks to prevent us from making such changes under a gag order, forcing all of us instead to actually seek some form of consensus.

I also heard the member for Winnipeg North and the member for New Westminster—Burnaby say that the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois members were a bit hypocritical by using remote voting to vote against the virtual Parliament project. In doing so, these members, both Liberal and NDP, are failing to see the forest for the trees precisely because, if we had had the opportunity to debate these procedural amendments, we might have reached a consensus focused exclusively on voting through the app, and not necessarily on the broader issue of the virtual Parliament.

It is possible to be in favour of voting through the app without systematically being in favour of all the measures of the virtual Parliament, especially because they do not use the same resources. For example, interpretation is not needed for voting. We know that the

hybrid Parliament is generating a lot more need for interpretation and the use of accommodation. That in itself is a concern and we should have debated it, but we were caught with only 11 hours of debate on that, without the possibility for amendments, because the government had used closure.

Motion No. 109 seeks to correct the government's ability to become a sort of tyranny of the majority when it comes to changing rules as critical as the ones that govern us.

● (1800)

When closure is invoked on a bill, its impact is not the same. The reason for closure also matters.

Closure during consideration of a bill can generally be aimed at protecting a certain segment of the population and our communities. Generally, it concerns values that are specific to each party and over which we might disagree, whereas the rules of procedure in the House are our rules of the game. The member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston gave a perfect example. He suggested imagining any sport, such as tennis, hockey, badminton or volleyball. If one of the two sides or teams could unilaterally change the rules in the middle of the game, would that be fair? That would make absolutely no sense. That is precisely what the motion seeks to correct, so that no one can decide more or less unilaterally how we govern ourselves.

Perhaps the goal is also to prevent this kind of vicious circle in which the government changes the procedure under closure in order to give itself more power, so that it can later change the procedure even more and ultimately take away any power the opposition parties have that is necessary to hold the government to account.

Unfortunately, this motion will not undo what was done in the past. It will not change the fact that the government invoked closure to fundamentally change the rules of procedure in the House, for example to create a virtual Parliament. However, at the very least, this motion will serve as a sort of guarantee for the future. That is what is good about this motion.

The way this motion works is also good. We do not want a majority to be able to change the ground rules. What the member is proposing is that we do not vote on the motion in the House right away. The motion seeks to send the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs so that we can hear from enough experts, fully debate the issue and then send the motion back to the House. In its wording, the motion lays out what should be done.

For all of these reasons, I sincerely thank the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston. I know that he is passionate about procedure. I also know that he is a staunch defender of the basic rules of democracy that govern us. That being said, I look forward to seeing how members will vote. I can already guarantee that the Bloc Québécois will support the motion, for many reasons, including because of what happened last year.

I am looking forward to seeing how the Conservative members vote on this. In a way, they may be tying their own hands, given that they could form the government in the not-too-distant future. One does not need to be Nostradamus to know that. Maybe they would be tying the hands of their own government. It will be interesting to see what happens.

In any event, the substance of the motion perfectly reflects the democratic will that should govern how we do things in the House. For these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of the motion.

• (1805)

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston has five minutes for his right of reply.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in my opening remarks I observed that the purpose of Motion No. 109 was “to ensure that no future government would be able to amend the Standing Orders without the consent of all recognized parties.” The mechanism laid out in the motion and the proposed additions to the standing order that are contained in the motion is to ensure that debate would continue as long as there is a meaningful body of individuals opposed to whatever change to the Standing Orders is being proposed. This would ensure that debate would simply continue ad infinitum unless a consensus is sought. This does not translate into meaning unanimous consent is required. In practice, it would mean that all-party consent is required.

Let me turn away from the rationale for doing this and toward a discussion of how I think the process ought to proceed. There is a role model for this: a change to the Standing Orders that I proposed back in 2015 for changing how the Speaker is elected. Formerly, the Speaker was elected through what is known as an exhaustive vote. There would be multiple candidates. If no candidate secured a majority on a vote, we would have a second vote. We kept on doing this until we eliminated all the candidates. I proposed changing this to a preferential ballot, but I did not propose simply that the House vote on my motion. I said instead to send it off to the procedure and House affairs committee, where expert witnesses could be brought in to look at the preferential balloting system used in a number of other jurisdictions, most notably in Britain in their elections of Speakers, both in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons. That is what we did.

As such, the same language is incorporated into the motion proposed here. I just want to read it. Ignoring all the substantive content, the procedure part of the motion reads as follows:

That...it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to undertake a study on the advisability of amending the Standing Orders as follows:

The substantive part of the motion follows, of course, and then the last part of the motion says:

[that] the committee report its findings to the House no later than 75 sitting days following the adoption of this motion.

Assuming that the motion is approved at some point the next time we vote on Private Members' Business next week, it would be reasonable to assume that we would have this matter back before the House for a final vote on a report from the Standing Committee

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on Procedure and House Affairs in February. Let me say what that committee report would probably look like. I am now holding in my hands the procedure and House affairs committee's report from the 41st Parliament, its 21st report. I will read what is said here. I would anticipate something like this being said again. The report said:

The Election of the Speaker is a matter for all Members to decide. The Committee does not oppose nor endorse motion M-489...and feels that the entire membership of the House of Commons should have the opportunity to vote on whether or not to change the Standing Orders in the manner suggested by M-489.

In order to accomplish this purpose of having a vote in the House, the Committee recommends that Standing Order 4 be amended as follows:

There is then the substance of the motion. That was respectfully submitted by the chair of the committee.

I think the same process would allow us to act now as we did then. We took an issue that could have been treated in a partisan manner. Maybe this is not a matter of concern, because it sounds like all parties support this, but that process allowed for it to be dealt with by means, essentially, of free votes of all the party caucuses in a manner that normally is not dealt with this way. There was actually a free vote in the House. Every single party in the House actually wound up dividing, with some members for and some against. A majority was in favour. I think that was a really proper way of handling changes to the Standing Orders. I do hope it happens again.

I guess I will get to say this again, but I do hope there will be a recorded vote on this, as opposed to seeking some other form of consent to the motion when we deal with this.

• (1810)

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion.

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

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 19, 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.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise this evening in Adjournment Proceedings to pursue a question I initially asked the Prime Minister on February 28. Although the topic of the rubric announced earlier today was climate change, I was really asking about a series of related issues in terms of Canada's preparedness to respond to extreme weather events, such as extreme wildfires and flooding, as well as the need to quickly pursue the clean electricity regulations promised by the government.

The Prime Minister's answer was certainly on point, but I am grateful for a chance to pursue more completeness where it was lacking. Of course, it is no surprise that, when reduced to less than half a minute to respond to questions, none of the answers are particularly complete. However, in talking about a net-zero grid, the Prime Minister did commit to it again. I agree with everything the Prime Minister said in that answer or those statements. Therefore, this is not a confrontational raising of the issue in Adjournment Proceedings; what I would like to pursue tonight is just the adequacy of what Canada is doing.

As we increasingly see, one of the very best ways to respond to the climate crisis and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels is to shift to electrifying as much as possible, wherever we can, and to ensure that our source of electricity is 100% green and renewable. In that, we skip over a problem quite often. Perhaps I can just quote from the Prime Minister's response on February 28, where he said, "A net-zero grid will serve as the basis for climate actions across the economy". That is true.

The difficulty is that we have not really grasped a pretty sticky, unpleasant, thorny nettle, which is that we do not have a national grid in this country; province by province, we have a balkanized series of individual monopolistic utilities. Just as we have not yet solved interprovincial trade, we sure have not solved having an effective grid; I would point out that, in the European Union, believe it or not, 27 separate nation-states have a grid system with the ability to have national sovereignty at their borders. We would think that would mean they could not possibly do as good a job as Canada. One country with 10 provinces, three territories and one federal government should be wonderfully well organized, but we are a shambles. We do not even think like a country compared with what the European Union has done, where it has a fully integrated grid.

The members of the European Union were able, after Putin invaded Ukraine, to say that Ukraine deserves to have secure energy sources. They plugged Ukraine into the EU grid. We cannot plug the Maritimes into Hydro-Quebec. We have never had provinces at war with each other. France and Germany were at war with each other and collaborate better now than do Alberta and B.C.

Somehow or other, we are going to have to figure out inter-provincial federal co-operation around an electricity grid that works north-south and east-west. Only then can we meet the Prime Minister's goal, the government's goal and Canadians' dream of an electricity grid that works.

• (1815)

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her years of advocacy on these issues.

I want to be clear: Our government has no intention to delay or weaken the clean electricity regulations. On the contrary, these are regulations of national significance. Yes, there are challenges with provinces across the country, but we understand the importance of getting it right so that the regulations can pass the test of time moving forward. Canada will need more clean electricity to achieve a net-zero economy.

[Translation]

Our population is growing. More and more Canadians are plugging in electric vehicles and using electrified public transit. More and more homeowners are switching to electric heat pumps. Companies are looking for ways to decarbonize their warehouses, offices and factories.

[English]

A transition to a clean electricity grid will only be successful if provinces and utilities across the country can deliver significant emission reductions while continuing to provide Canadian industries, businesses and households with reliable and affordable electricity. For that, the regulations must be flexible. That is why we conducted extensive consultation following the publication of the draft clean electricity regulations last summer. We reached out to provincial and territorial governments and to indigenous representation. We engaged with the Canada Electricity Advisory Council, utilities, industry, environmental organizations and all interested Canadians.

[Translation]

We have heard the concerns and criticisms from the electricity sector and from governments. We have heard about the challenges and the need for flexibility that some provinces have to face when generating electricity relies heavily on fossil fuels.

We have made improvements to ensure that provincial operators have greater flexibility.

[English]

We came to the table with more than \$40 billion in federal support to help provinces and territories on their path to a cleaner grid. Right now, Environment and Climate Change Canada is analyzing the feedback we received on the proposed changes. Stakeholders had until March 15 of this year to submit their comments. Continued collaboration is crucial.

As for all regulations, we will continue to engage, to understand any remaining concerns before publishing the final regulations before the end of the year. I know the hon. member has provided some feedback, and we will continue to push our government to do more. We are working to make sure that the clean energy regulations make sense so that they deliver significant emission reductions, reliability and affordability over the long term.

• (1820)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that I have to express deep distress that the hon. member thinks that we are moving to clean electricity regulations. One cannot have clean electricity when the federal government is allowing Ontario to bring more fossil fuels online to fuel an electricity grid that had been largely decarbonized by the previous Liberal government under Kathleen Wynne. It is a terrible shame, when we want to move to clean electricity, to allow more fossil fuels on the grid and to fail to move to ensure that the Atlantic Loop proceeds so that we can shut down coal in Nova Scotia, still its number one source of electricity generation.

Is the government serious about clean electricity and a functional north-south, east-west grid, or is it just a bumper sticker?

Mr. Marc Serré: Mr. Speaker, the clean electricity systems we are building across the country are very concrete. They will be the backbone of Canada's net-zero economy, allowing us to be more competitive.

The United States recently released its finalized clean power rules on April 25.

[Translation]

We already have one of the cleanest electricity grids in the world. Approximately 84% of Canada's electricity is generated from non-emitting sources such as hydro, nuclear, solar and wind. Regulations will help decarbonize the rest of our grid across Canada.

This will be an important part of our overall contribution to reducing emissions.

[English]

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am back again tonight to continue calling on the government to fix the Canada disability benefit.

To sum up where we are now, this is critical because 40% of the people living in poverty across the country are folks with disabilities. This is the case because provincial and territorial programs are all below the poverty line. In the province of Ontario, for example, the Ontario disability support program totals just over \$1,300 a month. In Kitchener, for example, that does not get most people one month's rent on an apartment, and it is about \$1,000 below the poverty line.

Folks with disabilities across the country and the disability community advocated for the government to introduce a federal benefit that would supplement these inadequate provincial and territorial programs. It was promised by the government years ago. It was in the Liberals' 2021 election platform, which they campaigned on. It was to be called the Canada disability benefit, and they put forward

that it would lift at least hundreds of thousands of folks with disabilities out of poverty.

Now, as a result of those commitments, we did see legislation get passed, and we saw the first version of a proposal for the Canada disability benefit in this year's budget. However, the issue is that what is being proposed is not what the disability community had been calling for. The Liberals are proposing it to be a maximum of \$200 a month, or about \$6 a day. They are proposing for it to only be delivered to folks who have access to the disability tax credit, which is an incredibly burdensome credit to get access to, and they are proposing that it not start until July of next year, which is about three months before the next fixed election date.

Here is what folks in the disability community have to say, and I will just share two briefly tonight. Krista Carr from Inclusion Canada said, "Our disappointment cannot be overstated.... This benefit was supposed to lift persons with disabilities out of poverty, not merely make them marginally less poor than they already are."

I have read the words from Kate before in the House. She said, "This budget announcement of adding a max of 200 more a month to a select few disabled people is The Most Liberal Party thing I've ever seen".

As a result, at committee, I asked the minister a series of questions, including how many people with disabilities would be lifted out of poverty and who in their consultations asked for this.

Last week, we finally got some answers, and they were disappointing. The minister has not met with all of her provincial counterparts, including Ontario. Nothing is scheduled there. The benefit will not lift hundreds of thousands out of poverty, but it will be about 25,000, or about 2% of folks with disabilities living in poverty. Also, for all they talk about "nothing without us", only 3% of respondents to the Liberals' online survey indicated support for the disability tax credit to be the sole eligibility criterion. It is clear now that the Canada disability benefit that they are proposing did not come from the disability community.

My question for the parliamentary secretary is the same that I asked months ago: If this proposal did not come from the disability community, who is it that asked for what the government is proposing to be in the Canada disability benefit after three years of supposedly consulting with the disability community?

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● (1825)

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his continued advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities.

[Translation]

We are on track to deliver the first-ever federal disability benefit. The design and implementation work is in progress. We must get this additional support to the people who need it as quickly as possible.

[English]

The Canada disability benefit is a major milestone in a strong and unwavering commitment to create a more inclusive and fairer Canada. In budget 2024, we are committing to invest \$6.1 billion over six years, beginning in 2024-25, and \$1.4 billion per year on-going. To repeat, budget 2024 has \$6.1 billion, which is the single largest line item in the budget of 2024, so it is really important.

I want to thank all of those who have been relentless in their advocacy and their championing the needs and priorities of people with disabilities. In the spirit of “nothing without us”, we will continue to listen and engage with the disability community in the next phase of delivering this historical benefit as we work towards the regulatory process.

Members can rest assured that, in July, 2025, eligible Canadians will receive their first payment. It will help over 600,000 Canadians with the cost of groceries, transit and equipment.

[Translation]

The Canada disability benefit has a clear objective: to help reduce poverty among working-age persons with disabilities. We have said it before and I will say it again: The benefit is intended to complement, not replace, existing provincial and territorial income supports for persons with disabilities.

[English]

We need to work with the provinces to make sure there would be no clawbacks. We aspire for the benefit to grow over time in a responsible and meaningful way in collaboration with the provinces. Our goal is that all persons with disabilities would be better off because of the benefit.

As everyone can see, the process is a huge undertaking, and we must ensure that it is done right. We cannot cut corners, and we need to let the consultation play out. Broad, meaningful and barrier-free consultation with the disability community is important, not just because it is required in the new Canada Disability Benefit Act but also because it is fundamental, and we believe it is the way to go to make sure that we improve the lives of people with disabilities. The work is ongoing. It is working well. We are on track towards providing the first benefit payment in July 2025.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is a friend, and I know he is speaking from the heart, but if he and others in the government are calling the benefit a major milestone but the disability community, the community that is meant to be sup-

ported by the benefit, is not, we have problems here. One of the problems is the consultation process the member mentioned.

The consultation is in there because it is an amendment I had added to the bill almost two years ago. The issue, though, is that for all the talk of listening, consultation and “we hear you”, the fact is that the disability community is trying to tell the government that the things folks with disabilities have been calling for are not in the benefit. What they are trying to get the government to understand is that it must do better.

There is talk that it might grow over time. What we need to see is that it is a matter of urgency to recognize that the number of people with disabilities living in poverty, in my community and others, is a crisis. I hope he is going to step up and do more about it.

● (1830)

Mr. Marc Serré: Mr. Speaker, since 2015 we have cut the poverty rate in half in Canada. We have lifted more than two million Canadians out of poverty, including more than 650,000 children.

[Translation]

We are not slowing down. We have focused our efforts on our social safety net to support the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities. It is unacceptable that people with disabilities should be more likely to live below the poverty line than people without disabilities.

[English]

The benefit would be the first-ever federal benefit for persons with disabilities, with extra financial security to over 600,000 Canadians who need it the most. By 2028, the Canada disability benefit would lift, as the member mentioned, 25,000 working-age persons with disabilities and 15,000 of their family members out of poverty each year. This is the next step in the progression of disability rights in Canada, not a destination. Our government will continue to champion the needs and the priorities of people with disabilities as we build a fairer and more inclusive Canada for all.

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a short while ago, I asked the finance minister a question during question period and was completely unsatisfied with the response, so here we are trying to get some details from the tax-and-spend Liberal government.

We have now known for months, if not years, that Canadians are worse off with the carbon tax than with any rebate that the government claims they would enjoy. We know this because we experience it. We all go out and fill up our cars. We pay our home heating bills. We see the prices in grocery stores of anything that has to be grown, shipped, refrigerated or heated. All of those extra costs get passed on to the consumer. This is what Conservatives warned Canadians about in the last few cycles. We said that the government would never be satisfied with the rate of the carbon tax, that the government would increase it. The former environment minister, Catherine McKenna, accused Conservatives of making that up. In fact, many of her friends and Liberal friends in the mainstream media, the government-funded, taxpayer-subsidized mainstream media, carried that message for her. Then she was caught on tape saying that if one wants to get people to believe what one is saying, one just has to keep saying it louder, over and over again. Even if it is not true, people will begin to believe what one said. That is the Liberals' attitude towards voters: Just repeat the lie louder and louder, more and more often, and eventually people will believe what they are saying.

However, the fact is that we cannot argue with numbers. We cannot argue with math. No matter how many times Liberals say something here in this House, on television, or out in the communities, it will never take away from the fact that every single time a Canadian family struggles to pay that grocery bill or gets hit by an even higher home heating bill, or winces as they see the fuel pump tick over \$100 for that fill, they know what the math shows, that they are worse off with the carbon tax. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that. The Parliamentary Budget Officer looked at all of the costs of the carbon tax, not just what we pay directly, which are the fiscal costs of the carbon tax.

A person will see the carbon tax, that fiscal cost, on their fuel bill after filling up their car. A person will see the carbon tax on their home heating bill. In many cases, it is rising to 25%, 30% or even 40% of the total bill itself, meaning it is almost as expensive as the fuel that we are using, whether it is natural gas or otherwise, to heat our homes. Those are fiscal costs. That direct line item people see when they pay a bill is called a fiscal cost.

The economic costs are a little bit difficult to see, but they still have a cost, nonetheless. The economic costs are the cascading effect of all those price increases: the fact that the retailer who sells the food has to make up for the fact that they pay higher utility costs, the fact that the farmer who grows the food has to pay to get it shipped, has to pay to fertilize it, to combine it, to store it, to dry it and to ship it. All of those businesses have less money to pay higher wages or to make investments in expansions. When we factor those costs in, Canadians are far worse off. The government is trying to only look at the fiscal costs, only look at one side of the ledger.

Here is the thing. Canadians do not have a choice. They cannot pick and choose which costs they are going to pay. They have to pay all of them. There is a report that the Government of Canada has possession of. The government produced the report. It has studied the report. The government has shown it to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, but it will not show Canadians the report.

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My question last week is the same as it is tonight: Why will the government not just show Canadians what its own report says about the total cost of the carbon tax?

• (1835)

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I have met regularly with Canadians and their families who are struggling to pay their bills. The member for Regina—Qu'Appelle never mentioned the Canada rebate to give more money to Canadians. He never referred to misleading comments that he made even today.

In budget 2024, we have taken bold actions to make life cost less, such as, for example, \$10-a-day child care, dental care for uninsured Canadians and the first phase of the national universal pharmacare program, which the member and his party voted against. Budget 2024 also enables the government to lower everyday costs for Canadians. We are taking action on a lot of these measures, which include stabilizing prices for groceries, cracking down on junk fees to make prices fairer and lowering the cost of banking. We are also committed to launching a new national school food program and a new disability benefit program that the member and his party voted against.

[*Translation*]

To be clear, all proceeds from the federal pollution pricing system are returned to the province where they were collected. As we have said repeatedly in the House, the households most in need of getting money back will receive the Canada carbon rebate. More than eight out of 10 Canadians will benefit from this system.

In provinces where the federal program is in effect, including Ontario, eight out of 10 Canadians will get more money back than they spend, thanks to the Canada carbon rebate. Low-income households, which the member never mentions, will benefit the most from this rebate. They will be able to buy the things they need with this money.

Another important point to remember is this.

[*English*]

The Bank of Canada has already said that fuel charges contribute only a fraction of 1%. The member never mentions this. It is misleading Canadians again. It is 0.15% toward the increase. That is what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: That is not true. It is incorrect.

Mr. Marc Serré: Mr. Speaker, the member is chirping again. That is what the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the Bank of Canada said: 0.15%. It is really insulting that the member opposite continues to use carbon pricing as a way to scare Canadians who are struggling to pay their bills.

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Carbon pricing is not the cause of the hike in grocery prices. The Bank of Canada confirmed this already multiple times.

There are also exemptions to support our farmers. There are also emissions, for agricultural support, that are not subject to carbon pricing. We provide exemptions for gasoline, diesel, fuel used by farmers in agricultural activities, and there is no price on emissions for livestock.

[Translation]

It is also partially refundable. There are a number of factors at play that the member always fails to mention. We have listened to Canadians and made adjustments for those who need it most.

[English]

I ask the member opposite to stop spreading misinformation in this House. Carbon pricing works. The member should listen to the experts. We have also heard clearly from citizen climate groups like Fridays for Future and students. We need to listen to the experts. Carbon pricing is a mechanism that reduces emissions, and Canada is benefiting from it.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, there are so many things wrong in what the parliamentary secretary said.

I did mention the rebate. I pointed out that the vast majority of Canadians are worse off even with the rebate, because they have to pay all the costs. He had nothing to say to that. He wants to get a gold star and a pat on the back because the Liberals have not applied the carbon tax to even more things. I am sorry, but Conservatives are not going to do that.

The carbon tax is not helping the government achieve its emissions targets. Since the government implemented the carbon tax, and hiked it year after year, Canada has fallen to 62nd out of 67

countries. We are worse off today on that metric than before the Prime Minister took over.

There is an easy way to settle this. No one has to take my word for it or the hon. member's word for it. Why will the Liberals not just table their own secret report, lift the gag order on the PBO and show Canadians the numbers so that they can make up their own minds? Why not just do that?

• (1840)

Mr. Marc Serré: Mr. Speaker, there is no gag order. There is no secret report. Again, that is misinformation from the member. Our emissions are down to what they were in 2005, so our plan is working. We have to do more.

[Translation]

That is why pollution pricing alone can deliver a third of the greenhouse gas emission reductions we need to achieve to tackle climate change. Pollution pricing is a major pillar in our plan to tackle climate change. The opposition party has no plan other than to let the planet burn.

[English]

The price on pollution returns the proceeds to Canadians directly. It is the most efficient and affordable way to fight climate change and reduce our emissions.

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 6:41 p.m.)

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