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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 30, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

• (1000)

[*English*]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from May 29 consideration of the motion for an address to His Majesty the King in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and of the amendment as amended.

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment first to congratulate you on your first sitting; that is wonderful.

Before I begin, I would also like to take a moment to say thanks. It is hard to put into words how grateful I am to the people of Cloverdale—Langley City. They worked so hard to help me return to Ottawa. The volunteers gave up evenings and weekends to knock on doors, make phone calls and deliver signs. Someone even made apple pie for the team. Every single one of them played a very important role in making this possible.

I give a special shout-out to my husband. He just never stopped: rain or shine, early mornings and late nights. His head-down-and-work-hard attitude is inspirational. Those fluffy pancakes and perfect chai tea he was making every Saturday at the campaign office are now legendary. I am so blessed to have such an amazing better half.

Some members may know I campaigned in the December by-election and won the riding with over 65% of the vote, only to be sent right back into full campaign mode before I even had a chance to warm up a seat in the House. It has been quite a whirlwind, but let us just say I have worn out more than one pair of shoes this year and probably a few volunteers as well. There are so many amazing people I could name, but we would need another hour, so they should just know that their work mattered, their dedication mattered and I carry their voices with me every time I stand in the House.

I will move now to my main speech. This week, Canadians were treated to all the pomp and ceremony of a throne speech, delivered by His Majesty King Charles himself, but as we know, it was written by the Prime Minister. Tucked into all the lofty words and

grand gestures was this promise: The government would be guided by what it called “a new fiscal discipline: spend less so Canadians can invest more.”

However, when the ways and means motion was tabled this week, rather than reducing the annual increase in spending to below 2% as the Liberals promised, there was a whopping 8.4% in increased federal spending. When we put all those numbers together, the Prime Minister will be spending 71% more than the Trudeau government projected in its fall estimates.

Is it really a good idea to pull the wool over Canadians' eyes with fancy accounting tricks to make the books look good? The whole idea of spending less so Canadians can invest more sounds great until we think about it for five seconds. It is kind of like someone telling their kids, “we are saving money this month” while standing in the checkout line with a brand new flat-screen TV. They are not saving; they are spending, and someone is going to have to pay for it.

Meanwhile, families are buckling under the weight of rising prices. I talked to people at the door, in church and at the grocery store, and they are cutting back on groceries, not just gadgets. They are cancelling their family summer plans just to keep up with mortgage payments, yet the government is talking about the largest transformation of Canada's economy since the Second World War. That does not come cheap; it will need to be paid for.

Canadians want a proper budget so we can see what this transformation will actually cost. It is time to stop the overspending, stop creating inflation and give Canadians a real chance to catch their breath, because this is not just about today's prices. When governments overspend, the cost hits every one of us through higher interest rates, cuts to services and broken promises. When the bill comes due, it does not land on the Prime Minister's desk; it lands in the lap of our children and grandchildren. If we do not act now, we will not just lose our standard of living; we will also be handing our children and grandchildren a country we cannot afford to fix.

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Speaking of things young Canadians cannot afford, let us talk about housing. While I was out door knocking during the campaign, I met a young man standing outside his townhouse. It was a small place, and he was a nice guy who was probably in his early thirties. He told me he had a good job, saved hard and, even with help from his parents, just barely scraped together enough for a down payment. With interest rates now high for him and costs climbing, he looked me in the eye and said, "I always hoped that one day I could move into a place with enough room to raise a family, but with the way things are going, that dream is slipping away." This stuck with me.

• (1005)

Imagine my shock when I found out that the new housing minister, the government's so-called solution to the housing crisis, is the former mayor of Vancouver, the same guy who saw housing prices explode under his watch. Vancouver did not just become expensive; it became one of the most unaffordable cities on the planet. If that is the government's idea of help, we should all be very worried.

The Liberals say they are going to double housing starts, but honestly, none of that matters if they do not fix the real problems: red tape, broken permitting systems and crushing taxes on building. The numbers do not lie. Costs are up, and young Canadians are giving up on ever owning a home. A country where the next generation cannot afford to put down roots is a country in trouble. We need a plan that gets homes built, not headlines written.

Let me read the government's solution straight from the Liberals' platform: They are going to "get the federal government back into the business of [home] building". Another new agency the government is creating, "build Canada homes", will act as a developer, using our money to build housing on public land. The Liberals are planning to pour billions of dollars into prefab houses and low-cost financing to government-approved developers.

The thing is that the Liberals do not want to help Canadians build their own future; they want to build it for Canadians using taxpayer money, and the government owns the keys. Housing is supposed to be about ownership, roots, stability and a future people can build, but under this plan, that dream is slipping farther and farther out of reach. The government is creating a system where more and more Canadians will rent homes from the government, built with our tax dollars on our public land, with no chance to own.

I am thinking of young couples working two jobs, trying to save while prices keep rising; the new Canadian who came here for a better life, only to find that ownership is out of reach; and seniors watching their children and grandchildren struggle to afford what they took for granted. The truth is that this is not just a housing crisis; it is a hope crisis. A whole generation is being locked out, and we owe it to them to do better. We do not need more government landlords; we need a government that respects people's dream to own a home and fights to make that possible.

Housing should not be a luxury that few can afford, and neither should public safety. It is a basic promise and one the Liberals have broken time and time again, almost as if it were by design. They have been slow to jail repeat violent criminals but quick to treat law-abiding Canadians like criminals through Liberal handgun bans. They go easy on gang members and carjackers but come

down hard on licensed, trained sport shooters and collectors who have done nothing wrong except follow the rules. That is the Liberals' approach to justice: Punish the innocent, excuse the guilty and put the rights of criminals first and the rights of victims last.

Let me share a heartbreaking case from my province of B.C. Last June, 40-year-old Adam Mann was charged with second-degree murder in the death of a young woman named Tori Dunn in Surrey. At the time of her death, he was out on bail, despite a violent history that included 22 prior convictions and a 12-year sentence for a home invasion. A pre-sentencing report had even described him as an "unmanageable risk", yet he was walking free.

Tori's family did not just lose their daughter; they lost her to a system that failed them. It is a system that prioritized the rights of a repeat violent offender over the right of an innocent woman to live her life in peace. That is not justice, it is not safety and it certainly is not compassion.

Canadians deserve a justice system that protects the public, not one that gambles with their life. We need real bail reform, laws that protect victims not offenders, and a government that stands up for safe communities. If we do not get serious now, we are not just risking more crime; we are also risking the public's faith in the entire system.

Canadians have heard enough empty words. What they need now is a plan, an actual budget in black and white. Is there just too much red ink for the new Prime Minister to be honest with Canadians? He ran on his résumé. He promised competence, credibility and discipline, but so far we have seen none of it. There is no real fiscal restraint, no plan to fix housing and no action on crime. There is just more borrowed money, more bureaucratic programs and more empty headlines.

If the Prime Minister truly wants to lead, he needs to deliver a budget that stops the bleeding, one that reigns in the reckless spending, restores affordability and gives Canadians back the hope that they are losing. Is this what competence looks like? Is this the stellar economic prowess the Prime Minister promised millions of voters? I sure hope not, because Canadians deserve better.

• (1010)

[Translation]

Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of her speech, my colleague talked a lot about government spending.

A by-election is about to be called in a Conservative Party riding, which will cost taxpayers over \$1.5 million. Does the member think that is a necessary expense or not?

[English]

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, we can debate distractions all day. My job is to stand up here for families that are falling further behind while the government delays in delivering a real plan, and that starts with a real budget, a responsible budget. It is plain and simple: We cannot fix affordability without fixing the books. Every day that the government delays tabling a responsible budget, inflation keeps hurting families, interest rates stay high, small businesses cannot plan and retirees cannot budget.

The longer we wait for a clear plan, the more expensive the crisis becomes. It is time for leadership. It is time to stop the bleeding and to bring forward a budget that shows discipline and respect for the people footing the bill: Canadian taxpayers.

[Translation]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as a member of Parliament representing a riding that borders the United States, I have an interest in border security.

The throne speech mentions the hiring of additional RCMP officers, but there is not a word about the government's intention to add human resources to the Canada Border Services Agency.

Does my colleague not find it odd, even abnormal, that the previous government's commitment to hire 1,000 border services officers was not included in the throne speech?

[English]

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, the real question Canadians are asking right now is whether the Prime Minister will deliver a budget that finally shows he understands the cost of living crisis. What Canadians are desperate for is a budget, not another glossy brochure of recycled promises. While the government pushes press conferences and platitudes, families are maxing out their grocery budget and skipping summer plans just to cover the mortgage.

We do not need more words; we need a real fiscal plan, one that reins in the reckless spending, respects taxpayer dollars and gives our economy a chance to breathe. Without it, we are not just talking about a failure to lead; we are talking about a failure to govern.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on her back-to-back re-elections.

She mentioned the lack of a plan from the Prime Minister, and I am wondering whether she has stories from her two campaigns of how Canadians view their own budget and the decisions they have to make in their own household, and whether any of those resemble

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what we are getting from the government. I thought she might have some insights from her conversations with voters.

• (1015)

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, it is not just from my voters; it is actually also from my own experience as a businesswoman. Never, ever, did we work without a budget. The reason we need a budget is so we can see whether we are on track. If we are not on track, we will never know. Things will go off the rails very quickly. Even the bank requires that we be disciplined by having a budget, following the budget and making sure we are staying within our expenses.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree in the House that a tragedy is playing out in Saskatchewan and Manitoba due to the wildfire exacerbated by climate change. I think we can all say that we share in sending our condolences and prayers to the people on the ground who are being impacted, and certainly the first responders.

One thing we heard in the election campaign in April is that the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs issued two calls to action for election candidates. One of them was calling for “a National Fire Administration intended to help Canada address and coordinate issues related to wildfire, explosives, housing policy, construction, tariffs, federal response to emergencies, green technologies, marine transportation, clean energy, defense”, and the list goes on. A national fire administration would serve as the nucleus of any future emergency management, responsible in terms of response to wildfires and an emergency such as the one that is playing out right now.

Does my colleague agree with the call to action by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, and how that would help right now?

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, we absolutely need to make sure that we are working to ensure that this tragedy is taken care of, and we will be providing as much support as we can.

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to thank the residents of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke for the trust they have placed in me for a ninth time. It is their hard work and their determination to build communities in the Ottawa Valley that inspire me to work just as hard for them.

I would also like to thank His Majesty King Charles III for visiting Canada and delivering the throne speech. One of the first acts of the last prime minister was to pull down a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, so it was encouraging when the member for Nepean, as one of his first acts, invited His Majesty.

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It was encouraging right up until the moment the speech was delivered, which was when we were all reminded that this is the same old Liberal Party, just dressed up in banker socks. This is the same party that seeks to seize hunting rifles from lawful citizens. It is the same party that promised the world it would expropriate 30% of Canada's developed lands and impose strict new environmental rules across the country. This is the same Liberal Party that has no economic plan other than to tax and spend and then borrow some more.

There is one difference between the Trudeau Liberals of six months ago and these repainted Liberals today. Whereas the last Liberals had a childish, obstinate mindset that treated any Conservative suggestion as radioactive, these light-fingered Liberals are ready to lift any idea out of our back pockets. Make no mistake: This is not a complaint. We want the Liberals to copy us, yet somehow, despite his university experience, the Prime Minister is bad at plagiarism.

What I mean is that, while they might steal our policy slogan, they will then twist it into a traditional Liberal policy. Take our policy to remove the GST on new homes. The elegance of our policy is in the ease of execution. It is easy for home builders to plan. It is easy for the CRA to implement, yet in the hands of the Liberals, the policy gets twisted into something else.

The Liberals said words like “remove GST” and “homes” and “new”, but they were not in the same order. The Liberals promised to remove the GST on sales of new homes to new buyers. Their policy creates uncertainty. Home builders will have to guess at how many new homes they will build for the first-time buyers. Their policies require the CRA to hire more bureaucrats to make sure the buyer is really buying their first home.

Making something more complicated than it needs to be, growing the public service and having the government pick winners and losers is peak Liberal policy. The speech did not mention the Liberal campaign promise to seize the property of lawful firearms owners within the next four months. It was encouraging for His Majesty to say that the rights of lawful firearms owners would be protected. As the former public safety minister said last December, phase two of the great Liberal gun grab will involve sending the police to the home of every single licensed firearms owner to conduct searches for newly prohibited firearms. Those two statements are hard to square. Was the omission of the gun grab in the throne speech a quiet acknowledgement by our economist Prime Minister that spending over a billion dollars to destroy privately owned property is a form of investment destruction?

We can only guess, since the Prime Minister campaigned on a slogan to eat less and gain weight. My hunch is that, despite how wasteful a gun grab would be, the Prime Minister will cave to the pressure from within his cabinet. The cabinet members will claim that the gun grab is an investment in saving lives. They will say this while they divert the police from stopping crime to searching the homes of 2.3 million law-abiding Canadians. They will say this despite the complete lack of evidence. They will say that they are saving lives while record numbers of teenagers are being shot. That is because the Liberals will always privilege the fears of their affluent voters over the lives of poor kids.

Only time will tell if the Liberals' plan to make buying homes more complicated will lower prices. Only time will tell if the Liberals will move ahead with their half-decade-old promise to grab up all the guns that look scary. What Canadians do not need time to figure out is that the Liberal promise to implement the 30 by 30 treaty is an epic fantasy tale. While this story is hardly *The Lord of the Rings*, a red dragon does make a cameo appearance.

● (1020)

In the throne speech, His Majesty told the story of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Negotiations for this international agreement were led by the Communists who control China, and the Liberal minister who stood in the House, this temple to liberal democracy, and declared himself to be a proud socialist.

The fact that a self-declared, proud socialist has been elevated to the position of Minister of Canadian Identity should send a chill down the spine of every small-l liberal in the country. Putting a proud socialist and environmental radical in the same room as the Communist dragon crushing the people of China should have been a feeding frenzy for the legacy media, yet, to read any coverage of the treaty in the Liberal-funded media, one would think this treaty is a green miracle of international co-operation.

Most news reports only mention the treaty's target to conserve 30% of our land and water by 2030. The media and the Liberals do not like to mention the other two targets in the treaty. They only want to talk about the third target. That is understandable. Conserving our natural habitat is widely supported. What Canadians do not support is a government lying to the world in their name.

The promise to reach 30% by 2030 was dishonest. Canadians do not have to take my word for this. They can go online to google Canada's conserved areas. From there, they will be able to find the government's report on its conservation efforts. The government might delete these web pages shortly, but I made sure to download a copy of the report for when it tries to put its track record into a memory hole.

Here is what the report says: Over the last 10 years of Trudeau Liberal rule, Canada conserved an additional 3.5% of its natural habitat. That is about the same amount that had been conserved under Stephen Harper, which means, over the last 20 years, Canada has conserved about 7.5% of its land. That brings the total conserved area to around 15%, but that steady progress was not flashy enough for the Trudeau Liberals.

Despite having no plan to make it a reality, the Liberals committed us to conserving another 15% of Canada's wildlife and lands in five years. That pattern of over-promising and under-delivering was typical of the Trudeau Liberals, so it was a bit of a surprise to see the man from Brookfield stand before Canadians to make the exact same promise.

Even more surprising was the ridiculous claim the Prime Minister made during his announcement. The man who claimed he writes his own talking points told Canadians that, over the last 10 years, the Trudeau Liberals had conserved 15% of Canada's land. He actually said that Trudeau Liberals had taken us from 1% to 15%. I know the Prime Minister has lived much of his life outside Canada, but surely even he knew that we had national parks before Trudeau.

Conservatives support conserving more of Canada's natural habitat. We just think we should be honest with other countries on what is possible. What my constituents cannot support is the Liberals committing Canada to targets 1 and 2. Target 1 would require massive new environmental regulations to be imposed on every Canadian. Anyone who has lived on property that falls under a conservation authority knows what this will mean. The Prime Minister's slogan, "build, baby, build", will be taken out quietly and smothered. Nothing will be built.

However, target 2 is the real shocker. The Liberals have committed us to restoring 30% of developed lands back to nature. The same Liberals want to pave over an area 400 times the size of Toronto to build windmills and solar farms. That a proud socialist could hold contradictory policies is not surprising.

What is surprising is the estimate of what it would cost the taxpayers of Canada to expropriate 30% of developed lands and restore them to their natural state. One estimate of the value of all the property in Canada puts it at \$19 trillion. To buy 30% of that would cost almost \$6 trillion. That is what I mean by fantastical. The only way this could ever happen would be for the Liberals to toss property rights overboard, claim the idea of property itself as a colonial legacy and give Canada a proud socialist identity.

The throne speech really does reveal that the Trudeau Liberals are alive and well. Let us just hope the new socks they are wearing were not made in China.

• (1025)

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in her speech, my colleague attacked the media and questioned its credibility. This is not surprising, coming from a party that wants to slash funding to the CBC without any consideration for the impact that could have on the quality of information available in the regions and available in francophone communities outside Quebec.

We are living in an era when so much disinformation is being shared online, and this can erode trust in our institutions. Instead, we should be making greater efforts to support a strong, independent press in order to ensure access to quality information.

The Address

I would like to know why our colleague wants to go after the CBC. Why does she want to go after a strong and independent press, when we should be doing just the opposite?

[English]

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I did not insult or attack the CBC. If we do not want to have a paid-off legacy media, we can just stop paying it off.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing, to a certain degree, that the member opposite continues to want to deny reality. We had an election where a government was elected with more votes than in any other federal election, and we had a very clear mandate that talks about building a stronger, healthier Canada. It is a mandate to enhance trade opportunities, as an example, yet we see an opposition member who continues to want to do nothing to provide a constructive critique of the budget while commenting on what she believes would be a healthy alternative. Does she have any intention of voting for the throne speech? If not, can she indicate what, if anything, she believes is good within the throne speech?

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, my biggest fan on that side of the aisle mentioned the budget. I did not see the budget or any dollar signs attached to anything in the throne speech. Once I have the numbers to demonstrate what each of the initiatives in the throne speech is going to cost, then I would be able to say something positive.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question will be very brief.

We are at the beginning of a new Parliament. I would like to know what my colleague thinks of a government that was elected on an economic platform, but is proposing rather extraordinary and exponential spending without presenting a budget. Does my colleague think that is responsible?

• (1030)

[English]

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, no, I do not think that is responsible.

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad I was able to catch your eye. I would like to express my congratulations to you.

I wonder if the member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke could comment further on the extent to which the Liberal Party campaigned on its purported plan, yet it has tabled a Speech from the Throne that contains no concrete plan whatsoever and no budget.

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Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister himself said that a slogan is not a plan. Plans involve precise measures and the amount each measure is going to cost. Therefore, when he said he had a plan, his only plan was to pick the pockets of our policies, which we are happy about. However, he should make sure that he puts the full policy we proposed in, because that would be a responsible response for the government to go forward.

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with the member for Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie.

It is with a great deal of emotion and a great sense of responsibility that I rise in this honourable chamber as the member for Bourassa.

I want to start by thanking my family.

[English]

Lori Idlout: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the translation was not coming through in English.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: We have interpretation now.

The problem has been fixed, so the member for Bourassa can restart his speech.

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of emotion and a great sense of responsibility that I rise in the House as the member for Bourassa. I would like to begin by thanking my family, my friends and the volunteers who worked with me on the campaign. Their patience, dedication and confidence made it possible for me to be here today. This victory belongs to all the people with shared convictions who pounded the pavement and listened to voters.

I congratulate the right hon. Prime Minister on his appointment and applaud the Speech from the Throne read by His Majesty King Charles III. This speech maps out a decidedly forward-looking path guided by a vision for a stronger, more equitable and more innovative Canada. For this vision to work, it has to encompass the full range of realities, including the reality in Bourassa. I am from Bourassa, a vibrant, diverse and proud riding. Bourassa is a welcoming place, steeped in history. Sadly, it is also one of the most poverty-stricken ridings in Canada. Nearly 48% of its households live below the low income cut-off. It has a lot of single-parent families and is in desperate need of affordable housing, access to employment and psychological support. These challenges do not define us, but they are of concern. It would be nice if our government would take these factors into account. We need more investments in social housing, more recurrent funding for community organizations, funding that is as permanent as possible, and we need to pay special attention to education, the success of our young people and mental health.

I will now address the three issues of greatest concern to me.

The first is public safety. The Speech from the Throne talks about stricter enforcement of violent crime laws, and with good reason. I am fully on board with this desire to strengthen the rule of law, but we must not stop there, because every act of violence and

every crime is preceded by multiple indicators and warning signs that are, more often than not, ignored. Let us talk about those indicators and warning signs. We cannot have a serious conversation about public safety without talking about chronic poverty, the shortage of sports, cultural and educational infrastructure for our young people, and the lack of safe green spaces. Some neighbourhoods are in dire need of these things. We also need to talk about the underfunding of community organizations, which often play a lead role in prevention. As I have said, we need to take a balanced approach to prevention and address the concerns expressed by members on the other side of the House. These are the indicators and warning signs I talked about earlier. If we do not invest in intervention and prevention, we will continue to pay the human, social and economic price for failing to step up today. We must strike a balance between deterrence and prevention. We must be firm in enforcing the law, but we also have to give young people reasons to believe in the law.

The second issue that resonates with me is artificial intelligence. I am an IT specialist. From a young age, I became actively interested in AI and was a believer in it long before it was used by most members of the House for the most basic of tasks. In my opinion, AI can speed up access to government programs. It can cut red tape for our organizations and industries, as well as for our citizens. It can also provide faster and more personalized services to citizens. It can improve infrastructure planning, emergency management and public facility maintenance in a much more proactive way. In today's world, there are many examples of this, which I will go into later. I would like to see our government align itself with this vision. This technology must, of course, remain a tool for serving people and putting them front and centre. It must never replace compassion and must never create new forms of social exclusion. We must build AI that is ethical, inclusive, transparent and accessible to vulnerable regions such as Bourassa.

● (1035)

The third issue that concerns us all and that several of my colleagues have spoken about is support for seniors. I cannot conclude my first speech without talking about an important segment of our society and population: our seniors. In Bourassa, many of them built our community through their hard work, commitment and wisdom. Today, many of them live alone. They may be isolated and living on very limited incomes. They have been very clear about two things.

The first is that they want a home support program. They want to stay in their own home and their own neighbourhood for as long as possible. To do that, they need more accessible home support programs, home care services, psychosocial support, paratransit and accessibility upgrades. These are very urgent needs.

The second is that they have financial anxiety. Seniors want their incomes to be protected against inflation. They want their pensions to be indexed to the actual cost of living. We must listen to them. Supporting our seniors is not just a social measure. It is a moral duty. It is a societal choice for the future.

In closing, being a member of Parliament means speaking on behalf of the people who elected us to sit here and who put their trust in us. It means speaking for young people, families, newcomers and especially our seniors. I am here to represent Bourassa with pride, dignity and, above all, determination. I am committed to standing up for my community's interests, sharing its realities and working with everyone to build a fairer, safer and more innovative Canada.

[English]

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome the hon. member to this House.

We have seen mixed messages from the Prime Minister and from the government when it comes to getting resource projects and pipelines built. During the election campaign, the Prime Minister's mantra was “build, baby, build”. He even invoked using emergency powers to get pipelines built, but then backtracked by endorsing the “no pipelines” bill, Bill C-69, as well as the production cap.

We have seen the Minister of Natural Resources repeatedly say that the government would now support getting pipelines built only where there is a so-called consensus. Could the hon. member elaborate on what that might look like?

• (1040)

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question is a little outside the scope of my speech. I would just like to tell him and the entire official opposition that, in my view, working together is essential to truly moving forward and building a stronger Canada. Offering up potentially meaningless criticism is not the way to move Canada forward and guarantee our country's future.

I think that your question strays a bit from what I said. However, I would say once again that our government is open to discussion and collaboration. I am sure the same is true on your side. That will make for a stronger Canada with more involvement and inclusion for everyone.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we continue with questions and comments, I would like to remind the hon. member that he must address his comments to the Chair and not directly to other members. I am hearing some members say “you”, but I have no opinion on the issues being discussed.

The hon. member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj.

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the past 10 years, I worked as a lawyer at the New Richmond legal aid office in the Baie-des-Chaleurs region. I served the most vulnerable members of society and saw poverty first-hand. When my colleague talks about the link between poverty and crime, I find that quite interesting.

I would like him to explain why, in the Speech from the Throne, his government did not commit to reforming employment insurance

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to get rid of the “spring gap” problem, to ensure that the EI system is generous enough to keep people from falling under the poverty line.

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, that is a very relevant question.

To find correlations between crime indicators, we need to look for the strongest correlations. The member asked a question about a specific government program that I did not really talk about. However, I can say again that we need to take a systemic approach. We cannot just look at one program. We need to take a systemic approach that includes funding for organizations, infrastructure for our youth, and more permanent and ongoing funding for our organizations. That could help.

I agree with my colleague. Again, I want to take a systemic and more holistic approach so that we can move forward in a more useful way.

Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his first speech in the House and on getting elected in the riding of Bourassa.

My question is very simple. I represent a rural riding. It is a bit different from the more urban ridings. My colleague focused a lot on AI. How can AI be used in a region like mine or in other rural and remote regions of Canada?

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, it is extremely important that artificial intelligence be used in an ethical and inclusive way. The last thing we need is to create an even bigger digital divide. Can AI play a role in rural settings? The answer is a definite yes.

AI makes information more easily understandable and simplifies processes. It could be put in place. I have said it before and I will say it again: The difference between our two ridings is an aging population that may not necessarily have access to digital technology. Using artificial intelligence, however, we can explain things in understandable terms to make it more accessible. I believe that. Here is a simple example. We could try to identify infrastructures in our ridings to proactively determine which of them need to be kept or improved.

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great humility and gratitude that I rise today to speak for the first time in the House as the member for the new riding of Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie.

The Address

First, I would like to warmly thank the citizens of Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie who elected me and placed their trust in me to be their voice here in Ottawa. They have entrusted me with their voice and the responsibility to raise our concerns, defend our needs and make the realities of our community heard right here in this fine institution. Their voices will accompany me to Ottawa every day.

I would also like to acknowledge Ludovic Grisé, mayor of Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville, who is here with us today. He has brought a breath of fresh air to the community ever since he was elected, first as a city councillor in 2019 and then as mayor in 2021. His youth, unwavering dedication and sincere love for his city make him an inspiring, accessible elected official who is deeply invested in our community's development. I look forward to working with him to advance our joint goals in a spirit of mutual respect, dialogue and lasting partnership.

As a father of four, I am especially proud to be a member of Parliament at a time when our government is taking concrete action to provide relief to Canadian families. For instance, the recently announced tax cut plan will provide real, significant tax relief to the middle class. People will see concrete results right away. Starting in 2026, a two-income family will save up to \$840 a year. In all, some 22 million Canadians will benefit from this tax cut. As of July 1, 2025, the lowest marginal tax rate will drop from 15% to 14%. Over a five-year period, tax cuts will put more than \$27 billion back in taxpayers' pockets. This is a major step forward for our country. I strongly believe that well-thought-out policy results in measures that make a real difference in people's everyday lives by providing relief, lifting us up and uniting us all.

With that, I would like to draw everyone's attention to an important event called *Afrique en lumière*, a celebration in honour of Africa Day, organized by *Lève-toi et brille* in partnership with the *Fédération Africaine et Associations du Canada*.

As the first Canadian MP of Congolese origin, this moment really resonated with me. It reminded me of where I come from and of what we can build together when we come from a place of respect and solidarity.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all the House of Commons employees for their warm welcome, their support and their exemplary professionalism since I arrived here. I would also like to thank my fellow members for their kindness, their advice and the spirit of co-operation I sense in this institution.

I am beginning my mandate with respect, determination and hope. I am here to serve. I am here to build. I am here to speak on behalf of Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie and on behalf of a strong Quebec in a strong Canada that is in charge of its economy.

• (1045)

The Deputy Speaker: Before moving on to questions and comments, I want to remind new members that references to people in the public gallery must always be made through the Chair. Only the Chair may acknowledge the presence of people here with us in the galleries.

• (1050)

[English]

The hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan.

Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I too was a municipal politician, and the recent concern I heard from municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals was that the carbon tax was being downloaded onto organizations and that the federal government never gave them back their returns. Members always talked about how eight out of 10 families were getting more money back, but these organizations were being overlooked.

Will the federal government commit to returning the carbon tax funds that have been taken from these organizations?

[Translation]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Mr. Speaker, our government decided to lower the tax rate from 15% to 14% for all Canadians. This is an important measure that will help move our economy forward and make Canada strong.

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and welcome him to the House.

Earlier, we talked about EI. That was a key promise made by the Liberal Party in 2015. It is 2025, and still nothing is happening. I would like to know why the government is not keeping its promises about EI. Why is it that, in regions like mine, many people find themselves in the spring gap, with no income for a huge part of the year? These people are the backbone of key industries such as fishing, forestry and mining. Why do they have to deal with the government's responsibilities?

Does he believe that reform is coming soon and that the government will honour the commitments it made to my constituents?

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Mr. Speaker, earlier I talked about a major step forward for our country. I will say it again: Starting in 2026, half of all families will see annual savings of up to \$840. The measure will affect nearly 22 million Canadians.

We have made important decisions for the benefit of Canadians.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I truly appreciate the member's comments. I was quite pleased to hear that he is the first person of Congo heritage to be a member of Parliament. I applaud him on that and look forward to hearing him tell us a bit more from his perspective.

I noticed the hon. member emphasized that the very first action the Prime Minister took was to give a tax break. Could he amplify why that was so important to him? He made reference to having some children.

[Translation]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I have four children. I am generally familiar with the needs of Canadians, having spent part of my formative years in the Congo and part here, in Canada.

When we presented this measure during the campaign, as I knocked on doors in Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, a lot of people told me it was important for Canadian families.

[English]

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to welcome the member opposite to this chamber. He gave a terrific speech. I am so excited that the member is also excited about tax cuts.

My major question for the member is this: If going from 15% to 14%, a 1% reduction, is so great, why do the Liberals not double it?

• (1055)

[Translation]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Mr. Speaker, I think that tax cuts should always be gradual and organized. Our government's decision to cut tax rates from 15% to 14% is a responsible one. As I said, this tax relief will ease the tax burden on Canadians in general by about \$27 billion over the next five years. I think a gradual approach is important for the sake of all Canadians.

[English]

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the constituents in my riding of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill for allowing me the opportunity to be their voice in this historic place. I am truly humbled by the honour they have bestowed on me to represent them and our community in the home of democracy for Canada and all Canadians. I know that the chair I sit in belongs to them.

This is an honour and a privilege that I cherish, and I pledge to work tirelessly on their behalf to prove worthy of the trust they have placed in me. From the bottom of my heart, I thank my hard-working campaign team and the hundreds of volunteers who devoted so much of their precious time to help me spread a message of hope in these trying times.

It was in the third week of May in 1956 when my mother Panagiota, a young woman in her mid-twenties, boarded the *Queen Frederica* for a transatlantic trip to Canada from her native country of Greece. Born in the 1930s in the midst of the Great Depression in a small village in the Spartan region of southern Greece to a poor family, opportunities were virtually non-existent. The inevitable hardship that followed as the country was embroiled in the Second World War was only compounded by the civil war that ensued in 1948.

Like so many of her generation, my mother was deprived of an education. By the 1950s, it became evident to her that she did not have a future in her poor village in her own country. It was then that a friend told her about a country called Canada. At the time, the Government of Canada had an immigration stream for domestics. Today, we call it the live-in caregiver program. She applied

The Address

and was one of 75 young women who courageously boarded the ship for Canada to work as a maid in a home. The *Queen Frederica* embarked on a 15-day journey, landing at Pier 21 in Halifax on June 6.

My mom walked off the ship with no money, carrying a small suitcase containing just a few clothing items and not knowing a word of the English or French language. In truth, though, she carried a lot more than that. She brought with her the dream that in this new country she had chosen, she would be welcomed, she would succeed with hard work and her dreams would be fulfilled. She dreamed that she would meet someone, get married, have children and grow a family in a country that promised every opportunity to educate her children, contribute to society and prosper.

My father John also chose Canada as his home and landed at the same pier with the same dream one year later. They met in Montreal, and the following year they were married.

Born in Montreal, my brothers and I grew up in a loving home guided by our Christian faith and the values taught to us by our parents. It was in those early formative years that I learned the importance of civic engagement and realized that in addition to my personal career path, I wanted to be of public service. For the past 35 years, I have volunteered in my community, and this ultimately led me to seeking elected office. My election to Canada's Parliament in 2011 and again in 2025 would not have been possible if my parents had not instilled in me a deep love for our great country. Canada is, indeed, a country where everything is possible, even for two poor people who came here, like so many others have, seeking a better life. For my family, my election was in part a fulfillment of a Canadian dream.

After 10 years of the tired Liberal government, Canada's promise that with hard work anyone from anywhere can achieve anything has been broken. Taxes are higher, interest rates are up, grocery prices have skyrocketed, home prices are up and Canadians have been left helpless, as the Liberal government has lost its way.

Unfortunately, the Speech from the Throne did very little to give people hope and inspire optimism for better days ahead. While there are some measures outlined that can be seen as steps in the right direction—

• (1100)

The Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the member.

It is now time for Statements by Members. The member will have about five minutes after question period is done.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[English]***NATIONAL ACCESSABILITY WEEK**

Ernie Klassen (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the first time in the 45th Parliament with gratitude and humility.

I am the first member of the Liberal Party to win my riding in 70 years. I thank the people of South Surrey—White Rock for placing their trust in me. It is an honour to serve as their representative.

To my family, the incredible volunteers and supporters, I thank them very much for their time, energy and unwavering dedication. I could not have done this without them.

My work in the House has already begun. My priorities for South Surrey—White Rock include protecting our border community, addressing the urgent pressures on housing and affordability, and building safer and more secure neighbourhoods.

I would like to recognize this week as being National Accessibility Week, which is a time to celebrate the contributions of persons with disabilities and build more inclusive and accessible communities.

I wish to thank Stephanie Cadieux, my dear friend and Canada's first-ever chief accessibility officer, for her continued leadership and—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Richmond Centre—Marpole.

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OPIOIDS

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to sound the alarm on a national emergency that is devastating families across the country: the drug crisis.

I listened carefully to the Speech from the Throne. I was disappointed and, frankly, alarmed that this crisis was barely acknowledged. Just 18 words were offered on a tragedy that has claimed 50,000 Canadian lives in the past decade. Fifty thousand Canadians have died from overdoses since 2015, which is more than all the Canadian soldiers who died in the Second World War, yet the government continues to downplay it.

The Prime Minister even said on the campaign trail that Canada is facing a “challenge”, not a crisis. He is dead wrong. In British Columbia, overdose is now the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18. In February, a 14-year-old girl died alone at home in Surrey. In July 2024, a 13-year-old girl in Prince George lost her life to overdose.

When will this Liberal government put an end to its reckless drug policy and failed decriminalization experiment?

*[Translation]***ORLÉANS**

Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the residents of Orléans for giving me the opportunity to represent them in the House of Commons. I consider it a tremendous honour and privilege, and I am grateful for their trust.

I also want to thank my campaign team and the hundreds of volunteers who took the time, day after day, to come out and help us spread our message. The people of Orléans shared their concerns with me during the election campaign. They gave me a clear mandate. Already, we are addressing their concerns by lowering taxes, eliminating the GST for first-time homebuyers and reducing federal barriers to internal trade.

As far as our country's sovereignty goes, like our national anthem says and like King Charles III reiterated in the Speech from the Throne, Canada's true north is indeed strong and free, and I expect it to stay that way forever.

* * *

*[English]***ISLAVIEW FOUNDATION**

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by acknowledging members of community councils from Long Range Mountains who are here with us today. I am immensely grateful for the work they do for our communities, and it is an honour to have them here in the capital.

I would also like to take a moment to commemorate the Islaview Foundation, a foundation built on hope, kindness and love in honour and memory of Isla Short.

The Islaview Foundation raises funds to help families who battle the challenges that come with having a child with a life-threatening condition. Once a year, and this year on May 23, the community of Deer Lake comes together to fundraise and celebrate Islaview Day, a celebration of Isla's life. There is a carnival, cupcakes, ice cream and lots of jokes, all symbols of childhood joy.

To Sarah and Michael, Isla's parents, and all the incredible volunteers and donors who make this day possible, I thank them for transforming heartbreak into hope and showing the country what it means to care for one another.

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*[Translation]***ORDRE DU MÉRITE BLEU ET OR**

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Ordre du mérite Bleu et Or is a distinguished honour awarded by the Université de Moncton to graduates with outstanding academic performance, community engagement and participation in student life.

I would like to congratulate two young people from my riding, Jennifer Lepage-Robidoux of Balmoral, who earned a Bachelor of Education degree, and Simon Thériault of Drummond, who earned a Bachelor of Social Science degree, on being awarded this high honour in recognition of their commitment to excellence throughout their university studies.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the 322 people who received degrees and certificates during the Université de Moncton's 73rd convocation at the Edmundston campus. This is a major milestone in their lives, and I hope that many of them will choose to stay in our region. Madawaska—Restigouche has an abundance of talented people, and it is a tremendous privilege to represent this wonderful riding here in Ottawa.

* * *

• (1105)

[English]

JIM GOUK

Rob Morrison (Columbia—Kootenay—Southern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, past and present, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Jim Gouk, a former member of Parliament who passed away on May 27 after a courageous three-year battle with cancer.

Jim was first elected in 1993 as a Reform Party MP for Kootenay West—Revelstoke. He served for 12 years and four elections, later representing British Columbia Southern Interior with the Conservative Party. Before politics, Jim worked as an air traffic controller. His deep knowledge of Canada's transportation sector earned respect across party lines.

A dedicated parliamentarian, he served on many committees and always focused on providing sound, informed advice to government. In his maiden speech, he said, “Those who are from there [the Kootenays] know how incredible it is. Those who are from other places are mistaken in believing that theirs equal it.”

Upon retiring in 2005, Jim said it was time to enjoy life with his wife, Ann, and practise the three Gs: gardening, golf and grandchildren.

Jim leaves a legacy of service, integrity and dedication. We extend our deepest condolences. May he rest in peace.

* * *

PRIDE SEASON

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the first time as the member of Parliament for the great riding of Bay of Quinte. I am overwhelmed with gratitude and optimism as I look out at this 45th Parliament and all the new and returning faces I will be working alongside as we build a better Canada.

I want to thank my wife, Sandi, and my daughters, Nicole and Rachelle. I also want to thank the tireless volunteers who helped secure this victory for the Bay of Quinte. I would not be here without them.

I want to recognize that June is the start of Pride Season here in Canada, a time to celebrate the vibrancy and contributions of the

Statements by Members

2SLGBTQIA+ communities we have in my riding of Bay of Quinte and across Canada. It is also a time to recommit ourselves to the work that still needs to be done to ensure we have true equality and opportunity in our society.

This Sunday, Pride week starts in the Bay of Quinte, with events taking place all over—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

* * *

[Translation]

LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after a throne speech that seemed to draw inspiration from the fiscal prudence advocated by the Conservative Party, the actions taken by the new Prime Minister quickly dashed any hopes. He promised restraint in the morning and went on a spending spree in the afternoon. They are handing out another \$6 billion for consultants while families in Lévis have to line up for food hampers.

For a moment, we thought the Prime Minister had finally understood the Conservative logic: Reduce the tax burden by reducing the size of government. He only partially understood. The government cannot cut taxes while increasing spending. That is not responsibility, that is inflation. Uncontrolled Liberal inflation has doubled the number of food bank users in some organizations in my riding in just three years.

The Prime Minister appears to be continuing in the same direction as Justin Trudeau. Canadians deserve better. The House deserves answers. Above all, it deserves a budget this spring.

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MEMORIAL CUP

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to draw the House's attention to the fact that Rimouski is hosting the Memorial Cup for the second time since 2009. This is a very important Canadian junior hockey event. Since the start of the tournament, our region has shown that we think big outside the major cities. This event is already a great success.

Every so often, the Lower St. Lawrence becomes a land of champions. At the heart of this success is the Océanic de Rimouski, the team of an entire region that the Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League once again entrusted to host this prestigious event. Thank you to the Tanguay family, the organizing committee led by Sébastien Noël, the volunteers and residents for all of their hard work.

I also want to commend the young players for their talent and sportsmanship. Together, they proved that regions can successfully host the largest events with pride, passion and determination. Good luck to the finalists and happy Memorial Cup.

Statements by Members

● (1110)

*[English]***OTTAWA CENTRE**

Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the people of Ottawa Centre. It is a true honour to serve my community, and a responsibility I carry with deep humility and commitment.

Throughout the campaign, I heard a clear call for leadership that listens and delivers. That is what I am here to do. I will keep working hard to expand access to dental care, build more affordable housing on public lands and advance a seniors' health and housing hub at Confederation Heights.

Revitalizing our downtown is also a top priority, from transforming Dow's Lake and the Arboretum into year-round community destinations to improving bike paths and supporting local businesses.

I am excited to keep pushing to bring the Ottawa Senators to LeBreton Flats, part of a bold, community-led vision that includes affordable housing, indigenous culture and French-language education.

I will always stand up for Ottawa Centre and for a stronger, more inclusive Canada.

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FINANCE

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is what it looks like when a country is flying blind: no budget, no plan and millions of families left in the dark. Parliament was shut down for half a year, and then came the snap election. Now, the new Prime Minister wants to spend half a trillion dollars but is refusing to deliver a budget. There are no answers, just smoke and mirrors, while real people are struggling to stay afloat.

I know a young couple in the GTA who are doing everything right. They are working hard and saving every dollar, yet they still cannot afford a home. Pre-construction sales are down over 70%, and experts say a housing shortage is just around the corner. The dream of home ownership is slipping away. For families who already own, mortgage payments are falling behind, groceries and gas are eating up what is left of the paycheque, and our young people, kids just starting out, are drowning in credit card debt.

No business would ever let a new CEO get away with this. The board would demand a budget, and Canadians deserve the same.

* * *

KANATA

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Kanata, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the honour of being sworn in once again as the member of Parliament for Kanata. Standing with my family, friends and dedicated volunteers who helped make this journey possible was deeply moving and a moment I will never forget.

Public service is a privilege, and I am incredibly grateful for the trust that the residents of Kanata have placed in me once again. I am ready to work hard every day to be their voice here in Parlia-

ment and to champion the issues that matter most in our community. It is an honour to serve on behalf of the residents of Kanata, Bells Corners, Stittsville and Carp. This seat belongs to all of them.

* * *

FINANCE

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the Prime Minister was telling the truth when he said he was different from Justin Trudeau; he is actually worse.

This week, the Prime Minister introduced his first spending bill, called the main estimates, for the coming year. It is a half-a-trillion-dollar spending bill with no budget. He promised to cap spending increases to 2% but then, one hour later, stuck Canadians with an 8% spending hike, nearly three times larger than inflation and population growth combined.

Single moms, seniors and small business owners have to budget before they spend. Why is it that the Prime Minister does not? This is all from the guy who said he was the man with the plan and would be a strong fiscal manager.

The Prime Minister will claim these are “investments” that will make Canadians better off, but the only ones getting richer are government consultants, who will get a record-breaking \$26.1 billion this year. That is 36% more than even what Trudeau gave them. That is \$1,400 from every Canadian household going to federal government consultants. Brookfield shareholders would never have stood for this, so why should Canadians?

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LONDON CENTRE

Peter Fragiskatos (London Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, recently I had the honour, for the fourth time, to be sworn in as a member of Parliament, now representing the constituency of London Centre. Naturally, I thank my colleagues and look forward to working with everyone in this House.

I thank my family, my beautiful wife Katy, our daughter Ava, and all the volunteers who put aside so much time to put in signs, to knock on doors and, yes, to write cheques so the campaign could happen in the first place, all of those things. I know that every member in this House feels equally about those volunteers. Nothing happens in democracy without them.

The work begins. We are prioritizing matters like trade. I am from London, Ontario. London is situated in southwestern Ontario, an area of the country that is disproportionately impacted by the Trump tariffs. With regard to housing issues, I have spoken about housing and homelessness many times in previous Parliaments. That will continue. That work is absolutely vital. Of course, affordability issues are paramount for all of us. Let us work together to get it done.

* * *

● (1115)

EDMONTON OILERS

Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago this week, ink hardly dry on my University of Alberta business degree, I started selling season tickets for the Edmonton Oilers hockey club.

Those were difficult years, post-dynasty in a tough Canadian economy, and our small Edmonton market was in imminent danger of losing our NHL team to a wealthy U.S. buyer, but then something magical happened. Edmontonians stepped up in spectacular fashion, cobbling together complicated season ticket-sharing schemes with their friends, family and neighbours to, in mere months, double our season ticket base to save the Oilers from the American threat.

Over my 10 years there, and for 20 more years since, the Oilers fan base has never wavered in its support. In recent years, Oilers fans have been rewarded with one of the most exciting teams in the history of our great game. Today, the Oilers stand once again on the edge of glory, an entire nation cheering them on.

I know that all members of this House, rarely united on anything, can unite behind this remarkable Oilers team. At this one critical moment in history, it is undoubtedly Canada's team. Bring it home, boys.

* * *

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the constituents of Hamilton Mountain for electing me for a second term, and I thank all of the amazing volunteers who brought such passion and hard work to help make it happen.

I would like to remind colleagues and Canadians that this week-end marks the start of National Indigenous History Month. A couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend a Red Dress Day ceremony at the Native Women's Centre in my riding, and the tears were flowing all around the room as we lit candles to illuminate the names of dozens upon dozens of local missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. I wore the red dress pin that I beaded myself under the tutelage of a master beader at an earlier event at the centre. I clearly do not have my teacher's talent, but the process of beading was painful and intensely meaningful.

Let us all take time this June to reflect on the history of indigenous peoples and how we can advance reconciliation.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FINANCE

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister spent weeks parading around the country and promising Canadians he would “spend less”. However, the guy who was supposed to give us fiscal restraint dropped an 8% spending hike after promising he would cap government spending at 2%, a big broken promise and a half-a-trillion-dollar spending bill without an actual budget. He called himself an Ottawa outsider, but he is picking up pretty quickly on the ways of old Liberal Ottawa.

Businesses and households across the country spend their money and live within their means. Why can the Prime Minister not do the same?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have more good news for Canadians.

Statistics Canada just announced this morning that the Canadian economy grew by 2.2% in the first quarter. This is a plan that is working. This is a plan about building the strongest economy in the G7. This is about transforming our economy. This is about an ambitious, confident and prosperous Canada. We will deliver for Canadians.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, leave it to the Liberals to tell Canadians that a half-a-trillion-dollar blank cheque and an 8% spending hike, after promising to cap it at 2%, mean good news for Canadians.

A request for a half-a-trillion-dollar blank cheque is not a plan; it is the exact opposite. So far, the plan is that the government wants to spend \$1,400 per Canadian family for government consultants. The Prime Minister said the Liberals would cut it by \$7 billion; instead, they increased it by \$6 billion.

If the Prime Minister is the man with the plan whom people want to hire in a crisis, why does he need to hire so many—

The Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Finance.

[Translation]

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting question, but here is the real question this morning: By how much did the Canadian economy grow in the last quarter? The answer is 2.2%. That exceeds economists' expectations.

It is clear that we have a plan to grow the Canadian economy, to make Canada's economy the strongest in the G7, to transform our economy and to create an ambitious and prosperous country.

Oral Questions

That is what Canadians asked us to do, and that is exactly what we are doing.

• (1120)

[English]

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the government had a plan, it would have tabled a budget yesterday and told Canadians exactly how their money is being spent.

Of course, nothing says affordability like hiring the architect of the housing crisis to fix the problem here. The new housing minister let Vancouver home prices rise by 179% when he was in office.

I have a very simple question. Can the minister tell us, with the government's inflationary spending, how much each Canadian mortgage will go up as a result?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I like the question period this Friday because we have so much good news for Canadians.

It is an interesting question, but the real question is that we have a plan, and our plan is working, with 2.2% in terms of growth in the last quarter. This is what Canada is about. It is about investing in our people. It is about investing in our industry. It is about investing in Canada. Not only do we have growth, but we always have a AAA credit rating, one of two countries in the G7. Imagine, Mr. Speaker. That is a confident Canada. That is an ambitious Canada. That is the Canada we will build together.

[Translation]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago, all those folks were elected after promising Canadians that they would control spending. On Tuesday, the King even mentioned a new fiscal discipline with spending increases capped at 2%. That was Tuesday morning. On Tuesday afternoon, the Liberals introduced their first bill. What was in that bill? It includes an 8% increase in spending. Who would have thought that this internationally renowned, brilliant banker would do worse than the drama teacher?

My one, simple comment to the finance minister is that he should get Justin Trudeau out of his head.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague. He is a very experienced member. However, I do not understand why he wants to distract Canadians from today's good news. For once, the Conservatives should be happy on a Friday morning.

Canada's GDP grew by 2.2%, which is higher than what economists were expecting. We have a plan to grow the Canadian economy. We have a plan to build the economy of tomorrow. We have a plan for a strong Canada. That is exactly what we are doing.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is really increasing by 36% is Liberal government spending on consultants. Last year it spent \$20 billion on consultants, which was preposterous, and now that figure has gone up

to \$26 billion. That shows a complete lack of control over spending. Canadians want a government that will control spending.

Why is the Minister of Finance refusing to table a budget?

He was even criticized by his leader last week. Will the finance minister commit to tabling a budget this spring to—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

He spoke about drama, and I must say that he is also being rather dramatic. We see his rather frequent theatrics every day in question period. The truth is that, during the election campaign, the Conservative Party presented a plan that was not worth the paper it was written on. It was a fully costed platform that was ridiculed by everyone in the country who knows how to count.

On this side of the House, we were elected with a very clear mandate to make government more efficient, reduce our reliance on outside consultants and give our public servants the means to accomplish our ambitious agenda.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not theatre; these are facts. During the election campaign, he himself said that he was going to cut back on consulting contracts. In fact, the exact opposite is true: there are 36% more contracts. I want the people watching at home to know that these consultants are going to cost them \$1,400 per family. That is par for the course for this government.

Could the minister remedy the situation and tell the Minister of Finance that spending more on consultants yet again is a bad move?

• (1125)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have reduced the use of consultants, but we were also elected to office with a very firm and strong mandate to improve government efficiency, particularly with the use of new technologies.

When my colleague talks about Canadian families, bear in mind that we tabled legislation in the House this week that aims to cut taxes for every Canadian family by an average of \$840.

Will the Conservatives be supporting that? It is common sense, after all.

FINANCE

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, elected officials should never blindly spend Quebecers' money. However, that is exactly what the Liberals are proposing today. They are asking the House to adopt measures worth more than \$200 billion without presenting a budget. There is no budget, not even an economic update. This is literally a spending spree. If the new government wants to break with the frivolous image of the Trudeau years, it is off to a bad start.

Will it come clean and disclose the true state of public finances to Quebecers?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my new colleague in the House, but we are off to a good start. The first thing we did was offer tax cuts to 22 million Canadians, including people in his riding, who will be happy to hear that today. There are 22 million Canadians who will pay less in taxes. This is a flagship measure.

During the election campaign, we said that we would be here to make life more affordable for Canadians. We promised, and we delivered. My colleague should be happy to support this government motion.

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals continue to improvise with Quebecers' money. They would have us believe that they can both raise spending and lower revenues without increasing the debt or cutting services. Quebecers can see that this does not hold water. However, by not presenting a budget plan, the Liberals are asking Quebecers to take them at their word.

The Liberals have proved time and time again that they do not deserve Quebecers' blind trust when it comes to public finances. When will we see a budget?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear: Quebecers put their trust in us by electing 44 incredible members of the Liberal Party, which, of course, forms the government. That is twice as many as the Bloc Québécois, which has 22 members. Quebecers know that we are in a tough situation right now. There is a tariff war that is directly affecting our workers and our economy. We are here as Quebec MPs and ministers to defend the interests of Quebec, and we will continue to do so.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a reminder for the Liberals. Quebecers elected a minority government, and so they expect the parties to co-operate. They expect transparency. Most of all, they expect restraint. Tabling over \$200 billion in new spending without a budget explaining where the funds are coming from is a blatant violation of the Liberals' mandate in every sense. We asked the government to co-operate, to show transparency and restraint.

Are the Liberals going to live up to Quebecers' expectations and present a budget plan?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government and the Liberal Party always live up to the expectations of Quebecers. That is why we earned Quebecers' trust again this year. We just passed this test during the election. That is why we are now 44 members strong, a record for our party, and very proud of it. I want to thank all my colleagues for their hard work and congratulate them.

Naturally, we are going to co-operate with the Bloc Québécois at times. However, the reality is that we are going to defend Canada's sovereignty, whereas the Bloc Québécois is more interested in Quebec's sovereignty. We are going to be there to create jobs and protect our economy. That is our priority.

[English]

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's first bill has shattered his spending promises. He was elected on a promise of financial transparency, accountability and responsibility, and only one month later, he has already torn down that facade, treating taxpayer dollars like some seedy, secretive corporate bank account instead of the purse strings of this nation.

In what world can the Prime Minister justify spending half a trillion in taxpayer dollars without a budget?

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this new government is making sure that spending is being carefully managed and focused on our most pressing priorities. We will continue to review our spending to make sure we are being efficient, effective and focused on meeting the challenges and opportunities Canada faces.

● (1130)

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government's dismissive rhetoric does not stand up to scrutiny. It promised to cap spending at 2%, but hours later increased it by 8%, with no fiscal anchor and no fiscal guardrails. We are in a fiscal free fall and working-class Canadians are paying the bill, including nearly \$1,400 per household spent on the Prime Minister's corporate consultant cronies. It is insulting to Canadians.

How is the Liberal government asking to spend half a trillion dollars without a budget?

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the investments in the main estimates. They include important funding to support the Canadian Forces, health services for first nations, dental care, border services and immigration, veterans' benefits and housing. The new government is investing in Canadians to build Canada strong.

Oral Questions

Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberals, it is the same spending, same ministers and same painful consequences for Canadians, except now, we do not know the government's full plan because it refused to table a budget, something quite new to Canada. Budgets have been presented during wars, economic downturns and, yes, even following elections. We do know the government has increased spending on consultants by 36%, meaning every Canadian household must pay \$1,400 to get gimmicks instead of results.

How is the Liberal government asking to spend half a trillion dollars without even a budget?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is the same old Conservatives but with new slogans. We have been just a week in the House and they are coming back with slogans. On this side of the House, Canadians watching at home know they can trust us, because we promise and we deliver.

We promised to be there for Canadians, and the first thing we delivered was a tax cut for 22 million Canadians. There are people in the member's riding watching today, and they are going to thank this new Liberal government for making their lives more affordable.

We have even more good news: We are removing the GST on new homes for first-time homebuyers, up to a million dollars. This is a great—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not think asking for a budget on behalf of Canadians is a slogan, and, actually, something that Canada has always had is a budget.

The government has spent \$330,000 just on consultants to re-brand a Crown corporation. The goal of that name change is to get people really excited about high-speed rail from Toronto to Quebec City. People in my area have grown quite tired of waiting decades for this project to become a reality.

When will the government actually get shovels in the ground instead of padding the pockets of well-connected Liberal consultants?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Transport and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the Conservatives finally talking about supporting big nation-building projects. At a time when our economy is being battered by U.S. tariffs, that is exactly what we need.

Now is the time to get shovels in the ground. Now is the time to build high-speed rail. Now is the time to build Canada. That is what the Prime Minister will be talking about with premiers in Saskatoon. That is what is in the bill we will be presenting in this session, and we are going to count on the Conservatives to support it.

FINANCE

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the new Liberal Prime Minister is keeping the wasteful spending of Justin Trudeau. In fact, the government is increasing spending on building bureaucracy and on well-connected consultants. The Prime Minister promised to cap spending at 2% and instead is increasing it by 8%. This is without even tabling a budget to give the House a full picture of our public finances.

How is the Liberal government asking to spend half a trillion dollars without a budget plan?

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member that a lot of the funds in the main estimates are transfer payments to provinces and territories. That means billions in federal support for the member's province and constituents. I challenge the member to join us in supporting these investments so that we can deliver services to Canadians and build Canada strong.

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week's throne speech confirms that Canadians are in for more of the same recklessness with the Liberal government. They promised to cap spending at 2%. They have broken their promise again, spending half a trillion dollars, almost 8% more than Justin Trudeau did. It is the same limitless spending and the same mistakes that got Canada into this mess.

Canada cannot trust the Liberals gambling with their futures. When will the Prime Minister stop hiding the state of our finances and release a budget?

● (1135)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to have been elected with this government on a strong mandate to reduce bureaucracy and make government more efficient. We are working on it. The goal is to spend less so we can invest more, and that is exactly what we are doing with a tax cut for 22 million Canadians, which is going to save, on average, \$840 per Canadian family. I am hoping Conservatives will rally behind this common-sense idea.

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the last 10 years, the Liberal government's debt and deficits have been out of control. The Prime Minister said that his government had a plan to cap its spending increase at 2% and to cut expensive government consultants, but now the Liberals want to quadruple that spending increase and spend 36% more on consultants, all without any accountability.

Why are the Liberals spending half a trillion dollars with no budget?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy for the question by the member. What he is failing to tell Canadians watching today is that Canada has one of the best balance sheets in the G7. Not only do we have a AAA credit rating, but we have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio. That is an enviable position.

I presided over the G7 finance ministers' meeting in Banff recently. The world is watching what Canada has to offer and wants what Canada has to offer. In this sense, we are going to build the strongest economy in the G7. We are going to make this country resilient and ambitious for all Canadians.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals came to power 10 years ago, they promised to reform the employment insurance system. Year after year, they assured workers that they were almost ready to go, that they would be doing something in a couple of months at most.

Ten years later, EI reform is conspicuously absent from the throne speech, despite the fact that we are in the middle of a trade dispute with the United States and key industries like aluminum are being hit with tariffs.

Does the government understand that this is the worst time to abandon our workers?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have already taken actions to strengthen EI and to remove some of the challenges that workers who are facing unemployment have in accessing EI. We know that we need to respond adeptly as these tariffs threaten our workers across Canada, and that is exactly what the Prime Minister has asked me and my colleagues to do.

We will continue to be there for workers. We will continue to have an employment insurance system that works for everyone.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is not one word about EI reform in the throne speech.

Stepping back from EI reform in the midst of a tariff crisis is tantamount to betraying workers, period. The Liberals have been promising reform for 10 years. Every possible study has been done, every consultation held. The Liberals have talked enough. It is time to act.

Will the government tell us exactly when it plans to introduce EI reform, or will it admit to workers that it is turning its back on them?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that, in this time of uncertainty around tariffs and trade with the United States, protecting our workers is critical.

Oral Questions

That is why we made EI easier to access. We eliminated the one-week waiting period for employment insurance. Also, severance and vacation pay and so on are no longer taken into account, thereby ensuring that workers can benefit from the employment insurance system that protects all our workers.

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[English]

HOUSING

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on day one of his new job, the Prime Minister's housing minister told Canadians that home prices do not need to come down. After 10 years, the Liberals have doubled housing prices, down payments, mortgage payments and rent. Now the housing minister is doubling down to keep home costs high.

Can the Minister of Housing tell Canadians how many more families must fall behind before the government takes action and finally tables a budget?

● (1140)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is taking action to put more money in Canadians' pockets by cutting their taxes right now. We expect the support of the members opposite to ensure that Canadians can afford more housing options because they have more money in their pockets. It is simple math that may be difficult for the Conservatives across the aisle to comprehend, but cutting taxes on GST for first-time homebuyers and income tax delivers more affordability.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Ontario land registry office, Teranet, reports that the average age of a first-time homebuyer in Ontario last year was 40 years old, up from 34 a decade earlier. New data also shows that GTA home sales are the worst since the market crash of the 1990s. At home, the Niagara Home Builders' Association has said housing starts in Niagara are at a 10-year low. This is the Liberal government's 10-year record.

Can the Prime Minister tell us why Canadians should trust him and his government to fix the problems they created?

Oral Questions

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I served for 10 years as mayor of Vancouver on the front lines of a housing crisis. Cities, as many mayors and councillors here in Ottawa this week know, do not have the tools, the finances or the jurisdiction to solve a housing crisis. That is why I am here now: so the federal government can implement changes to make housing more affordable at a scale not seen in generations.

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years, the Liberals have doubled housing prices. The new minister's housing record shows that the government is more of the same. As the mayor of Vancouver, he oversaw rent increasing 50%, house prices increasing 179% and homelessness increasing 40%, yet we know we must build more homes to meet demand. The City of Langford is actually discussing slowing down the development of homes, stating, "there is no award for over-achieving".

How many more Canadians must struggle to find a home before the government finally tables a budget?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, getting affordable homes built in Canada means partnership and collaboration across all levels of government: the federal government, provinces and territories, cities and indigenous communities, to face the challenges we have on the ground in communities. For seven of my 10 years as mayor, it was a Conservative government that did nothing for affordable housing across Canada.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on his first day in office, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure told Canadians that housing prices do not need to come down. He claims that the housing market is stable. However, in Beauce, the vacancy rate is less than 2% in a number of towns and cities. Rent for a new two-bedroom apartment has jumped by more than 50% just since 2021.

The measures announced by the current government are not enough. Young Canadians deserve to buy their own homes.

When will the government cut the red tape and come up with real solutions to the housing crisis?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue. That is why we have a plan and a great minister who has the skills to deal with the issue.

In the meantime, we will work together. Why? Because not only do we need to ensure that we build more housing and ensure that construction is more affordable, but we have a tremendous opportunity to help workers who are affected by Donald Trump's tariff war. In the current circumstances, we are going to create a construction industry to help workers in the softwood lumber, steel and aluminum sectors.

I look forward to working with my colleague on this issue.

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, their programs are simply not enough. Many young Canadians have lost the dream of owning their own home.

After 10 years in power, the Liberals have made rents, housing prices, down payments and mortgage payments double. People are suffocating. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, the average house price rose 9.2% in the last year in Quebec.

Does the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure believe that housing prices should come down in Quebec so that our young people can realize their dream, yes or no?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Quebecers and Canadians want to know is how we are going to help them through this housing and affordability crisis. The minister has been clear and our government has been clear: We are lowering taxes. We are making sure that we lower taxes on the middle class. We also want to eliminate the goods and services tax for first-time homebuyers. We abolished the carbon tax too. We are getting the job done on affordability.

In the meantime, we are also going to create jobs in the construction, steel and aluminum sectors and, of course—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for St. Boniface—St. Vital.

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• (1145)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Ginette Lavack (St. Boniface—St. Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by sincerely thanking my constituents in the wonderful riding of St. Boniface—St. Vital for placing their trust in me to represent them here in the House of Commons.

[English]

I would like to ask my colleague, the Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs a question.

The Prairies are affected by drought and warmer than normal temperatures for a third straight season. The conditions are fuelling the severity of wildfires and posing significant risks to our communities. We are not yet in June, and thousands of Canadians across the Prairies have been forced out of their homes, including thousands of—

The Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs has the floor.

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my heart is with everyone across the country who is affected by the devastating wildfires, especially the people of my riding, Churchill—Keewatinook Aski. The fear and uncertainty are overwhelming, but the people are not alone. I remain in constant contact with my federal colleagues and provincial, local and indigenous leaders, including Councillor Debbie Dumas, to ensure that every person gets the support that they need. The federal government and the Canadian Armed Forces are fully mobilized, people are being evacuated, and we stand united in this crisis.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal government, many Canadians no longer feel safe in their own communities. Violent crime is up 50%. Gang homicides are up 78%. Gun crime is up 116%. This is the direct result of the revolving-door Liberal justice system, or injustice system as I should say, and weak Liberal laws that serve the interests of criminals and not Canadians.

If this really is a new government, will the Prime Minister repeal Trudeau's old soft-on-crime policies, including Bill C-5 and Bill C-75?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our plan to keep communities safe will keep drugs, guns and criminals off our streets. We are committed to hiring 1,000 more CBSA officers and 1,000 more RCMP officers to secure our border and help keep our streets safe. We are partnering with police services across the country to fight organized crime. We will make it tougher for violent criminals to get bail and will impose stricter sentences for repeat violent offenders. We will always be there to protect Canadians.

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the now Minister of Public Safety said during the campaign that there was nothing wrong with the bail system in Canada. He even said it was "quite sound". This was despite the deadly spree of murders and other violent attacks committed by people out on bail, and frontline officers across the country demanding immediate reform.

Does the Prime Minister agree with his Minister of Public Safety that there is no problem with the bail laws in Canada, or agree with the frontline officers who are demanding real action now?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always heartening to hear the opposition clip something that is completely out of context, and unfortunately, the Conservative candidate in my riding did not even show up for the debate.

Let me just be clear: Our government was elected on April 28 with a mandate of ensuring that our communities are safe. That is exactly what we will do. We will work with law enforcement. This morning, I had the opportunity to meet, along with the Secretary of State for labour, members of the CPA, the Canadian Police Association, and I look forward to working with law enforcement across this country to make our communities safer.

Colin Reynolds (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, knocking on thousands of doors in my community this past spring,

Oral Questions

I heard the same concern: People are worried about the rise in crime. In Winnipeg, violent crimes like assaults, threats and extortion are increasing. Homicide Canada reported that in 2024, Winnipeg had over 40 homicides for the sixth year in a row. Because of Liberal bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, repeat violent offenders are treated with kid gloves and get released.

When will the Liberals finally put the rights of victims and law-abiding Canadians ahead of their soft-on-crime, hug-a-thug agenda?

• (1150)

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will take a moment to thank my constituents for returning me to the House of Commons for the fourth time. I am rising for the first time as the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

When I was talking to people during the campaign back home, they said when dangerous people commit serious crimes and pose a threat to public safety, they should face serious consequences. We have listened to them and are moving forward with stronger bail provisions for auto theft, for home invasions and for drug trafficking. We are also going to advance stronger sentences for serious crimes and for repeat offenders.

We are going to do what it takes to ensure that Canadians can feel safe in their communities and be safe in their communities.

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since 2016, 50,000 Canadians have died due to drug overdoses, mostly from fentanyl. Mass fentanyl production is mass murder. Conservatives are proposing life sentences for those producing or distributing over 40 milligrams of fentanyl.

How many more Canadians must die before the Prime Minister will treat mass production of fentanyl as mass murder and support life sentences for drug kingpins?

Oral Questions

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fentanyl crisis has impacted every community, not just in Canada but in all of North America and in many communities around the world. We are accelerating our work to crack down on and dismantle the fentanyl trade and organized crime groups that profit from it. That is why we listed seven cartels as terrorist entities under the Criminal Code. I am working closely with Kevin Brosseau, Canada's fentanyl czar, at home and abroad to put a laser-sharp focus on dismantling fentanyl rings.

We will always be there to protect Canadians.

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ETHICS

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like most Canadians, I do not stash my assets in offshore tax havens in Bermuda or the Cayman Islands, and like them, I believe in shining a little sunlight on the people who govern us. The Prime Minister claims that his assets are in a blind trust, but Canadians are the ones completely in the dark. He absolutely knows what his assets were before he placed them into a blind trust.

I will ask a simple question that deserves a simple answer: Does the Prime Minister knowingly or blindly have any financial interest in any offshore tax havens, yes or no?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are so proud to have a new Prime Minister with a clear vision of the country and with a plan to rebuild our economy, a plan to take on the tariff challenges with the United States, a plan to give prosperity to all Canadians and, of course, a plan to comply stringently with the code of ethics for all parliamentarians, which is among the most stringent in the world.

The Prime Minister will be complying. The member will be complying. We will all be complying, and Canadians should feel very reassured about that.

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not feel reassured. I certainly did not hear a “no” in there.

What we do know is that the Prime Minister was implicated in setting up offshore tax havens to avoid paying Canadian taxes. We know that he is sitting on stocks from Brookfield Asset Management, which is riddled with conflicts of interest and which benefits handsomely from government contracts. We know that he is perfectly fine to promote companies Brookfield owns on the debate stage, so what will he do to help himself behind the closed doors of government? Canadians deserve to know if he will financially benefit from any current or future contracts Brookfield gets with his government.

When will the Prime Minister come clean and tell Canadians what assets he personally holds?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been the governor of two central banks. He has had a successful career, which I am sure he is very proud of, in the private sector, and he has come to public service once again. This is another tour of public service for our Prime Minister, with a clear plan to get

Canada's economy back on track. That is what the Prime Minister is up to.

What the Prime Minister is also up to is stringent compliance with the code of ethics that Parliament has imposed upon itself, one of the most serious and stringent in the world. Canadians should feel very reassured.

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OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister has a plan, we would sure love to hear it here in Parliament.

On the eve of the election in which he was trying to get elected, the Prime Minister went on an Oilers radio show in Edmonton and was asked about oil. He said, “There's a massive opportunity...if you look at out east, [particularly in] Quebec, they import about 365,000 barrels a day.... Seventy per cent of that is coming from the U.S., so we've got an opportunity to displace there.”

The Prime Minister has a Quebec minister who is now looking at me in complete disagreement with those statements, but even the Prime Minister has said, “as much as half of oil reserves, proven oil reserves, need to stay in the ground”.

Which of the Prime Minister's positions should we believe?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to win this trade war, we will build on Canada's terms to deliver the strongest, most resilient economy in the G7. Canada's new government will cut red tape, fast-track projects of national interest and guarantee decisions within two years. We are not building just for speed; we are building for purpose to have a strong negotiating hand that unlocks the next generation of Canadian prosperity. We will get projects built to make Canada an energy superpower.

• (1155)

Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister went on to say, “we've got this resource. At a minimum, we should be using it all the time ourselves, because we're going to use what I call conventional oil and gas for the rest of my life and beyond.” He said that in Edmonton when he was trying to get elected, but he has a history of saying that we should leave oil and gas in the ground.

When will the government finally repeal Bill C-69 to create the conditions that will actually allow us to take advantage of this massive opportunity so it is realized?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a shout-out to the Edmonton Oilers, who won last night.

My goal is to get things built where we have proponents. We will make Canada strong and protect ourselves from American tariffs. I encourage my Conservative colleagues to join us in building the strongest economy in the G7.

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's energy sector and economy continue to be held back by Liberal anti-energy laws, like the industrial carbon tax and Bill C-69, which blocks all new energy infrastructure. This is compounded by Justin Trudeau's energy production cap, which will kill 54,000 jobs and gut \$20 billion from the Canadian economy.

The new Prime Minister likes to market himself as the anti-Trudeau. Well, it is time for him to prove it. Will the Prime Minister repeal the industrial carbon tax, repeal Bill C-69 and repeal the oil and gas production cap, or is he just another Trudeau clone willing to let our energy sector die?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, Canadians are facing threats to our way of life from both climate change and American tariffs. We are tackling these problems head-on by building clean energy projects that will fight climate change and make Canada the strongest economy in the G7.

The industrial carbon price attracts new investment, creates jobs and grows our economy. With innovation in carbon capture, we will build a low-cost, low-risk and low-carbon superpower. I encourage my colleagues to join us in building a stronger Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Sudbury, like Canada, has everything it takes to be an economic powerhouse: a skilled workforce, abundant natural resources and world-class research institutions.

Throughout the campaign, I heard from researchers, innovators and business leaders who wanted to know how the federal government could help them through this period of uncertainty.

Can the Minister of Industry tell the House how we will fight to protect and build a prosperous Canadian economy?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her hard work and congratulate her on her election in Sudbury.

She is right. The tariff war launched by the Americans is having a direct impact on our workers and creating a lot of uncertainty across the country. That is why we are going to invest heavily in creating jobs across the country, including in her riding of Sudbury and in northern Ontario.

We will attract investment from around the world. We will reduce our dependence on the Americans. Canada is not for sale. We are ready to do business.

Oral Questions

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just hours before the May long weekend, Parks Canada blindsided my region by banning motorized boats on Clear Lake after confirming access a week earlier. There was no consultation or warning. Locals care deeply about the lake, which is why the agency's "one boat, one lake" policy had broad support. When asked what suddenly changed, Parks Canada refused to justify its damning decision, which caused whiplash in the region.

Will the minister reinstate the "one boat, one lake" policy that Parks Canada supported just weeks ago?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, in that lake and that region, we are facing a zebra mussel invasion on which we must intervene to control. Otherwise, it could spread in the region to other water basins around that area. That is why, with Parks Canada, with local partners and with indigenous partners who support what Parks Canada has been doing, we are trying to tackle this issue as rapidly as possible.

● (1200)

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that answer is unacceptable.

The mismanagement by Parks Canada of Riding Mountain National Park is not new, and neither is the minister's refusal to act. He has been warned time and again of Parks Canada's ongoing failures, with no communication, no engagement and no accountability. Every time Canadians raise the alarm, the minister insists things will improve, but nothing ever changes.

Will the minister finally take responsibility and replace the superintendent of Riding Mountain National Park to restore trust and confidence?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite is saying is simply not true. We have, in fact, been working with local authorities.

Parks Canada provided funding to compensate for some of the loss in revenues last year because of the closure as we are trying to tackle this very important crisis. It is totally irresponsible for the member to somehow suggest that we should just let the zebra mussels spread all around Manitoba. Imagine the impacts for local drinking water, for commerce and for businesses all across the province. This is totally irresponsible.

*Oral Questions***EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Dane Lloyd (Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as fires burn across the Prairies, I know I speak for everyone in the House when I say that our hearts are with all of those who have been impacted and those who are working tirelessly to protect our communities.

In the wake of the Jasper fire, we learned about the devastating consequences of the poor forest management that failed to clear swaths of dead forest. Experts are now sounding the alarm that communities in national parks like Banff will face similar threats this summer.

Can the government tell us what preparations, if any, have been undertaken by Parks Canada to protect communities from wildfire?

Hon. Eleanor Olszewski (Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience and Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am monitoring the wildfire situation around the clock, and I am in close communication with my provincial counterparts.

The Canadian Armed Forces is evacuating first nations and others who are affected by the wildfires. Leaving a home under these circumstances is incredibly difficult, and our government will continue to support and protect all those who are affected by wildfires. There is nothing more important than keeping Canadians safe.

* * *

HOUSING

Maggie Chi (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the doors in Don Valley North, I heard from many constituents that access to affordable housing is one of their top concerns. I, like every member on this side, feel proud to stand with a government that has put forward the most ambitious housing plan this country has seen since the Second World War.

Can the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure tell my constituents what they can look forward to seeing from this plan?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the voters in Don Valley North for electing my colleague to this House.

We will get hundreds of thousands of new homes built, with more affordable homes across Canada, and double the share of non-market affordable housing in this country by starting up “build Canada homes”, a new entity that will build affordable homes at scale across Canada utilizing public land and even existing structures. We will be cutting municipal development charges, working with municipalities to bring down those costs as well, and much more.

* * *

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on July 6, 2013, the town of Lac-Mégantic experienced the worst rail disaster in Canadian history, and 47 people lost their lives.

Four thousand, three hundred and forty-four days later, despite political commitments and several motions adopted unanimously in the House, the people of Lac-Mégantic are still waiting for the work to begin on the rail bypass to get trains out of the downtown core. “We are going to do it,” Justin Trudeau told the people of Lac-Mégantic on May 11, 2018.

When will the new and fifth Liberal transport minister come to Lac-Mégantic to tell people the truth and explain why trains are still passing through the downtown core?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Transport and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. This is a very serious issue.

As the new Minister of Transport, I would first like to express my deepest condolences to the people of Lac-Mégantic, who have suffered so much.

This issue is truly a priority for our government. It must be a priority for our government, and I think it must be a priority for all members. We are going to do it.

* * *

● (1205)

[English]

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I tabled the first private member's bill in this Parliament, Bill C-201, which aims to bring mental health, addictions and substance use services into our universal public health care system. The last Liberal government promised to ensure that mental health was treated as a full and equal part of Canada's public health care system, but it failed to deliver.

Untreated mental illness has enormous costs for families, communities and our economy. Will the new government recognize that investing in mental health is good for all Canadians and support my bill?

[Translation]

Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the people of Papineau, who gave me the privilege of sitting in this House for the first time.

I would also like to thank the opposition member for his question. I can assure him that mental health is a priority for me. I want Canadians who need mental health services to know that their federal government will work closely with the provinces and territories to ensure that they can access these services.

[English]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, as Saskatchewan and Manitoba burn, there is precious little content in the Speech from the Throne on how the government plans to approach the climate crisis. There is not a single reference to the Paris Agreement and our legally binding targets to cut emissions by at least 40% by 2030. On November 2024, we were at only 7% below 2005 levels.

When will the government present a plan? So far all it has done is cut the one measure that was working.

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member mentioned, there are wildfires raging across our country. It brings to heart just how important climate change is and fighting climate change is for a strong, secure future for our country. I am absolutely committed to working with provinces, territories and indigenous peoples to make sure that we reduce our emissions, fight climate change and keep Canadians safe.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, although this petition is dated, it is timely. The petitioners say that they are personally moved by the heartbreaking violence that has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent people in Gaza and Palestine due to the Israel-Hamas war between October 23 and December 24, 2024. They say that across Gaza, more than 40,000 souls were lost, with approximately 70% of those being women and children. In the same period, 1,706 Israelis were reported dead. They claim that the conflict has not spared the occupied West Bank either, where the war has claimed the lives of 479 Palestinians, including 116 children and nine Israelis.

We know these numbers are dated, but the petitioners ask that Canada take significant measures to, as it has in the past, impose a two-way embargo on arms between Canada and Israel; investigate whether Canadian weapons or weapon components have been used against Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, including during the current war on Gaza; review all military and security co-operation between Canada and Israel; and, finally, close loopholes that allow the unregulated and unreported transfer of military goods to Israel through the United States.

• (1210)

JUSTICE

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to present a petition initiated by the parents of a young man who was unfortunately killed by a drunk driver. The petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to amend the Jordan rule to address critical gaps that risk undermining the principles of justice and fairness for victims of crime.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners strongly ask that serious crimes, particularly those involving death, be excluded from the constraints of the Jordan rule. These are the most severe violations of human rights injustices in cases involving a loss of life, and they must not be compromised by arbitrary time limits. Furthermore, in particular, the petitioners ask for an amendment in cases where the accused is not being deprived of liberty by being in custody.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition from constituents as well as Canadians from coast to coast. It is certainly an issue that came up on the doorsteps when I was campaigning. The petitioners ask that the government takes seriously its commitments under the Paris Agreement to avoid the dangerous and even catastrophic levels of climate change and global warming that will occur if we exceed the 1.5°C global average temperature increase.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to take many steps. I will summarize them by saying that they want the government to cut emissions dramatically to ensure that we avoid the levels of climate crisis that will put human civilization itself in jeopardy.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will permit me one burst of enthusiasm to congratulate the people of Edmonton. All Canadians join them in saying, “Go, Oilers, go.”

[Translation]

I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

CONSERVATIVE PARTY CAUCUS

Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to subsection 49.8(5) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I rise to discharge my obligations as the chair of the Conservative caucus and to inform you of the recorded votes of the first Conservative caucus meeting, which took place on May 6, 2025. Division C.1 of the act requires that four votes be taken at the first meeting of every recognized caucus following a general election.

The Address

The first vote establishes whether, for the remainder of that Parliament, members may only be expelled from the caucus by means of a majority vote among their colleagues. At its May 6 meeting, the Conservative caucus voted in favour of adopting this provision.

The second vote establishes whether a caucus will elect its own chair and retain the right to replace that chair with another, also by majority vote. The Conservative caucus voted in favour of this as well.

The third vote establishes whether a caucus will give itself the authority to conduct a leadership review vote, a power that the Liberals in the 44th Parliament may perhaps have regretted not adopting. At its May 6 meeting, the Conservative caucus voted in favour of this one also.

The fourth vote establishes whether a caucus will, in preparation for the eventuality that an interim leader will be needed, give itself the authority to elect that interim leader. The Conservative caucus also voted to adopt this authority. Subsection 49.8(5) of the act specifies:

As soon as feasible after the conduct of the votes, the chair of the caucus shall inform the Speaker of the House of Commons of the outcome of each vote.

I have now discharged this obligation. I encourage the chairs of the two other recognized caucuses to rise in the House, as I have done, and, in their respective reports to the Speaker, make clear whether or not separate votes were held in each question, as subsection 49.8(2) of the law explicitly requires.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the member for discharging his duties as the national caucus chair for the Conservatives.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[English]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to His Majesty the King in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and of the amendment as amended.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while there are some measures outlined in the throne speech that can be seen as steps in the right direction, the government's agenda is clearly lacking and short on measurable actions that could produce meaningful and positive outcomes for Canadians. Moreover, the throne speech is a blueprint intended to signal the direction and focus of an incoming government. It is up to this place, the House of Commons, and all of us elected parliamentarians to review government programming with the objective of ensuring transparency and economic viability.

Let us start with the need for a budget. Households have budgets. Small businesses have budgets. Corporations have budgets. Charities have budgets. People routinely create a yearly budget as a prudent standard practice. The Liberal government's decision to not table the budget at this critical juncture for our country can best be described as irresponsible.

The Prime Minister touted his banking and business background as qualifying attributes for the office that he now holds. Can anyone

imagine the response a Canadian would get if he or she were to approach their financial institution and apply for a loan with a caveat that they would provide their financial records and a budget six months after they receive the money? I would argue that the Prime Minister, his cabinet and the Liberal caucus would do well to respect Parliament and present a budget before they leave on vacation. They should not be afraid of vigorous, insightful and inspiring debate.

I want to touch on some issues that are important to my community and that were shared with me while I was campaigning. Nestled in the heart of the GTA, the beautiful municipalities of Aurora and Richmond Hill have been fraught with crime. There have been a record number of auto thefts and home invasions, and violent smash-and-grab robberies are far too prevalent. The Liberal catch-and-release agenda has frustrated law enforcement agencies across the country.

Even more glaring is the omission of investing further in the Canada Border Services Agency to provide it with the tools to catch and stop the influx of illegal drugs and guns into our country. Again, law enforcement agencies from coast to coast to coast have repeatedly told us that the majority of the confiscated weapons used in violent crimes in our communities have entered into our country illegally.

The Liberal government needs to get serious about the crime and drugs ravaging our communities. Repealing Bill C-75, which gave high priority to releasing repeat violent offenders back into our communities and avoiding jail time, would be a good start. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities. Sadly, the Liberal government is showing us once again that it will continue to take half measures that are weak on crime.

Speaking of half measures, the Liberals have now tabled a ways and means motion proposing three modest tax measures, but the motion does not go nearly far enough. The income tax cut, if one can even call it that, in practice, would not even cover a cup of coffee a week. The industrial carbon tax would continue to make life more expensive for businesses and consumers, and that would remain. Residents in Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill deserve better. We need a bigger tax cut that would make a real difference for their families. The entire carbon tax must be repealed so industry can excel and residents can afford to live.

One of the saddest conversations I had at the doorsteps was with a lady who confided the following: "Sir, I am not a political person. I am a widow in my eighties. My husband and I bought this home, a modest bungalow, and grew our family here. I worked all of my life, paid my taxes and am now on a modest fixed pension, but unfortunately I cannot afford to eat the same way I was eating three years ago, so I am eating less, and different things, because I want to continue living in my home." I would ask that members of the House reflect on the gravity of that statement.

Young people are being saddled with an ever-growing national debt. Youth unemployment is once again on the rise. Liberal policies have left them with little hope for their future, and the idea of achieving home ownership is but a dream.

In closing, there is much work to do. We can all do better. The current government can start by doing a lot better than the Liberals have been doing over the last 10 years.

I would like to thank my wife Gail, my pillar of strength for the past 45 years, as well as my children, Michael and Alicia, and my extended family, for their love and support. Being here in Canada's Parliament is indeed a huge honour and one that I will cherish every day as I walk into this historic chamber.

• (1215)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend across the way.

Pierre Poilievre was the parliamentary secretary to Stephen Harper at one time. When Stephen Harper was elected prime minister, it was back on February 6, 2006. Members would not believe how long it took him to present a budget. It was not presented until May of that year.

We just had a prime minister elected, and Conservatives are taking the direction from their leader, saying that we need to have a budget. In fact, the current Prime Minister has been the Prime Minister since the election on April 28.

Stephen Harper was given far more grace than the current Prime Minister, yet look at what we have to overcome. Does the member believe it might be a bit of a double standard that is being applied?

• (1220)

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, the current Prime Minister has touted his background as a businessman and a banker as credentials for the office he currently holds. He would never loan money to somebody if they did not present their financial picture. He would never loan money to a business if it did not present a budget. It is 2025, I would remind the hon. member opposite. The Prime Minister is now asking Parliament to give him a blank cheque for \$500 billion today, and then he will tell us what he has done with that money six months down the road.

It is not our money, but taxpayer money. It is my responsibility as a parliamentarian, and that of all parliamentarians, to have an opportunity to review that budget and every dollar that is spent so that we can have a say, we can have input and we can—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give my colleague the opportunity to tell the House what he thinks the Liberal government's reasons are for not tabling a budget at such an important time in our history.

The Address

[English]

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, I wish I knew the answer as to why. One can surmise only that there are things the Liberals do not want us to know. Transparency is an attribute that one cannot attach to the Liberal government. We have seen over the last 10 years, and in fact just in the last Parliament, that Parliament was shut down for a number of months because the Liberals refused to provide information that parliamentarians and Canadians were entitled to. Therefore, by not producing a budget, they are raising a big question mark as to the integrity of what they are intending to do with Canadians' money.

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome back the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill. It is nice to see him.

I note with pleasure that the member for Winnipeg North is also reminiscing about his time served in the House during the Harper government. I recognize that the member who just gave his speech also served during that time.

Could he share with us some of his fond reminiscences from that time?

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, certainly I was extremely proud to be a part of the Harper government in this time. It was a time in which we were completely transparent. Ministers presented their bills, budgets were presented on time and there was accountability. In fact, I am proud to say that our prime minister, Stephen Harper, was never called onto the carpet by the Ethics Commissioner, something that the former Liberal prime minister was quite challenged with. If I am not mistaken, it was two or three times that he had to present himself and was found guilty by the Ethics Commissioner of violations of the rules and regulations of this country. Therefore, I am proud to say that I served in the House with, in my opinion, one of the best prime ministers to have ever served this Parliament.

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my predecessor helped several municipalities in my riding apply for funding to build housing. In contrast, the Conservative leader, Mr. Poilievre, did not let his MPs help their own communities access these funds.

Will the Conservative leader continue to obstruct the efforts of municipalities represented by his MPs to build housing?

• (1225)

[English]

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, I see that the member is young. It is unfortunate that the government has created a situation in which home ownership is very difficult for young people. Certainly, paying \$56 billion a year in interest is not going to provide an—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Resuming debate, the hon. member for York—Durham.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House for my maiden speech, and I wish to begin by saying I rise with equal parts pride, equal parts trepidation and a little bit of childlike wonder. I hope all three of those continue in my career here in Parliament.

The Address

I want to begin by thanking several people who have been instrumental in getting me to this place. First, I want to start with my beautiful wife, Megan. Unfortunately, she is not here with me today, because she is serving a shift in the palliative care unit at St. Mike's Hospital right now, watching from the screens there. Without her help and support and her love and guidance, I would not be in this seat. I think all parliamentarians know this is a team sport, and their spouse is the number one fan on their team and number one contributor.

I like to say there is only one person who knocked on more doors than I did during the campaign, and that is my wife. In this campaign especially, she had to work extra hard doing that because she is pregnant right now. I have been learning as a new member that we have parliamentary privilege and immunities for what we say in the House. I was thinking about disclosing the gender of our future baby, but I think even those parliamentary privileges will not protect me if I do that without her permission.

I also want to thank my parents, David and Nan Mantle, who are watching at home this afternoon. They have taught me everything I know and instilled in me many, many things, but the most important thing they have instilled in me is to do the right thing, to do the fair thing, to do the just thing, to do the honest thing, even if it is going to cost me. This is my commitment to the House, to the members opposite and to my colleagues here in the Conservative Party, that I will do that.

I also want to thank all the communities of York—Durham for putting their trust in me: the people of Brock township; the people of Uxbridge, my hometown, whom I served on council with about 15 years ago; the people of Port Perry in Scugog township, where I spent summers in Caesarea on Lake Scugog learning how to wakeboard and ski; the people of Georgina, who welcomed me with open arms; and the people of Whitchurch-Stouffville, the parts that I know very well, playing baseball against Ballantrae and Vidor.

Of course, I also want to thank two proud first nations in my communities: the Mississaugas of Scugog Island, whose chief I have not had a chance to meet yet, but I look forward to doing that soon; and the Chippewas of Georgina Island, who welcomed me to visit Georgina Island during the campaign.

I want to share a bit of that experience. As the member for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury will know, as he has visited often, one cannot get there; one has to take a boat, a ferry. That ferry does not run on hopes and dreams; it does not run on unicorns or rainbows. It runs on diesel fuel, which was made more expensive by the carbon tax for years by the Liberal government. I join other hon. members here in demanding that the government refund that carbon tax to the first nation.

The people and the communities I mentioned are how I got here, but they are not the full answer for why I fought to be here and why the people of York—Durham have sent me here. I think there are at least three reasons. First, homes: The people sent me here because there is a sense among my generation that they will never get ahead, that no matter how hard they work, how much they save or how diligently they budget, they will never own a home. I will just say that again for my colleagues on the other side: no matter how diligently they budget. We are still waiting for that from the other

side. The dream of home ownership slipping away is creating depression and dejection among my generation.

I want to share two stories about that. The first is from a working couple in Uxbridge whose door I knocked on. Both had well-paying jobs, and they had a young family. They said they were doing okay, but they are just scraping by. They did not know what else they could be doing. They both work full jobs and try to manage their family.

Second, I received a message just earlier this week from a fellow millennial who lives in Keswick. She is being evicted from her home and lamented to me that she has nowhere to go. She said to me that she should not have to leave the town she grew up in because we cannot get enough affordable homes built for someone like her, who earns a good salary. I agree.

● (1230)

The government's throne speech talks about building homes. It says that a new government agency will save us, that prefabricated and modular homes are the answer. I refuse to live in a shipping container. I refuse to live in a communist-style tenement built by Brookfield Homes. I demand, for my generation, the same opportunities that my parents had before me.

The second reason that I think people sent me here is crime, crime on our streets and in our neighbourhoods. People feel unsafe. My residents do not want to have to be told to park their car in the garage or purchase military-style bollards so that their car does not get stolen.

My residents want drugs and gangs off their streets. Just this week in Georgina, the York Regional Police busted a drug ring through Project Madruga. I want to thank the York Regional Police for their diligent work there in getting fentanyl, cocaine, meth, opioids and illegal firearms off the streets. The Speech from the Throne says that the government will bring forward a renewed focus on this issue by making bail harder to get. I hope it does, and we will be watching.

Third, the people sent me here because Canada is in economic decline. They are worried about our relationship with the United States and Canada's place in the world. The data on this is not really in dispute. Growth is anemic. Purchasing power is down. Canadians are poorer than they were before. The antidote, at least in my estimation, is pretty straightforward: It is to remove taxes, remove the laws and remove the regulations that stand in the way of Canadians making a better life for themselves.

On trade, this is something I hope to contribute to positively. It is something I know pretty well, having spent nearly 10 years practising international trade with some of the best in the business. On that note, I would like to thank my former partners, Matthew Kronby and Jesse Goldman at Osler, for teaching me everything I know. My offer to the government is this: I will be a resource. If government members want to know what we are thinking on these issues, let us talk.

Canada's place in the world has been diminished because our armed forces lack the tools they need. The government says that it will rebuild and rearm the Canadian forces, and I hope that is true, but we will see. My family has a proud military tradition. My grandfather served in the Royal Canadian Air Force, attached to the RAF as a navigator during the Second World War, including on D-Day.

That tradition has been continued by my brother, who is a current serving member. I want to share my experience visiting him on a public event at his base. Unfortunately, while all the people on that base were excellent professionals and well trained, the government has failed to equip them properly. As I walked into the hangar, water fell from the ceiling into a garbage can because the roof was leaking. As we waited for rides in a military aircraft, we had to wait longer because it broke down. Although the military was prepared, even the spare broke down. Lastly, rides in the military vehicle had to stop because it blew a gasket and spread oil all over the parking lot. The state of the tools that we give our men and women in the armed forces is unacceptable, and that is something I will continue to raise in the House.

I point these things out not just because we are in opposition but because we want things to get better. Our message is fundamentally hopeful. I am here because I am hopeful about Canada's future, and if the government moves to address these and other issues, they will have my support.

I will end by asking for wisdom from heaven for this place and for all members in the House, because it is wisdom from heaven that is, first of all, pure, then peace-loving, confident, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. We are servants of the people, and no servant is greater than their master. No messenger is greater than the one who sent them. I pray that all members remember that in the House. God bless each member in the House, and God bless Canada.

• (1235)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really took an interest when the member started to talk about the issue of crime and automobile theft. In the province of Manitoba, back in and around the era of 2005, 2006 and 2007, we had the highest automobile theft in the country by far. No province even came close to Manitoba on a per capita basis. In fact, we could virtually double the number of vehicles that were being stolen.

What resolved the problem was not just Ottawa. It was Manitoba Public Insurance, it was the provincial government, and it was other stakeholders that actually came together, much like what happened recently, last year in Ontario. We have seen numbers go down.

Would the member not recognize that, on that particular issue, it is not just the federal government? In fact, many would argue, in the province of Manitoba, that it was the provincial government and MPI that made the difference, that it is not just one level of government that resolves that particular problem. Would he not agree?

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member brought up co-operation. We are in a minority Parliament, and I hope the government will co-operate with us on issues that matter to Canadians. Crime is one of them. I hope that on that issue, we can collaborate

The Address

on bail reform, because we know that the people stealing cars, trafficking drugs and trafficking firearms are going through a revolving door of bail.

The member talked about co-operation. The Province of Ontario has demanded bail reform, and the government has refused to give it. Where is the co-operation?

[Translation]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the previous Parliament, parliamentarians passed Bill C-21, legislation aimed at increasing gun control. However, since the bill passed, we have been waiting for the regulations that the government was supposed to introduce.

Does my colleague, who is concerned about safety, find it unusual that the regulations for such an important bill have not yet been introduced?

[English]

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I apologize that I must answer in English, but I commit to the House to learning as much French as I can as quickly as I can.

On this issue, I am concerned about the government's lack of priorities. It is focused on attacking law-abiding firearms owners instead of going after criminals and the criminal trafficking of guns across the border. I hope the government focuses on that priority rather than law-abiding firearms owners.

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his being elected to this august chamber. Second, I would like to thank him for his family's service in the Canadian Armed Forces, particularly his brother, who is still serving.

My question is about housing. I am just wondering if the member has heard from any of the affordable housing organizations in his riding. I just got emails from a community living project that was getting funding from CMHC. It is now being told, despite Parliament having been prorogued and then dissolved so we can have a new Parliament, that apparently all the money has been spent already. Despite the government announcing billions of dollars of more deficit spending, organizations are being told, "Sorry, wait it out."

If housing is such a priority, I am wondering if the member is hearing the same concerns about affordable housing projects in his community.

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I am hearing the same thing. I think it is important to recognize that my riding is both urban and rural. Sometimes people think that homelessness and a lack of housing are not rural issues, but they are. There are homeless people in rural ridings, and they have even fewer places to go.

The Address

I hope the government is being truthful and will do something about it. I hope it will give people their dream of home ownership, not a dream that cannot be attained.

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his election.

He talked about his family. We on this side of the House are taking concrete action to make life more affordable for our families. This includes our tax cut. We also want to maintain programs such as pharmacare, the Canadian dental care plan and affordable child care spaces. The Conservatives voted against these programs.

Will my colleague—

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for York—Durham.

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we will always support tax cuts, even if they do not go far enough and do not give enough relief. I invite the member to come to my riding, walk down the streets with me and see how tough it is.

I applaud the Liberals for the tax cut. Let us see more of it.

• (1240)

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Don Valley North.

In response to the Speech from the Throne, allow me to begin with a few words about the messenger.

On September 5, 1755, in Nova Scotia, the King of England's instructions were read aloud by Lieutenant Colonel John Winslow, in English, to 418 men and boys called to the Saint-Charles-des-Mines church in Grand-Pré. The royal proclamation of Acadian deportation ordered that all of their lands, homes, livestock and herds of all kinds be confiscated on behalf of the Crown, along with other goods, not including money and personal items, and that they be expelled from the province. The King's imperial orders led to the deportation of all French inhabitants of these districts. The soldiers then gathered up the terrified population, expelled them from their lands, and burned their homes and crops to the ground. Acadian families were deported on 16 ships, mostly to lands in New England, France, Louisiana and England. Of a population amounting to about 13,500 Acadians, an estimated 12,600 or more were deported. Others managed to escape to Quebec and Acadia, that remained French. On the Gaspé peninsula, where I live today, and on Île Royale and Île Saint-Jean, exiled Acadians established a number of villages. Historians estimate that more than half of the 12,600 deported Acadians perished from disease, epidemics, hardship, malnutrition or shipwreck.

On February 15, 1839, at 9 a.m., five patriots climbed the scaffold to be hanged at the Pied-du-Courant prison in Montreal. Of the 99 patriots who were sentenced to death, a total of 12 were hanged. The rest were sentenced to hard labour in Australia.

The Patriotes movement was a push for democracy. The patriots demanded that decisions be made by their elected representatives, not the governor general, who was controlled by the King of England. This fair and legitimate demand for responsible government was harshly suppressed by the British Crown. Quebeckers had their rights and freedoms suspended for four years during the unrest surrounding the Patriotes rebellion.

Perhaps these historical reminders will help the House better understand why having King Charles III visit and deliver the Speech from the Throne did not generate much enthusiasm from me and many of my fellow Quebeckers. Some will say that these events happened a long time ago. I would respond that yes, they did, but as we say in Quebec, *je me souviens*—never forget.

Perhaps the fact that Quebeckers never forget is also the reason that 87% of respondents to a Leger poll this week said they felt no attachment to the British monarchy. Perhaps this is also why a majority of Quebeckers, 52%, would vote to end the monarchy and create a republic. Perhaps this is also why the Quebec National Assembly unanimously passed a motion this week to sever all ties with the monarchy. In short, in Quebec, we have a problem with the messenger, the person who delivered the Speech from the Throne.

The Bloc Québécois has a plan for independence for the Quebec nation, a plan that will enable Quebeckers to adopt their own meaningful symbols and enjoy the freedom to shape their own future. In the meantime, the Bloc Québécois will introduce a bill during this session to allow elected members of this House to opt out of swearing an oath to the King. Our proposal is to make the oath to the King optional and allow elected officials to take an oath of office instead. This would be a step forward and would show some respect for the freedom of conscience of elected officials. I invite my colleagues to reflect on our motivations and recognize that this bill is legitimate and deserves their support.

• (1245)

Enough about the messenger. Now I want to talk about the message. I will start with something positive and then move on to the things that disappointed me.

On a positive note, I was pleased that the government mentioned that it wants to protect supply management. This is important for Quebec's farmers, our dairy, egg and poultry farmers. In my riding, the farmers under the supply management system are faring the best in the income crisis facing the agricultural sector right now, because supply management provides them with a stable income. We know that when CUSMA is renegotiated, the Americans will again try to get a bigger share of the dairy, egg and poultry markets. That is why the leader of the Bloc Québécois introduced a bill yesterday that would prohibit Canadian negotiators from making any concessions on supply management. The Liberal government's response has been fairly positive. I invite the Liberals to support our bill in order to provide our farmers with protective legislation as quickly as possible.

As for the things that disappointed me, for starters, the throne speech seems light on detail about the government's plan to build the best economy in the G7. The focus is more on eliminating federal barriers to trade and less on diversifying the economy. There is not one word in the speech about fisheries, for example. More than 80% of the seafood produced in the Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands is exported to the United States. The past few months have driven home the importance of diversifying our export markets. We need to reduce our dependence on the U.S. market because it is so unstable right now. I was surprised to learn that there is no federal funding allocated to trade missions for Quebec's fisheries sector. The federal government must support the fisheries sector with multi-year funding so it can find new markets. That is crucial to building a strong economy.

The fact that the forestry sector has been overlooked is another disappointment. I would like to remind the government that the U.S. Department of Commerce announced in March that it planned to nearly triple the duties on Canadian softwood lumber, bringing total levies to nearly 27%. Let us not forget that the Canadian softwood lumber industry is already subject to a 14.4% levy on its exports to the United States. The additional tariffs could come into effect as early as August. If they are implemented, they will have a significant negative impact on Quebec's forestry industry, because 50% of Quebec's softwood lumber is exported to the United States. We need to support our forestry companies, and I made a commitment during the last election campaign to guide them through the coming crisis and to call for assistance programs that are adapted to the reality of the Gaspé and Quebec. The forestry industry must also diversify its export markets and focus on developing the domestic market. In that regard, the Bloc Québécois's proposal to promote local purchasing in federal government contracts could increase market opportunities for Quebec softwood lumber.

That brings me to my final point. Where are the infrastructure investments we were promised? Building a strong economy requires adequate infrastructure, and I am going to try to fill the gap in the Speech from the Throne with two suggestions that would strengthen my region's economy.

First, if the Liberal government wants to build the best economy in the G7, it seems to me that this requires an adequate rail transportation system across the country. The Gaspé rail line will be operational to New Carlisle by September 2025. However, VIA Rail refuses to resume service from Matapédia to New Carlisle, even

The Address

though regional connections are at the heart of its mandate. Through their tax dollars, the people of the Gaspé contributed more than \$400 million in federal funding to VIA Rail in 2024 so that it could provide service in the regions. It should also be noted that when VIA Rail suspended service in 2013, it was because the rail line was no longer safe. I therefore call on the Liberal government to intervene with VIA Rail and compel it to reverse its decision and commit to resuming passenger rail service in the coming weeks. It is an essential service that allows people in my region to travel to other regions. This is a legitimate demand and would help strengthen our economy by improving people's productivity.

My final suggestion is this. If we want adequate infrastructure, the runway at the Magdalen Islands airport needs to be extended.

• (1250)

[English]

Clifford Small (Central Newfoundland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the hon. member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj. His riding has quite a bit in common with my riding and many ridings in Newfoundland and Labrador.

With regard to the Speech from the Throne, the Prime Minister reiterated his commitment to 30% by 30. Right now, 14% of Canada's oceans are considered protected areas. Iceland has 2% protected and Norway has 1% protected, with no plans to go further with that, but the Prime Minister's lofty intentions are to increase marine protected areas to 30% of the ocean.

I wonder what my hon. colleague thinks of that and what impact it could have on the fishing economy in his riding.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, what worries the Bloc Québécois about fisheries is the oil drilling that the Liberal government is prepared to green-light. It will definitely disturb marine wildlife, and that worries us.

As for inshore fishing, we want to promote a model where fishing is done by family businesses that are handed down from father to son, with inshore fishers taking just enough from the sea to make a living, without going to extremes, like the factory ships have too often done in recent history.

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj. He is actually my neighbour. There is only the estuary and Gulf of St. Lawrence between us. Our two ridings have a lot in common. He talked about fisheries and forestry. I would add that we also have tourism in common.

He mentioned the glaring oversight in the throne speech regarding infrastructure and the extensive investments that would be needed to get us to roughly the same level as the big cities. It is fair to ask for this in order to help our communities grow and keep residents from moving away.

The Address

I would have liked to hear him talk not only about market diversification, but also about economic diversification. In his opinion, was this also overlooked in the throne speech?

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, the challenge is not only to diversify our export markets, but to also diversify our economic activities. The fishing industry in particular needs to diversify the types of products it markets. It is working on diversifying and marketing redfish, but its progress is too slow and it needs support. The same is true for seal hunting, which is gaining ground too slowly even though the resource is available.

The Bloc Québécois wants to support these sectors so they can diversify both their export sectors and their economic activities.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague on his election. His riding neighbours mine, actually.

Let me reassure my colleague. The Speech from the Throne underscores our commitment to protecting the people who provide us with fresh, healthy food, like our farmers. We have an ambitious plan to protect Canadian agri-food workers. We are also committed to protecting our supply management system. I understand how important the supply management system is. It is extremely important to my riding's economy as well.

I wanted to use my time to reassure my colleague. We have a plan, and I can assure everyone that we will work to ensure food security.

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, we have given the Liberal government the perfect opportunity to put its money where its mouth is. All it has to do is support our bill.

It is one thing for the government to say that it wants to protect supply management, but it is another to then give up market share during negotiations, as was done during the last negotiation of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, with compensation for producers that took a long time to arrive.

If the Liberal government is sincere, it should support our bill. Together, we will prevent the next round of negotiations from targeting this crucial sector of Quebec's economy.

• (1255)

[English]

Maggie Chi (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand in the House today, and I would like to join colleagues who have gone before me in congratulating you. I look forward to your guidance in the House.

I also want to congratulate all of my colleagues on their elections and re-elections. I look forward to working hard with all members on all sides of the House to do good for Canadians.

I am humbled and honoured to serve here. I want to thank the people of Don Valley North for trusting me to be their representative in the House of Commons. I will never take it for granted. I will continue to listen to the views of my constituents and bring their ideas into the decision-making in the House as we confront the great problems that challenge us today.

Don Valley North is one of seven federal ridings of the former city of North York, now part of the city of Toronto. We are known as the city with heart, but this riding holds a winding heart: The East Don River carves its way through quiet ravines where deer cross paths with morning joggers and where the chorus of birdsong competes with the hum of a subway line.

Don Valley North has world-class medical professionals, successful businesses and a wonderful population with a great sense of humour. My riding is a vibrant and welcoming community. The people are innovative and hard-working and understand that if our neighbours do well, we all do well. That is why I am proud of the commitment in the throne speech to making life more affordable for Canadians by cutting taxes and to building the strongest economy in the G7.

I am by nature an optimistic person. I am, after all, a Maple Leafs fan. I am optimistic that we will listen to Canadians to improve our country so that everyone who seeks a better tomorrow for themselves and for their communities can use their skills and contribute fully to our economy.

Young people from all over Canada come here on class trips to watch question period and are told that this is politics, but politics for me is what happens when we come to a consensus and make decisions. Collectively, we shape the rules, and we have an opportunity to improve things and find new and better ways of responding to the needs of our electorate. We all have a shared responsibility to show Canadians that politics can be an instrument of good.

The people of Don Valley North are proud Canadians who want to keep Canada strong and free. They know it is a privilege to be a Canadian, not only because we look after each other with universal social programs and produce the world's best lobsters, but also because it is a good place to achieve our ambitions. My standing here proves the strength of Canadian values.

However, while I think Canada is paradise and there is no better place in the world to live, we know we can do better. The people of Don Valley North and Canadians across the country strive for excellence, and we build on our past successes to reach even greater heights.

As members know, elections are only a small part of what brings us to this place. I want to thank my family. My parents have always stood by my side, and I acknowledge my mom and dad, who gave up everything to start from scratch in a new country. I admire their grit for making a go of it. They have always encouraged me to dream bigger, and I would not be here without their sacrifice and belief in me.

To my dear partner, who could have imagined all those years ago at city hall that this is where we would end up? He has walked every step of this journey with me, always lifting me up and reminding me of what is possible. His love and encouragement have meant the world to me.

I thank my campaign team, who did the hard yards day in and day out; the EDA; and all my friends and volunteers for their tenacity, good humour and kindness. Without them, I would not be standing here representing one of the finest ridings in Canada for the Liberal Party.

For as long as I have the privilege of serving here, I will work every day to leave the place better than I found it.

• (1300)

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate our hon. colleague on her maiden speech.

Twenty-five hundred words make up the entirety of the Speech from the Throne, yet it made no mention of the over 50,000 Canadians who have died by overdose since 2016. It made no mention of the fact that our country is gripped by an overdose and opioid crisis. It made no mention that in my province of British Columbia, the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18 is overdose.

There was not one mention of the opioid crisis. I would ask our hon. colleague to comment on that.

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, this is an important topic. Our new government, with the new Prime Minister, is committed to working across the country to tackle this important issue, and I look forward to working together with others as well.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can sympathize with regard to the Toronto Maple Leafs. The Winnipeg Jets did well this year; they were number one in the NHL, but they fell a little short for the Stanley Cup. I think there are a lot of people who continue the dream with the Toronto Maple Leafs.

My question is in regard to the Prime Minister. One of the very first initiatives the Prime Minister took was to give Canadians a tax break. I know that understanding and taking action to deal with the issue of affordability are important no matter where we look in Canada.

I wonder if my friend and colleague could provide her thoughts on the importance of giving that initial tax break to Canadians, in the hopes that we will get unanimous support for it.

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, this was absolutely one of the top issues I heard on the campaign trail. Young people and young families are concerned. They are concerned about affordable housing and the affordability of their everyday lives, but they are hopeful. After seeing our government's plan for cutting taxes for middle-class families, building more affordable housing and eliminating the GST for first-time homebuyers, they are hopeful and see that we are one of the only parties putting forward a concrete plan to help families across Canada and help young people have access to affordable housing. At the same time, we are also strengthening our economy. We are building one of the strongest economies in the G7.

The Address

I look forward to working with my hon. colleague and everybody in the House to make sure that happens. We are starting on day one.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I have a question for her about the budget.

She talked about plans, spending and the future. Meanwhile, we have no clue whatsoever about the budget or what it will include. The government is making plans and spending money without even knowing how much it has at its disposal. In my personal life, it does not work like that. I imagine that it does not work that way for her either.

Could she explain how her government can spend money without knowing how much it actually has?

[English]

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with a government with a concrete plan. Throughout the campaign, people were excited to see a concrete plan to cut taxes for the middle class, to eliminate GST for first-time homebuyers and to break down inter-provincial trade barriers.

We got to work on day one. We have had conversations with provinces and have had conversations across the table with stakeholders, and I am confident that we can deliver for Canadians.

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I congratulate you on your role as Deputy Speaker and I congratulate the member on her election.

As the MP for Nunavut, I hear on a daily basis about the issues of the cost of living. As an example, a package of four corn on the cob is \$15 in the community of Pangnirtung. That is how drastic and unaffordable it is.

I wonder if the member agrees that to address the cost of living crisis, there needs to be an increase in investments like airports and marine ports in Nunavut.

• (1305)

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member on her election as well.

I very much share the concern about the cost of living and affordability. Throughout the campaign, many folks shared their stories and concerns about affordability issues. The tariffs from America do not help with that, and we need to tackle that head-on. Our government has—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Richmond Centre—Marpole.

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the chamber for the first time, with deep humility and a profound sense of responsibility. It is an honour beyond words to represent the people of Richmond Centre—Marpole, a community I have called home for over three decades, a place that has given me opportunity, belonging and purpose.

The Address

First, I thank the residents of my riding for placing their trust in me. They have given me the privilege of being their voice in the Parliament of Canada, and I will carry that responsibility with integrity, determination and a strong commitment to their values.

To my campaign team, Alice Tang, Luhan Yao, Zenbia Chan, Thomas Leung, Kenny Chiu, Erica Ng, Terrence Lam, Bethia Yuen, Alice YF Wong, May Zhu and many others, I thank them for their tireless work, their belief in our cause and the sacrifices they made. They are the reason I am standing here today.

To my dear wife, Christine, I thank her for her unwavering support. We have walked this journey together, from uncertainty to service. To our son, Micah, a Richmond firefighter and army cadet officer, I thank him for his strength, values and service to the community.

Let me share a little about myself. I came to Canada in 1988 from Hong Kong as a first-generation immigrant, with no family here and little more than determination. Canada welcomed me and gave my wife and me a chance to build a life through hard work, resilience and community. To give back, I served in local government for over 25 years as a school trustee and then as a city councillor. That experience taught me that leadership starts at the grassroots by listening, solving problems and staying grounded in service.

Today, I enter federal office with the same mindset: to ensure Canada remains a land of opportunity, not just for people like me but for future generations and for new immigrants arriving with dreams like mine.

Let me tell members about Richmond, one of Canada's most dynamic cities and a true jewel of the west coast. It is the fastest-growing city in British Columbia and a vital gateway to the Indo-Pacific. It is home to the Vancouver International Airport, the second-busiest in Canada, as well as to a major deep-sea port and the largest commercial fishing harbour in the country.

Richmond is not just a local hub; it is a centre of global trade, innovation and investment. We are also the most culturally diverse city in Canada. Over 60% of its residents were born outside the country, and more than 120 languages are spoken. Richmond is a mosaic of the world, yet a community deeply united by shared values. It has 1.4 jobs for every working-age resident and the longest life expectancy in Canada. It has been named the most active city in B.C. Richmond is a Canadian success story, and we are proud of it.

However, I stand here today not only to speak about our success. I rise to sound the alarm on a national emergency that is devastating families across the country: the drug crisis.

I listened carefully to the Speech from the Throne. I was disappointed and, frankly, alarmed that this crisis was barely acknowledged. Just 18 words were offered on a tragedy that has claimed 50,000 lives in the past decade. Let me say that again: 50,000 Canadians dead from overdoses since 2015. This is more than all the Canadian soldiers who died in the Second World War, yet the government continues to downplay it.

The Prime Minister even said on the campaign trail that Canada is facing a “challenge”, not a crisis. He is dead wrong. This is not

just a public health issue. It is a national emergency, and it is deepening. For the past decade, we have seen a steady expansion of failed policies, from supervised consumption sites to taxpayer-funded safe supply and, most recently, drug decriminalization in British Columbia. These were presented as compassionate solutions. In reality, they have led to more deaths, more chaos and more despair.

● (1310)

A 2025 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, offered by researchers from Memorial University, the University of Manitoba, and Johns Hopkins, found that opioid overdose hospitalizations increased significantly in areas where safe supply and decriminalization were introduced. The conclusion was clear: More drugs do not mean less harm. This is a dangerous myth, and our young people are paying the price.

In British Columbia, overdose is now the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18 years. In April, a 15-year-old boy died in Campbell River. In February, a 14-year-old girl died alone at home in Surrey. In July 2024, a 13-year-old girl in Prince George lost her life to overdose.

These were not just tragic headlines. These are children. These are dreams lost, families shattered and futures stolen, yet the government clings to the policies that normalized addiction. Terms like “safe consumption” and “recreational use” are misleading. There is nothing safe or recreational about consuming poison.

We must shift the conversation from enabling addiction to promoting recovery. That means investing in prevention, education, mental health, treatment and enforcement. I ask again, when will the government put an end to its reckless drug policy and failed decriminalization experiments?

Let us look at Richmond. In 2023, Richmond recorded 27 overdose deaths, only 1% of the provincial total. That was not by accident. We have no cannabis retail stores. In February 2024, our community came together to oppose the installation of a supervised injection site, and we succeeded. Residents stood up for their families, and I stood with them.

We believe in real solutions, not slogans. We support recovery, not surrender. We focus on education, community services, law enforcement and mental health. That is the approach I will continue to champion in Parliament.

I came to Canada with a suitcase and a heart full of hope. I was given a chance, and I want to ensure that others have the same opportunity to build, not be broken by the very systems meant to protect them.

The crisis is not about ideologies. It is about saving lives. Let us stand together across party lines to act with urgency and seriousness. The future of our youth, our families and our communities depends on it.

I again thank my constituents in Richmond Centre—Marpole for their trust. I will work every day to be worthy of it.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the last gesture the member opposite put on the record in wanting to work co-operatively.

Canadians in all regions of the country would acknowledge that one of the biggest concerns that came out of the election has to be President Donald Trump with tariffs and trade. We are very much concerned about it. The Conservative Party can play a positive role on that.

We are going to see a number of initiatives in the coming weeks that are going to be of critical importance to Canadians, whether it is the tax break or the building of one economy. I am wondering if the member would commit to recognizing that and supporting legislative measures that will make Canada stronger and healthier while delivering tax dollars to his constituents.

• (1315)

Chak Au: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member compared tariffs to the drug crisis. The drug crisis was not created by Trump or the tariffs. It was created by the wrong policies, which were adopted by the Liberal government over the past decade. It has nothing to do with Trump. The wrong approach was adopted by the Liberal government in the past decade.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague, the member for Richmond Centre—Marpole, on his election. I was very familiar with his work as a city councillor, which I reported on in my former career as a journalist.

I want to thank him for his advocacy on putting forward what was a very unpopular position with the Liberals but a very popular position among ordinary Canadians. The Liberals have said that the answer to the drug crisis is to give people more drugs, to give free drugs.

I am wondering whether the member could speak to the experiences in his own community and about what that has done to people who are actually struggling with addiction and to the communities around them.

Chak Au: Mr. Speaker, the costly experiment on human lives that was initiated by the Liberal government in providing safe supply was a failure. In huge contrast to that regimen, our neighbouring cities, as I mentioned earlier, had only 1% of overdose deaths last year. That was because we took a very proactive approach to preventing drugs from coming into communities and offered people counselling. We also helped educate the younger population to understand the harm that drugs can cause them.

The Address

I think the Liberal government adopted the wrong approach in the past decade, which led us to our present state of despair.

Jacques Ramsay (La Prairie—Atateken, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, although decriminalization might be put into question, even in the east of the country, where it does not exist, we see the same trends.

The problem is a complex one and cannot simply be limited to decriminalization. Over the last 10 years, the government has spent over \$1 billion in emergency treatment and in mental health funds, as well as in other initiatives.

I look to the member to work more on progress and to try to see whether we can do more.

Chak Au: Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge that this is a very complex question. We have to work together to find ways to address it.

However, I also want to point out that repeating the same old approaches used in the past will not bring a different result. Doing the same thing again and again while expecting a different result is foolish, so I would urge the Liberal government to change its failed policies and use a different approach that includes prevention, enforcement, treatment and education.

Yes, let us work together. This is a national crisis and we have to work on it, but first of all the government has to change its path.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is great to see you in the Speaker's seat. As I said to you off camera, it has been a long time coming.

First and foremost, I want to send a huge thanks to the hard-working people of Cariboo—Prince George for once again placing their trust in me to represent them, now for the fourth time.

My time is short today, so I rise not only to respond to the Speech from the Throne but also to address and confront a national tragedy that is shattering lives and communities, Canada's opioid crisis. Since 2016, over 51,000 Canadians have died from opioid overdose. These are not just numbers; they are our loved ones who were stolen by a crisis fuelled by the proliferation of fentanyl, coupled with horrendous policies by both federal and provincial governments.

In British Columbia, overdose is now the leading cause of death for youths aged 10 to 18. This is unacceptable, yet in the Liberal Speech from the Throne there was not a single mention of this catastrophe. In 2,500 words, there was not a single reference to the opioid crisis killing thousands of Canadians every year. On average, 17 Canadians lose their life every day due to overdose, and those are just the numbers we know. Perhaps that is by design. After all, during his recent leadership race, our new Prime Minister stood before Canadians and said publicly that the overdose issue was a challenge, but not a crisis. As a matter of fact, he repeated it.

The Address

The opioid crisis has been exacerbated by the Liberal government's misguided drug policies and catch-and-release criminal justice reforms. These policies must be ended immediately. They have left our streets less safe and our communities more vulnerable. They are not saving any lives; they are just perpetuating addiction, with no end in sight.

The opioid epidemic is a public safety disaster. British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario account for 83% of all opioid deaths, but no community is spared, large or small. The opioid crisis knows no social boundaries. In fact, just this week, in my hometown of Williams Lake, the city council passed a motion to explore declaring a state of emergency in response to the rising incidents of vandalism, open drug use, fires in front of businesses, theft, public indecency, defecation and more. City councillor Scott Nelson said the following with respect to the crisis: "Things have gotten so crazy, [so bad,] so out of control. Our resources [as a community] are depleted in terms of what's taken place".

In the last two days, there have been on average 10 to 20, possibly even 30, overdoses each day. That is astonishing. It is not Vancouver or Toronto but a small community of 10,000 people. Look at what it is experiencing and what it has been forced to do after 10 years of failed Liberal policies. Addiction fuels crime, homelessness and social disorder, yet the Liberals have prioritized harm reduction at the expense of prevention and recovery.

The Liberal government's failure to address the opioid crisis in its Speech from the Throne, despite very briefly mentioning border security and fentanyl trafficking in an attempt to appease President Trump, ignores the economic and human toll of the opioid crisis and sends a clear signal to Canadians struggling with addiction that their new federal government could not care less about them.

Over the last 10 years, the Liberal government's failed drug policies have done nothing to curb deaths. British Columbia's 2023 decriminalization experiment, fully supported by the Liberal government, allows possession and public use of hard drugs like heroin, fentanyl and cocaine. Despite decriminalization's being marketed as a solution, B.C.'s overdose death rate is the highest in Canada. Public drug use has surged, straining communities and first responders.

We hear reports of needles scattered around parks, playgrounds and sidewalks. Kids playing soccer in the Lower Mainland have to dodge contaminated needles on the field. Safe consumption sites are allowed to operate right beside high schools, and in doing so are promoting open drug use to young and vulnerable Canadians and falsely marketing it as safe.

So-called safe supply programs are an absolute, abject disaster. Diversion of these drugs into the black market fuels the illegal drug trade, many experts have admitted, but the Liberal government has tried to cover it up for years, demeaning anyone for speaking their uncomfortable truths.

• (1320)

In November 2024, retired Prince George RCMP superintendent Shaun Wright testified on the opioid crisis at our parliamentary health committee. Mr. Wright, who has decades of experience in frontline policing, has said that the decriminalization experiment

was "the most horrific failure of public policy" in the history of B.C.

This is the side of the decriminalization experiment that the Liberal politicians in the Ottawa bubble will not see, do not see and do not want us to understand or see. Our communities are unsafe, and our constituents feel unwelcome in their own neighbourhoods. The government must commit to not expanding the failed decriminalization experiment to anywhere else in Canada and to halting all attempts to bring forward legalization of deadly hard drugs, as some Liberals have suggested.

Furthermore, the \$1 billion spent by the Liberals, as mentioned earlier by one of our colleagues, has solved nothing. What do we have to show for it? We have more deaths, more families torn apart, more communities on the brink of extinction and no hope in sight. I ask the member to take a look around their community. Does it look the same way as it did 10 years ago, before the first Liberal reign in 2015? It does not.

Treatment access remains severely limited, and supervised consumption sites simply do not address addiction's root causes. The throne speech was silent on the crisis. It missed a critical opportunity to prioritize treatment and recovery.

This baffles me a little, because we have had a plan to fight for recovery. In our Conservative platform, we highlighted how we would create 50,000 new beds for recovery to honour the 50,000 Canadians who have died from the crisis. The Liberals stole so many ideas from our plan: the GST cut on housing, income tax cuts, etc. I strongly encourage them to steal this plan as well and to get to work creating those 50,000 beds.

There is another side to the drug crisis as well. The Liberal government's criminal justice reforms, most notably Bill C-5, have made things many times worse. By eliminating mandatory minimum penalties for certain drug-related offences, Bill C-5 is a catch-and-release policy that lets traffickers off with nothing but a slap on the wrist.

In our communities, 98% of crime is committed by five or six prolific offenders in one of my communities, and by 30 in my largest community, Prince George. When they are in jail, the crime rate goes down. When they are out of jail, the crime rate goes up.

As a matter of fact, when one of my constituents, Bob Hubbard, returned home last fall, he found his house being looted by a group of drug addicts. He tried to stop them. While he was in the process, they ran him over with his own vehicle and left him for dead on the road. The perpetrators were caught the very same day, but within 24 hours after leaving Mr. Hubbard for dead on the road, they were out committing more crimes in our community. That is the reality we live in.

Businesses have also been broken into. Their windows are smashed and their doorways are set on fire so many times that owners cannot get the necessary insurance to operate their business, so they choose not to report these incidents or they close shop altogether, leaving the downtown core a ghost town. That is the reality after 10 years of Liberal government.

If the Speaker will indulge me, I have to leave with this. Canada's opioid crisis, with over 50,000 lives lost since 2016, is a tragedy ignored by the government's Speech from the Throne. In B.C., drug overdoses are the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18. This is a tragedy that hits home when I think of 13-year-old Brianna MacDonald, who died alone from an overdose in a homeless encampment in Abbotsford late last August. Her story is a stark reminder of our failure to protect the most vulnerable.

As leaders, we must do better and be better.

• (1325)

This is not just a challenge; it is a crisis. It demands urgent action, not silence. The Prime Minister's policies have failed Canadians, and Canadians demand a system that supports recovery, punishes traffickers and restores safety.

Let us honour Brianna and the thousands lost in this city by fighting for a future where no more lives are lost.

• (1330)

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians sent a clear message last month. They want us to build an economy that works for everyone. We have an ambitious plan to reduce the cost of living and build a strong economy, the most competitive in the G7. The message sent by voters, particularly in the riding of Carleton, was a call for real change, and we are committed to delivering on that call.

Will my Conservative colleagues respect Canadians' choice and support our efforts to strengthen and unify the Canadian economy, or will they continue to obstruct, as they did during the previous Parliament?

[English]

Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, how does our hon. colleague stand up? I just mentioned that there have been over 51,000 lives lost since 2016 to the opioid crisis. I spoke of the horrific crisis that our country is gripped with, and he recites speaking notes. That is unacceptable.

The Address

[Translation]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his fourth election to the House.

I am sure that he has observed over the years, as I have, that if we are not moving forward, we are moving backward. He mentioned a few things in his speech, and earlier I talked about employment insurance.

What does he think of the government's broken promises, if not its wilful blindness, especially when it comes to EI?

[English]

Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, our colleagues on the Liberal bench say it is a new government, it is a new day and let us just forget about the last 10 years. They will stand and say they have been elected with a strong mandate. Yes, but the mandate was built on a lie.

The new Prime Minister was elected because he told Canadians he had a plan. What we have seen ever since his first day of being elected is that he does not have a plan. There is no budget. He cannot tell us what the strong road map to economic prosperity is. It is a wonder that those on the front bench are standing and using the silly talking points from the past.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I would ask members to be judicious in their choice of words.

The hon. member for Kitchener South—Hespeler has the floor.

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member from Cariboo—Prince George for putting more light on this horrendous situation, which is only getting worse. Every member of the House sees it in the downtown of the communities they come from.

I have not heard anyone on the other side actually defend any of these problems. When Liberals do rise to speak, they speak about change. Does the member take this as a tacit acknowledgement that indeed their drug decriminalization and safe supply experiment has failed? Beyond acknowledgement, does the member think it is time for an apology, and beyond that, what changes should be made immediately?

Todd Doherty: That is a great question, Mr. Speaker, but can you afford me another 10 minutes to answer it?

The new Liberal member for Victoria stood and said that for the first time in however many years, the people there elected a Liberal candidate. That is shameful. A story just came out in *The Globe and Mail* that said that whole areas of Victoria have turned into absolute ghettos and war zones. First nations communities and communities all across our nation have been drug-addled and crime-riddled and are absolute war zones. People are living like zombies, and that is not compassion. We have perpetuated their addictions.

I absolutely believe that the Prime Minister should stand up on behalf of the Liberal Party and caucus he represents and apologize to Canadians for their abject failure over the last 10 years.

The Address

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I congratulate the member on his re-election. I always appreciate his speeches.

The opioid crisis has unfortunately reached my riding of Nunavut as well, which is surprising because all the communities are fly-in communities. I wonder whether the member agrees that a way to address that in my riding is to have better screening facilities both at mailing ports and at airports as well?

Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, the health committee talked about better screening in areas such as airports and mailrooms, and also about traceability for the safe supply that is being diverted. At every step of the way, the Liberals said no to it. It is a big issue, and it falls squarely at the feet of the Prime Minister.

• (1335)

Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to share my time with my colleague from Nunavut.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to speak to the Speech from the Throne delivered on Tuesday by His Majesty King Charles III. This speech will mark the beginning of a new parliamentary session. It charts a course to a fairer, more sustainable and more prosperous future for all Canadians.

Today, I would like to highlight certain aspects of this speech that resonate particularly well with the realities of the people of Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation. My primarily rural riding is home to a mosaic of small, vibrant, tight-knit communities surrounding two urban hubs. I am talking about the people of Lachute and part of Gatineau, including Buckingham and Masson-Angers. Throughout my riding, residents have the same aspiration: to live with dignity in affordable, well-serviced, accessible, sustainable communities. What we see in the throne speech is a renewed commitment to quality of life, security and affordability.

Building housing is a priority for us. Housing is not a luxury; it is an urgent need. Many families have moved to my riding in recent years, putting enormous pressure on the housing supply. Young people who want to set up house are knocking on the same doors as seniors who want to stay in their communities and newcomers who are searching for a home. We need to build, and we need to build fast, but we also need to build smart. Our government understands that. The government will undertake a series of measures to help double the rate of home building while creating an entirely new housing industry using Canadian technology, Canadian skilled workers and Canadian lumber.

The government will introduce measures to deliver affordable homes by creating "build Canada homes". This mission-driven organization will act to accelerate the development of new affordable housing. It will invest in the growth of the prefabricated and modular housing industry, and it will provide significant financing to affordable home builders. That also means supporting our municipalities, which typically do not have the infrastructure or the human resources to properly accommodate this growth, as noted in the throne speech. The government will make the housing market work better, including by cutting municipal development charges in half for all multi-unit housing. The government will drive supply up to bring housing costs down.

One sentence in particular from the Speech from the Throne stuck with me: "The Government is guided by its conviction that the economy is only truly strong when it serves everyone." This is especially true for us in Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, as in other remote rural municipalities. These communities are the beating heart of our country. They feed our cities. They preserve our traditions. They often innovate behind the scenes, but they face unique challenges.

Our municipalities are vulnerable. Like many people across our country, certain Canadians, some younger, some older, are struggling to reach their full potential. Our government understands that. It is taking meaningful measures to make life more affordable for middle-class Canadians, including cutting taxes to save dual-earning families up to \$840 a year and eliminating the GST for first-time home buyers on homes valued up to \$1 million, which will save them up to \$50,000.

Our government will protect the programs that will save young people and families thousands of dollars every year, including the Canadian dental care plan, which will soon be available to about eight million Canadians. Throughout the election campaign, one thing that kept coming up in our discussions on the ground was the importance of access to dental care. When I was out knocking on doors, visiting markets and seniors' residences, people, especially seniors, talked to me about the Canadian dental care plan. This is more than just one issue among many. It is a question of dignity, health and social justice. This makes me think of Gisèle and Bruno, a couple in my riding who stopped me this week with smiles on their faces. I can picture them now. They told me that they had begun the process of getting dental care under this new plan.

• (1340)

Gisèle told me that for the first time in years, she and her husband will be able to see a dentist without worrying about cutting out other expenses. It was only a two-minute conversation, but the message was loud and clear: This program is changing lives in my riding.

People like them are the reason we introduced this plan. People should not have to suffer in silence or avoid smiling just because they cannot afford dental care. This program was set up thanks to hard work, political will and openness to hearing what Canadians tell us day after day.

I also want to highlight the importance of working together as a nation to create one economy out of 13. This will allow labour mobility between provinces. I would like to share the story of a welder without borders and the story of a trade and a country that need to be harmonized. For 21 years, I put on my leather apron, adjusted my welding helmet and turned on my torch. I was a welder, but I was also a teacher at a vocational school specializing in the building trades. Every day, I shared my knowledge with students of all ages, all motivated by a desire to build the Canada of the future, one steel wall or one building at a time.

However, there was always one thing that neither the heat of a workshop nor the passion for a profession could overcome, and that was provincial boundaries. Living and working in a border region means living with a certain amount of nonsense. On one side of the road, students could hope to find a job as soon as they graduated. On the other side of the road, despite having the same skills, students faced an invisible obstacle: provincial credential recognition. Each province wants to define its own criteria and create its own certifications. At the heart of this administrative maze, the workforce remains stuck, immobilized, unable to meet pressing needs elsewhere. This paradox is all the more frustrating given that the country needs these skilled workers who are ready to weld, construct and build.

The housing crisis is raging and construction sites are waiting, but workers remain idle, not because of a lack of will, but because of a lack of standardization. What I have learned over the years is that expertise knows no borders. A quality weld is a quality weld, whether it is done in Quebec, Ontario or on pipelines in Alberta. It is time for our system to recognize this as well.

Prefabrication is a solid solution. I firmly believe that prefabrication is one of the ways of the future. The steel sector has been using this approach for a long time, manufacturing components in a factory and then installing them. By harmonizing skills across the country, we can set up regional prefabrication centres to produce housing and infrastructure modules that are ready to assemble wherever there is an urgent need.

I would like to talk about a strong Canada united by the trades. Yes, the building trades ecosystem is complex, but that is not an insurmountable obstacle. To build a more resilient and united Canada, we need to train more workers, harmonize certifications and open domestic borders. I know for sure that trades play a critical role because, at the end of the day, welders are not merely building things out of steel. They are building bridges between provinces, between generations, between needs and know-how.

In the Quebec riding of Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, the majestic Ottawa River is also the border with Ontario. Communities on both sides of the river are closely connected, as are our economies. Barriers to internal trade and labour mobility have impeded economic growth in my riding. I am sure my colleagues will understand why I am so pleased with our government's desire to eliminate all other federal obstacles.

To wrap up, the vision of the Prime Minister and our government to build a strong, united Canada that works closely with the provinces will finally lead to a real free trade system across the country. This will enable Canada to reach its full economic poten-

tial and, above all, create opportunities for economic development and prosperity across the country. I am determined to work with all my colleagues to ensure that the voices of the regions and the people of Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation continue to be heard, listened to and, above all, respected.

• (1345)

[English]

Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the member highlighted the Liberal government's latest housing crisis solution as building more prefab homes. In metro Vancouver, where my riding is, we built 20-storey and 30-storey high-rise towers close to transit stations.

The hard part in urban development is land assembly, rezoning applications and putting in the civil services. How is prefab housing going to solve that problem?

[Translation]

Stéphane Lauzon: Mr. Speaker, I am a big fan of prefab construction because I represent a rural riding. However, I am also familiar with urban centres.

Urban centres thrive with a government willing to fully co-operate with provincial, territorial and municipal governments so that we can work together to further develop and facilitate the environmental and urbanization process across municipalities. Together, we will work better and build better.

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation for his speech, and I congratulate him on his re-election. I, too, would like to ask him a question about housing.

In the throne speech, the government said it was going to double the rate of home building. Considering the current shortage of 100,000 housing units in Quebec, not to mention the housing shortage for first nations, I would like to know how many housing units the government plans to build per year and when the situation will be rectified for Quebec and Canada.

Can my colleague give us more details?

Stéphane Lauzon: Mr. Speaker, a throne speech is meant to be broad. The issues it covers serve as our guidelines. There is work to be done. That is why we were elected as members of Parliament.

For my part, as a member of Parliament, I am committed to ensuring that housing is built as quickly as possible in my riding and across Quebec. I also want to help my colleagues across Canada make it easier to build housing. I think a positive step has already been taken by reducing the price of first-time home purchases, not to mention investing in municipalities for infrastructure. I sincerely believe that starting up partnerships with municipalities will make it easier to build.

The Address

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since this is the first time I am rising in the House, I would like to thank the people of Les Pays-d'en-Haut for sending me to the House of Commons. It is an honour to represent them.

My colleague emphasized the importance of supporting municipalities with infrastructure. I am a civil engineer. I was the mayor of the municipality of Morin Heights for 16 years. I am very familiar with infrastructure issues.

I would like the member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation to tell us more about how the government will help municipalities get the funding needed to carry out these projects.

Stéphane Lauzon: Mr. Speaker, we have had the opportunity to work with engineers who understand the existing market well. The Quebec municipalities we worked with all told us about the infrastructure deficit. There can be no building without drinking water and waste water infrastructure.

That is why, in the Speech from the Throne, we promised to help developers with up to 50% of the development charges associated with large-scale housing projects in both rural and urban areas. We will support businesses that want to build. The more homes we build, the more affordable rents will be.

• (1350)

[English]

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to thank very much the member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation for sharing his time with me. I hope that this is the first of many collaborations to come.

First, I thank Nunavummiut for electing me to represent and amplify their voices in this place. I thank my volunteers, contributors and staff for energizing my campaign. I thank my family, and a very special thanks to my husband Allan for supporting my work.

I acknowledge that we are on unceded Algonquin Anishinabe territory.

The throne speech was quite similar to the last one I heard. Again, there were major gaps. We heard nothing on health care, non-profit and indigenous housing, the TRC calls to action and the MMIWG calls for justice. There was nothing on addressing the high cost of groceries and nutrition north, and nothing on making the rich pay what they owe.

First, with respect to health care, Nunavummiut do not have proper access to basic health care. The non-insured health benefits program relies heavily on medical travel. All 25 hamlets in Nunavut are fly-in communities. When a constituent needs medical attention, they are flown to Iqaluit, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Yellowknife or Edmonton because of the lack of access to doctors.

I represent the largest electoral district in the world. Nunavut is more than two million square kilometres. It is eight times larger than the United Kingdom, and there is only one hospital. As a result, Nunavummiut must travel to southern locations for medical attention. Instead of building capacity for health care within Nunavut, the federal government has decided to subsidize the airlines, which are making huge profits from medical travel.

Elders are unable to age at home. As we age, we often require more medical attention. Too many times, elderly Nunavummiut are exiled to institutions in the south. They are taken from their familiar surroundings and diet, and forced to live without culturally appropriate care. This is a horrible way to live out the last years of their lives, especially for elders who have already experienced genocidal policies like residential schools, dog slaughters and forced relocations. We must do more to support elders to remain in Nunavut communities by investing in each hamlet to build an elders' *qam-maq* and to have access to transportation and medical care.

The federal government is responsible for funding the non-insured health benefits program, but the Liberal government continues to fail to transfer the funds in a timely manner. The Government of Nunavut is forced to use its own meagre funds to ensure that medical care continues. It cannot prioritize building schools, long-term care facilities or more homes, because it is subsidizing the federal government. The Nunavut Minister of Health is frustrated by the shortfall in federal funding and by the federal government's refusal to negotiate in good faith. Without a proper negotiated agreement, the territorial government cannot prioritize its own agenda. Chronic underfunding of investments in Nunavut and Inuit was the reality before Nunavut was created in 1999 and remains as such today.

The throne speech said that transfers to territories would be maintained. This is completely unacceptable. Maintaining transfers to the territorial government means no increases, even when the cost of everything is on the rise.

The cost of living is exacerbated by the lack of infrastructure for airports and marine ports. A recent example is how much longer it took for my validation. My validation was delayed by two weeks because flights were cancelled or delayed. Often, flights are cancelled due to weather, rather than being delayed to a later part of the day when the weather improves.

• (1355)

The Cambridge Bay Airport runway is not paved. This causes mechanical challenges for airplanes and impacts the flight schedules. How can the government talk about Arctic security and defence when it will not even invest in paving airport runways?

The lack of transportation infrastructure impacts the cost of living. Grocery prices are so high in Nunavut that my constituents regularly tell me they go hungry. For example, in Pangnirtung, a package of four corn on the cob is \$15. Not only are groceries super expensive, but the produce is often spoiled and rotten before it reaches the store shelves in Nunavut. I was in Grise Fiord in March of this year, and the potatoes for sale had already begun to sprout and the lettuce was brown.

There are solutions to these problems. The Arctic Research Foundation built a greenhouse from a sea can in Gjoa Haven. They now have access to fresh lettuce and fresh produce. This one project has done so much for food security in Gjoa Haven. Similar projects in every community can help. From community freezers to food processing plants and greenhouses, the federal government must invest in similar projects led by Inuit if it is serious about Arctic security.

Nunavut has the highest rate of child poverty in Canada at 42%, compared to the national rate of 18.1%. Nunavut has the highest rate of food insecurity of any province or territory. These statistics do not seem to matter to the federal government, as it cancelled the Inuit child first initiative's hamlet food voucher program. No reason was given. Over 15,000 Inuit children were served by this program. Finally, children were going to school having had breakfast. Without it, Inuit children and families are experiencing starvation every day. This is unacceptable.

The Liberals cancelled the successful food voucher program but kept the failing nutrition north program. Every Nunavummiut knows the nutrition north program does not work. Instead of re-vamping it, the Liberals appointed an Inuk to review the program. While I have a lot of respect for Aluki Kotierk, I question whether this review was necessary, especially when it is so blatantly clear that nutrition north is allowing companies like the The North West Company to make record profits.

The government is ignoring Nunavummiut and the government is ignoring indigenous peoples. As the member of Parliament for Nunavut, I will continue to raise the voices of Inuit and Nunavummiut in this place to address the chronic underfunding of the territory, to protect Inuit children and families, and to build the infrastructure and housing that is so desperately needed in Nunavut.

At this time, I am moving a subamendment as follows: That the Conservative amendment be subamended by adding "as well as Indigenous peoples". The seconder for the motion is the member for Winnipeg Centre.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I regret to inform the hon. member for Nunavut that the seconder has to be in the chamber or present online. Since that is not the case, the subamendment cannot be moved.

• (1400)

Lori Idlout: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, could you check to see if the member for Courtenay—Alberni is online?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I do not see the member for Courtenay—Alberni online, so he is not in a position to second the subamendment.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

The Address

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would not want to give the false impression that the previous government ignored in any way the needs of northern Canada and indigenous people in general. To demonstrate that, I would challenge the member opposite to indicate a government that has contributed more financial resources to the north than the previous government did.

Having said that, I anticipate that we will have a very busy next few weeks and will be looking for co-operation, realizing that after coming through the last election, there are priority issues dealing with the construction of major national builds, if I can put it that way, that have co-operation from provinces and territories. We have other forms of legislation, such as the tax break for 22 million Canadians. I believe that is the number. Are these initiatives that the member opposite will be supporting?

Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, I will first address the member's preamble. For decades, every Liberal and Conservative government has underinvested in Nunavut and in indigenous peoples, which is why we have significant gaps in infrastructure, in the billions of dollars. Highlighting that the previous Liberal government has spent more than other governments is still not enough.

Regarding projects that you have mentioned, I think that pushing through the Prime Minister's agenda for one project, one review, for example, will ignore UNDRIP. Indigenous rights must not be violated in this policy. Developments on indigenous territories must adhere to constitutionally protected rights before projects begin. If this happened, then we could see indigenous peoples benefiting from—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will just remind colleagues to address their comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound has the floor.

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member on her re-election.

She mentioned in her speech the lack of infrastructure in the north, in Nunavut, for our military. I would like her to share her opinion on the economic benefits, not just to the military but to the community in the north, when the federal government invests in military infrastructure.

The Address

Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, as much as I appreciate that there are focuses towards national defence, I really do hope that the focus on Arctic security and Arctic sovereignty helps Nunavummiut to be engaged in it. At this point, if the military is just flown in with a cookie-cutter approach, more social issues will arise. However, if we lift barriers so that Nunavummiut can be engaged in Arctic security and Arctic sovereignty, like investing in Canadian Rangers, I could see the benefits going both ways.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her comprehensive explanation of the variety of major challenges that Nunavut is facing.

Nunavik in Quebec is also facing significant challenges. Recent events have led us to consider what we can do to improve drinking water and sewer infrastructure, particularly for the community of Puvirnituq.

Can my colleague enlighten the House on how Nunavut is responding to this type of challenge?

[English]

Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, I congratulate the member on his first term. We have had a quick conversation, and I think we will be able to work really well together.

I think one way to make sure we can increase investments in the north is to help use NATO spending. If we are going to reach our 2% target, a way to reach it is to say that northerners need to be engaged in Arctic sovereignty and Arctic security. Investing in infrastructure in the north could mean reaching those targets. It could mean northerners' participating in the security of the Arctic.

• (1405)

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate members of the House who have successfully won their ridings after an election. It is an exhausting experience. To those who were elected for the first time, I say congratulations. To those who were re-elected, I welcome them back.

It is an honour for anyone to serve in this place. In my case, it is for a community of over 100,000 people. I am here with the tremendous responsibility and weight of being their voice in Canada's Parliament. The people of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, like all Canadians, want to have a government, a Parliament and a country that works for them.

While we have differing views across the aisle and throughout the House on the best way Canada can serve its citizens and the role we play in the world, I believe that everyone shares in the belief that this is the greatest country in the world and that our best days are ahead of us.

I look forward to finding opportunities where we can work together to achieve the things that are so important for members in all of our communities: affordability, homes that are within reach for young people, safety and security in the streets, and shorter lines at food banks. When I have met with the good people who work at food banks in my community, I always tell them that I admire their

work and their passion so much. There are very few people who want to work in a field in which they will be put out of a job, but the people who help those who have the least among us, who need a hand up, are always committed to doing that so they will see a community where their services are no longer needed. I thank them. I know we all want to help the folks who are using those services, help the folks who cannot afford a home, help grow the power of paycheques in Canada and help unleash our potential on the world stage.

I would not be here following my fourth election victory without support from the most important people in my life: my wife Amanda, and my children, Luke, Ama, Michaela, James and Nathan. When I started this journey in 2018, James was a very new addition to the Barrett household. We could not have dreamed or prayed for Nathan to join us, but by the second time I was returned here, Nathan was with us. I appreciate their love and support so much.

It has been a long time. We have been working long and hard over these last few years. This is the first election during which my wife did not have a baby on her hip and was able to come knocking on doors with me to meet the people in our community to hear what the issues are, what the challenges are, and what the dreams and hopes are for the people in our community. They are just like what our family wants. They want that hope. They know that we cannot turn things around on a dime, but we have to have a plan. That is what Canadians are expecting.

During the election, the right hon. Prime Minister was elected on a promise to be the man with the plan and not the man with slogans. He did offer slogans. We got those, but we have yet to see his plan.

We had a Speech from the Throne delivered by His Majesty. It was a great day. I think it is so important to remind Canadians of the enduring connection between Parliament and the Crown, the strength of our democracy, the foundations of it and the history of our system. It was great to have our Parliament opened that way.

I had the opportunity to meet His Majesty. In an exchange, he expressed his hope that we would return to Centre Block. He hoped that it would not be terribly delayed.

• (1410)

In what I am sure would be a break from protocol, I invited His Majesty to return to open Parliament when we return to Centre Block. He liked that idea very much. I look forward very much to that day. We are here in the people's House, and they do want to see that plan.

The Speech from the Throne delivered by the King contained many of the elements in the platform that was offered by the Prime Minister during the election. Following that, we expected to see the framework. What does it look like? How are the Liberals going to pay for their promises? What specific measures are they going to take? How will they pay for building homes that Canadians can afford or reducing the burden on Canadians who are paying taxes?

How are the Liberals going to pay for the increased supports that our Canadian Armed Forces need, the kit that the brave men and women who serve our country need? We need new troops, more troops, and to take care of the ones we have. Of course, how are we going to take care of those who have served? How are we going to take care of our veterans? What does that look like in a budget?

We need new CBSA officers to protect our borders and to protect Canadians from threats on the other side of our borders. We need frontline police officers. How are the Liberals going to fund those programs? What are they going to do to keep Canadians safe in their communities by keeping repeat violent offenders off the streets? We need to see those details in a budget.

The Conservatives have put forward an amendment, and that amendment is absolute common sense. It states:

...we urge Your Majesty's advisors to include a firm commitment to present to Parliament an economic update or budget this spring, before the House adjourns for the summer, that incorporates measures aimed at unleashing Canada's economic potential, including full accountability of Canada's finances, with respect for the areas of jurisdiction and the institutions of Quebec and the provinces.

That is what Canadians are expecting. That is not a new amendment, but this is what Conservatives are expecting. We want to work in collaboration to get these things done for Canadians. We want to cut taxes. We want to build homes. We want safer streets. We want to eliminate those lines at the food banks. We want Canadians to have spending power. When they are working one and two jobs, they are building our country up. We want them to have that spending power and to have the freedom that is the result of the hard work that they have put into building our country.

It is an awesome responsibility that we have, but we, as a Parliament, need to demonstrate that there is a plan. Our role, as His Majesty's loyal opposition, is to hold the government accountable. What we want from the government is a plan so we can scrutinize it and give the best results possible to Canadians. It is why I take the time away from my family. It is why I want to serve my community.

I would be remiss if I did not mention someone. He was not able to join for my swearing-in this time, because of his health. My 96-and-a-half-year-old grandfather, Francis Barrett, is a proud Canadian. He served with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and he loves this country. He has taught me so much about why it is important to deliver for future generations, just as his generation did for us.

I love this country. I am so proud to be back representing the people of my community. I am going to work incredibly hard for them, just as I know members will in this place. We are looking forward to seeing a plan from the government and are calling on them to deliver that today. I thank all Canadians.

• (1415)

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague that Canada is the greatest country in the world. These turbulent times have shown that Canadians have what it takes to unite around a plan to strengthen and unify our economy. However, if my colleague believes, as I do, that Canada is the greatest country in the

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world, I have a hard time understanding how he can stand behind a leader who has been badmouthing our country for years and telling everybody, quite wrongly, that Canada is broken.

[English]

Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member and congratulate him on his election victory.

It is important that there be accountability. What we saw over the last 10 years, as is evidenced by the change in direction by the leader of the member's party, is a complete reversal or commitment to reverse on many of the very things that his colleagues and his party perpetrated on Canada over the last 10 years. What they broke needs to be fixed, and there needs to be accountability for that.

The best way for the member to contribute, and for all members to contribute, is to make sure that there is a sound plan. However, half a trillion dollars in spending, which has been chucked on the table this week looking for a rubber stamp from parliamentarians, is not a plan. It risks the same kind of economic vandalism that we saw over the last 10 years. We need not repeat it. Let us see a budget.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on his re-election. As members of the House may be aware, in the previous Parliament, he served as the shadow minister for ethics, which with the previous government was, I believe, three and a half full-time jobs. He was kept so busy with the litany of scandals and ethics lapses from Justin Trudeau and many of his cabinet ministers, and now there is a supposedly new government and a Prime Minister who will not even disclose potential conflicts of interest.

I am wondering whether the hon. member is willing to take on what could be a repeat of the last Parliament in terms of the volume of ethics breaches for which he will have to hold the government accountable.

Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my hon. colleague to this place. He was obviously a keen observer of what went on over the last 10 years, and it was not an encouraging time for Canadians. The serial ethics law-breaking that we saw with Justin Trudeau was an example that was set, and unfortunately followed by other members of his cabinet.

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Hope springs eternal, and I am very optimistic that we will see a change in tack from the new Prime Minister, and there is an opportunity. However, there are unresolved issues, including the Prime Minister's yet having to declare to Canadians on a few important issues, including whether his investments were held in offshore tax havens and not paying his share of taxes for the important services that Canadians need. There is still an opportunity for the Prime Minister to set a new tone. I remain very optimistic but ready to do the hard work to hold him accountable either way.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I reflect on the fact that Pierre Poilievre never did get the security clearance, which is something that was actually brought up at the door, as Canadians were concerned as to why the leader of the Conservative Party chose not to get the security clearance. It was a legitimate question before the election and during the election, and I believe it is a good question today.

I am wondering whether the member, who is the ethics critic, would maybe suggest it to his leader, given that every other leader decided on the merit of getting a security clearance. Does he not believe that maybe his leader should get the security clearance?

Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, in spite of some of that performance, I welcome my hon. colleague back to the House. He knows it better than most, as he spends an awful lot of time in the chamber, and he is here to serve his constituents as well.

It is important that the leader of the opposition be able to do his job. As past opposition leaders have said, the framework set up by the Trudeau government was one that would have disadvantaged the leader of the opposition in his ability to hold the government to account, and he has a constitutional obligation to do that. For our part, we are going to continue holding the government to account.

• (1420)

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me say congratulations on your new role in the Speaker's chair. I know that is something you have been wanting to do for quite some time, and I am very confident that you will do very well in your new role.

As this is my first speech in the 45th Parliament, I would like to take a minute to thank the voters of Regina—Wascana for electing me for a third time to represent their interests here in the House of Commons. They have my solemn promise that I will do my very best to fulfill this role each and every day.

Of course, I would like to thank the many campaign volunteers who worked so tirelessly on the election campaign by knocking on doors, putting up lawn signs and giving people rides to the polls on election day.

Certainly, I would like to thank my family for supporting me throughout every step of this long journey, including all the way to Parliament Hill for my swearing-in ceremony last week.

Speaking of long journeys, it was certainly a pleasure to welcome King Charles to Ottawa for the Speech from the Throne. Given that this is a new Parliament and Canadians have said that they want politicians to work together, I will start by highlighting some of the positive things in the throne speech.

The income tax cut and the GST cut on new homes are initiatives that Conservatives have been calling for for quite some time. The Liberals did not go quite as far as we would have liked, but if they want to steal Conservative ideas, we are certainly not going to complain.

For the most part, while the King's speech contained many positive words, it was certainly lacking in details in terms of how its goals would be achieved. This is concerning, especially since Parliament has not sat since Christmas and will not sit again until the fall.

Nevertheless, there was one brief reference in the throne speech about making Canada "the world's leading energy superpower". Given such a passing reference, I do not think the current government fully appreciates just how important the natural resource sector is to our future prosperity, especially for Saskatchewan. In any given year, between 10% and 15% of the provincial government's budget comes from natural resource royalties. That means that 10% to 15% of the budget of every hospital, school and provincial social service comes from getting Saskatchewan resources to market, and 10% to 15% of the salary of every doctor, nurse, teacher and social worker depends on the natural resource sector. However, if we cannot get Saskatchewan resources to market, if we cannot get oil, gas, potash and uranium to their customers, then it becomes that much more difficult to build hospitals and schools, and to hire more nurses and teachers. As a result, government services and quality of life deteriorate.

This raises an obvious question: What is the best way for a landlocked province like Saskatchewan to get its resources to markets, both in Canada and around the world? For oil and gas, the obvious answer is pipelines. We need to get pipelines built in order for the quality of life of Canadians to improve, so it is certainly concerning that the throne speech contained so little about developing our natural resource sector.

There was the mention of creating a new major federal project office, which one would hope would approve and speed up pipeline projects. Unfortunately, in his first question period on Wednesday, the Prime Minister refused to answer whether new pipelines would be approved. He left it to his Minister of Energy and Natural Resources to clarify: "we will support new pipelines if there is consensus in Canada for them." The Prime Minister cannot even come to a consensus within his own cabinet about getting pipelines built, so how is he going to come to a consensus all across the country? I would suggest that as long as the former minister of the environment, the orange jumpsuit-wearing, CN Tower-climbing member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, is still sitting around the cabinet table, new pipeline projects will never see the light of day in this country.

• (1425)

During the election campaign, when I was doing door-to-door canvassing in Regina—Wascana, just about every day someone on the doorstep shared with me a story about long waiting lists to see a medical specialist, long nights in a hospital waiting room just to see a doctor, overcrowded classrooms, and overworked and underpaid nurses and teachers. These are the direct results of a provincial budget stretched too thin, because for the past 10 years, the Liberal government has refused to let us build pipelines in this country.

However, the benefits of the resource sector to the Saskatchewan economy are not limited to provincial government coffers. Let us not forget about the actual workers who work in the mines and on the oil rigs. There used to be plenty of jobs in this sector so that people could earn a decent living and raise a family. Unfortunately, the resource sector in southern Saskatchewan has shed thousands of jobs over the last 10 years because of the policies of the Liberal government to keep resources in the ground.

Let us not forget one of Regina's largest employers, Evraz North America, which makes pipelines. The members of United Steelworkers 5890, the union that represents Evraz employees, used to have stable, predictable employment as long as pipelines were being built and as long as there were new pipeline projects on the horizon. However, they too have suffered from hundreds of layoffs because of the Liberal government's opposition to pipelines. Many other people in Regina directly benefit from the development of the natural resource sector, including the numerous oil and gas service companies and, of course, the workers at Regina's co-op refinery.

In order to get more pipelines built, the Liberals must repeal Bill C-69, the “no more pipelines” law. This law, which was passed by the Liberals in 2019, has made it impossible for the private sector to build pipelines in this country. Once Bill C-69 is finally repealed and we can once again build pipelines across Canadian soil, the next step is to ship Canadian oil and gas across the ocean to other

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countries. This means the Liberals must also repeal Bill C-48, the west coast oil tanker ban. Take, for example, the northern gateway pipeline project. This pipeline, which was applied for and approved under the previous Conservative government, would have piped Canadian oil and gas to the coast of northern B.C. and then on to customers in Asia. Unfortunately, this pipeline project was stopped dead in its tracks when the Liberals announced that they would not allow oil tankers to transport the oil from the end of the pipeline to customers in Asia and around the world.

The Liberal government can no longer overlook the contributions that our natural resource sector can make to international trade and to international peace and security. Our allies should not be buying oil and gas from dictators in Russia or the Middle East. They should be buying from Canada. This is exactly what has been asked of Canada by the Japanese Prime Minister, the German Chancellor, the Greek Prime Minister and many other countries as well.

The House is scheduled to rise for the summer break on June 20. That means that, due to the Liberals' decision to prorogue Parliament and then call an early election, when the House returns in the fall, we will have sat for only 20 days since Christmas. Twenty days is apparently not enough time for the Liberals to table a budget, so I am not going to get my hopes up too high that they will enact legislation to repeal Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, or to fix the many other problems they have created over the last 10 years. If the Liberals do want to work together and steal even more Conservative ideas, especially ones related to pipelines and the natural resource sector, we are happy to co-operate.

• (1430)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

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