



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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Monday, June 16, 2025

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 16, 2025

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1100)

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 1—PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-5

MOTION THAT DEBATE BE NOT FURTHER ADJOURNED

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in relation to the consideration of Government Business No. 1, I move:

That the debate not be further adjourned.

[English]

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is now moving closure on its piece of legislation in order to, as it claims, fast-track projects for our nation. However, without getting rid of Bill C-69, without getting rid of Bill C-48, without getting rid of the industrial carbon tax and without getting rid of the production cap, what is the point in fast-tracking legislation to have a one-stop shop where people can just hear the word “no”?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I would point the member to page 1 of the Liberal platform. We just had an election, as the member probably recalls, where we solicited a mandate to move very quickly on two important fronts: first, to reduce interprovincial trade barriers, which cost us billions of dollars and points on our gross domestic product, therefore making Canada poorer; and second, to accelerate the construction of major projects in the country.

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, over the past several days of debate, the Bloc Québécois members have expressed what we feel are extremely serious concerns, particularly with regard to passing the bill so quickly.

Did the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons listen to what the Bloc members had to say? Does he think what we said made sense?

Does he not think that we are right in wanting to further study a bill that could have dire consequences for the future of Quebec and Canada, rather than ramming it through as quickly as possible?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I will give in French the same answer I just gave in English to my esteemed Conservative colleague.

We just had an election. The first page of the election platform of the party currently in power states that we need to act quickly in the interest of the Canadian economy, first, to create one economy out of 13 and enrich every individual Canadian, and second, to quickly implement major projects from coast to coast.

• (1105)

[English]

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to hear the government wants to build special projects, specifically the pipelines that Alberta has been asking for for a long time, but the same government has put up barriers so that these projects cannot go through, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, which are still in place.

I am not sure how the Liberals can explain to Canadians how they are going to build projects while the barriers they have put in place are going to prevent those projects from happening.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I know the member to be a very studious and constructive member of Parliament, and as he well knows, this is a major step toward accelerating the kinds of projects the member himself purports to support.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will just remind colleagues, as this is the first time this type of debate has happened during this Parliament, that when we have questions and comments, while it is not the exclusion of government members, preference is given to opposition members.

On a point of order, we have the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, from my understanding of going through this process, the Speaker is correct that government members will get questions, but they take priority over independents.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Preference is given to the opposition, obviously, and although not to the exclusion of independent members, government will also be given preference.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

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James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-5 was just introduced in the House for debate on Friday. We have only had a few hours of debate on it already. The Liberals are up to their old tricks again, trying to ram through legislation without giving Parliament the opportunity to debate this bill. We know that it would not repeal the “no more pipelines” act or the “no more tankers” act. We know that it would not help with anything in resource development.

Why are the Liberals back to their old ways of shutting down debate and undermining democracy?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I would point the member to the support of Canada's Building Trades Unions just this morning and the 13 premiers of the provinces and territories. That says nothing of an election campaign where we extensively debated the very issues the member is purporting to support. This is the government's response to those. We have outlined a process for accelerating major projects into the future. This bill is an important first step.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this government is hiding behind an election platform, saying that it promised these measures. Yet nowhere in the platform does it mention that the government would be moving a motion to amend 13 laws and 7 regulations, including environmental legislation, in an effort to weaken environmental protection and accelerate the approval of projects such as oil pipelines.

Ecojustice speaks of superpowers awarded the government, and says that this is a first in the modern history of environmental law. Even Stephen Harper would not have dared propose these kinds of measures.

Can the government explain why it is in such a hurry to muzzle Parliament and push through a project that is not in the public interest?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, the member has obviously not read the Liberal Party of Canada's election platform. We debated the document at length during the campaign. It says, “It's time to unite this country and invest in nation-building infrastructure on a scale not seen in generations. Major nation-building projects will connect Canada and grow the economy in ways that last for generations”.

Quebeckers and Canadians expect every member of the House to act quickly.

[English]

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister can expand on what this bill would do to remove the barriers that are preventing a lot of workers from being able to work amidst the unjustified and illegal tariffs, and the importance of fulfilling the mandate to remove internal trade barriers across Canada.

• (1110)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. We know that internal trade barriers have a cost. They come at a great cost to our economy and to the personal, individual wealth of all Canadians.

The member makes an extraordinarily good point. They also come at a cost to working men and women in the skilled trades and in private sector unions right across this country. Men and women want a chance to move across the country with their credentials to work on these major projects. That is why we see, as with Canada's Building Trades Unions and IBEW, endorsements across the board from Canada's union movement. Go check it out.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the grand chief of the Anishinabek Nation and the Ontario regional chief, Abram Benedict. They cited the potential infringement of their Constitutional rights and the obligations around free, prior and informed consent. This violates the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. They are asking that time be given for the bill to be studied properly so their voices are heard.

Why is the government ramming through this legislation without giving indigenous peoples an opportunity to provide insight and input?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, section 35 rights are constitutionally protected in Canada, and UNDRIP, as we know, has the principle of free, prior and informed consent. It is about working together in an atmosphere of partnership and respect.

We are, of course, seeking meaningful participation and partnership from indigenous peoples, and I would remind the member that this includes indigenous peoples who are advocating for major projects to be accelerated in their regions to foster high-paying jobs and prosperity for their people.

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it appears the Liberals not only do not want to answer questions, but do not even want to take questions that we have asked and they have failed to answer, like questions on consensus. What does consensus mean moving forward with these major projects? We have seen that Premier Eby in B.C. has said there will be no pipelines through B.C.

Who has veto power and what is consensus? That is what I would like to ask the minister.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member well knows that the way we get things done in this country is by working together with indigenous peoples, with provinces, with cities, with unions and with private sector investment. That is the way we are going to move forward. We are going to move forward with consensus, getting investment decisions made while having good, strong, well-paying jobs involved in the construction and operation of these major projects. Consensus is at the heart of this very bill.

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. President, my colleague said that the government presented its platform during the election. However, nowhere in the platform does it say that it would claim unprecedented power, the power to govern by decree. For example, section 21 allows any proponent to circumvent any and all laws.

We heard our Conservative colleagues talk about GC Strategies and ArriveCAN. Moreover, the government is trying to have the bill adopted by imposing a gag order. The government would have the power to exempt proponents from the application of any law. Even the Canadian Cancer Society has expressed concerns that this could place people's health at risk.

I do not understand at all. The Liberals never announced such a power grab during the election.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I think the member was not listening to our leader when he mentioned the need to proceed with the adoption of this bill so it could obtain royal assent before Canada Day.

My esteemed colleague will have a second reason to celebrate this Canada Day. We will open up investment opportunities in our country, while lowering barriers between Quebec and the other provinces. This will create wealth and opportunities for Quebecers.

The Bloc Québécois were against this measure during the election. Now we are 44 Liberals on this side of the House.

[English]

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is just like the Liberals. Typically, they will say one thing during an election and do something completely different once they have been elected. They refuse to repeal Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, the shipping ban. Also, the minister is talking about all the jobs this bill would create, but at the same time, they refuse to repeal Bill C-50 on the just transition, which will cost 200,000 jobs in energy, 290,000 jobs in agriculture and 1.4 million jobs in construction.

Why will the government not send a clear signal to investors and working Canadians by repealing Bill C-50, Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 and truly show Canadians that Canada is open for business?

• (1115)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, that question betrays the member's absolute lack of consultation with working people in Alberta and across this country. Of course workers in this country want to be in on renewable technologies and the new economy. This is what sustainable jobs are about, but we also want to create new openings, new possibilities, new infrastructure and, yes, new resource development in this country, in Alberta and elsewhere. The member knows that, and that question betrays a profound lack of knowledge of the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is really unbelievable. The leader of the government is telling us, in a

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condescending tone, that we did not read the Liberals' election platform, in which they said they were going to do these things.

What I see this morning is that the government is in a great hurry to have an exceptionally controversial bill passed because it knows that Canadians and Quebecers would react to any study of the bill and find it unacceptable. The Liberals want to hurry up and bypass democracy, and present the people with a *fait accompli*.

Nowhere in the Liberal Party's platform does it say that they would circumvent democracy and our institutions. I hope they did not have the nerve to put that in writing.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, by definition, everything that takes place here is democratic.

The member across the aisle is denouncing our bill. I suggest that he speak to the Quebec government and stakeholders in the matter, including economic stakeholders, the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal, the FTQ and the rest of the union movement. These people are united. They stand behind the opportunity to launch major projects, adopt a broad vision, create good jobs and contribute to Quebec's prosperity.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all know well, as the government House leader has explained in his opening remarks, that we had an election on April 28. Let there be absolutely no doubt that a mandate was given to every member of the House of Commons, no matter what political party, and it was that Canadians want to see a stronger, healthier Canadian economy. The leader of the Liberal Party, the new Prime Minister, with a new administration, made a commitment to pass this type of legislation by July 1. Without this form of procedure, we would not be able to achieve that. The opposition knows full well—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, that is an extraordinary question that goes to the heart of this issue. We hear about democracy in the chamber. We just had the ultimate democratic test. Do members know what we heard?

All of us, everyone in this chamber, heard this: Get moving. Get this country moving. We need a response to the threats coming from down south. We have a plan, a Liberal plan, to put before the people and pass before July 1. That is what we are doing.

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic that the member for Winnipeg North just got up and said our Canadian economy is on the rocks. Guess which government has been in power for the last 10 years. It is his government.

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The part that I think is more difficult for Canadians watching today is that they were sold a bill of goods. This was supposed to be a new prime minister and a new government, but the government is doing exactly what the previous government did for the last 10 years. When it did not get its way, it would ram things through the Parliament.

Please, for all Canadians, explain how the current government is different from the last 10 years of the last Trudeau government.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, guess which party has been in opposition for the last 10 years. That means the Conservatives should, I think, rally themselves to a solution, a set of solutions that would enrich Canadians in every one of their ridings, contribute to our gross national product and create opportunity for working men and women and investments in this country from coast to coast to coast. The member should look in the mirror and get behind our plan.

● (1120)

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think we need to be clear today: The government is talking nonsense. The Liberals' election platform does not state that they will stifle democratic debate in the House, or that they will prevent the opposition parties from doing their job and studying in committee a bill aimed at giving the government superpowers.

They are proposing what almost amounts to war measures. They want to repeal their own laws, which were adopted democratically, to give up the fight against climate change and threaten the environment and Canadians' health without public debate.

That was not in the Liberals' election platform. I would like them to tell us where it says that, because no one voted for that.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I recommend that my esteemed colleague read the first page. He will not have to read much of the document. The first page explains the need to act.

The Prime Minister spoke at length of the need for the House to act. He said that, when we got here, we would introduce a bill that would receive royal assent before July 1, to give a Canada Day gift to all Canadians. This is a gift that will create wealth, job opportunities and investment in Canada.

[English]

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are presenting Bill C-5, their so-called free trade and labour mobility in Canada act, as a serious effort to strengthen the economy, but once again, it is all promise and no plan. They promised homes, with none built. They promised pipelines, with none delivered. They promised a budget, which is still missing.

They have now tabled another bill filled with talking points but no mention of pipelines, no plan for infrastructure and no answers on how this will actually move our economy forward. It is the same Liberal formula: big talk, no delivery, no pipelines, no housing, no budget and just headlines.

If the government wants to unlock the economy, why are pipelines and major infrastructure missing entirely from this so-called productivity plan? Is this just another press release?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member to the House. Hopefully, she can convey the same urgency she just conveyed in her question to her own caucus colleagues. Canada is at an economic crossroads. Canada requires measures that would provoke investment and create opportunity for working men and women right across the country. That is precisely what this bill does. I suspect the member knows it all too well but has not been able to convince her colleagues of it yet.

[Translation]

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing my Liberal colleague say over and over again that, during the election, they promised to have the bill enacted before July 1.

I find that a little presumptuous. It implies that, during the election, either the Liberals thought that they would form a majority government, which is not the case, or they really did not take the work of members of Parliament into account in their election platform. Which one is it?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, we are a minority government, and that makes the members on the other side of the House uncomfortable. It means that they have to make choices, necessary choices, choices that Quebeckers are asking us to make, choices that the other provinces are asking us to make. The unions, the business community and virtually every section of civil society are asking for this. They are urging us to take action for the economy, to respond to the United States and to create opportunities here at home. That is what we are doing.

[English]

Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just have a couple of simple questions. It really is quite perplexing. Who has been in power for the last 10 years? Who passed legislation that shut down pipeline expansion and development? Who put in the no tanker ban? Who brought in all these types of legislation that have constricted our economy, held back our economy and talked down our oil, gas, and natural resource and energy sector for 10 years? It was not this side of the House. It was that side of the House.

Now, all of a sudden, the Liberals want us to believe they have done a backflip and a road to Damascus and that they now believe in energy development. Can the minister please explain this to the people's House?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, to the member whose riding I know well, I very much doubt there will be a tanker going up the Saint John River anytime soon.

I will say that in New Brunswick, and right across this country, whether it be in Saint John or in any other province, major projects have been put on the table. Those major projects require our attention, and that means the member's attention too. He does not get to shirk his responsibility. I would ask him: yes or no; up or down; on major projects now, yes or no?

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my Liberal colleague is saying that this is written in the Liberal platform and that it is necessary. What is actually necessary is to not impose a gag order and circumvent Parliament. It reminds me of the saying that the ends justify the means. If the ends justify the means, then anything is justified, including violence and breaking the law.

This government says it is going to consult the provinces and first nations, but it does not even want to consult members of Parliament. This gag order is totally unacceptable, and I hope that every opposition member will vote against it.

• (1125)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, by definition, everything that goes on here involves choices and that is, by definition, democratic.

I am not sure I understand my colleague's question, but I suggest he go see the Premier of Quebec, the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, the business community and everyone in Quebec's economic sector. They are telling us loud and clear that we need to do something now.

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said, we are truly at a crossroads. Canadians made their wishes clear, and they deserve better than the kind of debate that is going on here today, which is purely aimed at providing sound bites for social media. Canadians deserve a real conversation.

I would like my colleague to tell me how the criteria in the bill ensure that consensus and the fulfillment of our environmental protection commitments are central to the bill. What are the criteria?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for raising a substantive issue, since all we are hearing this morning are questions about processes and procedure.

The member knows this very well, because she has read the text of the bill, which does not eliminate any of the requirements concerning the environment or the consultation of indigenous communities, nor does it detract from any other statute or regulation of the Government of Canada. We are accelerating, but we are not taking anything away.

[English]

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I remember standing in that corner when the Liberal Party was the third party in the House and its members protested so strongly against Stephen Harper starting to use time allocation on bills. It had happened, at that point, nine times in 40 years, then it began to be every bill, but nothing from the Harper government was as breathtaking as the programming motion put forward for Bill C-5.

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I ask the hon. government House leader to reconsider and respect parliamentary democracy in this place.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. It is indeed an interesting question, for this reason. Canadians are asking this Parliament to act. They elected the Parliament they did. It is a minority Parliament. It requires parties from all sides of the House to weigh in on the substance and the issues of the day. That can mean obstruction for obstruction's sake. We had a privilege motion that lasted three months that every member on that side knew was fake.

This government will proceed responsibly, democratically and according to the rules, but it will proceed.

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this old, tired government creates imperatives with its inaction and then introduces half-empty measures. When will the government introduce that it is going to repeal the oil and gas production cap?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: It is very interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservatives get up and decry the procedure on this very bill and then want to debate the next bill. We want to give them time to debate this bill. I am very interested as to why the member gets up and talks about other bills that may come before this House. Let us get down to business and do something for unions, for investors in this country, for investment—

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle has the floor.

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we said, this is a minority government.

Out of respect for the democratic process, I want to point out that people are watching us. A minority government requires consultations. That means going through all the democratic steps. We should keep sitting until July 15. We need to have a discussion.

We suggested splitting up Bill C-5, since there are a lot of things in it that we agree with. However, we do not intend to give the government carte blanche.

• (1130)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, Canadians did not give the Bloc Québécois the right to introduce government bills.

It is our job to introduce government bills in the House. Yes, we are in a minority situation. That means that they, too, must make choices, necessary choices in our opinion, choices that we will have to make to ensure the future of Quebec and Canada.

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The Bloc Québécois has an opportunity to ensure Quebec's future. Quebecers want that. The Bloc does not.

[English]

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would inquire if the minister sincerely believes the bill will meet constitutional scrutiny. We know the bill prescribes that projects of national importance will, essentially, be treated as a forgone conclusion. We also know the duty to consult, identified by the Supreme Court, has repeatedly held that the government has to consult in good faith. How can the government have consultation in good faith when it comes with a forgone conclusion?

Does the minister truly believe the bill will meet constitutional scrutiny?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the election, the Prime Minister made many references to the legislation before the House today. The expectation in British Columbia is that after this bill is passed, British Columbian farmers will be able to sell their wine in every other province and territory in Canada.

Can the leader of the House for the government state clearly today whether all trade barriers for the distribution of B.C. wine will be eliminated?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, we act in a federal jurisdiction. This bill eliminates federal exemptions to interprovincial trade and is an important piece of leadership as we move forward.

I would also note that the member's premier, his province and even his region have come to various arrangements that facilitate just that. Yes, we would like Okanagan—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is a sad moment for democracy. I can even see it in the faces of the Liberal members across the aisle. Many of them are uncomfortable with what is happening.

Not only do we need to study every single bill but, depending on the scope of the changes proposed, we must also be conscientious and inform the public. Despite the condescending attitude of the Leader of the Government in the House, who appears to be saying that we have no business proposing anything, the opposition's role in a democracy is to inform the public and ask questions. What the Liberals are doing this morning is preventing us from doing that, while they intend to sacrifice—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has 30 seconds to respond.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is exaggerating by repeating the same questions.

We on this side of the House are very excited about fulfilling such a solemn election commitment and, as we promised the people

of Quebec, moving forward with this major development that will create opportunities, jobs and investment in Quebec and across Canada.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion.

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

Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, we request it be carried on division.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded vote.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Call in the members.

● (1215)

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

(Division No. 9)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaf	Acan
Aitchison	Al Soud
Albas	Ali
Allison	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Auguste	Baber
Bailey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Bardeesy	Barlow
Barrett	Battiste
Beech	Belanger (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River)
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Bendayan
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Bittle
Blair	Block
Blois	Bonk
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Calkins
Caputo	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chambers	Champagne
Chang	Chartrand
Chatel	Chen
Chenette	Chi
Chong	Church
Clark	Cobena
Cody	Connors
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Dandurand
Danko	Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson

Deltell
DeRidder
Desrochers
Dhillon
Diotte
Dowdall
Duguid
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Epp
Eyolfson
Falk (Provencher)
Fanjoy
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Gaheer
Gallant
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Windsor West)
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Greaves
Guay
Guilbeault
Gunn
Hallan
Hardy
Hepfner
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Holman
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Jansen
Jivani
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khanna
Kirkland
Kmic
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)
Kusie
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lattanzio
Lavack
Lawrence
Lefebvre
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Long
Ma
MacDonald (Cardigan)
Mahal
Malette (Bay of Quinte)

Maloney
Martel
McCauley
McKelvie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean (Calgary Centre)
Melillo
Mendès

d'Entremont
Deschênes-Thériault
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Fuhr
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Genuis
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Gould
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Klassen
Konanz
Kram
Kronis
Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lantsman
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Lightbound
Lobb
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
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MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Majumdar
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Mantle
Mazier
McGuinty
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McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Ménard
Menegakis

Michel
Miller
Moore
Morrison
Motz
Myles
Nathan
Noormohamed
Oliphant
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Petitpas Taylor
Provost
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Reid
Reynolds
Roberts
Rocheffort
Rood
Rowe
Ruff
Saini
Sari
Scheer
Schmale
Sgro
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sodhi
Sousa
Stevenson
Strahl
Stubbs
Tesser Derksen
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Uppal
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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I declare the motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 1

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to join today's debate on Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy legislation. Before I get started, I want to recognize that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Mississauga East—Cooksville this afternoon.

We are living in a very uncertain world. As I speak right now, there are missiles being exchanged between Israel and Iran. There is great tension in the Middle East. War continues to ravage Ukraine after three years of brutal Russian onslaught, naked aggression against that democracy that is simply trying to defend its sovereignty. Authoritarian regimes are on the rise. I think it is fair to say that this is probably the most uncertain time in the world, certainly since the Cold War; parallels can be made. It is the most dangerous time since World War II.

In the backdrop of all I just mentioned, and we could spend an entire debate talking about that today, the U.S. administration and the United States, our largest trading partner, regardless of one's partisan affiliation or ideological viewpoint, is seeking to re-establish and to reimagine the relationships it has in the world, with maybe less on multilateralism. It is certainly changing the relationship that the United States has in relation to trade.

We as parliamentarians sit in this place today with tariffs on Canadian products going into the United States that are unjustified and illegal. I am sure all members of the House would agree with that, but they exist. If someone is a steel worker in Hamilton, or if they are in Quebec or in the Soo, there is great uncertainty right now for our Canadian workforce, and particularly for certain industries across the country.

Canada is at a crossroads in terms of what we do next. The Prime Minister and the government were elected in April in part to be able to handle the world that we are living in and the economic uncertainty that has been presented because of all the factors I just laid out, and that brings us to the legislation that is before the House here today.

The Prime Minister has been very clear that we as Canadians can give ourselves so much more than anyone can take away from us as a country. The legislation that is being considered here in the House aims to do just that: It aims to ensure that we can strengthen our Canadian economy, which is under duress from U.S. tariffs and is facing an uncertain world for all the reasons I just laid out.

• (1220)

The bill seeks to do two things. First, it seeks to establish one Canadian economy, not 13. This has been a concept for quite some years, many decades in fact. It is fair to say that some Canadians, and maybe indeed some members of the House, could be cynical about the idea that we can break down the interprovincial trade barriers that cost Canadian GDP in this country approximately \$200 billion. Twenty per cent of our national gross domestic product is

from services, goods and products being moved within our federation, and for far too long, there have been impediments to that free mobility, the ability for products to move easily between jurisdictions or for the accreditation of professions and services in this country to be recognized among provinces, territories and the federal government.

That is exactly why the government has introduced the bill, which would remove all remaining federal barriers to interprovincial trade. There are very few, but it is incumbent upon all of us, certainly upon the Prime Minister and the government, to show leadership such that the provinces and territories will follow suit. There is certainly political will right now, and Canadians are looking for their elected leaders to break down the barriers and make it easier to do business. Ultimately, this is about growing our Canadian economy.

Over the last 10 years, Canada has had the second-highest overall growth in the G7, but productivity remains an issue. This is something the Prime Minister and the government are serious about tackling, and they want to get started on this domain in earnest. The bill would help do that. The bill would help to break down barriers, to allow small businesses across this country to send their products east-west, as opposed to necessarily looking to other international markets.

I will give an example. I represent the Annapolis Valley, Kings—Hants, in Nova Scotia. There is an emerging wine industry there. It is easier for wine growers in Nova Scotia to send their bottles of beautiful handcrafted products to France than it is to send them to New Brunswick or Ontario. That is just one of the examples. How about the accreditation for surveyors? A surveyor who has accreditation in Ontario would have to re-register in order to work on a federal project in the same city. These are the types of things that we can no longer take for granted and not move on with a sense of urgency and action.

The bill is very clear and is only 25 pages long. The first half is dedicated to interprovincial trade and the mobility of workers in this country. I look forward to a member of Parliament's suggesting that is not a good idea, because I do not think it is what public opinion is, and I certainly do not think it is where public policy should be in the moment of the factors I just laid out to the House. We are going to be moving on it.

The bill would allow for federal regulatory agencies or departments to ensure that where there is comparable, and that is the word used, legislation in a provincial or territorial sense, it would receive the same accreditation as federally. That is important. The legislation lays the foundation. There would be a lot of heavy lifting to ensure that we can exercise that. The legislation is step number one. The sooner we can pass it through the House, the better.

The second aspect of the bill is that we need to get our economy going. We have major projects, and the world needs what Canada has, whether it is in critical minerals, agriculture or the forestry sector. We are blessed to have natural endowments and people with ingenuity, such that people around the world want our products and services.

On major projects, the government is delineating a process to be able to approve major projects more quickly. It is extremely important. Proponents have talked about wanting the ability to move faster on this, and the legislation would allow there to be a major national projects office with the Governor in Council and one minister who would set the conditions for the projects. The cabinet would have the ability, of course, to engage with indigenous partners, provinces and other stakeholders to identify major projects of national concern.

There are five criteria the legislation lays out. I want to cover them for all members of the House and for the public at home so they can understand what would actually constitute a major project in this country. A project would have to strengthen Canada's autonomy, resilience and security. Obviously, it would have to have a clear economic or other benefit to Canada. It would have to have a high likelihood of successful execution in terms of the ability for a project to actually move forward and happen. It would have to advance the interests of indigenous people and contribute to the clean growth in Canada's objectives in relation to climate change. Those are the criteria the government would use.

• (1225)

There are a few things that are extremely important to highlight. I go back to section 35 rights and UNDRIP. There has been some concern outside the House that somehow this legislation would disallow or lessen the constitutional rights indigenous people are afforded in this country. That is not what is happening whatsoever. Any project that would ever find its way onto this list of national projects of concern would have to have involved deep consultation with indigenous people, and one of the actual provisions is that indigenous communities would have to be consulted as part of this.

Nothing from this bill would take away from UNDRIP, which the House passed. Nothing would take away from the ability of indigenous partners to actually benefit.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, there is a member from the NDP heckling me here on today's point. What she does not understand is that this represents an absolutely tremendous opportunity for indigenous people in this country. She wants to, I guess, perhaps, limit the economic opportunities available to indigenous people in this country.

We have increased the loan equity in this—

An hon. member: It's about free, prior and informed consent.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order, please.

I will remind members that there will be a question and comment period. Let us hold our comments until then.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Government Orders

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre can wait for her turn in this place, when she can happily ask the question.

My position, and the position of the government, is that we need to be able to move projects of national interest that include indigenous equity in this country. There are indigenous communities that want to move on national projects—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order, please.

The hon. parliamentary secretary is rising on a point of order.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg Centre knows her behaviour is inappropriate. It is a constant, direct heckle to the member, and I would ask that, if she cannot contain herself, she be asked to leave the chamber.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will encourage all members to withhold their comments when they do not have the floor and allow the parliamentary secretary to finish his comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, this legislation is crucial. We are in an economic crisis. This legislation would move forward with the ability to move on interprovincial trade and the reduction of barriers and allow major national projects to get built.

The government is absolutely committed to advancing indigenous participation in major national projects. Projects would not be listed if there were not adequate consultation or if section 35 rights and UNDRIP were not recognized. Members in the House can argue otherwise, but the government has been very clear and committed.

This legislation is crucial. Let us get it passed because it matters for Canada.

Clifford Small (Central Newfoundland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I heard the parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister talk quite a bit about trade. One group of products being hit hard right now by tariffs is Canadian seafood.

Lobster, of course, is a very important seafood export of the member's province and of mine as well. Since March, there has been a 25% tariff placed on Canadian seafood by China. It seems as though seafood and the seafood industry are just collateral damage in a trade war the member's government started with China.

Given his high-profile position and how connected he is to the PMO, could the member explain to the fishing industry of Atlantic Canada if he is doing anything about it?

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, we know the value of the Canadian seafood industry, particularly in our home region of Atlantic Canada. The Prime Minister has been very clear. He had a very constructive conversation with the premier of China. We are going to be regularizing communication with the Chinese government.

Government Orders

However, the member needs to also understand the geopolitics involved because the seafood industry also benefits from exports into the United States. This is an important conversation that the Prime Minister is having at the G7 summit right now. At the end of the day, this is a difficult situation because the U.S. government is also very hawkish on China. Any pathway we move forward on has to be measured against finding a balance with the Canada-U.S. relationship, in a continental sense, while also engaging constructively with the Chinese government to make sure we can continue to move our seafood products and our agriculture products to the world. Our government is committed to making that happen.

• (1230)

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Kings—Hants for his speech and his sensitivity on issues affecting indigenous peoples.

He repeated the phrase we have often heard from the Liberals over the past few days, about creating one Canadian economy out of 13. This shows how little consideration was given to the indigenous economy, even in the thought process that led to this election commitment to encroach on provincial jurisdictions. Otherwise, they might have said 14 economies, or maybe even 70. Every nation has its own economic values. Every nation's economic values are different. When I hear them talking about 13 economies, I assume they are referring to the economies of the 10 provinces and three territories.

Has my colleague considered that indigenous people can have their own economy, separate from those of the provinces?

[English]

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr Speaker, this is a new government, but for the members who have been involved over the last 10 years, and the hon. member will hopefully agree, reconciliation was an absolute cornerstone of former prime minister Justin Trudeau's tenure here in his service to Canada.

We have consistently invested in and put in equity for indigenous partners to be involved in major projects. The government has actually increased the equity loan program for indigenous communities to take advantage of and be involved in major projects to help move communities forward and to help bring some communities out of poverty. There are tremendous opportunities out there. We respect the fact that we want indigenous partners across the country to be involved in major nation-building projects. It is the right thing to do. It makes sense economically, and it makes sense for reconciliation.

Pauline Rochefort (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very fortunate in Canada to be blessed with many great financial institutions, and within these institutions are economic departments with great economists leading them.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the position of our Canadian banks with respect to this particular bill.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I chair the Prime Minister's economic growth caucus. We had the opportunity to welcome chief

economists from the major national banks who were supportive of the type of legislation that allows big projects to get built.

I do not want to speak for the banks in this country, but I would say that this is the type of legislation that is about building economic resilience in the country. It is about making sure big projects happen. It is crucial to make sure that we can drive productivity in this country, and I would encourage all members to support this bill as soon as possible because it matters at a crucial time for the country.

Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a privilege it is to rise in this House today on behalf of the people of Mississauga East—Cooksville. It is a pivotal time for our country and for Canadian families alike.

I would like to congratulate all the dads out there for a belated happy Father's Day. They do a great job.

Canadians sent us here with a clear message to make life more affordable, to make our economy work for everyone and to bring this country together stronger, fairer and more united than ever before. That is exactly what our government is doing. When I speak with a young couple in Mississauga trying to buy their first home, a small grocer who wants to expand their business across provincial lines or a retired couple feeling the pressure at the checkout line, one thing is clear: Canadians are looking for action and not slogans. They are getting that action through bold, focused leadership under our Prime Minister and our new government.

This is not just about responding to challenges; it is about seizing the opportunity. Today, all eyes are on Kananaskis, Alberta, as Canada hosts the G7 summit. This is a moment to showcase what makes Canada strong: our resilient middle class, our clean and conventional energy leadership, and our commitment to building a modern, unified economy where no one is left behind. We will stand on the global stage and show the world that Canada is not just keeping up; we are leading.

Here at home, we are moving quickly to deliver real relief for Canadians. Bill C-4, now before this House, delivers on the 2025 campaign promise to cut taxes for the middle class, reducing the lowest tax bracket. That would mean more money in the pockets of 22 million Canadians, up to \$840 a year for a two-income family. This relief would start on July 1, so the time to act is now. Families cannot afford delay; they need this support and they need it now.

We are not stopping there. We are tackling the housing crisis with a targeted GST exemption for first-time homebuyers on homes up to \$1 million. This would be especially impactful for families in cities like mine of Mississauga. We are helping young Canadians enter the housing market while investing in housing supply to make sure the next generation has the same shot at success.

This past weekend, I had the honour to attend a Luso charities event, which raises vital funds for individuals living with cognitive disabilities. What stood out to me was not just the generosity in that room, which was tremendous, but that there were developers, union leaders and construction workers. People from every corner of the building sector came together for a common purpose.

Do members know what they told me? They said they are optimistic. They believe in the direction our country is going, the way we are headed. They know that by working together with government, community, industry and labour, we can build the homes Canadians need while creating good jobs and delivering inclusive, progressive growth. This is what nation building looks like, and it starts with partnership. This is what it means to build fairness.

Now let me speak about trade, infrastructure and opportunity, because these issues are deeply connected. It was a busy weekend this weekend. I also had the pleasure of attending North America's biggest halal food festival, right in the heart of Mississauga. Fifty thousand people came out, including families, entrepreneurs and business leaders from across our country. Amir Shamsi, the founder, took me around to speak with many of the businesses. Built from the ground up, many of them are newcomer-run, women-led or youth-run. They told me they were ready to grow. They want to move their products across provincial borders and access new markets abroad, but right now they are hitting red tape, different standards, fragmented rules and unnecessary costs. We need to fix that.

● (1235)

That is why Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, is so important. It is vital that we do this. The bill tears down those barriers, creating one unified marketplace across Canada. It helps small and medium-sized businesses, like those at the halal food festival, expand faster, hire more workers and compete globally.

Trade policy is not enough. Nation-building infrastructure is the backbone that supports our economic growth. That is why Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, would help unleash strategic trade and energy corridors, projects that connect our natural resources to markets, our businesses to ports, and our goods to global demand.

We need to modernize Canada's ports, from Halifax to Vancouver, to handle large volumes and higher efficiency. We need to expand rail and highway infrastructure to reduce congestion and speed up delivery. We need to build clean energy corridors that will move electricity across provinces, so that Canadian power can fuel our homes, our factories and our vehicles from coast to coast to coast. This is how we unlock the full potential of the Canadian economy, by investing in the hard infrastructure that makes trade real. This is inclusive, bottom-up trade, where the benefits start with the people on the ground, in places like the great place of Mississauga, and ripple outward across our country.

At our borders, where economic and national security meet, we are acting with Bill C-2. The bill would modernize trade routes, strengthen enforcement and stop the illegal flow of guns and drugs, while speeding up the legal flow of goods. That is good for safety and good for business, and it is essential for a modern economy.

Government Orders

These are just bills, but they are all part of a unified vision, a 2025 Liberal vision, a Liberal plan that Canadians voted for: tax relief for working families; housing access for the next generation; strategic infrastructure to support trade, innovation and energy; a clean economy that grows with people-powered innovation; and a strong Canada united from coast to coast to coast.

It is a plan to build on economic expertise, empowered by the values that Canadians hold dear. We have a Prime Minister with real-world experience in global finance and public service, who held a job as the Governor of the Bank of Canada, as well as the Governor of the Bank of England. This person comes with this experience and brings us all together to a new government, a cabinet team that reflects Canada and delivers for Canadians.

Members have probably heard the announcement that Michael Sabia will be the incoming Clerk of the Privy Council. We have someone, again, who understands both business and public policy and brings those together. He has done it in Quebec. He has done it across our country. That will help. It will help as we build our team Canada.

This Canadian team, working together with all of us, and I say all of us because I speak to all members in the House, our provinces, our territories, our indigenous partners, the private sector, labour and 41 million Canadians, will unlock Canada's full economic potential. That is what real partnership and real leadership look like. What unites all of this is simple. We are focused on people: not partisanship, not posturing, but people.

This is how we restore faith in government, by showing that it can work and that it can deliver for our people. As we show the world in Kananaskis today, Canada is leading, not just with words, but with action. Let us build one economy. Let us support every family. Let us continue building a Canada that works for everyone. Let us build Canada strong.

● (1240)

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the sentiment of the member from Mississauga, I am worried about the details in the legislation before us today.

Government Orders

Can the member confirm if the breakdown of interprovincial trade barriers will allow B.C. wine producers to sell their goods, without any federal rules in place, to any other province or territory? Second, why has forestry been excluded from projects of national interest?

Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, we have great wines right across our country, from B.C. to Ontario, where I am from, the Atlantic provinces and Quebec. I am not naming all the provinces, but we have great wine.

I want to commend the provinces for taking a leadership stance to be able to break down those interprovincial barriers. What I can also say to the member is that, federally, we will eliminate those barriers. The federal government is eliminating those barriers—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

[Translation]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech and I wonder what guarantees we have. We have already talked about carte blanche. What I am talking about is not only the 13 acts and seven regulations that the government would be free to ignore, but also what we need to discuss before proceeding.

I would like to ask my colleague a question. The Liberals are telling us that we must seize this opportunity at all costs. Do they mean an opportunity to govern as they see fit, without consulting anyone?

What guarantees do we have?

[English]

Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question and for the opportunity to share this with the member and all members in this House. We were home in our constituencies over the weekend, and I had an opportunity, in my remarks, to talk about many of the people I met on the street, at festivals and at different events. They all said we are in a crisis moment right now. We need urgency. We need to get things done. That is what our government is doing. It is ensuring that we are doing that with efficiency so we can deliver for Canadians. I would think it would be the same in the member's riding, that her constituents are looking for those deliveries and those results to be able to help families in her riding, as this will help families in all of our ridings.

• (1245)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did want to take this time to cede my speaking time to the member who had been heckling, wanting to speak and ask government members questions, but unfortunately she is not in the room, so I will—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order.

Hon. members know they cannot make reference to the presence or absence of members in this place. I just ask the member to carry on without that particular piece of commentary.

We have a point of order from the member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, thank you for reminding the member that we cannot identify who is here and who is not.

However, I can say that I am here from the NDP and I am happy to take her question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It does not quite work that way.

The hon. member for London West.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, on that note, I wanted to ask my hon. colleague to expand a bit more on the internal trade barriers that Canadians gave us a mandate to address and the importance it would have for ridings like his and ridings like mine in the southwestern corridor.

Can the member take that question?

Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for the opportunity to talk about these interprovincial barriers. Since our Confederation, since 1867, I think we have had this discussion about interprovincial barriers and how they are stopping our entrepreneurs, stopping our economy and really putting the brakes on our economy from being able to develop.

This is the moment in Canadian history when there is an opportunity for us to take down those barriers and work together with our provinces, territories and indigenous peoples to be able to show Canadians that government can work. I will seize this opportunity. I know we will do it as a House here together, and this will strengthen our democracy.

David Bexte (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government looks to the last 10 years on indigenous relations to reinforce its record, but it will not look to the last 10 years for its economic record.

Can the member comment on why the highest-impact item, oil and gas, has not been included in the economic plan?

Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, we are committed to growing our economy, to making our economy the best economy in the G7. I say to the member, that includes clean and conventional energy. It includes agriculture. It is also about manufacturing. This bill speaks to all sectors, and it speaks to all Canadians. It is about our prosperity. It is about our future.

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be dividing my time with the member for Saskatoon—University.

This is my first speech in the House, and I would like to thank all the supporters from Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

This takes me back to how I got started in politics in the first place. It is ironic, because as a first nations member in Kitimat, where I come from, I got my start on the environment file, meaning that we were trying to repair the damage done to our territory over the last 70 years: damage to the river, damage to the forest and damage to the air. That took up the bulk of our time. At that time, I had to research what an environmental assessment was, what a permit was and what aboriginal rights and title were. This took me years, as a labourer, at a time when the Internet was not readily available to us. We had one computer in our condemned band office, which used to be a residential school. It was hard. It took years to understand this, and nobody in my organization could really explain to me the full extent of what an environmental assessment was. Now, I am back. Over the years, I used to think about all this information in my head being useless, because I thought nobody cared and I could not use it anymore, and then I end up here, talking about the same things I was talking about in 2003, but this time it is flipped.

Canadians should understand that Bill C-5 is in two parts. One is about breaking down provincial boundaries, and I will not be talking about that. I will be talking about the second part, the exemption from environmental assessments in Canada.

The environmental assessments are responsible for LNG Canada, the largest private investment in Canadian history, being built in Kitimat to the highest standards, with transparency and accountability. Everybody understood what was going to happen, because there were federal and provincial authorities involved. More importantly, what strengthened that process was aboriginal rights and title. All first nations from Prince George to Kitimat were part of that process. We all got it; we understood it. There was an emergency of sorts back then, a crisis. Aboriginals were in poverty, and the violence of poverty goes along with that.

Now we have a new crisis, but nobody on the government side is talking about some of the conditions that led to this crisis in the first place. Bill C-69, that extensive bill with all those words in it, actually shut down the building of pipelines. There was also Bill C-48, the ban on tankers coming off the west coast of British Columbia.

The weakened state we are in, and the reason Bill C-5 is on the floor in the first place, is because of tariffs. However, I will go further and say that Canada has lost its place in the geo-energy world, the geopolitical world and the geo-economics world, and it was all self-inflicted. I mean, forget about the tariffs for a second and just think. Without a strong economy, we have a weak country. That is just basic, simple math. It is just common sense, and first nations understand this.

We are now talking about Bill C-5, which would basically exempt major projects from environmental assessments at the federal level, but it would not reduce or eliminate them at the provincial level. It is yet to be seen how much time would be reduced. There is no word on how the federal government will actually replace the consultation and accommodation of aboriginal rights and title, which are protected by section 35 of the Constitution. These processes have been in place, in formation over decades, but now, in one day, we are going to wipe that all out. We are going to say, "No, we don't need an environmental assessment."

Government Orders

I agree that environmental assessments take a lot of money. They take a lot of time, and they are risky. We could do all the work we want and still not receive an environmental assessment certificate, not to mention what will happen if we have a harmonized environmental assessment with the provinces. There are so many different ways to say yes and no.

● (1250)

Now we are getting that from B.C., which will say no to pipelines, so what we are talking about here is almost a waste of time. If we do by some miracle get to a point where we get a pipeline approval, we are going to end up in court, because there are a tremendous number of gaps proposed by this bill. They were in place when I started in council in 2003, back when we were trying to figure out not only how we make our way in a new world as first nations, but how to strengthen the environmental standards in B.C. and Canada and get B.C. and Canada to live up to the conditions in a permit. That took a lot of work. When first nations say that they strengthened the permitting regulations and environmental assessments and used rights and title to do it, it cost first nations a lot of time, money and political capital, because we were trying to balance economics with the environment and the welfare of our people over the next 50, 100 or 150 years. It was difficult.

In Kitimat Village, we reached a happy medium where everybody benefited, not just first nations. Even our neighbouring first nations benefited, but on the basis of the processes in the province of British Columbia and Canada. We figured it out.

Yes, environmental assessments cost money, an incredible amount of money. For a major project, I recommend to proponents that they better have \$50 million of disposable money just to get their certificate, with no guarantee they would get their certificate. Bill C-5 is now saying the government will forego an environmental assessment and give an exemption if it is politically acceptable to it. That would cut down on time and money, but how many groups will be lobbying the government to get on that exemption list? How will the government ensure that the lobbying is done openly, transparently and fairly?

We just went through a debate about contracts issued to a company to the tune of \$60 million-plus where processes were in place to ensure there was no fraud or corruption with respect to the contracts being issued. We still have not gotten that resolved. What are we going to do when a \$30-billion project comes down the pipe, or a \$40-billion project? None of this makes any sense to me, except that there will be no environmental assessment for a major project unless, the way I see it, we find ways to cut corners. Where are we going to cut corners? We are already going to do it with the environmental assessment, but surely we are not going to cut corners with aboriginals on aboriginal rights and title, consultation and accommodation.

Government Orders

There are a lot of first nations that understand this process, but what is number one to the first nations in my area is to address the environment first. That is what we do, and we use our rights and title to do it. We understand there are jobs, money, training and everything associated with a project, but we have to address the environment first. The best way to do that is to engage in an environmental assessment. Usually, aboriginal rights and title run parallel to environmental assessments, both provincially and federally, but if there is no environmental assessment, then what is the process? How will aboriginals ensure that projects are done to the highest standards? We have always bragged that Canada has the highest environmental standards in the world. How do we ensure this with Bill C-5 going forward?

There are many questions here, but the Liberal government just proposed closure, meaning we will not get to debate this bill in full. It was tabled last week. I have never come across a bill this extensive and we only have a week to debate it. Not everybody is going to get up and get a chance to talk on behalf of their riding. Canada has to hold the government accountable. It has to know what is happening with Bill C-5 and the future for the next five, 10 or 20 years, because exemptions are going to be a big issue.

• (1255)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his maiden speech, but I want to remind him that not that long ago, the member and the Conservative caucus actually voted in favour of having the legislation go through in a timely fashion, by Friday. It is important for him to note this, and it was done for all the right reasons. We just came out of an election where there were substantial debates and concerns, and the ideas and principles of this legislation are a reflection of what Canadians are expecting the government and the official opposition to do. I appreciate that the Conservatives voted for this particular process.

Recognizing the importance of sustainable economic development is indeed a very serious issue that is on the minds of all legislators as they push forward with this legislation. Could the member provide his thoughts with regard to why he believes it should ultimately be passed, because—

The Acting Speaker (Chris d'Entremont): The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, this is basically federal Liberal legislation, and we all understand there is a crisis.

I will speak on my own behalf. I voted for it because I believe in the economy and I believe in a strong country, but I need to see more details. I have to go back to my riding and explain why there will be exemptions coming to environmental assessments. I have to explain why there will be no environmental assessments by the federal government but there will be for provincial governments. I have to explain somehow that first nations, which have a right to carry out their own environmental assessments, may or may not be heard. We still have more questions on this.

• (1300)

[Translation]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my Conservative colleague a question.

Since I became a member of this House, I have often seen the Conservatives get all worked up about Liberal corruption and collusion scandals, whether real or imagined. I will not hide the fact that I do not necessarily have the highest regard for the work ethic of the government and the Liberal Party. However, proposed section 21 in Bill C-5 allows any major national project to be exempt from any law in Canada.

Is my colleague not concerned that the government could circumvent crime and ethics laws to save its own skin?

[English]

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, first nations, under the Indian Act, are forced to understand good governance, and that includes transparency and accountability. In fact, under the funding agreements, if there is a deficit in first nations territory, they get punished. If there is a surplus, under the Indian Act they get punished. When we are trying to understand self-governance and trying to understand self-determination, transparency and accountability always rise to the top.

We talk about scandals here. I have been here a month and I have not seen transparency and accountability in any of the questions we have asked the Liberal government. I agree with my colleague. Where is this going to end up?

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I articulated a concern earlier today, because it appears that the legislation is playing fast and loose with the charter. Specifically, we know the legislation proposes that projects of national importance are effectively a foregone conclusion. We also know that the Supreme Court has been very clear time and time again about the duty to consult indigenous peoples. That duty specifically requires good faith.

How can we have good faith when the government comes to the table with a project that is already a foregone conclusion? I am hoping the member can speak to that and about whether he believes the bill will meet constitutional scrutiny.

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I know my colleague has already questioned consultation and accommodation duties. In terms of this bill, either the Liberal government understands the case law and ignores it or does not understand the case law to begin with.

Consulting on a bill has a specific definition of process for over 600 first nations. It is not simply a matter of sending an email or sending a letter and hoping for the best. It has to be followed up on. It is an elaborate process that costs money and time. I will be watching for this with my colleagues in the House.

Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a case study on how not to build a nation, how to destroy a country from within. To understand how bad this bill and the government are, we need to understand how we got here if we are ever going to get through this as a country.

Since day one, the Liberal Party of Canada has been trying to re-shape Canada into this weird reality. Many Canadians do not recognize this country, a postnational state that does not have an identity. Over the past decade, Canada has had the worst record on economic growth in the G7. For every category, Canada is dead last because of Liberal policies that have weakened our country and made our citizens poorer.

There are countless stats to confirm how far we have fallen. Just look at the over two million people in our country relying on food banks every day just to sustain themselves. This has been caused by Liberal inflation because of terrible policies like printing money, but maybe more importantly, it has also been caused by the laws the Liberals have enacted to ban growth within Canada, such as Bill C-69, the “no more pipelines” bill, and the tanker ban. This has real-world implications; there is real Canadian suffering. I am also thinking of youth, who are facing record unemployment right now. Whole generations have given up on the dream of ever owning a home. The Liberals want a nation of renters. We are a country in decline because of the terrible policies of the government. It is almost as if in every way possible, the Liberals have made us more dependent on the state.

We do not talk enough about natural resources in Canada. We should be a stronger nation because of our foundation built on natural resources, but that will never happen while the Liberals are in power. The “keep it in the ground” gang has kidnapped our once proud country. We used to build in Canada. We used to celebrate new production in Canada, not cap it. Our citizens are hard working. We are a country, or used to be a country, of doers. After a decade of decline, the terrible Liberal antidevelopment laws have killed communities across our country.

As a country, we have spoken endlessly about the north and the importance of protecting and growing our presence in the territories, but because of new Liberal regulations, the north is hurting. This bill would not address that. I have travelled to the north. I have heard first-hand how Bill C-69 has stalled and ultimately killed every new mining project in the territories.

I have been told that in the territories there are two main types of jobs: people can work for the government on the taxpayers' dime or they can work in the mining sector. The government has stalled and changed regulations so that no mines are currently being built in the territories. Soon, there will only be government jobs, and all those mining jobs will be evaporated. Everyone is just going to get on the payroll of the government. That is the strong country the Liberals are building, a country that happily fires its own citizens and ships production and jobs to foreign countries. The Liberals have made our economy more beholden to foreign interests and have made a weaker Canada.

Because of Liberal anti-pipeline policies, we do not have ways to move our product to market. This results in America buying our oil at a discount. The citizens of this country own the resources in the

ground, all the resources. No one special group has more say over them. We are the owners, not the corporations and not the government; the citizens are, for our benefit.

However, this once great country, which owns these resources, has a government that wants to keep them in the ground as long as it can. The manager of the resources, the government, has done a lousy job in managing our assets and our inheritance for the next generation. These brilliant Liberals have layered on so much regulation that pipeline companies such as Brookfield invest in pipelines around the world but not here in Canada. It is elbows up against our own people and resources.

We have closed all growth opportunities to export the product that we all own, making it easier for Americans to literally have us over a barrel. We have forced ourselves to sell to the Americans for a discount on every barrel of oil. It is upwards of \$15 on every barrel that we just give away because of the crazy policies the Liberals have enacted for our country.

● (1305)

If we add that up with the millions and billions of barrels of oil, there is the money to reinvest in schools, hospitals, highways and true infrastructure. We would have the revenue because our economy is growing. We would have the ability to get our product to market, but not under the Liberals.

The Liberals have a record of selling out our country for what they claim is the environment. We might just stop that for a minute. The whole idea is that we have to keep it all in the ground and stop everything to save the planet, but just on the oil and gas equation, if the whole world would use oil from Canada, our emissions as a planet would go down by 25%. I am not sure whether they are hurting our country more or the environment more with their crazy Liberal policies.

It gets even worse when we talk about LNG. There is not a country in the world that would not want what we have, but we have squandered this opportunity. This is the worst missed opportunity in a generation. I am so embarrassed for our country about what has happened.

When the Liberal government formed government 10 years ago, there were 15 LNG plants lined up for Canada. There was not a single taxpayer dime in these projects; it was all private investment that would have driven our economy for a decade. These projects were billion-dollar projects located in coastal communities desperate for well-paying jobs that would allow families to buy a home, raise some kids and retire in a safe community. Those paycheques would have come from liquefied natural gas plants.

Government Orders

Unfortunately, the Liberals changed the policies, and only one is progressing. We still do not have it up and operational. If we remember the resource that is in the ground, the natural gas, it is owned by all of us. With what we are doing right now, if we are going to sell an ounce of natural gas outside Canada, it goes to our only customer, the United States of America.

America is our sole customer for natural gas. It takes our gas, transports it in the capacity that we do have in pipelines to the States, and it goes to liquefied natural gas plants, some of which are for the same companies that were proposing those plants in Canada. After the Liberals said no, they went to the States.

We send our gas to the States, and the Americans get the profit from liquefying it and selling it around the world. The profit and the jobs go to the Americans because of Liberal policies. This is the country the Liberals have built. All those jobs and opportunities have been lost to America because of Liberal regulation.

After a decade of crazy Liberal policies that have weakened the country, these crackerjacks are proposing to fast-track a limited number of nation-building projects. It is like *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*.

I hope families are not waiting. If someone is in one of the many families that have their careers tied up in a project that is waiting for approval from the government, this is the Willy Wonka magic golden ticket they are claiming. If they are waiting for that, I hope their project will go ahead. This is the kind of sweepstakes the Liberal government thinks is the best way to build a nation.

We have a country desperate for growth and all the good things that flow from economic activity. The Liberals only want a handful of those opportunities. This is limiting Canada's growth. The Liberals have weakened our country at the worst possible time. The government has had 10 years to improve interprovincial trade, but it has not.

The Liberals have benefited from a divided federation, so no one believes it when the Prime Minister says that the barriers will be coming down by Canada Day. Frustrations with Liberals have never been higher in Saskatchewan, and for good reason. Many families I know work in the uranium sector and do not trust Bill C-5 or what the government is up to.

Nuclear energy and uranium mining has been stalled in our country because of layering of multiple regulations. If we want to build a nation, I have a project for us. It is ready to go. It is the NexGen Rook 1 project. There are 1,300 high-paying jobs in northern Saskatchewan ready to go. It would result in over \$10 billion in government revenue.

This is the project. This is one of thousands of projects across Canada that could actually build a nation. I plead with the Liberals to please put Canada first for a change and get this project done. This is just one of the uranium mining projects that are on the go in Canada and northern Saskatchewan.

● (1310)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): That is a perfect place to pause as we move on to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Sudbury has the floor.

Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was interesting when the member talked about natural resources. Certainly, as the MP for Sudbury, the mining capital of Canada and, I would say, the world as well, I know that mining is very important. Critical minerals are of increasing importance as well.

The government invested \$3.9 billion in the critical minerals strategy, which the member's party voted against. I would be interested to know whether the member understands the need to support that. I will give one example: The United States is dependent on 80% of nickel from Ontario, essentially Sudbury, for its aerospace and defence work, so the importance of investing in our natural resources, and certainly in critical minerals, with \$3.9 billion—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I have to interrupt the member to provide time for a response.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—University has the floor.

Corey Tochor: Mr. Speaker, the member claims \$3.9 billion has been put into this project. How many mines have been built? It is zero. I think back to my province of Saskatchewan. BHP has the largest mine that is getting built right now. The only reason that mine is going forward is that it was grandfathered in under old regulations, not under Bill C-69.

This is a failure of the Liberals. They spent billions of dollars on a critical minerals strategy, and potash is one of those minerals, but there are no other mines being proposed and/or being built right now because of the over-regulations that you guys have burdened our industry with.

I would not be proud about your mining history.

● (1315)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions go through the Chair.

For questions and comments, the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue has the floor.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, something unusual happened, namely that closure was adopted, and the official opposition agreed to have the entire House subjected to closure.

I would like my colleague to comment on the consequences of his vote this morning and the precedent it sets, especially when we are talking about a bill that will give sweeping powers to the Prime Minister's committee, namely the Privy Council, the power to say that just about anything is in the national interest. This will therefore go beyond the jurisdiction of the provinces, indigenous peoples and Parliament.

[English]

Corey Tochor: Mr. Speaker, I share some of my hon. colleague's frustrations. The provinces have been told by Ottawa what to do, what not to do and how to do it, but we have heard from the courts how unconstitutional what the Liberals have done in the last 10 years is—

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member seems to have a point of order.

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, for a while there was no interpretation. I would just like to see if it is working.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will speak in English. Is the interpretation working in French?

[Translation]

It is working now. I will give the floor back to the hon. member for Saskatoon—University.

[English]

Corey Tochor: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether members caught all that, but Ottawa has messed things up in our provinces and has dictated to the provinces in their jurisdictions. The courts have ruled how unconstitutionally Ottawa has been treating our provinces, and that includes Quebec and Saskatchewan. Now with Bill C-5, if someone is a Liberal insider, they are going to be successful in this country. It is the Liberals' track record, for the last 10 years, that if someone was a Liberal insider, they made cake. For everyone else, it is too bad, and that—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): For questions and comments, the hon. member for Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna has the floor.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the previous Liberal member gave a bit of the nickel tour, and I will give the copper tour, or a penny tour.

In my old riding of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, there were two copper pit mines, one just outside Princeton and one outside Logan Lake, and both companies at the time wanted to expand their operations, but they were actually concerned that they would be subject to Bill C-69. It would add a whole lengthy process that, in the day, would not be better than the provincial one and would just cost them, as Bill C-69 measures things that are not contemplated provincially or are calculated in a different sense, making nothing but work and paper for accountants.

Does the member think that the government has really lost an opportunity, instead of going back to the drawing board and redrawing Bill C-69, getting rid of the unconstitutional elements and red tape? Is that not where their focus should be?

Corey Tochor: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is right that Bill C-5 is not a fix; it is how to get Liberal insiders on a select list of projects that will get done. This is ethically challenging, and it opens up a litany of opportunities in which insiders are going to get rich, once again, because of the Liberal government. It will pick winners and losers, versus letting the market decide.

Government Orders

To the example that you raised on Bill C-69 and on ways to save it, we do need regulations and we need protections, but what we do not need is what we currently have, with which nothing is getting done. We are in a crisis in Canada, and the Liberals do not have the answers, because they are the ones who actually messed up this country so badly.

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

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North.

Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me say off the top that I will be splitting my time with a great new member, the hon. member for Terra Nova—The Peninsulas.

Since this is my first time speaking for a substantive length of time since the election, please allow me to thank the hard-working, industrious people of Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North for the honour of being their voice and their servant and for carrying their hopes and dreams to this place. While I have lived and worked in other places in North America in my career, I have always felt and known that the communities of Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North are my true home, and home is where the heart is. It is the honour of my lifetime to serve these great communities. I want to thank my campaign team, including Simon, Mona, Jordan, Wendy, Jim and hundreds of volunteers. Above all, I thank my wife, Tracy, without whose love and support I certainly would not be here today. I will now go to the matter at hand.

Canadians are struggling, not because we lack talent and not because we lack resources, but because we are too often being held back by red tape, gatekeeping and a government that over-promises and under-delivers. Nowhere is that clearer than when it comes to getting big projects built or trying to move goods and services and workers across provincial lines in our own country. These barriers do not cost us only time and money; they also cost us opportunities, investments and jobs.

That is why Bill C-5, an act to enact the free trade and labour mobility in Canada act and the building Canada act, is such a missed opportunity. It claims to deliver free trade and fast-tracked projects, but the reality is it would deliver bureaucratic theatre; it is a showpiece of announcements without the substance to back them up.

Let us start with part 1 of the bill, the free trade and labour mobility in Canada act. The premise is good. Canadians should be able to work and trade freely across the country without unnecessary federal barriers. However, the scope of this section is minuscule. It would affect a tiny subset of goods and services. In fact, during government briefings on the bill, one of the few examples offered was clean energy labels on washing machines, which is certainly underwhelming.

Government Orders

There is no comprehensive list of affected items. There is no plan to deal with the biggest trade barriers, no mechanism to assess progress and no timeline. There is no effort to create a blue seal licensing standard that would allow skilled immigrants and professionals, such as doctors, nurses and engineers, to work in the province next door, despite meeting rigorous national standards. Therefore, this was a missed chance to unlock the talent that is already here in this country.

There is also a missed opportunity to incentivize the provinces to remove their own barriers. The most effective governments are those that find ways to align incentives, not those that just issue guidance and hope for the best. That is why Conservatives have proposed a real solution to offer financial bonuses to provinces for every interprovincial trade barrier they eliminate. It would be a win-win-win. It would boost GDP and increase federal revenues. In fact, economists estimate that removing interprovincial trade barriers could add as much as \$200 billion to Canada's economy; yet, instead of seizing that opportunity, Bill C-5 takes a baby step. It scratches the surface when Canadians are looking for bold, transformative reform.

Part 2 of the bill is the building Canada act. The most revealing part of this section is not what it proposes but what it omits. It is an admission by the government that its own laws are the problem and that Liberal legislation, such as Bill C-69, the shipping ban and the energy cap, are laws that have tied our economies in a knot. The Liberals know it, investors know it and workers know it. The bill is the Liberals' workaround, a way to admit failure without fixing the root of the problem. The bill tries to create selective escape hatches for a few lucky projects, but it would keep all the red tape in place. It is a patchwork solution for a broken process.

There is no clarity on which projects would qualify, no defined criteria for what would constitute the national interest and no certainty for investors or communities. It is just another layer of bureaucracy and a lot of discretion left in the hands of ministers. Even with the promise of a two-year timeline, provincial vetoes would remain, and the sunset clause would limit the use of these powers to just five years. How is anyone supposed to plan long term?

• (1320)

Here is the most frustrating part. The Liberals are essentially picking and choosing which projects get exemptions, without fixing the laws that block everything else. If they can fast-track one project, why not all deserving projects? Why not fix the system for everyone, not just the politically connected few? Canadians do not want political favours. They want fairness, they want clarity, and they want to build. That is why Conservatives support real reform, one-and-done approvals, a national energy corridor and shovel-ready zones with clear timelines and firm standards. We believe all worthy projects should be able to proceed, not just the ones that win favour from this week's minister. We have the people and the expertise in Canada. We have the resources. What we need is a government that believes in Canada's potential again.

Let us talk about the broader context. Canada has posted the worst growth in the G7 over the last decade, yet we have all the national resources in the world. We have everything the world wants. At the same time, we are selling our energy to the United States at a

discount. Our farmers, miners and builders are being boxed in by the federal government. Global demand for energy, food and raw materials is surging. Other countries are stepping up, but Canada is standing still. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce said it well: "internal trade barriers still act like a [self-imposed] 21% tariff." What did we get from this bill? We got a couple of washing machines.

Meanwhile, U.S. tariffs have turned a simmering problem into a full-blown crisis. Canadian workers and exporters are caught in the middle, and the government has no answer. Dan Kelly of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business summed it up when he said the spirit of this bill may be positive, but in practice, it will not move the needle.

We could be leading the world. Again, we have everything the world wants. Eighteen LNG projects, as has been mentioned, sat on Trudeau's desk awaiting approval. Germany, Japan and other countries came looking for our LNG. We could have been helping get the world off coal and replacing European dependence on Russian natural gas, yet the Liberals turned the German chancellor away and said there was no business case. Will this be more of the same?

This is not just about economics; it is about sovereignty, national unity and building a future where Canada leads in so many sectors as we are capable of doing. It is about restoring the Canadian promise to generations that feel abandoned by their government. Conservatives will not stand in the way of the minor progress of this bill, but we will not pretend the bill would deliver what it claims. We will work in committee this week to strengthen it, seek real amendments and keep pushing for solutions that go beyond optics and tackle the root cause of stagnation. Canadians do not want more red tape and more process. They want paycheques, they want purpose, they want projects to get built, and they want to be proud of this country and what it can do, once again.

• (1325)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the legislation we have before us is a reflection of the April 28 decision. It is something Canadians want and expect from not only the government but the opposition. I am very grateful that the Conservative Party today voted in favour of us being able to get this legislation through so we can present it to Canadians before July 1.

Having said that, the Prime Minister and the administration have been very proactive, meeting with premiers of all different political stripes. It sends a powerful message. In fact, we said we would work with a team Canada approach in delivering for Canadians in a major election platform, a platform that was, at least in part, accepted by the Conservative Party.

I wonder if my colleague could provide his thoughts on the team Canada approach that has been led by the Prime Minister of Canada.

Dan Muys: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, Canada has everything the world wants. I cited 18 LNG projects that languished on the desk of the former prime minister. We have the ability to unleash great potential, and this bill does not go far enough. The new old government, or the old new government, has had 10 years to address that, and what we get is a very tiny, baby-step piece of legislation just before the summer recess to create the illusion that something is being done. Conservatives support some progress, but my goodness, we have everything the world wants, we should be booming in this country, and we need to unleash that potential.

• (1330)

[Translation]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I see that my Conservative colleagues are not very satisfied with Bill C-5. It is an understatement to say that we are not either, because we are more than dissatisfied. We are deeply concerned about what is in this bill.

Given that the Conservatives themselves are dissatisfied, why are they in favour of fast-tracking a bill that will make major changes to the way projects are approved?

More importantly, will we have the time to do things properly, since closure will not allow us to carry out a serious study?

[English]

Dan Muys: Mr. Speaker, my Bloc colleague sits with me on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. We will be studying the bill this week around the clock, clause by clause, and I am sure we will have many points of agreement and discussion around that, to make some improvements to what we view as a bill that does move the needle just slightly, as referred to in the comments from the business leaders, but certainly not enough.

There is so much more potential that needs to be unleashed in Canada, and this bill is just going to take that tiny baby step toward it. We certainly support that little bit of progress, but we want to see a whole lot more, and I do look forward to working with the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, who sits on the transport committee with me, for his speech today. The government likes to talk about one national economy, yet we see in the second half of Bill C-5, and the Prime Minister has said publicly, that provincial premiers are going to have a veto. That means 13 different economies by its very nature.

Government Orders

Could the member expound upon whether he finds there is a contradiction here in what the government says and what it legislates?

Dan Muys: Mr. Speaker, we certainly see that the movement towards free trade within Canada by Canada Day is, obviously, not going to happen. The bill just moves an inch along, and it is woefully inadequate. As my colleague pointed out, the vetoes that are contained within it are an impediment to that one Canadian economy.

It just harkens back to the original Canada free trade agreement that the old Liberal Party government, apparently now the new government, had under Trudeau. There were hundreds of pages of exceptions. I do not know what is new in this particular piece of legislation.

Jonathan Rowe (Terra Nova—The Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador relies heavily on the tourism industry. In fact, it is one of the biggest employers in rural Newfoundland, since the collapse of the fishery. Even this industry has a massive trade barrier: the Marine Atlantic ferry. This ferry acts as a bottleneck, holding back growth despite demand. Bill C-5 talks about nation-building projects, yet our current infrastructure and transportation system needs immediate attention.

During tourism season, these vessels are fully booked, with no room for tourist vehicles and RVs. Although most hotels, resorts and restaurants have more capacity, tourists are not able to get across the gulf into Newfoundland. Our tourism industry has grown tremendously in the last decade, yet Marine Atlantic services have hardly grown. Hotel rooms and historical tours go unused because there is no ferry space available to bring travellers in.

During this last campaign, when the Liberals knew they were going to lose more seats, like mine, they made a last-minute election promise to reduce the ferry rates. Now, we can all agree that passenger rates should be free, but the Liberals promised to reduce rates before Canada Day. We are only two weeks away, and the prices still have not changed. People are booking ferry rides now for July and August, but what will happen? Will they get reimbursed? People do not know what is going to happen. This uncertainty undermines planning for families and is creating uncertainty in our tourism industry.

If the Liberals want to reduce trade barriers, they need to take a good look at how the island of Newfoundland does trade. Fifty per cent of our province's cargo shipments are through private cargo companies, yet only Marine Atlantic cargo is subsidized. How can private industry compete when shipping costs are so high?

Government Orders

If the government wants to continue its freeze on transport trucks, will this create even more demand on Marine Atlantic services, eliminating even more possible ventures for passenger opportunity and tourism opportunity? Why does the Liberal government not make up its mind and either subsidize all cargo shipping into the province or none of it? Perhaps that would shift the cargo market, resulting in fewer transport trucks on our ferries, allowing for more passengers and more tourists to boost our economy, which would reduce the interprovincial trade barriers on our tourism industry.

Speaking of ferries, I see in the national news that the Province of British Columbia has awarded its ferry construction contracts to Chinese companies, for the ferries to be built in China, a country we are currently having a trade war with. This decision undermines Canada's industrial backbone. The Prime Minister says he is elbows up for Canada, and he brags about allegedly successful meetings with premiers across the country, yet he cannot seem to convince B.C. to build these ferries here in Canada.

Talk without action means loss of jobs for our country, which may soon have a stockpile of unused steel and skyrocketing unemployment. I am curious to know how many other boatbuilding jobs will be going overseas. B.C. alone says it expects to create 18 new ferries in the next 15 years. Where will these boats be built? Will these powerful paycheques retreat overseas?

I understand that the Liberal government has all its consultants as busy as a Bay Street banker rewriting the rules of capitalism before breakfast, but perhaps the Transport Canada minister and her team could investigate this fiasco to determine what needs to be done for these boats to be built here in Canada. In my district alone, there are two shipyards and two fabrication sites sitting idle. Perhaps the Liberal government could work with private industry to make real investment here in Atlantic Canada to conduct minor upgrades to build these ferries, future ferries and other Canadian ships. These idle sites represent a ready-for-business infrastructure and workforce.

Being an island and a landmass in the most eastern part of the country holds other connection difficulties as well. Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the largest providers of hydroelectricity in the country, with potential to have massive expansion, yet we struggle to get our power to market. Will the government use Bill C-5 to remove the interprovincial trade barriers on our green energy by ensuring that its proposed energy corridor would be connected to our province? That way, we could sell our electricity at fair market value without the extortion of other provinces. Removing these barriers would both boost our Newfoundland economy and meet national energy needs.

Considering the government just hired Hydro-Québec's Michael Sabia, I and every other Newfoundlander and Labradorian have major doubts that this energy corridor would allow our Labrador electricity to market without other provinces taking the icing off the top.

• (1335)

We want someone from the government on that side of the House to take a stand and assure us that this energy corridor will remove all provincial barriers and gatekeepers, so Newfoundland and

Labrador can get our energy to market without having to give away our lunch money. We want a commitment to clarity, timelines and fair play conditions so that all provincial governments and private energy investors can prepare for this enormous opportunity.

Let us get down to the core of Bill C-5. The biggest component of the bill would allow the Liberal government to select a few projects it deems as nation-building projects. What is interesting about this is that even the Liberals now understand that their anti-building laws, anti-mining laws and anti-energy laws are too much for private industry to navigate on their own. They created so much red tape that they now need this new bill to roll out the red carpet for their VIP-selected projects.

Perhaps my colleagues will be filled with the highest level of integrity and would never plan to violate any ethical policies or choose companies that would benefit them, but I can assure the members, absolute power corrupts absolutely. By giving themselves the power to make or break any project in Canada with a slight stroke of a pen, it is only a matter of time before we see more shameful stories such as GC Strategies, which was given nearly 100 million taxpayer dollars in contracts to do nothing, or the green slush fund, where over six years Sustainable Development Technology Canada approved approximately 900 million taxpayer dollars in funding that was inappropriately directed to projects that violated guidelines, often given to companies that Liberal MPs or their friends owned. We must learn from the past. Those warnings cannot be ignored.

Furthermore, if the Liberals realize that a handful of supposed nation-building projects would help our economy, why can they not understand that hundreds of these projects across our nation would put this country back on track, where it needs to be, and take care of our seniors, pave our roads and fix our health care? We would not even need Bill C-5 if the government were to repeal Bill C-69, which blocks pipelines projects through this country, and Bill C-48, which cripples our offshore industry. We would not need Bill C-5 if the Liberals had never implemented the production and emission caps that are choking our economy or if we had never had the last Liberal decade because we would have had one of the strongest economies in the world. We have everything in this country to succeed, except for good leadership.

I grew up in a Canada where an average kid from Clarendville could have endless possibilities. He could run for student council and one day be the MP, or he could start pumping gas and dream of one day owning that gas station and be an oil tycoon, just like "Old Man" Irving. Bill C-5 would kill this dream and many more just like it.

Bill C-5 tells young Canadians that, if they want to build something, they have to be pals with the people at the top. It is a perfect fantasy for Canadian oligarchs. That is not the Canadian dream. It is a nightmare of privilege. It replaces merit with connection, potential with politics and small-town hope with big-city gatekeeping. We need a Canada where every company and every person has equal opportunity, and we need a smaller government to make way for bigger citizens.

• (1340)

Pauline Rochefort (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a new member of the House, and I was very impressed this morning with the vote and the support in the House for our bill. To me, it speaks about action. Action is so important, and I think, certainly, that is what Canadians are looking for.

I was impressed with my colleague's comments. I have been following as well, at a distance, the matter of tolls on ferries, and I appreciate his frustration. I understand that some of the reasons behind the difficulty in resolving some of these matters is due to the fact that there are many ferry companies that are involved and there are some complexities involved.

I was wondering if my colleague could comment on how he might play a role more locally, in his riding, in resolving this matter.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Speaker, we have one transport company from mainland Canada to Newfoundland and Labrador for passengers. It is Marine Atlantic. We do have cargo ships and other companies as well, but we have one for passengers and tourists. That is the one I am speaking of today. There are a lot of things we can do locally, but Marine Atlantic is a national, Crown corporation, and it starts right here in the House.

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech.

For several weeks now, we have heard the Conservatives criticize the Liberals on ArriveCAN and GC Strategies and question their ethics. This legislation will really give the Liberals superpowers, allowing them to shield their developer friends from the law. Proposed section 21 will allow them to exempt developers from ethics laws, the Canada Labour Code, and so on.

I wonder why, in this context, the Conservatives supported the closure motion that will allow the Liberals to pass this bill without any serious consideration and without members being able to improve it.

[English]

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Speaker, desperate times call for desperate measures. Conservatives knocked on the doors of Canadians, and we understand, with the cost of living, they are really worried if they are going to make the next rent.

We understand that some projects in this country are better than no projects. We have stated over and over that these are baby steps in the right direction, but we need to repeal Bill C-69 and Bill C-48

to unleash Canada's potential, so we can improve this country and give the citizens at home a better quality of life.

• (1345)

Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Terra Nova—The Peninsulas gave an inspiring speech.

The member mentioned the importance of ferries. His riding and mine are at opposite ends of the country, but they have this in common: We are coastal provinces, where ferries for passengers and traffic are very important. However, in British Columbia, we are not even building our own ferries. I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of one strong Canadian economy to be able to at least build our own ships.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree with my colleague.

We are in a crisis right now. We are in a tariff war with multiple countries across the world. However, we may have a stockpile of unused steel, and this would be a great opportunity to put our workforce to work, whether they were to be built in B.C., Newfoundland or anywhere in Canada. It is a great opportunity, but it does not seem like the government is interested in seizing that opportunity to create work here at home.

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I congratulate the member on his election.

I wonder if the member has heard from the Nunatsiavut Government in his province and whether it has shared its concerns with Bill C-5 and how the bill would infringe on its rights.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Speaker, I have not heard directly on Bill C-5, but throughout the campaign, when I talked to aboriginal people in our province, everyone had the same concern. They want to be consulted before things go through. They do not want the federal government to have a veto card to push anything through.

Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford.

I just want to give my thanks to my neighbours in Beaches—East York. Trust is everything in our democracy. It means a lot to be given their trust, and I am going to work hard to earn it.

Against the economic threat posed by President Trump, Canadian politicians have rightly renewed calls to build up our country. I am one of them. It is a nation-building moment. A strong and resilient domestic economy is a priority. Of course, it should be. To that end, we should remove unreasonable barriers to economic growth. If a rule does not contribute to the public interest, or if its negative cost is disproportionate to any positive contribution, we should do away with it, but that does not mean we should pursue economic growth no matter the cost.

Government Orders

Depending on the project, there may be competing public interest considerations, including biodiversity and habitat protection, indigenous rights, climate change, long-term cost-effectiveness, democratic participation and more. However, under the guise of responding to the threat posed by Trump, we are sacrificing other important values. We are not thinking about unintended consequences, and we are actively undermining our parliamentary democracy. Consider the case of two bills, Doug Ford's Bill 5 and the federal government's Bill C-5.

Ontario's Bill 5 became law last week. It not only gutted habitat protection, just to start, but also enacted the Special Economic Zones Act to give the government, unnecessarily and disproportionately, unchecked power. Effectively, the government can now designate special economic zones and then exempt or alter any provincial or municipal law that would apply to a company or project within those zones. Ecojustice rightly called it a threat to democracy. Worse, the Ford government shut down democratic debate, curtailed committee scrutiny, and jammed the bill through the legislature. Now, that may be par for the course for Doug Ford. That is fair.

However, Ecojustice has also called the federal government's bill, Bill C-5, a threat to democracy, and no Liberal government should welcome that accusation. Worse, with Bill C-5, in a Bill 5 déjà vu, the federal government is proposing to shut down democratic debate, curtail committee scrutiny and jam the bill through the legislature. It would all actually make Harper blush. Liberals would rightly scream if a federal Conservative government attempted the same.

While they share similar goals, and yes, they suffer some similar defects, the federal Bill C-5 is not exactly the same as Ford's. Part 1 of our legislation, the free trade and labour mobility act, usefully aims to harmonize federal and provincial rules where reasonably possible. The idea is simple, to avoid duplicative regulation of goods, services and labour where federal and provincial rules are comparable. Yes, of course, the devil is in the details of assessing what comparable means, but it is a welcome move.

The problems with Bill C-5 lie in part 2, the building Canada act. Its purpose is clear, to get national interest projects built more quickly. This is so far, so good. The proposed law would streamline authorizations at the same time that it emphasizes the importance of climate action and indigenous rights. This is a huge and positive distinction from Ford's Bill 5. At no point does Ford's bill even mention climate change or the need to consult with affected indigenous rights holders. However, despite its promise, the proposed building Canada act has two major faults. First, it would give the government unfettered discretion in designating national interest projects, and second, similar to Ford's Bill 5, it would give the government unchecked power to exclude or alter any law that would otherwise apply to such a project.

The Minister of Natural Resources set the stage for Bill C-5 in a May 23 speech calling for a renewed spirit of building by reframing the national conversation. There has been no more asking about why we should build. The real question is, how do we get it done? In my view, it would be wise of the government to take its own advice when it comes to Bill C-5. Rather than defending the "why", or the idea of the bill, we should refocus our attention on the

"how", or how we pass it. In other words, we should improve the bill and respect democratic participation as we do so.

First, we should welcome greater parliamentary and civil society scrutiny. The government's proposed guillotine motion seeks to limit parliamentary debate at every stage of the bill. More concerning, it will jam all expert and public testimony, and all committee scrutiny, into less than two days. What is this for? Members can consider that Parliament is not currently scheduled to sit between June 20 and September 15. We are rushing legislation through Parliament under the auspices of an urgent threat, but we are not willing to put Parliament to work for what, an additional week, to get things right?

The debate on amendments does not need to be rushed. We could easily extend committee hearings by an additional week, provide resources for the committee to sit every day and engage in a more thoughtful process to hear from experts, improve the bill and pass it through the House by Canada Day.

● (1350)

Beyond improving the process, we should also fix the substance of Bill C-5.

First, clause 5 currently would give the government unfettered discretion to designate national interest projects. There is a list of specified factors at subclause 5(6) that the government may consider, including the interests of indigenous people, as well as clean growth and meeting Canada's subjects with respect to climate change. That is all good. However, with the bill as currently drafted, the government would not need to consider any or all of these factors. We can and should change that. We could either mandate that the government consider these public interest factors, or we could require that national interest projects not be inconsistent with them. Simply, Parliament should be more prescriptive than including factors as mere examples.

Second, clause 22 would empower the government to exclude the operation of any law from a project it has deemed to be in the national interest. Combined with the unfettered power to designate such projects, it would effectively do away with Parliament. There is an easy fix: Remove this unnecessary and disproportionate power from the law. The government can always amend regulations as it sees fit, but it should return to this place, the House of Commons, if a law duly passed by this place is to be excluded or altered in any given situation. If there is a rationale for excluding the operation of a particular law, of course we can move quickly as needed.

There are no doubt other possibilities to improve the law. It may well make more sense to limit the unique process to the next three years instead of the next five. We could require that ministerial advice with respect to conditional authorizations be made public. Expert testimony would likely offer other good ideas if we care to listen.

For my part, I will support Bill C-5 here at second reading to send it to committee, because it is time to build, and good projects should be built more quickly. I will vote against the government motion that would hinder the work of the parliamentary committee tasked with public hearings and improving the legislation. I will vote for the bill at further stages only if it is amended substantively.

We do not make laws in this place for one government or for one prime minister; the laws we pass are binding on all future governments of all political stripes. Even a time-limited law like the one that is before us would establish a precedent. If passed as it is, Bill C-5 would be a dangerous precedent that would enable Conservatives to gut environmental protections when they are in power next. President Trump is a threat to our economy; of that, there is no doubt. My constituents overwhelmingly voted for a government and leader ready to act, to respond to Trump forcefully and to build up our country thoughtfully, but not at the expense of our democracy, environmental protections and indigenous rights.

• (1355)

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my first question to the hon. member is whether I can post his speech on my Facebook page. I would appreciate that.

In all seriousness, the bill lacks a lot of things and is susceptible to many things, that is, court challenges as a result of the lack of indigenous consultation within the bill, and other parts as well. I wonder whether the hon. member can speak to the risks as they relate potential court challenges related to the bill.

Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, of course, the member can post anything I say to his Facebook page. His constituents, I think, would welcome most things I say at least.

The second thing is that we should not take the duty to consult lightly. Of course, legislation cannot oust the duty to consult. That is a constitutional obligation, and the courts have well defined it. There are some good things in the bill, and I support its object, of course. However, on that particular question, the bill would require consultation with affected indigenous rights holders, not only in designating a project but also its implementation.

[Translation]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I just realized the scope of the message.

Members might have noticed that my colleague used the words of my predecessor last Friday. The only thing, if I understand correctly, is that he voted for it.

What about the next steps? What does my colleague intend to do so that democracy can do its job and that this bill is not pushed through with closure?

Government Orders

[English]

Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, I thought I was clear on this; I apologize if I was not. The vote we just had was to shorten the debate on the government motion; it was not a vote on the motion itself.

I said I would support the bill at second reading. Of course, I agree with the object of building this country up. Everyone should agree with the object of the bill. I will support getting it to committee. I will support it only if there are substantive amendments at committee, and I am not going to support hindering the work of the committee.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the legislation contains principles that, I ultimately believe, were given to every member of Parliament coming out of the election, a mandate to take down barriers and build a stronger, healthier one economy. A good example of that is interprovincial trade, and I am wondering whether the member could provide his thoughts on the importance of interprovincial trade and taking down those barriers.

Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, it is in all of our interests to remove barriers to interprovincial trade. The challenge, obviously, is that it would come at a particular cost to one province in one case and a different province in another case. The federal government has to show leadership, and through the bill, in part 1 in particular, we are showing that leadership, and that leadership should be welcome.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, words cannot express my deep respect for the hon. member for Beaches—East York for his courage. I would like to point out to him that the Canadian Cancer Society believes that part 1 also needs to be amended and that it could lead to a race to the bottom without exemptions for health and environmental standards as interprovincial barriers are brought down. Again, Greens favour bringing down interprovincial barriers and building a one Canada economy, but not with a bulldozer pushing it through Parliament.

Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, the devil is in the details of what “comparable” means. I agree that we do not want a race to the bottom, but we definitely want a removal of interprovincial trade barriers that are unreasonable and that hinder our economy.

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member and I worked together on the former ethics committee. Would he agree that a closure motion is more of an autocratic type action, or is it democratic? I would like to clarify with the Liberal government whether it is autocratic in nature, or democratic, with this action?

In my home community, the Tignish Fisheries Cooperative is marking a 100-year anniversary. Keep in mind that this incredibly successful venture began during a time of wooden boats, sails and oars. Today, it is electronics, fibreglass boats, efficient engines and the best seafood products in the world. The threads that bind these two realities together are the hard work and determination of a community filled with talented and dedicated people.

Now, the Tignish Fisheries Cooperative employs 380 people, and it works wonderfully because thousands of individuals over the years believed in something greater than themselves. They had faith in their home. From its early days as a fisherman's union to the best seafood processing in the world, this operation has been an incredible success, and I want to congratulate all those there now, and thank those who came before—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Perth—Wellington has the floor.

* * *

JOHN HOLTBY

John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for half a century, John Holtby lived and breathed parliamentary democracy. He began as first clerk assistant at Queen's Park and served at the table in the B.C. Legislature. Here on Parliament Hill, he was chief of staff to the McGrath committee and served as an adviser to prime ministers, House leaders, senators and whips. To new MPs, he was always there with a kind word of advice, a mischievous idea and, when needed, a gentle word of caution. In the House, he is recognized as an authority, as the editor of Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, sixth edition.

John was fond of the classic words of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. If I could be so bold as to turn around those words, I will say, "So he passed over, and all the division bells rang to greet him on the other side."

May my dear friend rest well.

* * *

● (1405)

[Translation]

G3E

Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoulu, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I took part in last Saturday's launch of G3E's summer season with a fishing for all event on the Beauport River.

For over 30 years, the water education and eco-monitoring group G3E has exemplified civic engagement in protecting Quebec's aquatic environments. This innovative organization has developed an extensive network and impactful programs. G3E uses science and passion to provide water education and monitoring tools, supported by over 269 adopted rivers to date. These initiatives reach nearly 39,000 students and 35 community groups, and they have restored more than 409 kilometres of riverbanks and collected 270 tonnes of waste.

G3E's approach is rooted in openness, integrity, innovation and excellence, while fostering dialogue, respecting knowledge and upholding scientific rigour and transparency in everything that it does.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Dalwinder Gill (Calgary McKnight, CPC): Mr. Speaker, crime and drug use are getting worse in Canada. Law enforcement agencies in Ontario recently seized 1,000 pounds of cocaine and nearly

Statements by Members

half a million lethal doses of fentanyl. In my riding of Calgary McKnight, families cannot sleep at night because they worry about their homes being invaded and their cars being stolen.

Meanwhile, the Liberal public safety minister does not even know his own government policies on firearms or drugs, and he is fine with releasing repeat violent criminals out into our streets. Canadians need real solutions to crime, to addiction and to the broken Liberal bail system.

Our Conservative plan would ensure that repeat violent offenders are kept behind bars and that those battling addiction are given the proper care they need.

* * *

SOUTHERN ONTARIO CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a local organization making a powerful impact through sport, the Southern Ontario Cricket Association, SOCA. Founded by Parveen Sharma and now led by Giridhar Bannaravuri, SOCA began in 2019 with just 12 teams. Today, it is Canada's second-largest cricket league, expanding to 78 teams.

SOCA's heart lies in youth development, Their Little Champs junior club empowers children with skills, confidence and values of teamwork and leadership. Their rapid growth in women's cricket and plans for a winter indoor camp show commitment to equity and opportunity in sport. By introducing an over-40 men's league, SOCA is ensuring that cricket remains a game for all generations.

Through cricket, SOCA is building more than athletes. It is building stronger, more inclusive communities. Please join me in celebrating the Southern Ontario Cricket Association for its dedication and impact through sport.

* * *

HON. CHARLES JAMES MAYER

Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Charles James Mayer passed away on April 24 in Winnipeg. First elected to the House of Commons in 1979, he served as minister of state for grains and oilseeds, minister of western economic diversification and minister of agriculture. He was inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2005.

Statements by Members

Charlie was also a member of my husband's family. When I first met him in 2017, I was preparing to moderate the Conservative leadership debate. When I asked for his advice, he said that I could use his cattle prod if I needed to, that it would keep them in line.

Charlie was kind, thoughtful and humble to a fault. He was respected for his fierce intelligence, his humanity, compassion and decency. He was a great Canadian but remained until the end, like myself, a proud westerner.

He will be missed by his wife, Anita, his children, Holly, Cheryl and Judy, and their families.

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[Translation]

MICHELIN-STARRED RESTAURANTS

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, they are joining the ranks of culinary greats such as Paul Bocuse, Anne-Sophie Pic and Alain Ducasse.

I am talking about our Quebec chefs who were recently honoured by the prestigious *Michelin Guide*. On May 15, nine restaurants in Quebec were awarded stars. Tanière³, a true Quebec City institution, made a big splash by getting two stars on its first try, while ARVI, Kebec Club Privé, Laurie Raphaël, Légende, Jérôme Ferrer—Europea, Mastard, Sabayon and Narval were each awarded one star.

These coveted red plaques are more than just a decoration; they are proof of our culinary talent. Our culinary creativity and identity are on par with that of Paris, Tokyo and New York. Quebec's restaurant industry is an economic gem, a driver of tourism and an ambassador for our culture.

I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of these restaurants.

* * *

• (1410)

[English]

SMALL BUSINESSES

Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all of us in this House are here to support our constituents. Over the past 10 years, I have witnessed partisanship to the detriment of Canadians. This summer, I challenge all members in this House, regardless of political affiliation, to stand up for Canadians by supporting small business.

Small businesses across Canada continue to work hard and create jobs. Whether it is by travelling within Canada, shopping locally or choosing made-in-Canada products, we have the power to invest in our economy and strengthen our economy. As Canadians, we have all felt the impact of U.S. tariffs. It is now more important than ever to choose Canadian whenever possible. I will be doing just that as I head back to my riding this summer, and I encourage everyone to do so.

Together, we can ensure that Canadian businesses thrive, communities grow stronger and our economy remains as resilient as ever.

THE ECONOMY

Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after the last lost Liberal anti-development decade, Canadians pay the price.

Today the G7 starts. Canada used to be powerful, but the Liberals are lucky we still have a seat at the table. Canada's economic growth is now last in the G7. Allies like Germany and Japan begged for Canadian energy, but the Liberals rejected them, and \$670 billion in natural resource projects died by delay and Liberal attacks.

This PM claims “elbows up”, but they have been “elbows down”.

Canada has the world's highest per capita resource wealth, but the Liberals made Canada more reliant on the U.S.

Canada's standard of living falls behind, with an income gap of over \$30,000 per person versus the U.S.

The U.S. will still take up to 90% of Canada's energy at big discounts if the Liberals keep their job-killing Canadian oil and gas cap; the anti-development bill, Bill C-69; the shipping ban bill, Bill C-48; and the federal industrial carbon tax on Canadian businesses.

In Canada, anyone from anywhere should be able to work for a powerful paycheck. Conservatives will—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Brome—Missisquoi has the floor.

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[Translation]

TRANS CANADA TRAIL

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the first time in the House. First of all, I would like to thank the people of Brome—Missisquoi for placing their trust in me. I will be a hands-on MP, and I will listen to what they have to say. This victory would not have been possible without the unwavering support of my campaign team, the volunteers, and my wife, Sylvie, who has been a source of invaluable support.

Today, I would like to recognize that we celebrated International Trails Day in Eastman by honouring the Trans Canada Trail, a true national treasure that connects Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Since 2019, tens of thousands of dollars have been invested in our trails in Brome—Missisquoi. The plan is to invest \$154,000 by 2026 to improve access and enhance the experience.

Statements by Members

I congratulate the local stakeholders who are working to preserve and improve this vital network. I reiterate my support for this initiative, both here and across the country.

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[English]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week the Auditor General confirmed that without proper oversight, due process or consideration, the government flagrantly ignored public procurement procedures and gave \$64 million in taxpayer dollars to unqualified insider consultants. In the Auditor General's own words, the government frequently failed to show "which contracted resources performed the work, what work was completed, and whether the people doing the work had the required experience and qualifications."

The Liberal governments of yesteryear at the very least put up a facade of public utility when giving lucrative government contracts to insiders. With GC Strategies, that veil came off completely. Unlike this government, the opposition respects the public purse and has a motion ready to go and get that money back. The only question is whether this Liberal government's hubris allows it to admit its mistake, take responsibility and give the money back.

* * *

● (1415)

WILDFIRE IN SQUAMISH

Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize all those who put themselves in harm's way to fight the Dryden Creek wildfire in Squamish and keep the community safe.

Despite dangerous conditions, thanks to the skill and determination of Fire Chief Aaron Foote, Squamish Fire Rescue, Whistler Fire Rescue, BC wildfire crews, Mayor Armand Hurford, the district of Squamish Emergency Operations Centre and the Squamish Nation, the fire is now being held, and the evacuation alert has been lifted.

Beyond the fire lines, the community came together. Businesses offered help, students delivered meals and neighbours supported one another, so much so that officials paused donations due to overwhelming generosity.

This wildfire, the third in Squamish this year, reminds us of the growing risks of climate change and the need to be prepared. We must all follow FireSmart guidelines and sign up for local emergency alerts. Everyone who fought the fire, supported neighbours and stood together showed us what Squamish is truly made of.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to those who know what is at stake with the nuclear Iran and to the Iranian people, they should remember who they are; not the hunted, the lion; not the silenced, but the rising sun. The time has come, fierce in spirit and brilliant in purpose, to reclaim their homeland and fulfill

the ancient promise of Cyrus and the legacy of civilization over barbarism.

Let this be the hour when the prison doors close, tyranny falls and freedom takes root: a free Iran, a proud nation restored and, with it, the hope for a more peaceful region led by its most resilient people. Do not let Canada's moral equivocation and a foreign minister speaking out of both sides of her mouth embolden the regime, a regime that has crushed dissent and policewomen's bodies, arrested without cause, executed at scale, erased gay rights and terrorized the world for more than 40 years.

The biggest state sponsor of terror killed 55 Canadians and 30 permanent residents. It has a former Liberal justice minister under 24-hour protection and intimidates our own people. The next time the foreign minister speaks, I hope she remembers that.

* * *

BOB WOOD

Pauline Rochefort (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning a 26th annual memorial service was held to recognize the parliamentarians we have lost over the past year. Included was Bob Wood, who represented the riding of Nipissing as a member of the Liberal Party for nearly 16 years, up until 2004. He passed away in North Bay a few months ago at the age of 85, and Anthony Rota succeeded him in the riding, now known as Nipissing—Timiskaming.

Bob served as parliamentary secretary to the minister of veteran affairs, with North Bay being a major Canadian Forces base with a strong NORAD presence. Bob was beloved by the citizens of the riding, and I doubt there are many MPs in this room who can boast of having topped every poll in three successive campaigns. While exuberant in his political and social presence, Bob Wood's legacy of kindness was private and personal as he offered that kindness when no one was looking.

The people of Nipissing—Timiskaming, his colleagues in Parliament and the citizens of Canada extend their deepest thanks to Bob and their sympathy to his family. May Bob rest in peace.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***NATURAL RESOURCES**

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is at the G7 today surrounded by allies in the largest oil-producing province in the federation, but thanks to the Liberal government, the oil and gas products they are demanding are still in the ground instead of powering our economy and Canadian paycheques. We have laws blocking extraction, a cap that halts production, a shipping ban that stops it from leaving and an industrial carbon tax that makes it all more expensive to build.

Will the Liberals repeal our anti-energy laws and approve projects so that we can get jobs for our people and get our resources to market?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what this government will do is pass the one Canadian economy act to get the economy going again.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is the problem. As the G7 begins, the world may find out what Canadians have known for years: The Liberal laws still in place make it nearly impossible to get anything built. The Prime Minister's solution is not to fix the problem. Instead, he wants to give hall passes to the very few favoured VIPs to skip the line while everyone else waits.

Bill C-69, the emissions cap, the shipping ban and the industrial carbon tax are all still on the books. Everyone knows the laws are broken and we need to exempt projects for them, so why not just repeal the laws, period?

• (1420)

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what my hon. colleague should know is that the CEOs of the energy companies, the union workers and the rig workers are all supporting the one Canadian economy act, so it would be really great if the Conservatives got on board as well.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these "leave it in the ground" Liberals keep blocking resource projects, giving more dollars to dictators. Radical Liberal policies are costing Canadian jobs and keeping our clean, responsible Canadian resources out of the hands of our allies.

With the G7 now under way, will the Prime Minister put aside his radical climate agenda to make sure that Canadian resources get into the hands of our allies?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear and I will repeat it once again. We are going to keep working to make sure Canada is an energy superpower. To do that, we need to be low-risk, low-cost and low-carbon. We are going to keep making sure that we build a strong Canadian economy. I hope the Conservatives will help support us.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada cannot become energy independent until bad Liberal policies are repealed. The Prime Minister even admits that his own policies are not letting anything get built in this country. He even wants to give

premiers a veto over pipelines, ensuring that Americans get Canadian product at a fire-sale price.

With the world gathering in Alberta today, will the Prime Minister repeal his anti-energy laws so our allies can get more Canadian product, yes or no?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is clear. If Canada wants to be an energy superpower, we need to do it in a smart way, and that is to make sure it is low-risk, low-cost and low-carbon. The Conservatives were unable to build anything because they did not do environmental assessments and they did not consult with indigenous peoples. We are not going to follow the way they did things, because that did not get things done. We are going to get things done right.

[Translation]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as our country hosts the G7 nations, it is sad to see that Canada has the worst record in the G7 when it comes to developing natural resources. There is a reason for that.

It is because this Liberal government has had anti-energy and anti-natural resource policies for the past 10 years. These include the disastrous Bill C-69, which still gives the federal government veto power over hydroelectric projects. Quebec would never have been able to develop Manic-5, Romaine or James Bay.

When will the government repeal Bill C-69?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague that we just finished an election campaign.

On page one of our election platform, it says that we are going to pass a one Canadian economy bill, which will make it easier to get major projects built. This is a fact. Unions, the business community, the Premier of Quebec and all the premiers of Canada support it.

Let us move forward with Bill C-5. Let us get the Canadian economy rolling.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister and all the Liberals members have a very short memory.

Over the past 10 years, they passed at least four anti-energy and anti-natural resource bills. We are not just talking about Bill C-69. We need to scrap Bill C-48, the marine shipping ban, the oil and gas production cap and the industrial carbon tax. The world needs Canada now more than ever.

When will the government repeal these laws?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every responsible government must respect the environment, indigenous rights and processes.

However, we know that we must now implement major projects, both in Quebec and in all the Canadian provinces and territories. We will do so with respect, but also with greater efficiency. We will put our workers to work. We will attract investments and stimulate our economy before Canada Day.

* * *

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister thinks that he is Pierre Poilievre.

He wants to impose closure on Bill C-5 so that he can make all the decisions about energy projects. He wants to be able to unilaterally decide, by executive order, which projects will go ahead in the national interest, and he wants to be able to unilaterally define what the national interest is based on his personal opinion. He wants to impose pipelines on Quebec, and he wants to do it without any debate or studies. Never in his wildest dreams did Pierre Poilievre consider doing such a thing. Will the Prime Minister stop imitating him and withdraw his closure motion?

• (1425)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not just a dream. One Canadian economy will become reality.

Not only do we expect the Bloc to support us, but we have the business community behind us. We have the unions. We have the provinces. We have Quebec. This is a golden opportunity for the Bloc Québécois to build a strong Canada, a united Canada, an ambitious Canada, a prosperous Canada. We on this side of the House will always fight for a strong Canada.

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Conservatives want to pass a Liberal bill under a gag order and Danielle Smith supports the federal Liberals in Ottawa, it is clear that the oil companies are the ones who are really behind Bill C-5.

Quebeckers did not vote Liberal to have Conservative policies that benefit oil companies and Danielle Smith imposed on them under a gag order. If Quebeckers had wanted Pierre Poilievre, they would have voted for him. Do the Liberals realize that they are betraying Quebeckers?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after losing stakeholders from civil society, unions and the business community, the Bloc Québécois is resorting to hyperbole.

What we are doing, however, is bringing together unions, the business community, the Government of Quebec and even provincial and territorial governments. We are going to implement green projects, renewable projects and other projects that will get Canadians working and get the Canadian economy moving, all before Canada Day.

Oral Questions

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-5 has given rise to a Conservative-Liberal coalition working for the oil companies.

After years of saying that the Liberals are the devil incarnate, the Conservatives are now eating out of their hands. They are willing to pass Liberal bills. They are even prepared to adopt Liberal gag orders. They are prepared to do anything as long as it is in the interest of the oil companies, but not in the interest of Quebeckers. Quebec did not vote for this. Why did the Liberals lie to Quebeckers during the election and not tell them that they were going to govern with the Conservatives?

The Speaker: Order. Can the hon. member withdraw the word he used that is not to be used in the House so that we can move on to his main idea?

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals told the opposite of the truth.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the more they talk, the more obvious it is that the Bloc members did not read the first page of our election platform.

We literally spent the entire 35 days of the election campaign talking about getting the Canadian economy rolling, building one Canadian economy in order to help advance major projects, Quebec, green energy, the entire country and our workers. The Bloc Québécois is wrong: Quebeckers did vote for that.

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[English]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the recent Auditor General's report revealed that GC Strategies, a Liberal insider company, was paid a whopping 64.5 million tax dollars by the Liberal government to do literally nothing. Think about how Canadians struggling to make ends meet feel about having to pay massive taxes just to enrich Liberal insiders. It is like reverse Robin Hood.

Will the Liberals support our motion to get Canadians' money back from these scammers or will they keep robbing Canadians to pay their friends?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be absolutely clear: We will never tolerate any misbehaviour or misconduct from our suppliers or their subcontractors. We have taken legal action against GC Strategies. We have referred cases to the RCMP because we will always defend the integrity of our procurement system.

Oral Questions

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only are the Liberals tolerating this behaviour; they are promoting the people who oversaw it. In the normal world, somebody who would have overseen \$65 million going to scammers would have been fired. Instead, these ministers have been promoted. Today, we found out these ministers want to give even more money to consultants to manage web pages.

Why is it that with the Liberals, incompetent politicians get promoted while Canadian taxpayers get stuck with the bill?

• (1430)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned time and time again last week, we will always defend the integrity of our procurement system, and we will always hold bad actors to account, which is why, for the company the member mentioned, we revoked its security clearance and terminated all contracts more than a year ago.

We have put in place the office of supplier integrity, which has barred GC Strategies from contracting with the government for seven years. We have taken legal action against the company. We have referred cases to the RCMP. We will always hold suppliers and their subcontractors responsible for misconduct.

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General confirmed that GC Strategies, a two-person company, got \$64 million from the Liberals, often without competitive bidding. In nearly half the contracts, there is no proof of any work even being done. In 82% of cases, departments did not check if taxpayers were overpaying, and in 50% of contracts, security clearances were not properly enforced, including by departments like Global Affairs and National Defence. It was a total collapse of basic oversight, but taxpayers are still forced to pay while Liberal insiders get rich.

Will every member of the House vote to get Canadians their money back?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will never tolerate misconduct from our suppliers or their subcontractors. We have taken legal action against GC Strategies. We have referred cases to the RCMP, because we will never tolerate misconduct from our suppliers.

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is right; GC Strategies is under RCMP investigation. The Auditor General exposed millions paid without proof of work, without oversight and without security rules being followed. The ministers responsible did not get fired; they got promoted, rewarded by the Prime Minister. Only with the Liberals do they fail upwards, collect promotions for incompetence and leave the taxpayer on the hook. It is the same scandals, same ministers.

Why is Liberal corruption always rewarded while Canadians get the bill?

[Translation]

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question. As I said several times in

the House last week, we will never tolerate misconduct from suppliers.

That is why we are taking legal action against GC Strategies. We have referred cases to the RCMP. We have implemented recommendations from previous reports from the Auditor General. We will always defend the integrity of Canada's procurement system.

[English]

Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, through questioning Liberal ministers last week, we know they had no clue why \$64 million was paid to GC Strategies for work not done. The Auditor General found the following: security requirements were not enforced, contract monitoring policies were ignored, procurement policies were not followed and deliverables were not confirmed before payment. The Liberal ministers responsible for this fraud were promoted upwards. Why?

After cheap talk of the government saying it is not the old government, when will the new government vote in favour of getting Canadians their money back?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the aisle, we will always defend the integrity of our procurement system, which is why we have put in place recommendations from previous reports of the Auditor General. We terminated all contracts with GC Strategies more than a year ago. We have revoked its security clearance.

We have set up the office of supplier integrity, which has barred GC Strategies from contracting with the government for the next seven years. We have referred cases to the RCMP, and we have taken legal action against GC Strategies. Why? It is because we will never tolerate bad actors in our supply process.

[Translation]

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, public funds must be carefully managed, and taxpayers' money must serve our country, not friends of the Liberals. In Quebec, there is an expression used to describe the abuse of power and the code of silence that protects cronies: "A friend is a friend".

Will the Liberal ministers of the past 10 years vote with us to make GC Strategies pay back the \$64 million that it was overpaid?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I reject the premise of my colleague's question.

We will never tolerate misconduct from our suppliers. That is why we have taken legal action against GC Strategies. We have referred cases to the RCMP because we will always defend the integrity of our procurement system.

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about integrity. Today, our Conservative Party introduced a motion demanding that the \$64 million that was overpaid to GC Strategies in exchange for zero services be returned to Canadians.

Will the Liberal ministers of the past 10 years, who approved this payment to their friends, finally show some integrity by supporting our motion to force GC Strategies to return the money and to ban this company not for seven years, but for life?

• (1435)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague that the office of supplier integrity and compliance operates at arm's length from the government. It decided to bar GC Strategies for the next seven years.

We have already taken action against this supplier because we will never tolerate bad actors in our supply process. We have taken legal action against GC Strategies and referred cases to the RCMP. We terminated all contracts with GC Strategies more than a year ago and revoked this supplier's security clearance because we will always defend the integrity of our procurement system.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with Bill C-5, the government is not only muzzling the House, it is also muzzling all forms of opposition outside the House in the name of the so-called national interest. It is silencing all those who think that our clean drinking water could be threatened by dirty oil pipelines crossing our lakes and rivers, including the St. Lawrence. It is silencing all those who are concerned about our farmland and forests. It is silencing the people, the Quebec National Assembly and the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement.

Why is it that, for the federal government, building Canada always means weakening Quebec?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I would tell my colleague that we are inviting everyone to join us in building Canada.

Quebec will have an important role to play. Quebec is a leader in renewable energy, hydroelectricity and interprovincial trade. This is a golden opportunity for the Bloc Québécois to vote in favour of Quebec and, at the same time, build a strong, resilient and prosperous Canada.

Unions, workers and employers support the bill. The House should vote in favour of this major initiative to build Canada.

Oral Questions

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, one thing is for sure: The Liberals' national interest is not in the interest of the planet or future generations. In less than three weeks, they have gone from transport electrification to "Drill, baby, drill". The Prime Minister has gone from Canada standing strong against Donald Trump to sidelining Quebec and forcing pipelines on it without debate, serious study or expert witnesses explaining the implications of Bill C-5.

The Prime Minister obviously has no respect for the work of elected officials. He has clearly proven that with his gag order. When will he finally understand that this is a democracy?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are absolutely committed to protecting the environment while building our economy.

I would like the Bloc Québécois to support us so that we can do exactly what Canadians and Quebecers asked us to do when they elected us. They elected a Liberal government to ensure that Canada becomes an economic superpower while also thinking about the environment.

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[English]

HOUSING

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal housing minister says he does not want house prices to go down. While everyday Canadians are priced out of a home, he says he is focused on protecting people's assets. Well, now we know why. From his Vancouver penthouse, the minister is sitting atop a personal real estate empire worth over \$10 million, including luxury properties in Tofino, Squamish and English Bay.

Why is it that the only thing getting built under the housing minister is his personal fortune?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will caution the member on using inaccurate facts. I will be following all the rules even before they are required, and these are some of the rules that the Conservatives themselves brought in under former prime minister Harper. Liberals will work with the office of the Ethics Commissioner to ensure transparency, and I will continue to demonstrate integrity in my role as minister. My focus is on getting more affordable housing built across Canada.

Oral Questions

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberals are just like atoms: They make up everything. More Canadians than ever are watching the dream of home ownership slip further out of reach, but the housing minister is not focused on solving the housing crisis because he is profiting from it. The average home in Canada now costs \$680,000; it is \$1.2 million in Vancouver.

Rents and mortgages have doubled, and housing starts are down, so why is the minister more interested in protecting his real estate empire than ensuring Canadians can afford a home?

• (1440)

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I thought we wanted to finish question period on time.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Housing, indeed all ministers and members of this House, live under some of the most stringent ethical requirements, which require disclosure and transparency, as the member knows very well. The Minister of Housing is, obviously, complying with all of those rules and will continue to do so. At the same time, he will continue working on providing housing opportunities for Canadians. That is why he is there; that is what he is going to do.

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member will have to excuse us if we do not take the party that has been known for serial ethical law-breaking at its word when the Minister of Housing, who said house prices do not need to come down, is sitting in a \$2-million penthouse on a multi-million dollar real estate fortune while he is telling Canadians that they are okay to just stay in their parents' basements. Canadians want to know why the minister was not transparent, did not answer the question in committee of the whole and did not answer the question when the member previously asked. We do not think that he answered it honestly when he gave an answer to the Ethics Commissioner.

Why will the minister not come clean and tell Canadians the truth?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister quite literally just gave the answer on the floor of this House. That member knows, as do his colleagues, that we live under ethical guidelines that are among the most stringent in the world. They govern all the members of this House. The minister is in full compliance with all of the rules. That member knows better.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is in compliance with his multi-million dollar real estate empire. That is the only thing he is in compliance with, while people are living in tent cities. The minister has said the housing market is working just fine. This is from a real estate tycoon, while he has a \$2.4-million penthouse in Vancouver, a \$5.6-million lakefront property and a \$3-million estate in Tofino. Do we think housing

prices are going to go down? There is no way. It is not in his financial interest for them to go down.

How can anyone believe the minister will do anything for housing when it is in his vested interest to keep his real estate portfolio high and Canadians in tents?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister is literally spending day and night, seven days a week, creating opportunities in housing for Canadians, while at the same time being in full compliance with the strictest ethical obligations faced by public office holders in the world. The Speaker knows that and those members know that. We are in full compliance. That will continue to be the case.

[Translation]

Bernard Généreux (Côte-du-Sud-Rivière-du-Loup-Kataskomiq-Témiscouata, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Minister of Housing and Infrastructure is saying that housing prices do not need to come down. That comes as no surprise from a person sitting on a \$10-million real estate fortune. He owns a \$3-million estate in Tofino, a \$5.6-million home in Squamish and a luxury penthouse in Vancouver.

Meanwhile, in Quebec, young people are stuck living in their parents' basements, unable to buy or sell. Why is the minister looking down at young Quebecers from his Vancouver penthouse and telling them that housing prices do not need to come down?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that this Minister of Housing has been working tirelessly to create housing opportunities for all Canadians, while fully complying with our ethics regime, which is one of the most stringent in the world. He is in full compliance with the Ethics Commissioner's rules. Our code of ethics requires transparency and disclosure. That is what the minister is delivering.

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[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Philip Earle (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our new government recently introduced the one Canadian economy act, which is intended to tear down internal barriers to trade, cut red tape and get nation-building projects off the ground. While it is true that the bill is critical to help grow our economy, indigenous communities' individual rights must be respected throughout the process.

Can the Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs outline how indigenous partners will be consulted and how these communities would benefit from this bill?

• (1445)

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a First Nations rights holder as well, I want to acknowledge the concerns raised by indigenous leaders across this country. Their voices matter. That is why we are investing in real consultation, with \$40 million to support indigenous engagement, in addition to establishing an indigenous advisory council.

This legislation would be an economic game-changer for indigenous people like never before.

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HOUSING

Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' own housing agency's latest numbers on housing starts are out, and they are bad, particularly in cities that receive money from their housing accelerator fund. For example, Vancouver got \$115 million and starts are down 10%; Kelowna got \$31.5 million and starts are down 33%. On May 13, the latest housing minister claimed he wanted to build on the housing successes of the last few years. What success?

When will the Liberals learn that bureaucrats do not actually build houses?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite will know, there are monthly fluctuations to the housing starts across Canada, and there is really good news in the CMHC report. We are on an annual pace of almost 280,000 housing starts this year, which is almost a record, and we will not stop there. We are focused on doubling housing starts in this country over the next decade, and we will stick to that goal.

Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it does not just stop there. Hamilton got \$93.5 million, and housing starts there are down 50%. Toronto got \$471 million, and they are down 58% there. Guelph got \$21.4 million, and housing starts there are down over a whopping 78%. The Liberal plan is to continue spending on city bureaucracies, and now they want to build a third federal housing bureaucracy.

When will the government learn that repeating its same mistakes and expecting a different result is not going to solve what is quickly becoming a housing catastrophe?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we have challenges with housing across the country on affordability. The good news is that we are seeing near-record-level housing starts this year. Members can cherry-pick month-to-month stats. This year, 280,000 starts is the pace we are on right now, and we need to go farther and faster. That is why we are delivering on development cost charge reductions that will bring down the cost of housing.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is only getting worse, and the Liberals' failing programs are not helping. The Lib-

Oral Questions

erals' so-called housing accelerator fund is spending more but building less. The Liberals' own numbers show that Kelowna will receive \$31.5 million in taxpayer dollars, even though housing starts there are down 33.6%.

Will the Liberals abandon their failing housing programs and build homes, not more bureaucracy?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will direct the member opposite to talk with the Kelowna mayor and council about what they think about the housing accelerator program, which hundreds of mayors and councils across the country have asked their own members of Parliament on the Conservative side to support, because they want this program. They want support to scale the housing they build in their communities, and we will be there to support them.

Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' own housing agency continues that after \$74 million from the housing accelerator fund, housing starts in London are actually down by a whopping 72%. Meanwhile, students and young families are still being priced out of the market, with little hope of ever owning their own home. The Prime Minister promised to get the government into the business of building homes, not building more bureaucracy.

When will the Liberals finally recognize that the red tape is the problem, not the solution, and reverse these policies that are keeping young Canadians in their parents' basements?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Well, Mr. Speaker, I hope the member opposite is supportive of the work we are doing here to give first-time homebuyers, young Canadians, an opportunity, discounting their purchase price by up to \$50,000 in GST relief. It is a significant effort, along with the tax cut for 22 million Canadians that makes life more affordable and enables them to access housing, and we will not stop there.

Oral Questions

● (1450)

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, only the Liberal government could spend more taxpayer money and deliver less. Its so-called housing accelerator fund gave the City of Toronto \$471 million, and what did Canadians get in return? According to the Liberal government's own housing agency, Toronto's housing starts dropped a whopping 58% compared to last year. This is a classic example of a Liberal-style failure. The Liberals spend taxpayer money, grab a nice photo op, and then walk away while fewer homes are built.

Will the housing minister finally admit that this Liberal bureaucracy fails to build homes while the next generation of Canadians fall further behind?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak strongly in support of the housing accelerator program, which has over 200 agreements with communities across Canada. The members opposite can keep criticizing and insulting their city councils and mayors, but they are going to deliver on this housing. Month-to-month statistics fluctuate, but overall we are seeing housing starts up this year, which is great, and we are seeing local communities deliver.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week, leaders of the G7 gather in Kananaskis. Top of mind at this summit are international peace and security. Canadian energy is a key part of this conversation. Our G7 allies, such as Germany and Japan, have spent years asking for ethically sourced Canadian oil and gas. Yet, this same Liberal government has stymied our allies for 10 years.

When will the Liberals get out of the way and approve the energy infrastructure that Canadians and our allies so desperately need?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the first ministers' meeting, the Prime Minister and the premiers got together and thought that the one Canadian economy act was a great idea. Managements think it is a great idea. Labour unions think it is a great idea. It would be very helpful if the Conservatives got on board and helped us get this bill passed.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of economic vandalism by the Liberals, Albertans want the walk to match the talk. It has been three months since the start of the campaign, four weeks since the throne speech, weeks since the meeting with the premiers and businesses, and yet the “no more pipelines” bill, the tanker ban, the production cap and the industrial carbon tax all still remain, and not a single oil and gas project has been announced.

When does the talk, talk, talk become the walk, walk, walk, or is this all just more Liberal squawk, squawk, squawk?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleagues will get an opportunity later this week to put their money where their mouth is and vote for this bill.

Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberals, Canada's pipelines are more clogged than a kitchen sink, thanks to anti-energy laws like Bill C-69, the “no new pipelines” law, the job-killing production cap and the industrial carbon tax. Our energy industry is struggling. Investment has fled, and companies will not build under these conditions.

Will the Prime Minister finally scrap this anti-energy agenda so we can sell to our allies and bring home bigger Canadian paycheques?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Canadians elected this Liberal government, what they asked for was for us to be able to build a strong, united country. What I hear from the opposition is division. That is not what Canadians want. What we saw when the premiers and the Prime Minister sat down together was how we are going to build together.

I hope the Conservatives are going to support our build Canada act so that we can actually get the job done.

[Translation]

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we just went through 10 years of Liberal lethargy, 10 long years of Canadian complacency as the world eyed up our natural resources. This was a lost decade during which the Liberals decided to turn their backs on our allies and create the worst anti-energy environment in the G7, through anti-pipeline legislation, a cap on oil production and a ban on shipping.

The G7 summit is taking place this week right here in Canada, in Alberta. Will the Liberal Prime Minister repeal these laws that are making Canadians poorer, and will he approve energy projects that will put more money in their pockets?

● (1455)

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Canadians elected a Liberal government, what did they want? They wanted us to work together to build a strong country and a strong economy. That is exactly what we are doing.

When we become an energy superpower, it will be low cost, low risk and low carbon. Will the Conservatives support our bill to ensure that we can get these projects done?

[English]

CANADIAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, more than ever, Canadians are feeling a deep sense of pride in who we are. We are united by our shared history, rich cultures and breathtaking landscapes. In my riding of Halifax, we have the Citadel National Historic Site, which stands as a powerful symbol of our past. Nova Scotia has three world-renowned gems in Sable Island, Kejimikujik and Cape Breton Highlands national parks.

Could the minister tell us what our new government is doing to reinforce our national pride and encourage Canadians to discover all the incredible places that make Canada so special?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no better time to choose Canada, which is why today we unveiled the new Canada Strong Pass. All summer long, admission is free for national parks and historic sites, with major discounts on camping as well. What is more, kids get free access to national museums and galleries, and free or discounted fares on Via Rail.

We are encouraging people of all ages to explore the places and stories that unite us from coast to coast to coast. With the Canada Strong Pass, it has never been easier to get out and discover the best country in the world, Canada.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I attended the public safety forum in Surrey this weekend. I have to say that I felt like we were living in a violent video game: the Reflections banquet hall, shot up; Hub Insurance, shot up; strip mall, shot up. Now, in Fleetwood, an honest businessman was gunned down in his office in broad daylight, which was possibly tied to extortion. The message from these criminals is clear: "Pay up or your family will pay the price." What is the government doing? It has wasted hundreds of millions going after licensed gun owners while gangsters roam free.

Will the Liberals commit to protecting Canadians from violent extortionists?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first off, I had the chance to meet with the Mayor of Surrey just recently to talk with her about the concerns in her community, as well as with many of the members who represent Surrey in the House today.

Extortionists must be held to account for their crimes. We will act decisively to strengthen the Criminal Code and move aggressively to protect victims by making bail laws stricter for violent and organized criminals. Extortion with a firearm carries a maximum sentence of life in prison. We will always be there to keep Canadians safe.

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, extortion is up 357%, and those are the ones we know about. In Surrey, criminals are shooting up businesses and bragging about it online because they know they will not face serious jail time. Peo-

Oral Questions

ple are terrified, and these gangsters are running the show. What did the Liberals do? They voted against mandatory minimums for extortion. They made it easier for violent criminals to get back on the street.

Will the government support the common-sense Conservative plan to crack down on violent extortionists, or will it keep putting criminals ahead of Canadians?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in case anyone is mistaken in this House, extortion is illegal in Canada. It is punishable by serious offences. Repeated extortion with a firearm is punishable by a mandatory minimum of seven years' imprisonment and a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

The Criminal Code reflects the seriousness with which we take this crime. We will do what it takes not only to punish criminals on the back end, but to give law enforcement officers the tools they need to prevent it in the first place. I hope the Conservatives will be willing to work with us to advance the reforms that will help keep communities safe.

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Peel Regional Police busted an extortion ring. Unfortunately, of the 18 arrested, almost half were on a form of judicial release at the time of arrest. Under the Liberal government, extortion cases are up by almost 400%.

Bill C-381, introduced by Conservatives, would have given law enforcement officers the tools they require to go after extortionists. When will the Liberals stand with hard-working families and their safety? Will they adopt our Conservative plan to crack down on violent extortion?

● (1500)

Vince Gasparro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this new Prime Minister, new MPs like me and this new government take this incredibly seriously. The fact of the matter is that we are hiring 1,000 new RCMP personnel and 1,000 new CBSA members to go after the bad guys. I hope the member and all members on that side of the House will support us in the strong borders act.

Amanpreet Gill (Calgary Skyview, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of the Liberal government, extortion has risen by 357% and Canadians are living in genuine fear for their lives. One of my constituents recently received a video from a perpetrator threatening to murder their children. People's lives are at stake, and this cannot go on any longer. We need to restore mandatory minimum penalties on extortion.

And the bells having rung:

The Speaker: The question is as follows. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

• (1520)

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

(*Division No. 10*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Baber	Bailey
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bonin	Bonk
Borrelli	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dalton	Davidson
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Niagara South)
Dawson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
DeRidder	Deschênes
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duncan
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Gazan
Génereux	Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)	Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Groleau	Guglielmin
Gunn	Hallan
Hardy	Ho
Hoback	Holman
Idlout	Jackson
Jansen	Jeneroux
Jivani	Johns
Kelly	Khanna
Kibble	Kirkland
Kmic	Konanz
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kronis	Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)
Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lawton
Lefebvre	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lloyd
Lobb	Ma

Mahal
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Martel
Mazier
McKenzie
McPherson
Menegakis
Morin
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perron
Reid
Reynolds
Roberts
Ross
Ruff
Scheer
Seebach
Simard
Steinley
Stevenson
Strauss
Thériault
Tochor
Uppal
Vien
Vis
Warkentin
Williamson

Business of Supply

Majumdar
Mantle
May
McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre)
Melillo
Moore
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Richards
Rood
Rowe
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shipley
Small
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Viersen
Wagantall
Wagham
Zimmer — 172

NAYS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anand
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Blois
Carr
Chagger
Chang
Chatel
Chenette
Church
Connors
Coteau
Dandurand
Deschênes-Thériault
Dhaliwal
Diab
Duguid
Earle
El-Khoury
Eyolfson
Fanjoy
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Gaheer
Gasparro
Gould
Greaves
Guilbeault
Hajdu
Harrison
Hirtle
Al Soud
Alty
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Bendayan
Blair
Brière
Casey
Champagne
Chartrand
Chen
Chi
Clark
Cormier
Dabrusin
Danko
Desrochers
Dhillon
Duclos
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fancy-Landry
Fergus
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Fuhr
Gahey
Gerretsen
Grant
Guay
Gull-Masty
Hanley
Hepfner
Hodgson

Privilege

Hogan	Housefather
Hussen	Iacono
Jaczek	Joseph
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Klassen
Koutrakis	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)	Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lavack	Lavoie
LeBlanc	Leitão
Lightbound	Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Malette (Bay of Quinte)	Maloney
McGuinty	McKelvie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Ménard
Mendès	Michel
Miedema	Miller
Mingarelli	Morrissey
Myles	Naqvi
Nathan	Nguyen
Noormohamed	Ntumba
Oliphant	Olshewski
O'Rourke	Osborne
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Provost	Ramsay
Rana	Robertson
Rocheffort	Romanado
Royer	Sahota
Saini	Sarai
Sari	Sawatzky
Schiefke	Sgro
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sodhi
Solomon	Sousa
St-Pierre	Sudds
Tesser Derksen	Thompson
Turnbull	Valdez
van Koeverden	Vandenbeld
Villeneuve	Watchorn
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zerucelli	Zuberi — 166

PAIRED

Members

Carney	Dancho
Joly	Plamondon — 4

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

And the Clerk having announced the results of the vote:

Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am wondering if you could clarify the process when voting. The member for Fleetwood—Port Kells left his chair during the vote for an extended period of time; wandered around, it appeared to be to the lobby; came back; and then voted.

Is that allowable?

The Speaker: I will consult.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, can it be confirmed that indeed the member did vote physically in the House as opposed to on the application? If he voted from the application, I think then it would be permitted, based on the procedure that we have become accustomed to.

The Speaker: The member voted in person, I am told. Is the member still here? Could the member confirm whether he remained in his seat for the whole period of the vote or left his seat and came back?

Gurbux Saini: Mr. Speaker, my app was not working, so I came back and voted in person.

The Speaker: I understand that the member is new and that these things happen. Essentially, the process is that, if the app does not work when a member is in the lobby or in any other situation, the member can come in and, after the vote has been called, get up and say that the app did not work and that they would like their vote to be counted one way or the other.

That is the proper procedure. The member's vote would not count unless he gets up and asks for unanimous consent for his vote to count.

Gurbux Saini: Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent for my vote to count.

The Speaker: Is there consent to allow the vote to count?

Some hon. members: Yea.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED MISLEADING MINISTER TESTIMONY IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise today to address the question of privilege raised by the member for Mirabel.

I have had the pleasure of working with my hon. colleague for four years now. I hope that he will agree that I have always been courteous and frank in my dealings with him and with all members of the House. However, in raising this question of privilege, the member accuses me of deliberately misleading the House during consideration of the main estimates in committee of the whole.

As we all know, procedures in committee of the whole can be lengthy and, in some cases, questions can be open to interpretation. A review of the transcripts will show that the member for Mirabel asked me:

Were these carbon tax rebate cheques that were sent out in the middle of an election to buy votes in eight provinces delivered without the tax that funded them being collected?

To that question, I simply replied, “Madam Chair, the answer is no.” I believe that it is simply wrong to describe the carbon tax payments as an attempt to buy votes, as the member implied in his question.

The date on which the rebate cheques were sent to Canadians is public knowledge. At no time did I mislead the House on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your attention to this matter, and I apologize for any misunderstanding. At no time did I attempt to mislead the House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1525)

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the House of Commons' "Report to Canadians 2025".

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present, in both official languages, reports from the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for the following activities: the 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, held in Sydney, Australia, from November 3 to 8, 2024; the Artificial Intelligence in Security Workshop, held in London, United Kingdom, from January 27 to 30, 2025; and the 73rd Westminster Seminar, held in London, United Kingdom, from March 10 to 14, 2025.

* * *

[Translation]

ACT TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-210, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (oath of office).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is not every day that a bill to amend the Canadian Constitution is introduced. Today, I am pleased to introduce in the House a bill to amend section 128 of the Constitution Act, 1867, to eliminate the obligation to swear an oath to the King. Under this bill, the oath to the King would be replaced with an oath of office similar to the ones sworn by judges and some senior government officials. An MP who is elected by the people officially takes office once they have sworn an oath. However, what should be a moment of pride and celebration becomes a painful, humiliating experience that besmirches our honour and undermines the credibility of our institutions. Many Canadians, along with nine out of 10 Quebeckers, reject the monarchy, the living embodiment of old British oppression. This is therefore a test and an opportunity for Canada to show that it is as inclusive and open as it often claims to be. Everyone knows that an oath to the King is nothing more than a remnant of colonialism, and it is time to free ourselves from that.

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

* * *

• (1530)

[English]

PETITIONS

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a huge honour to table this petition, which was signed by mill workers at the Domtar Catalyst mill in Port Alberni.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners highlight that Canada's forestry industry has historically been a source of good jobs for rural communities. The forestry industry has faced multiple challenges in recent years that have led to significant job losses, including wildfires, infestations and the ongoing softwood lumber dispute. The U.S. trade policy poses a serious threat to Canada's forestry industry, as well as the communities it supports, such as Port Alberni.

Forest biomass energy production has the potential to provide Canadian electrical grids with a sustainable source of energy while creating jobs for rural communities. Canada's failure to implement biomass tax incentives has left our forestry sector at a competitive disadvantage compared to the U.S.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to commit to the timely passage of a biomass tax credit to support Canadian forestry workers, which was in the 2023 fall economic statement, and increase federal funding for market expansion programs to find new customers for Canadian wood products and construction systems.

[Translation]

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to present a petition today that is really important for women's rights.

[English]

The petitioners are particularly concerned with and focused on the gender apartheid of the Taliban in Afghanistan, which is depriving women and girls of fundamental rights. Girls are denied the right to learn and to go to school; these are full violations of international law under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and against the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

I know I am only to summarize petitions. This one is lengthy, and I will summarize it as follows.

The petitioners ask the Government of Canada to formally and publicly declare Canada's support to include gender apartheid as a crime against humanity and international law, to advocate for the CEDAW framework, to take on gender apartheid and make specific changes in our policies to reach out to support Afghan women and girls, to collaborate with other UN member states, to sanction senior Taliban officials under Canada's Magnitsky laws and to make every possible effort to protect our sisters in Afghanistan from a cruel, misogynistic, illegal regime.

Please, I urge the government to consider this petition.

PRISON NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I table two petitions on behalf of voters in Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford.

Government Orders

The first is in respect to the prison needle exchange program. Drugs and drug paraphernalia are considered contraband in prison, yet the Liberal government is forcing our correctional officers to simply turn a blind eye and allow dangerous drugs to be used inside our prisons.

These correctional officers are calling on the government to immediately cancel the prison needle exchange program, stop permitting the use of illicit drugs in Canadian prisons and focus on efforts related to recovery.

CRIMINAL CODE

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of Seabird Island First Nation.

On June 23, 2022, Bill C-28 received royal assent, which allowed for extreme intoxication to be used as a defence for violent crimes such as sexual assault, where a reasonable person would not have foreseen the risk of a violent loss of control.

Residents are very concerned about this provision in the Criminal Code and are asking the Government of Canada to repeal it.

GAZA

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I have a petition from 65 Canadians led by Doctors Against Genocide.

The petitioners are calling for the implementation of the Geneva Conventions, as well as making sure that international assistance accountability act requires all Canadian foreign aid to uphold human rights and international legal standards.

The petition is calling on citizens and residents of Canada to call upon the Government of Canada to do five different things: first, to publicly and unequivocally reject the militarized aid model currently used in Palestine; second, to demand the full restoration of access for UN agencies and established humanitarian NGOs, including UNRWA and the World Food Programme; third, to insist on safe and immediate entry for Canadian health care workers and other international humanitarian personnel to Palestine; fourth, to withhold Canadian funding from any entity or model that does not comply with the principles of neutrality; and finally, fifth, to ensure that all Canadian aid to Gaza is delivered through internationally recognized humanitarian channels.

* * *

• (1535)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 1—PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-5

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while I have spoken many times in committee of the whole, while presenting petitions and when asking questions during question period, so far in this parliamentary session, I have not participated in Government Orders. To that end, I would like to thank the voters in Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford for giving me an overwhelming majority to represent them in the people's House of Commons in the 45th Parliament.

It is the honour of my professional career to be a hometown boy representing his community. I thank the people of Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford. I thank my family for supporting me. I do not take this job lightly, and I will work tirelessly on their behalf.

This was a different election. To go back a few months, former prime minister Trudeau resigned and the Prime Minister was elected, by Liberal voters, to lead the Liberal Party of Canada. In April, the Liberal Party put forward a platform called “Canada Strong”, a plan to unite, secure, protect, build. The language in this platform is very important. In fact, it led to the Liberals winning the most seats in the House of Commons again. On page one, it states:

America’s unjustified and reckless trade war threatens Canadian jobs, businesses, and our way of life. They are trying to weaken us so they can own us. In the face of this threat, we have a plan to build the strongest economy in the G7.

I outline that point because there was a lot of fear in this election, and rightfully so, about what Canada's relationship would be like with the United States. It came up at the doorstep every day, especially, I will note, among baby boomers. The first page of the Liberal platform goes on to state that a government, led by the current Prime Minister, “has a plan to remove barriers to internal trade.” It goes on to state that the Liberals “will reduce internal trade costs by up to 15% and expand our economy by up to \$200 billion, that is up to \$5,000 for every Canadian.”

In British Columbia, this was talked about a lot. It was actually a platform commitment to remove internal trade barriers to have free trade in Canada. It was a platform commitment shared with that of the Conservative Party of Canada. This brings us to the fourth sitting week of Parliament since the election, and today we are debating Bill C-5, a free trade and labour mobility act. However, when we look at the bill, there is a problem because the rhetoric in the Liberal platform does not match the reality in the legislation before us today. In fact, the bill would really do nothing to meet the expectations of what Canadians expected from Parliament. I will explain.

Bill C-5 does not address any of the key promises made by the Liberal platform. It would not enforce mutual recognition across provinces and territories. It does not address and would not dismantle provincial trade barriers. It does not include any binding timelines or enforcement mechanisms. It does not establish “buy Canadian” procurement standards. It would not fund or prioritize infrastructure needed for free trade between the provinces and territories. It would not protect or support Canadian industries under foreign trade attacks. It would not create the promised centralized one window for major project approvals. I will note, as a British Columbian, that it would not remove the internal trade barriers between provinces and territories for B.C. farmers, such as our wine growers, to sell their products, barrier-free, across our great nation, which needs to be pointed out.

● (1540)

As I mentioned, we have no idea what the economic consequences of this bill would be. The Liberal platform, as I just outlined, said that, by breaking down internal trade barriers before July 1, there would be massive economic development in Canada and \$5,000 more in the pocket of every Canadian. I am stating this point again because I do not believe that is the case. I look forward to the Parliamentary Budget Officer giving a clear breakdown on what the economic positives or negatives of this bill will have on Canada's economy.

Another massive and glaring omission in Bill C-5 is its failure to address another key thing Canadians wanted this election, and that was credential recognition for health care workers. In my province, we are facing a health care crisis. In fact, I receive more calls about hospital closures than almost any other subject in my constituency office. I have had constituents die because the health care centre in one town is too far away from the hospital where they could have received the medical treatment that used to be available in their community. There is broad consensus in Canada that we need credential recognition, that we need to allow the foreign-trained nurses and doctors who we permitted into Canada under our immigration point systems to do exactly what they intended to do when they got to Canada.

An hon. member: How would you do that?

Brad Vis: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North has not. Frankly, in his riding, the Filipinos are very upset with him because he made that promise, and he cannot deliver on it.

Conservatives proposed a blue seal program that would allow health care workers to transfer their skills easily across provinces and the establishment of a national competency body, similar to the Red Seal programs for trade. Bill C-5 does not solve any of these issues, even though every politician in the House of Commons knows it was something raised at the doorstep every day during the election.

With my limited time here today, I will just quickly touch upon part 2 of the bill, the building Canada act, which gives the federal government power to designate and fast-track so-called national interest projects. Earlier this morning, my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley outlined some of the major flaws with this aspect of the bill, and it largely related to the duty to consult.

Government Orders

British Columbia has a higher proportion of first nations than any other province in the country. First nations in British Columbia want to see major projects built. They want to partner with the federal government, but they see parts of this legislation as a poison pill. It seems to them that the Prime Minister is seeking to usurp their constitutionally given rights to be consulted and to in work with the government for economic reconciliation. The bill could have clarified those points, not in the preamble, but in the body of the text, to give first nations the authority and respect they deserve on major projects going forward. That was not included in the bill.

On major projects, this bill would create a new industry for consultants. Unlike Bill C-69, which has effectively shut down all major resource projects in Canada, this new bill, and I am voting for it, so I am not completely against it, but I am outlining the criticisms, would allow proponents to go directly to the Prime Minister's office without checks and balances. In some cases, sure, that would be okay, but we do not know what the Prime Minister intends, what his criteria are going to be and how he is going to be transparent with all of Canada about what projects he is picking and choosing. I do not want to live in a country where one man gets to pick winners and losers. I want a country where every project proponent sees a pathway to a yes or no answer with a reasonable amount of investment dollars put forward. That is not too much to ask. Other countries with our resources already have similar processes. We used to have it in Canada. We are asking for that to be returned.

As we are in the period of time to debate this bill only today in the House of Commons because of a closure motion, I will have to keep my remarks short. I thank again the people of Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford for putting their trust in me. It is a true honour.

I look forward to studying this bill in more detail.

● (1545)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for voting in favour of the closure motion, which demonstrates that he not only supports the legislation, but also understands and appreciates why it is so important that we pass it before July 1.

Respecting the member's comments, I do have one specific question. He seems to have the impression that all Ottawa politicians have to do is pass legislation, even if it goes into provincial jurisdiction, because the provinces, from his perspective, might not necessarily mind. I am not aware whether we can actually do that.

Government Orders

Specifically, the member said that the blue seal program Pierre Poilievre talked about would have recognized any international doctor or nurse, no matter where they lived in Canada, and that the Conservatives would be able to do that. Does the member believe that the federal government has that type of authority? It seems to me that is provincial jurisdiction, and we should be talking with the provinces about it.

Brad Vis: Madam Speaker, with respect to the question from the member for Winnipeg North, there would have been a federal licensing body.

Let us turn to page 2 of the Liberal platform, which states, “Unleash free trade in Canada by Canada Day by tabling legislation to eliminate all federal barriers”. We are not getting that.

The platform continues, “Achieve mutual recognition of credentials with provinces and territories so Canadians can work wherever they want.” We are not achieving that. It was right in the Liberals’ platform on page 2. The Liberals did not fulfill that promise.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to talk to my colleague. In our opinion, Bill C-5 is a major democratic setback. It is also a step backwards in our environmental protections.

My colleague must know that supporting the closure motion and eventually the bill will not just put this on the Liberals’ record; it will also be on the Conservatives’ record.

What will Bill C-5 do? When a major project is proposed and is considered to be in the national interest, some legislation will no longer need to be circumvented, such as the Fisheries Act.

What is the purpose of the Fisheries Act? Section 2.1 of that act states that the purpose of the act is to provide a framework for the management and control of fisheries, as well as the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat.

Why does my colleague think that a major project deemed in the national interest must necessarily be carried out at the expense of preserving fish?

[English]

Brad Vis: Madam Speaker, there were multiple questions and points made by the member, and I congratulate him on his entry into the House of Commons.

I will note that I am supporting this bill because I believe there is an urgency. I just believe that the Prime Minister’s Office is going too far and is lacking transparency in its approach to the second part of the bill before us today.

If the member would like to speak further about fisheries-related issues, I would be pleased to do so, as I represent a large portion of the Fraser River and some of the most important salmon stocks in all of Canada.

• (1550)

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. Before I begin, I want to

recognize a new person in Kamloops, a new cousin. His name is Harry Smith, born to Lewis Smith and my cousin Claudia Wright. I welcome Harry to the world. It is a pleasure to have him as one of our newest members in Kamloops.

My hon. colleague spoke about first nations and consultation. I took over part of his riding through redistribution. We now have 27 first nations in Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. I wonder if, given his knowledge of the area, the member could expand on the comments he made earlier respecting first nations.

Brad Vis: Madam Speaker, in the Fraser Canyon and Fraser Valley region, we are seeing a huge number of first nations entrepreneurs who want to build projects on their traditional lands. They want to bring economic prosperity to their people, and they are pushing ahead faster than the Government of Canada is able to move with more projects.

First nations want to see barriers eliminated for that work. They want to see federal departments get out of the way, with their over-burdensome red tape, to allow them to not only build and to take economic risks, but also, ultimately, put forward and support projects that are going to bring economic prosperity to a region of the country that has been ignored by many consecutive governments.

Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the fine member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

This being the first substantial time I have spoken in the House, I would like to ask for a few moments to thank a bunch of people who made it happen. Number one, first and foremost, as always, is my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Without Him, I would not have the ability or opportunity to serve the great folks of Essex.

I want to say thanks so much to my lovely wife Allison of 27 years—

An hon. member: What a saint.

Chris Lewis: Yes, she is a saint.

Madam Speaker, I thank her for being there with me and thank my three amazing children. I thank my father Kim, who has taught me a lot along the way, and my late mom Helen, who I know is looking down.

I also thank my amazing election team so much for all their hard work. I have one of the very best teams. Of course, I thank the amazing people of Essex, who have put their trust in me for a third term.

Over the last 10 years, we have been in this House time and time again facing legislation that stems from the Liberal anti-energy agenda, with bills like Bill C-49, Bill C-55 and, most notably, Bill C-69, the “no more pipelines” act. Each of these bills sought to increase the regulatory framework around energy infrastructure, slowing and in many cases stopping development. Because of these policies, in January of this year, EnergyNow reported that since 2015, Canada has seen \$670 billion in cancelled natural resource projects.

The cancellation of these projects has had devastating impacts on people's lives, with the Montreal Economic Institute projecting that the Liberal oil and gas cap could cause the loss of almost 113,000 jobs by 2040. How striking it is that a political party that has spent the last 10 years throwing up every barrier it could to the construction of new energy infrastructure should now find urgency in passing Bill C-5, a bill that would only slightly lower some of those barriers.

Across Canada, unemployment has risen to 7% according to the latest data released by Statistics Canada. Liberal job-killing policies have caused this crisis, and the refusal to repeal antidevelopment laws will only worsen it. Through this act, the government is telling Canadians that the very laws it has implemented have prevented them from getting jobs, prevented them from putting food on the table and prevented the economic development of our country.

How many more cancelled projects, layoffs and losses of income will we see before we say enough is enough? What we saw consistently from the last government was sweeping plans and grand promises, but no action, and here we go again.

On June 9, the hon. government House leader said, “Bill C-5 is a response to an economic and trade crisis caused by our neighbours to the south.” He is right. Our lack of growth in the energy sector has created a reliance resulting in the United States receiving 96% of our oil exports in 2023. It is now the number one exporter of LNG in the world, a position that should and could have been held by Canada.

If the Liberals had focused on bringing energy products into Canada over the last 10 years instead of halting their development, Canadians would not be losing their jobs and we would not be stuck playing a frantic defence. In the past five years, proposals have come from almost a dozen countries that have wanted to purchase or partner with Canada's LNG production, such as Germany and Poland in 2022, Japan and South Korea in 2023, and Greece, the Philippines and Taiwan in 2024.

The Liberals have had the last 10 years to strengthen our workforce and economic independence and diversify our LNG. Instead, they have left Canada without the option and infrastructure to stand on our own two feet. Canada should be strong and independent, not scrambling to pass legislation because the government realized it has been making serious mistakes.

Bill C-5 promises to speed up the approval process and remove regulatory barriers. If that is the goal, why does the government want to create an entirely new office to oversee each project proposal? This regulatory body has not been identified, may take sev-

eral months to establish and staff, has an unknown set of criteria by which to assess projects and does not have a designated minister.

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As it stands, the building Canada act may at best reduce the number of months that a proposed project would spend before the new regulatory body. To build a major project today, whether it is a pipeline, a mine, an electricity transmission line or any other project, takes several years, and there is good reason for that. Those years are filled with advanced planning, engineering, road evaluation and consultations with landowners and indigenous communities, and then they take several months to build.

● (1555)

Shortening the regulatory reviews, while desirable, will not change that, nor will it prevent groups that oppose such projects from using the courts to hamper and delay their development. Those legal delays will undoubtedly drag on, and we will see exactly what we have seen over the past 10 years: Projects will get cancelled, and hard-working Canadians will lose their livelihoods because of the government's lack of planning.

What happens when the approval of important projects is sped up without proper consideration is that mistakes are made, details are overlooked and corners get cut. TD forecasts that there will be 100,000 job losses by the third quarter of this year. Canada cannot afford this lack of concrete planning or commitments. More cancelled and delayed projects will lead to more Canadians who cannot provide for their families.

Several areas of the bill are vague and noncommittal. For example, Bill C-5 fails to outline clear criteria for what is considered a national interest project, and hidden away at the end of the bill, it states that cabinet has the power to exempt national interest projects from federal laws. The government is handing itself unchecked power to exempt projects it deems important and telling us not to question it, without committing to repealing the laws that have created these problems in the first place.

Additionally, the bill fails to provide concrete timelines for the new and improved approvals process. The Liberals have merely stated that the goal for this bill is to shorten approval timelines from five years to two, but conveniently have not committed to that timeline in the text of the bill.

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Not only will this bill make little to no real impact on the timeline of energy infrastructure projects, but the Prime Minister has also said the premiers will have a veto on resource projects and pipelines, which will certainly cause delays and hinder our fight to protect Canadian sovereignty. At best, moving projects from concepts to useful and operating infrastructure will still take several years and billions of dollars. What is the justification for ramming this bill through the House without proper examination and debate to ensure it will have the same benefits the government claims?

This cabinet is effectively the same as the last one. For the past 10 years, it has failed to further Canada's interests, increase Canadian jobs, grow Canada's economy or strengthen Canada's sovereignty. As my colleague, the hon. member for Lakeland, pointed out on May 28, "the Liberals [have] killed 16 major energy projects" in the last five years. She went on to ask why we should trust what they will be able to get done this time around.

If the government wants to enact real change and speed up nation-building projects, then it should repeal its antidevelopment laws that block those projects so we can strengthen the jobs in our oil and gas sector. Furthermore, it should repeal the industrial carbon tax, which is financially strangling our farmers and steel, aluminum and natural gas producers, and causing companies to give up their operations in Canada and move to other countries.

Make no mistake: Conservatives want to see streamlined project development without the piles of red tape that have built up over the past decade. We want to work with the government to make sure that happens. Conservatives have been consistent in our support for natural energy infrastructure, warning the Liberals for years about the economic necessity of these projects. However, that does not mean we should not do our due diligence and take the time to properly consider this legislation.

In its current state, Bill C-5 does not provide real solutions. The crisis caused by the Liberals has robbed Canadians of jobs and stability. Bill C-5 also has no impact on the laws causing these issues, the laws that have given us skyrocketing unemployment and an oil and gas sector that is far behind our competitors¹.

Canadians deserve economic stability, but they also deserve transparency and clarity. I challenge the government to repeal its antipipeline and antidevelopment laws and allow the House the time to flesh out the details of this bill to give Canadians concrete timelines and a set list of criteria so it provides real, tangible benefits to Canadians.

• (1600)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on a few occasions in his comments, the member made reference to his concern about the process. I would like to remind the member that he voted in favour of the government's motion that would ultimately see the bill pass this Friday. I appreciate it, because it highlights the importance, going out of the election, of the mandate Canadians gave not only to the government, but I believe to the entire House of Commons to build a stronger, healthier economy, which the Prime Minister has been leading. This is the reason he met with all the premiers. There is a very strong theme here.

It would appear that a number of Conservatives have some concerns. Is the member aware of any amendments the Conservatives will be proposing to give more strength to the bill? I ask because we will be going into a committee.

Chris Lewis: Madam Speaker, I would ask the member to pardon me if I am a bit cautious. I have been around this place for five and a half years, and time and time again, what the Liberals have said has never come to fruition.

I am happy to hear the bill is going to committee. I think that is fantastic. It should be debated; it should be discussed because there are great ideas on both sides of the table. However, as I mentioned in my speech, there has not been enough time to debate it properly. Yes, there is definitely a sense of urgency, but Canadians have been failed far too many times for Conservatives not to bring up their concerns.

[*Translation*]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, obviously I do not agree with my colleague's interpretation of Bill C-5.

In my opinion, this is a very bad bill for all kinds of reasons. The fact that it gives the Prime Minister so much power to define what projects are of national interest bothers me a lot, but that is not what my question for him will be about.

I have always seen the Conservative Party, in this Parliament and in the past 10 years, as the official opposition to the government, opposing the denial of democracy through procedures that could sometimes be difficult to endure. The official opposition made sure that democracy was respected. Now, however, the official opposition, or so-called official opposition, plans to support the government, which means that the only opposition left in the House is coming from the 22 Bloc Québécois members, along with the handful of NDP members and the lone Green Party representative. In practice, that means the government has almost 400 members.

I would like to know what my colleague has to say about that. Does he feel that his party has abandoned its role as the official opposition to support a bill that will be used for who knows what, or is he perfectly at ease with the idea of trampling on democracy to pass this bill?

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[English]

Chris Lewis: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. It puts a bit of a smile on my face, because, again, in the almost six years of representing the great folks of Essex, I saw time and time again the Conservatives stand here while the NDP and the Bloc propped up the Liberal government. Then when the NDP decided not to prop it up anymore and did not have enough folks, the Bloc propped it up.

I find it a bit half-hearted that the member would consider for a moment that Conservatives will not continue to stand and ask really tough questions while holding the government to account to ensure that the best deal for Canadians from coast to coast to coast will be made. We will stand with Canadians.

• (1605)

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

I wish to recognize the life of Gloria Goold, mother-in-law to Stephanie Rennick, who works in my office, as well as Peter Goold.

What is the biggest broken promise my hon. colleague has seen from the Liberal government in recent years?

Chris Lewis: Madam Speaker, in a nutshell, one word is hope. There have been so many promises and such a lack of hope by the Liberals. We are really proud—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

[Translation]

Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour for me to rise in the House to represent the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, who entrusted me with a fourth term on April 28. As is always the case in the Saguenay region, the election campaign was difficult, first because there was a bit of a Liberal wave and, second, because it is a fertile riding for the Bloc Québécois. It was a struggle every day.

Once again, I would like to thank the people who put their trust in me. I would also like to thank my team, which worked very hard during the election campaign. They supported me and gave me so much motivation to power through when the going was rough. During an election campaign, we work every day. We go door to door and talk with citizens. I really want to thank my team, because it would be very difficult to do this all by ourselves. We always need people around us, and we will certainly work hard for our riding on the challenges that will arise.

Today, I am going to speak frankly because the time for rhetoric is over. The Saguenay region deserves results, not empty promises. It deserves concrete projects, not bureaucratic gridlock. It deserves a real recovery, not token half measures.

During the last election campaign, the Prime Minister promised repeatedly that there would be free trade across Canada by July 1. That would require interprovincial trade barriers to be eliminated, but that has not yet been done. We will wait. Those are certainly fine words, but we will see if the Prime Minister puts them into

practice. He promised to kick-start the Canadian economy with billions of dollars in strategic investments to stimulate regional development, create jobs and give hope back to communities like ours, because it has been a long time since any major projects came our way. Every time projects are mentioned, we do not see them come to fruition.

Today, we are talking about a hastily tabled bill that purports to fix the problem. In reality, it is only a tiny step in the right direction, and not many details are provided. Once again, we see that this government lacks transparency. As always, it gives itself some leeway to tell people that projects will go ahead when in fact they will not.

Nevertheless, the bill represents an important acknowledgement. It basically admits that the Liberals themselves blocked everything with their laws, which created major obstacles to development and prevented foreign investors from coming here. The government seems to be finally realizing what we in the Saguenay region have known for a long time, namely that projects that could stimulate our economy are being stifled, not by a lack of local will, but by Ottawa's complex, poorly designed rules. This bill provides for the creation of exceptions, rather than dealing with the real problem of over-regulation. We are not going to get anywhere with a hypothetical proposal. First and foremost, the Saguenay region needs consistency and a real building plan.

Let us take a very concrete example that everyone is familiar with. We talked about the GNL Québec project many times and raised it again recently. This project could have injected \$14 billion into our economy, created thousands of jobs and made the Saguenay region a world leader in clean energy exports. A number of elected officials and business owners have stressed that the rejection of GNL Québec left a void in our local economy.

• (1610)

What blocked the GNL Québec project? It was blocked by anti-development bills and regulations that impose such cumbersome and inconsistent assessment processes that they discourage any major investment. The people of Saguenay did not reject the project. It was buried by Ottawa, by a highly ideological government that drives away major investments, a government that often stands in the way of entrepreneurs, a government that does not stand up for its industries and workers, a government that must itself buy a major project like Trans Mountain to ensure it will be completed.

Canada needs consistency. The government developed a critical minerals policy that omitted phosphate and high-purity iron. It then listed a number of identified minerals that are not consistent with its own policy. There is also the Climate Institute of Canada, which said last week that domestic production will drop by 56.5% if Canada does not increase its investments in critical mineral development. That is quite something.

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That is why I want to make it clear today that the best way to speed up nation-building projects is to repeal the well-known Liberal anti-development laws, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48.

That is what needs to be done to spur investment in Canada and to get homegrown projects like Ariane Phosphate, First Phosphate and Strategic Resources off the ground. Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean is positioned as a region with a promising future and everything that it needs to prosper. It has a skilled workforce, a strong industrial culture, and access to global markets through the port of Grande-Anse, which leads to the St. Lawrence River and ultimately Europe. It has expertise in aluminum processing, with four clean energy aluminum smelters.

We are ready. It is not the region that is lagging behind; but instead—

My cell phone alarm just went off, and I apologize to the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I would like to remind hon. members that we have timers and that the Chair will let them know when their time is up. Such alarms can be extremely disruptive for the interpreters.

The hon. member may continue his speech.

Richard Martel: As I was saying, our region is ready. It is not the region that is lagging behind, but instead, it is Ottawa that is holding it back. We are not asking for special treatment. We are simply asking to be allowed to get on with our work, to be given the resources to achieve our ambitions, to have projects assessed quickly, and to have clear, stable and predictable rules. Our vision is simple: We want to put Saguenay's economic development back on track by leveraging our resources, our expertise and our resilience. This means less red tape and bureaucracy to encourage energy independence, not dependence on foreign countries.

Rhetoric does not pay the bills. Broken promises do not build industry. Poorly thought-out regulations do not create jobs. It is time to build. It is time to produce. It is time to break free of the regulatory chains that are holding us back. It is time to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on others.

• (1615)

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague knows that I appreciate him. He also knows that I come from his riding, where there is a Garon Street in honour of my grandfather. I know that developing our resources is important to the people of Saguenay.

However, when we look at the Conservative agenda, it is clear that they want no environmental assessments. What we get from their speeches is that as soon as an environmental assessment prevents a project from going forward, instead of questioning the project itself or trying to improve it, they systematically question the assessment. As a result, this is now a party that will likely support a bill that guts a large number of existing environmental protections, both federal and provincial.

I would like my colleague to tell me the circumstances in which environmental assessments are valid. Are there cases where good projects cannot go ahead because of environmental assessments? Does he think that is legitimate?

Richard Martel: Madam Speaker, we have the strictest environmental standards, and work is often duplicated. That is why we are having a hard time getting economic development projects off the ground, because they take forever.

Here in Canada, we have not had a project for a long time, because it takes 10 or 15 years to get off the ground. Meanwhile, other countries manage it in three years, four years or even two and a half years on occasion.

Natilien Joseph (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, the Conservatives spend their time criticizing strategic investments as wasteful spending, even when it comes to attracting innovative companies, creating sustainable jobs or strengthening our economic sovereignty.

Would the Conservatives prefer to see these billions of dollars go to our international competitors rather than being invested here at home in Canada's future?

Richard Martel: Madam Speaker, we have the weakest economy in the G7. There are not enough projects in Canada. We have been talking about this for a long time. It takes wealth.

We need to create wealth to be able to make the transition. Going green is expensive. If we cannot create wealth at home, how are we going to improve our technologies and expand our recycling industries? Roadblocks are constantly being thrown up because we do not have the money.

We are way behind Europe. I think that we should have started these kinds of projects a long time ago and created the wealth that would have enabled us to make the transition more quickly.

[English]

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. Before I begin, I want to recognize the life of a community member, Luigi Collavini, who passed away in the time we were not sitting. He leaves behind his son Jon, his daughter Erminia and his wife Teresina. May perpetual light shine upon him.

The Liberals just talked about money going into the hands of Canadians. What about the motion, which this member just voted against, to put money that was taken through GC Strategies back into the hands of Canadians?

Does my colleague agree?

[Translation]

Richard Martel: Madam Speaker, that is a very good question. I think that money should go back to our constituents. There was a very big problem, which we identified. We are forcing the government to give that money back to our constituents.

Again, I would like to thank my colleague for raising this issue.

• (1620)

[English]

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a great honour to rise in this place and speak on behalf of the good people of Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna. I will be splitting my time with the hon. member of Parliament for Mirabel.

For the record, Bill C-5 is not perfect and, with respect, there are a few concerns I must point out. Let me start with the glaringly obvious. This bill is dubbed as the “one Canadian economy act”, and yet one of the first things we learn is that provinces and territories must provide consent on major projects. In other words, they have a veto. When a veto is provided to 13 different provinces and territories, we are not creating one Canadian economy. If anything, it is completely the opposite. In fact, a cynic might suggest that parts of this bill are designed to fail because the Prime Minister just spent an entire election making big promises that he had no intention of fulfilling. Why did he not get anything built, someone might ask the Prime Minister, who could then reply that there was no agreement on what to build. There, I submit by design, is a huge flaw within this bill.

However, we also know this bill contains other measures, in particular, under “Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada”, taking action or, in this case, legislatively proposing to take action on internal trade barriers, which have long been a passion of mine. I will expand on that point. When I was first elected to this place as someone totally wet behind the ears and a rookie MP, I was fortunate to draw quite highly in the private members' lottery order of precedence. Back in 2011, before the NDP was in power in British Columbia, tourism was not under attack and, indeed, there were a great many Canadian visitors in my riding every summer. Visiting local wineries, even in those days, with over 200 of them, has always been an immensely popular thing to do. Unfortunately, for visiting tourists from other provinces, they could not buy wine at those wineries to take back home with them. Why? Because there was an archaic Prohibition-era federal law that made it illegal to transport wine in person or to have it shipped across the provincial border.

Long-time members of this place might recall that I proposed a private member's bill to remedy this and create true free trade in Canadian wine, or so I had hoped. In those days, the NDP was our official opposition, hard to believe now, I know, which looked to slow down my bill. However, with the help of some Liberals, in particular, former Liberal MP Scott Brison, my bill was accelerated and passed in this House and the other place. Immediately after, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and British Columbia adopted the spirit of my bill; other provinces, not so much. One actually made regulatory changes to block what my bill had achieved.

I mention this because the Prime Minister has, unfortunately, made some outlandish statements, promises really. One was that there will be no interprovincial trade barriers by July 1. He also suggested that the elimination of these internal trade barriers will create another \$200 billion of economic activity into our Canadian economy. I am not certain if this is wishful thinking or wilful political misrepresentation as a result of the recent election. Either way, I

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submit that expectations have been created that Bill C-5 will just not live up to.

[Translation]

This is not to say that the federal government should not do everything it can to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers. To some extent, this part of Bill C-5 certainly does propose that, and that is why I am prepared to support it.

However, I must also return to the need for consensus found in the other part of Bill C-5. While the Liberal government will allow provinces and territories to veto major projects, we also have to recognize that many interprovincial trade barriers are erected in exactly the same way when one province essentially refuses to come to an agreement with the others. That is what frustrates me about this bill, because it contains a certain amount of double-talk and mixed messages.

I must also point out the obvious. Since 2015, the Liberals have passed several bills, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, that have killed many Canadian energy projects. The Liberals know this, of course, but they are too arrogant to admit the obvious.

• (1625)

Fundamentally, the Liberals have created a regulatory environment that is no longer accessible to the private sector. Instead of fixing this, which would be the obvious solution, the Liberals created Bill C-5, which proposes to circumvent and accelerate these regulatory hurdles through a new political process, subject to everyone's agreement, of course.

The exact mechanism of this political process is an enigma. I would like to point out that, in the past, our former Liberal government kept trying to try to buy jobs in the electric vehicle battery sector. As we now know, many of these investments, as the Liberals call them, completely failed, as is often the case when governments pick winners and losers by using politics as a criterion.

I also have to come back to another point that concerns me.

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A few months ago, when campaigning to become the new Liberal leader, our now Prime Minister flew into Kelowna, and while there he told supporters that he would use emergency government powers to build energy projects. A part of that was the “build baby build” thing we heard so much during the election. Of course, in Bill C-5, there is no such language about using emergency government powers to build anything. Instead, what they say here is that there must be consensus, and of course, the NDP Premier of B.C., David Eby, has already said “no”. He will not support any new Canadian pipelines built with Canadian steel that export Canadian oil and gas by getting it to tidewater. He will, however, say yes to B.C. ferries built with Chinese steel by Chinese workers in a Chinese state-owned shipyard.

I mention that last part, because none of the Chinese steel is subject to any industrial carbon tax, unlike here in Canada, where Canadian steel remains subject to the Liberals' industrial carbon tax. On an interview with CTV Atlantic, the Prime Minister was clear that steel made by industry would be targeted for increases to offset his political 180° turn on the consumer carbon tax. This, of course, makes our Canadian steel more expensive and less competitive against Chinese steel with no carbon tax.

If this Liberal government was truly serious about building one Canadian economy, why ignore the fact that Canadian industries need a regulatory environment that is competitive and that creates incentives for investment that would lead to great-paying Canadian jobs?

[Translation]

Bill C-5 completely misses the mark on those points. We are left with rather modest steps, despite huge promises to the contrary. At least those steps are in the right direction, but this bill could and should have been much more ambitious.

I would like to sincerely thank all members for taking the time to listen to my comments and concerns today.

[English]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have been listening to Conservative speeches all day long. One would think, from listening to them, that they were not going to vote in favour of this legislation, but not only are they going to vote in favour of it, based on what they have ultimately been saying, but they also voted to limit the debate on it only a couple of hours ago.

Can somebody, perhaps this member, please explain the logic behind this to me, as to what is going on over there? Are they in favour of the legislation, or are they not? If they are not, can the member explain why he voted in favour of limiting the debate on it just a few hours ago?

● (1630)

Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, this is the arrogance that comes from that other side. They cannot accept a yes.

There was an election. I argued that the Liberals had done such a poor job under Justin Trudeau that they actually wrecked our regulatory environment so that private capital formation was impossible

in this country. Now, with this Bill C-5 coming forward, this Liberal government is admitting it was a complete failure. Rather than addressing Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and all the other things that I have mentioned, they are doing a workaround.

They won an election. I want to see projects go forward. This is not my first policy option. With the arrogance that this party is putting out while they do this, they should be mindful that Joe Clark thought he had a majority as well. I look at where that ended up getting him, particularly with a whip who could not count.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, I kind of have to agree with our Liberal colleague. I too am having a hard time following. We had a Conservative official opposition that was a strong opposition with a leader. I did not always agree with him and I was quite critical of him, but that is not the issue. It seems that, not only have they lost their leader, they have also lost their direction.

They are supporting the Liberal closure motion. I have been here for 10 years and for 10 years the Conservatives have been telling us that closure motions are appalling. I thought that the Conservatives were champions of democracy. I do not know what to think anymore. They voted in favour of the closure motion and they are saying that they will vote in favour of a bill that gives full authority to the government, and full authority to the Prime Minister to decide whether or not it will follow the rules and regulations.

Now, all of a sudden, our colleague rose to criticize the bill. I am having a hard time following. Is there anyone in charge at the Conservative Party?

[English]

Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I will say it once again for my Quebec colleague. It is because the Bloc, the NDP and the Green Party agitated against the Harper government's reworking of our environmental system to get private sector formations and important infrastructure built. They used it politically to win elections. That is something they chose back then.

By putting forward Bill C-5, the government, under the current Prime Minister, admits it has gone too far. Would I want it to address C-69 and get a system that works well for everyone instead of using this loophole in Bill C-5 to work around the system and create other issues? Absolutely.

Right now, we need to start getting our resources to new markets away from the Americans. That is something the people in Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna have told me. We only have limited time, so I am going to support that as not being my first option, but my second one.

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Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his excellent speech. He and I have both been here for a long time. We watched, for the last 10 years, as the Liberal government blocked and stymied pretty much every economic development opportunity, particularly in my home province of Alberta, and countrywide. As he sees the Liberals seemingly taking all of the ideas the Conservatives have had for the last 10 years and swallowing themselves whole, how much barbecue sauce does he think they had to put on themselves in order to do that?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Yet you still couldn't form government. What does that say about—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Order.

The hon. member for Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna.

Dan Albas: Let me commend you, Madam Speaker, on making that particular loud Liberal voice quiet. I respect your authority and our colleagues here.

What I would simply say is this. We came here after a hard-fought election to get things done. I may not necessarily agree with everything in Bill C-5, but I do recognize that the regulatory environment the previous government created had grown unwieldy and out of control. We could not build important public infrastructure. That needs to change. That is why I am supporting the bill at second reading.

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, I salute all my colleagues in the House.

I find it rather interesting that we are spending a lot of time discussing the substance of the matter and the bill itself, when we are looking at a closure motion. After a little over three weeks in the House, we are already dealing with a gag order.

First, the bill itself is a problem. It is because two bills were merged into one. What the government has done is it has used the old tactic of putting members of Parliament in a tough spot by preventing them from doing their job properly on voting day. This makes a mockery of democracy as well, because there are two parts to the bill.

The first part is not very contentious. When we listen to the comments of members from all parties, it is not very contentious. The first part of the bill seeks to remove federal barriers to interprovincial trade. Basically, what we are doing is telling the federal government to take a step back. Ultimately, what the federal government will do is recognize each province's regulations to ensure the mobility of goods and services. They will say that if the good or service meets a province's regulations, it will be recognized. That is true decentralization. In a way, it is an example of federalism that could work.

However, they then throw part 2 of Bill C-5 into the mix. The title of this bill is mind-boggling. The Liberals are telling us that this is a bill to create one Canadian economy. We read the bill and then we look at the recent behaviour of the Prime Minister. He is going to meet behind closed doors with the oil industry, which is preparing a list of oil projects and is interested only in oil and almost

nothing else. When we read this bill, we see that there may be one Canadian economy, but it is the Alberta economy. There will be only one economy, and it will be Alberta's. The bill will serve the oil industry.

Now the Liberals are promising us free trade before Canada Day. What is mind-boggling, once again, is their definition of free trade, which is essentially that, if the Prime Minister likes a bill, then all other laws can be broken. The Prime Minister can talk to his friends in a certain industry, his friends then manage to convince a minister, who holds some bogus consultation and Ottawa gets its way. I am not saying that is what will happen, but the bill would certainly allow it and that it is dangerous in a democracy.

I personally have a hard time imagining the Prime Minister sitting down with Donald Trump in the south and telling him that our definition of free trade is to let him violate our laws when it suits him. I taught economics. I have spent my entire life studying economics, and I have never seen a definition of free trade that looked like the Prime Minister's definition. It is mind-boggling.

What does that mean? If we go by the Canadian formula, it means that the definition of free trade would be to tell the Americans that we are renegotiating the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, and that if there are any projects that suit Donald Trump, such as those that violate the Fisheries Act, the Indian Act, the International River Improvements Act, the National Capital Act, the Canadian Navigable Waters Act, the Dominion Water Power Act, the 1994 Migratory Birds Convention Act, the Canada Transportation Act, the Canada Marine Act, the Species at Risk Act or the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, then the Americans can come and violate the Impact Assessment Act, the migratory bird sanctuary regulations, the Dominion water power regulations and the wildlife area regulations.

Let us imagine for one second going to the United States and telling them that this is our definition of free trade. Everyone here would cry foul and claim that Canada's sovereignty has been violated, "sovereignty" being a word that the Liberals have suddenly rediscovered.

What is mind-boggling, once again, is that the Conservatives are supporting closure. Their support for the bill would be understandable.

● (1635)

Why are they supporting this gag order? They are supporting the gag order because they are stuck. They have no leader. For years they have been talking about nothing but oil. Doug Ford stabbed them in the back during the election campaign. They have lost the political machinery. They are also getting stabbed in the back by Danielle Smith, who supports the bill. I would imagine that the Conservatives are telling themselves that they have no leader, that the Prime Minister is popular right now and that people will not actually remember how they are voting because they are too busy having backyard barbecues.

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A few days ago, the Conservatives voted to steal \$814 million from Quebecers. There were two votes in one week, and the Conservatives voted with the Liberals against Quebec both times. What the Conservatives do not realize is that they can be in favour of the bill and still vote against the closure motion. They are spending so much time kissing the Liberals' feet that they are going to get a fungal disease, as my colleague from Jonquière would say. They just need to say no to the closure motion and let the committee to do its job.

The member who spoke before me said that this is the Conservatives' best policy option right now. That is why they will pass the bill the way it is. In other words, the Conservatives are voting to short-circuit the committee. They are voting in favour of not having enough time to amend the bill. If the Conservatives have a better definition of what free trade should be, they are now voting to deprive themselves of the opportunity to improve the bill based on their own convictions. That is pathetic. The Liberals were elected, and the Conservatives are rolling over and accepting the outcome. They are telling themselves that people do not want anyone to stand in the way and that the Prime Minister is popular.

What kind of democracy do we have if a gag order is imposed barely three weeks after the House comes back? The Conservatives are criticizing the Liberals because they have not tabled a budget yet. They are up in arms about transparency and accountability, yet here they are giving up the opportunity to do the work in committee. That work would give us a chance to hear from witnesses, and I am not just talking about witnesses from Quebec or about Greenpeace representatives or environmentalists. I am also talking about people who think like the Conservatives and who would try to turn this bill into something I would oppose. The Conservatives see doing that work as obstructing the Prime Minister, who appears to have become Canada's new monarch.

What do Conservative members do for the money they are paid? The 44 members from Quebec here in the House are right to say that there was a fear campaign during the election. They are right to say that Quebecers elected a lot of Liberals. They are reminding us of that, and we are taking note. We know that; we are intelligent people. Those members were elected to defend Quebecers. The ball is in their court. Quebec members are telling us that the Quebec government, employers and unions are in favour of their bill. The Liberal parroting has well and truly begun. They kept saying it over and over throughout question period. Well, then, why do they not send the bill to committee? Call the unions, the workers and the employers to appear. If they think that Quebecers would support this bill in its entirety, why are they not letting those people be called to appear before the committee?

The Prime Minister met with his buddies from the oil and gas industry. A list of projects is on the way this fall. The Liberals still have not tabled a budget, however. Now they tell us that this bill can bypass the democratic process because it was written on the first page of their election platform. Where are the other pages? Where is the necessary budget? An election was called, and we were told that the world had changed but public finances had not. We are being told that we have to create a new Canadian economy with a bill that allows no room for consultations or democratic

work. If the Liberals want to table their platform, they should table all of it. They should do all the work, not just half of it.

I see members from Quebec over there at the back, futzing around on their phones and ignoring the debates. They were elected to stand up for Quebec. Now the ball is in their court. They need to prove to us that they are going to stand up for Quebec. So far, 44 Liberal members from Quebec have risen to vote against a unanimous motion by the Quebec National Assembly concerning the issue of one economy, not 13, as defined by the federal government. Is rising to show contempt for all 125 members of the National Assembly of Quebec the right way to stand up for Quebec?

• (1640)

So far, these people have shown that they are not doing what they were elected to do. Yes, there are a lot of them. Yes, there are 44 of them. The shame that they must feel for their behaviour so far must be proportional to their numbers in the House.

This closure motion is unacceptable. For the sake of democracy, this bill must be referred to committee.

• (1645)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, who am I to defend the Conservative Party, but allow me to do so. At the end of the day, whether it was in Quebec, Manitoba, B.C., Nova Scotia or the Northwest Territories, it was universally established that people were genuinely concerned about the economy, Donald Trump, tariffs and trade. They were genuinely concerned. Whether it is the aerospace industry in Quebec or the aerospace industry in Manitoba, the legislation before us is a reflection of what the people of Canada, in all areas, were saying. That is why the Conservatives are supporting the closure of the bill, though they have some issues with some amendments.

Do the Bloc members have anything at all to contribute to the bill? Are there any specific amendments they would like to see? Will they stand up for the people of Quebec and Canada?

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, first of all, before us are two bills that have been merged. Had the government given it any serious thought, it would have split the bill in two.

Second, the member for Winnipeg North tells us that the bill reflects the fear that Canadians were feeling during the election campaign. I agree with him that the Liberals campaigned on fear. That was their main selling point.

This bill also reflects the personal views of a Prime Minister who has total control over his cabinet and his government because he has appointed friends who have been with him throughout his career. It reflects his definition of free trade. It is a corporate definition that we have never seen anywhere else. As I said, it is a definition that Canadians themselves would never accept if these conditions were imposed by the United States.

The reason that the Liberals are pushing us to pass this bill quickly under a closure motion is that they see the oil industry as the only avenue for our future development. It is an electoral trap for the Conservatives. It is obvious that the government is happy because the Conservatives have fallen for it hook, line and sinker, like a bunch of amateurs.

[English]

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have seen some challenges, of course, economically, and nearly every economist in Canada, if not the world, says we need to build major projects and we need to reduce interprovincial trade barriers. Does the member agree?

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, the economists at the International Energy Agency have not said that. The economists at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development have not said that. All economists are saying something: We have to take our time.

Where was the gag order in the Conservatives' platform and the Liberals' platform? Where in both of those parties' platforms was the idea of muzzling Parliament after three weeks? My colleague is going to have to let me know. When he went to see the people in his riding, at what point did he say he was going to vote with the Liberals to put an end to debate and parliamentary work, despite the salary he earns? After three weeks, this is what the Conservatives are doing with the Liberals.

I think if he had told his constituents that, he might not be here today.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is always great to hear someone talk about the economy when it comes to a bill like this one. I agree with my colleague that it would have been a good idea to split it.

Beyond that, I would like to address the bigger picture. Parliament has been sitting for three weeks, yet the government stubbornly refuses to table a budget while projecting astronomical deficits. As for the opposition, it promises to be the official opposition, but it is in disarray and has no leader. It says that it will support this bill, which provides that this Prime Minister will not only govern without a budget, but will also define issues of national interest to which no laws or rules apply. What is more, the government is doing all this under a gag order.

Am I right to be concerned about a shift toward authoritarianism, or whatever this may be, where all the power is given to the government and there is no longer an official opposition? We in the Bloc Québécois are the ones who need to play that role.

Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, the Liberals were so afraid of losing their seats over the past few months, before the new Prime Minister came along, that they fell prey to a cult of personality.

Now no one dares challenge this Prime Minister, who appeared like a saviour and says he is going to cut taxes, but will not say how he is going to pay for it, and this is after presenting a completely flawed economic and financial platform during the election. It has become a cult of personality.

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I am surprised to see that the Conservatives are so afraid of him that they have fallen prey as well.

• (1650)

[English]

Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to stand in the House to add my thoughts and the views of our constituents on various pieces of legislation. Today, it will be on Bill C-5, an act to enact the free trade and labour mobility in Canada act and the building Canada act.

I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

Before I get into the meat of the bill, I will say that this is my first chance to stand and give a speech in the House since the election, so I would like to thank my team working here in Ottawa and, of course, back at home, for their ongoing work. They keep the wheels on the bus and keep things moving. I want to thank them for their very hard work and professionalism. I would like to thank Marnie; Lisa; Tara; my executive assistant, Andrew; of course Mack and Paul here in Ottawa; and, during the election, the teams of volunteers, of whom there were many on all sides.

In our part of the world, in Ontario, we went through some pretty challenging weather. There was the big ice storm. Every municipality in my riding was under a state of emergency for a couple of weeks. It put a strain on volunteers of all stripes, but everyone showed up day in and day out. They kept knocking on doors, putting up signs and spreading their respective messages, so I want to thank everyone who played a part in that role. Our democracy is stronger because of their work.

I want to give a shout-out to my campaign team and my campaign manager, Paul; my EDA president, Derek; and of course my family for their unwavering support. For everyone in this place, if we do not have the support of our family, it is extremely difficult to do this job. My family has my back and is encouraging me to keep doing this, so I thank my family as well for the ongoing support.

We are debating Bill C-5 today. It has two main parts, and the first has to do with interprovincial trade. As we all know and have heard in the debate today, Conservatives have long called for the easing of interprovincial trade barriers as essential for boosting economic efficiency, fostering national unity and enhancing competitiveness in the global economy.

One of the most compelling reasons to dismantle interprovincial trade barriers is the potential for significant economic gains. A more integrated domestic market would allow businesses to scale operations more efficiently, access a larger customer base and reduce duplication and costs. Here in Ontario, it is estimated that could mean about \$200 billion annually in the province. However, Bill C-5, as mentioned, only takes baby steps and falls short of where we need to be. I am afraid Bill C-5, unfortunately, may not have any impact at all in removing the barriers to interprovincial trade.

Government Orders

The second and probably most controversial part is around natural resource development. Bill C-5 attempts to address the effects of a decade of Liberal mismanagement of the economy by introducing measures to fast-track major projects in Canada. After an admission that the Liberals caused the problem through Liberal laws that have made it impossible to get anything built in this country, the Liberals have turned to allowing certain projects, like those that are politically favoured and lobbied by Liberal insiders, like maybe GC Strategies no doubt, to circumvent the Liberal laws.

Conservatives do agree with the Liberals that it is all their fault that the economy is stalling when it comes to natural resource development, and that their own legislation has hobbled the Canadian economy and has actually put us at risk due to the desires of the administration down south.

We have known about the ongoing dangers of the economic waters that have become unsettled; we have called this out for over 10 years. Bill C-69, the no more pipelines bill; Bill C-48, the tanker ban, which will not let Alberta energy leave off our west coast; the emission caps and many more barriers and hurdles to economic growth and expansion have all been put in place by the Liberal government.

Fortunately, we have now gotten to a place where the Prime Minister is saying that if projects are determined to be in the national interest, federal reviews would shift from whether these projects get built to how best to advance them. Apparently, according to the Prime Minister and multiple media sources, this is meant to streamline multiple decision points for federal approval, while minimizing risks of not securing project approval following extensive project risk.

• (1655)

This would create a system where we have more people regulating an industry than we have actually working in it, which is a problem. Again, the Prime Minister has no problem creating more white collar desk workers with government authorities, simply to expand the class of people who will always be loyal to the growth of big government. That is a choke point for innovation and productivity.

Let us be clear: We are not saying, "Let us promote dirty air and dirty water." We all breathe and eat the same things, and we want the cleanest possible. However, when we have a political class that has no compassion with respect to the impact of its decisions, because government always gets paid and first and never runs out of supply, that is a problem. It is clear that in the legislation, without the removal of key pieces of previous government legislation I mentioned, Bill C-69, Bill C-48, and many more, the regulatory system would continue to choke industry and continue to stifle investment from abroad.

What the Liberals would do, with the piece of legislation before us, is continue to reduce our ability to extract energy and sell it to the world, unless powerful lawyers and lobbyists cozy up to Liberal politicians to get their project fast-tracked. This would lead to more government control. Why is this? It is the same thing the Liberals seemed to love with so-called green energy, more like alternative energy. It is mostly about control. This way, the government would

decide who gets the government grants and who would get the fast-track approvals to bypass the legislative regulatory framework.

Of course, it happened in Ontario under Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne. We all know about the Green Energy Act, where favoured companies got big contracts and grants and were able to steamroll through legislation already in place that prevented some projects from going forward.

In essence, the government wants people to buy primary services from it with their tax dollars, with all of the grants going to its chosen companies, again, with some link to government. This is how the power broker class does business, and this is why government had no problem pushing TransCanada out of building the Trans Mountain pipeline. The regulatory burden, the framework, was so much that the company had to give up. The only reason the pipeline was able to be completed is that the government took over the project with endless resources at its backing, which is the tax base, the taxpayers of this country. That is why it got completed: through government control.

If we were in some bizarre world, some upside-down universe where there were windmills in abundance and we were getting a lot of our energy from them, and all of a sudden the government found black goop that came from the ground that was able to power cities and make car engines run faster, it would be in favour of it. It would be in favour of drilling, of fracking, because it would then be the government controlling that industry and that kind of energy.

With the free market, though, if we do not like a service being provided, we take our money and go elsewhere, and because of that dynamic, of course we get competition. Somebody is always trying to innovate a product or service to gain a share of the market. That means that people who are not happy with their current offering always find the path of least resistance; they find something better. That is why, with creativity and competition, we get vibrant innovation.

When a government agency or entity monopolizes a service, we get pre-approved innovation; we always get innovation based on what the government has in mind. There is always a conclusion, and the grants are handed out based on what that conclusion is. If we are lucky, we might get some supersmart people running a department, and innovation is able to happen quicker, but on the whole, if it is left up to politicians, unfortunately innovation comes second.

I think government is not good at running much. If it were, if people say, "Well, maybe government is", I ask what would happen if the government ran the music industry. It would probably stifle all kinds of music that the government does not like.

An hon. member: Would it?

Jamie Schmale: Yeah, it probably would.

Madam Speaker, we would not get the choice; we would not get the innovation. What is good music, right? I bet my taste in music is totally different than that of the member opposite, and that is a good thing. I guarantee that if the government controlled the music industry, we would get what government wants. We would get what the government tells us is music, and that would be unfortunate.

With competition, innovation and the freest of markets, we get better product, better quality and a better price. I think that is lacking in the bill. We do not address that. We are still working on the fact that in order to get fast-track approval, people have to go begging to government, whether they have the right lobbyists or lawyers, in order to get that approval. That is not innovation.

• (1700)

Amandeep Sodhi (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, during the election campaign, my campaign team and I knocked on thousands of doors and heard from many constituents across the riding about how worried they are regarding the economy and Donald Trump's tariffs.

Can our government count on the hon. member's support for Bill C-5?

Jamie Schmale: Madam Speaker, what was clear during the election was that somehow the administration down south, which had been in place for about two months or so, maybe three months, was the focal point of the Liberal campaign. However, Liberals seem to have done a smoke and mirrors show, where the last 10 years of Liberal misery was forgotten about. Unfortunately, now we see the results: Crime is still through the roof, housing is in trouble and the inflation crisis is out of control. We just saw the latest food prices, and the cost of meat is insane right now. All these problems are still here, and they are here because the government is still the same as the one that was here before.

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to give my colleague the opportunity to comment a little more on the Liberal government's misalignment between its virtue-signalling announcements and its project-killing policies.

Jamie Schmale: Madam Speaker, that is a fantastic question. I think that is the essence of all of this. On the one hand, Liberals say, "Let us get things built"; they say that they will get things moving and shovels in the ground. However, at the same time, they have a regulatory framework that currently exists that stifles any of that from happening, while companies that beg the government, are properly connected and maybe, hopefully, even throw a few dollars to the Liberal Party, might even get their project approved.

It happened in Ontario with the Green Energy Act; a whole whack of companies that received projects for wind turbines and solar panels were shown to have donated to the Ontario Liberal Party. I fear, unfortunately, that the framework the Liberals are setting up in Bill C-5 is a dangerous path to take; I do not advise it. That is why we have a free market, where people with the best applications go forward.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we can definitely always innovate more. As the representative for the riding of Waterloo, I can say that we believe in innovation and in competition. There have been other members within the Conserva-

tive Party trying to understand what would happen once the legislation passes. They have been kind of misquoting the Prime Minister as saying that the legislation would actually be removing any federal barriers to interprovincial trade.

Does the member agree we are a federation and that all levels of government would have a role to play to ensure that we have interprovincial trade within Canada that is barrier-free, that all levels would have to pass legislation and that this is the federal aspect?

Jamie Schmale: Madam Speaker, I do agree that interprovincial trade and removing the barriers is a good thing. I do agree that when those barriers are gone, we would be able to create billions of dollars in economic activity right across our country.

The issue here now is the fact that the Prime Minister, during the campaign, talked about getting interprovincial free trade done by Canada Day, and the clock is ticking.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, I wonder if my Conservative colleague would allow himself the same freedom to support the government on a bill like this knowing that, hypothetically, there would be an election within a year, that the next government would be formed by the Green Party and that our Green Party colleague, the leader of this new hypothetical government, would call a halt to all oil development going forward, would put an end to oil and oil subsidies and would lead us in a transition to wind, electric and other alternative energy sources.

If such were the case, would my colleague feel the same degree of pleasure and enthusiasm in supporting a gag order to pass a bill that gives the government and the Prime Minister all the power to decide what must or must not comply with the rules in force?

• (1705)

[English]

Jamie Schmale: Madam Speaker, if I heard the hon. member correctly, I will say that is why market forces demand this kind of thing. Consumption of oil is expected to go up. We have a lot of it; let us get it to market and create jobs, opportunity and wealth right here at home.

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Madam Speaker, as this is my first opportunity to speak and to rise on a bill before the House in the 45th Parliament, I would like to take the opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for the people of Haldimand—Norfolk for putting their trust in me as their representative for a second term. I am truly inspired by the people of Haldimand—Norfolk, and I am truly honoured to be their voice in Parliament.

It is important for Canadians at home to understand the broader context of this bill, Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, which is before the House.

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Before U.S. President Donald Trump took office, the Liberal government was asleep at the wheel. The sweeping tariffs imposed by Trump and his America first policy and his post-Bretton Woods quest, which seeks to upend the international order, while challenging for Canada, are not the sole cause of the current trade problems we now face.

Rather, this disorder has simply uncovered a deep fissure within our nation, which has been caused by a decade of Liberal policies that have left Canada weak and vulnerable. Far from being the maple leaf elbows-up patriots they presented themselves to be, the Liberals have questioned Canada's ethos and have undermined its national sovereignty over the last 10 years. They undermined Canada's sovereignty by diverting billions of taxpayer dollars to green revolution projects through the green slush fund that has been proven to benefit Liberal insiders.

They bet against the oil and gas sector by shutting down pipeline projects while favouring the green investments from foreign, autocratic countries with worse environmental records than Canada. The social fabric of our nation and our society was also eroded during the last 10 years of Liberal leadership, creating disunity and making us vulnerable to external threats.

It is surprising to see the same Liberal Party that attacked our national identity by changing the names of streets, by tearing down statues of national leaders and by removing national heroes like Terry Fox from our passport turn around and put their elbows up and become the flag-bearers of national pride.

We have the third-largest accessible oil reserves on the planet, which we leave untapped. Once it is extracted, it goes almost exclusively to the Americans, who refine it and sell it back to us at a profit. This reality exists because the Liberal government failed to have a vision for future generations of Canadians and instead prioritized its own ideological goals for its own political survival.

The Liberal government has blocked the production of ethical oil in Canada and blocked LNG and oil development from going to international markets. We have failed to build our export capacity, and we have nearly become dependent on the U.S. market. As the G7 meets today on Canadian soil, in the beautiful, resource-rich province of Alberta, we, sadly, have the unfortunate status of being the economy with the worst economic growth.

The world's economic watchdog, the OECD, forecasts that Canada will experience the slowest growth in real GDP per capita among its member countries between now and 2060.

Because of the Trump tariffs and the government's incompetence, workers are losing their jobs. Canadian families are anxious. Communities are shaken. In Haldimand—Norfolk, where I live and in the community I represent, there are thousands of residents who work at the Stelco mill. Stelco is a vital part of our community in terms of jobs, economic activities and business partnerships. Right now, our community is hearing rumours of layoffs, and they are deeply concerned.

The Liberal government had 10 years of power. The current Prime Minister was the economic adviser for a large portion of that time. Liberals wasted the opportunity and resources, and they have left Canada vulnerable as a result.

• (1710)

Conservatives want nation-building projects. We want to see projects accelerated. That is why Conservatives support the intent of this bill. However, the bill takes only baby steps.

I am concerned, and many Canadians are concerned, that the Prime Minister is speaking out of both sides of his mouth. He told premiers that they will have a veto on resource project development and pipelines. The government's environment minister has also been directly questioned on the commitment to build pipelines but could not even utter the word "pipelines". During the election, we had the Prime Minister engaging in doublespeak, saying one thing to one audience in Alberta and saying something completely different in Quebec, so please forgive us Conservatives if we are a bit skeptical that the government's business is not in pipelines. Actually, the bill is an indictment of the Liberals' own anti-resource law.

If we are serious about removing barriers for workers, we need to also give professionals the ability to work across provinces, stop waste and allow international doctors who are qualified to practise rather than driving Ubers. We need access to health care. That is essential, especially in rural communities like Haldimand—Norfolk. We are hearing stories of Canadians waiting for hours in emergency rooms, who are in desperate need of urgent care. More and more we are seeing people dying on wait-lists, unable to get the critical surgeries and treatment they need. Many residents still do not have a family doctor, which means they are not getting timely access to care.

I personally had to intervene in one of these situations and speak to the former immigration minister to help a doctor in Caledonia get paperwork sorted out so that thousands of residents would not be without a family doctor, and so that Dr. Marilyn Robertson in Caledonia could be replaced with a competent doctor from abroad. If this had not happened, many residents would have been left without a family doctor.

There are an extraordinary number of bureaucratic hurdles that people have to go through in order to practise medicine in Canada. The government has missed the opportunity to introduce the Blue Seal standard and get thousands of qualified doctors and nurses working in Canada through passing a sound and rigorous national test.

In conclusion, we, as a nation, have a great and historical opportunity before us. I am full of hope for Canada. We have the potential to be the most prosperous nation on this planet, the freest, the most advanced and the most just nation in the world. That is why Conservatives will always be committed to holding this Liberal government to account and calling for higher standards in service to Canadians. We will support even the small steps to strengthen this nation. Conservatives will keep fighting for a prosperous and sovereign Canada, and we hope the government will do the same.

• (1715)

Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the act before us, the one Canadian economy act, seeks to break down internal trade barriers within our beautiful, great country and also advance national infrastructure projects. I am wondering if we can count on the member's support.

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, I encourage the Liberals to continue stealing our great Conservative ideas.

What is contained in this bill is just baby steps. It shows some initiative, but there is so much more that needs to be done in order to truly break down interprovincial trade barriers. Conservatives encourage the Liberals to take those further steps so that we can get on board.

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have to admit that I am tepid in supporting this bill, because I have seen, over the last 10 years, major announcements by this Liberal government, yet nothing gets done. I am old enough to remember, during the recent election campaign, when the Prime Minister made a promise, and he said that interprovincial trade barriers would be removed by Canada Day, yet we are dealing with a bill to deal with the removal of interprovincial trade barriers.

I know this hon. member has been here for a long time now. Does she share this same sense of tepidness that I have in terms of this government's ability to actually get things done? Are these just more announcements and more of the same?

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, Conservatives would want to see the Liberals absolutely do more and have shovel-ready projects. It is really unfortunate that we had a promise that there would be an elimination of these interprovincial trade barriers by Canada Day, yet here we are still debating this issue. We would like to see this done at a much faster pace, and we would like to see greater steps. Yes, we need to move beyond this rhetoric and actually get this thing done.

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned in her speech that, during the election campaign, the Prime Minister said one thing about oil and gas projects in English for Alberta and another in French for Quebec.

I just want to confirm that she was indeed talking about how, in western Canada, the Prime Minister said in English that he would use his prerogative to authorize projects that he describes as being in the national interest and force them through. Is that actually what he said out west? Also, did he tell Quebecers that he would respect provincial jurisdiction, especially on environmental matters?

Is that what my colleague was talking about?

[English]

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, when we look at both of the statements that were made, they were highly contradictory. Out west, it was, "Yes, we are going to build pipelines. We are going to develop. We are going to have shovel-ready projects." Then when the Liberals went to Quebec, it was, "No, there will be a veto. If you don't want something coming through this province, you can veto it." There was a double standard as to what exactly the Prime

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Minister intends to do with making Canada more internationally competitive and making sure we can have a robust response to these trade barriers.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on her re-election and her coming back to the House.

I am curious to know what the member opposite thinks about the fact that the Conservatives asked for an election, we went to the election, and Canadians gave us a mandate to build one strong Canadian economy. Are the Conservatives opposed to removing the barriers across provinces to increase productivity in Canada, to make sure there are jobs for our young people and to make sure we respond to the mandate that Canadians gave us?

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, I congratulate my hon. friend on her success and victory here also.

The fundamental issue is that these are Conservative ideas. We are not opposed to building one economy and ensuring that interprovincial trade barriers are broken down. That is what we have been advocating for. That is why we have advocated for resource—

• (1720)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We have to resume debate.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue has the floor.

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I hear applause starting already. I would hope they would wait until the end of my speech, but I appreciate it nonetheless.

It is a privilege to rise to participate in this important debate on a landmark piece of legislation, Bill C-5. Our government has a nation-building mandate and a bold and ambitious plan for Canada's future. Our core mission is to build the strongest economy in the G7.

As a country, we are facing new and unprecedented economic challenges. Of course, we know that our sovereignty and economic security are under threat, but Canadians are resilient. We are ambitious. We are ready to think big and undertake a historic economic transformation that can deliver greater prosperity for future generations.

As we know, Canada's relationship with our economic partners is changing. The system of open global trade we have relied on for decades is now weakened and uncertain. Even without the illegal and unjustified tariffs launched and thrust upon us by the United States, it had already been clear for many years that Canada's economy was over-reliant on trade with the United States.

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True, it remains the greatest bilateral economic relationship in the world and, in many ways, the envy of other regions. It is a historic and mutually beneficial relationship that certainly served both countries well and will continue to do so, both out of necessity and under improving terms that I hope are being negotiated as we speak.

The current reality is that diversifying Canada's trade relationships and building a more robust domestic economy have become as important as ever. What has not changed is that Canada has what the world needs and that bilateral trade benefits both parties. This is why the government is working to strengthen its relationships with reliable trading partners and allies around the world while also improving our domestic transport infrastructure, logistics and supply chains to create a more nimble and streamlined economy.

Delivering more of Canada's goods to more parts of the world and being a reliable and ethical source of natural resources for more markets will help build prosperity here at home. At the same time, when it comes to transactions within our borders, the government's goal is to create one Canadian economy instead of 13 as part of our commitment to strengthening internal trade within Canada.

Internal trade is an essential element for the Canadian economy; we all know that. It supports economic competitiveness by creating jobs, helping businesses expand, enhancing consumer choice and increasing Canada's overall economic growth.

As it stands now, internal barriers to trade and labour mobility across Canada cost as much as \$200 billion each year. Therefore, removing those barriers that have held back our economy is critical to unlocking Canada's full economic potential.

Another major aspect of strengthening Canada's economy is to think big and get infrastructure projects of national significance both designed and completed faster. As a country, we need to accelerate the realization of major nation-building projects that will help Canada become the strongest economy in the G7, deepen our trade relationships with reliable partners and create good Canadian jobs. The government's goal is to unleash a new era of growth that will ensure Canada does not just survive ongoing trade disputes but emerges from them even stronger than ever.

This brings me to the proposed legislation we are debating today. Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, is aimed at eliminating federal barriers to trade and labour mobility. It also lays the groundwork to advance nation-building projects that are crucial for driving Canadian productivity growth, energy security and economic competitiveness.

First, the new legislation addresses the goal to create one economy instead of 13. It would remove federal barriers to free trade within Canada's borders while protecting workers, the environment and the health and safety of all Canadians. In cases where there is a federal barrier, the legislation would allow a good or service that meets comparable provincial and territorial rules to be considered to have met federal requirements for internal trade.

• (1725)

For Canadian businesses, this will make it easier to buy, sell and transport goods and services across the country. It sounds simple,

but smooth internal economic flows have been stubbornly impeded for a long time. It is literally the friction in the economy that has been there for quite a number of decades, including under both Conservative and Liberal governments. These internal trade barriers have proven incredibly challenging because, of course, there need to be willing partners in provinces and territories to work on this together. It seems we have the will today as we face the threats that have come from abroad, specifically our southern neighbour. There is a new will from provincial and territorial partners to overcome these internal trade barriers.

The bill would also make it easier to do business across Canada by removing regulatory duplication and cutting federal red tape. It would reduce costs or delays for Canadian businesses that follow comparable provincial and territorial rules by providing a framework to substantially reduce the burden of federal rules that apply to trade across provincial and territorial borders. This, as I said earlier, could add up to \$200 billion in economic activity. It could boost productivity by up to 7% and possibly even reduce prices by as much as 15%. This means that a good or service produced, used or distributed in line with the requirements of a province or territory would be recognized as meeting comparable federal requirements.

For example, a food product that meets one province's organic standards or an appliance that meets provincial energy efficiency standards would be treated as if it meets comparable federal standards. Federal recognition of goods that meet comparable provincial requirements would make it easier for Canadian businesses to sell their products across the country and, in turn, increase consumer choice for Canadians. In addition to tabling Bill C-5, the government is also committed to removing further federal exceptions in the Canadian free trade agreement by July 2025. This will help provide Canadian businesses with greater opportunity to compete across the country.

On the subject of labour mobility, the bill would provide a framework to recognize provincial and territorial licences and certifications for workers. For example, I hear from nurses in my riding of Whitby that they cannot easily have their certifications and licences acknowledged in other jurisdictions across the country; the bill would make it easier for them to work in other parts of the country. This is really good news for nurses and many other health care workers.

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This means that a worker authorized by a provincial or territorial jurisdiction could more quickly and easily, in the same occupation, work in other jurisdictions. It goes without saying that making it easier for workers to get a federal licence by recognizing workers' provincial or territorial credentials for the same job benefits both the workers and the employers by providing more employment opportunities and a broader selection of candidates. It would really increase labour mobility across Canada and widen the pool of candidates for all employers.

The second and equally important aspect of Bill C-5, as I have mentioned, is aimed at unlocking and accelerating major projects of national interest. Such significant nation-building projects can help accelerate Canada's economic growth and create well-paying jobs.

Members might be asking, what are projects of national interest? I can say that they are projects that would make a significant contribution to Canada's prosperity and advance national and economic security and autonomy. They would do this through increased production of energy and goods and the improved movement of goods, services and people throughout Canada. The projects would strengthen access to Canadian resources, goods and services to a diverse group of reliable trade partners. Again, this is all within the national interest, if we think about what we are really focused on here, which is expediting major nation-building projects. They are in the national interest. They would help us increase productivity, help the movement of goods as they flow across the country and help us diversify our trade relationships and access foreign markets.

As some concrete examples, such projects could include highways, railways, ports, airports, oil and gas pipelines, critical minerals and mining projects, nuclear facilities and electricity transmission systems. The idea is that the federal government would determine whether a major project is in the national interest, again, based on consultations with provinces and territories, and it would only be designated following full consultation with affected indigenous people. Indeed, the government is already working closely with provinces and territories and indigenous peoples to identify and operationalize such projects.

The intention is for projects to be evaluated on whether they meet all the following criteria. I will reiterate them for those who may need a reminder. A project should strengthen Canada's autonomy, resilience and security; provide economic or other benefits to Canada; have a high likelihood of successful execution; advance the interests of indigenous peoples; and contribute to clean growth and to Canada's objectives with respect to climate change. I realize that is a high standard. However, when we come together as a nation, as we have seen over the last few weeks with the Prime Minister's meeting with first ministers, there seems to be a real excitement to build big things in Canada again, to get big things done for the good of the country and to stand up for our economic security and sovereignty.

When a project is designated, it would be conditionally approved up front, which is a very unique and significant change to how we have done things in the past. There would still be existing review processes, but the government's aim is to strike co-operation agreements with every interested province and territory within six months to realize the end goal of one project, one review. This means realizing a single assessment for projects, better coordina-

tion of permitting processes with the provinces and territories and streamlining of multiple decision points for federal approval to minimize uncertainty for proponents, which is very important. Our economy has been riddled with uncertainty, based on the threats that we have been experiencing.

At the PM's economic growth caucus, we had our major banks' chief economists come, and every one of them said the main word that they think represents where Canada is right now is "uncertainty". There is investor uncertainty. It is hard for the bank officials to project what is going to happen. There is a lot of uncertainty out there, so this is our way of reducing that uncertainty. The goal is to send a clear early signal to build investor confidence and start investment in construction faster.

● (1730)

The ultimate objective is to reduce decision-making timelines on major projects down to two years. That is a significant improvement, whereas it has taken, in some cases, five years or even more. Getting it down to two years is ambitious, but I think it is good to be ambitious. When governing a country through a crisis, we need to be ambitious. We need to get big things built. We need to overcome these internal trade barriers. We need to expedite these large, nation-building projects.

A federal major projects office would coordinate and expedite these reviews, and it would include an indigenous advisory council with first nation, Inuit and Métis representatives. The results of the reviews would inform a single set of binding federal conditions for the project. We are essentially pulling all of the requirements into one, almost like a term sheet or a document that says it is approved based on all of these conditions.

That would make it significantly easier for proponents to go through the approval process, because they would have everything in one place. They would have one window, one office to work through, a streamlined process, and a will from the federal government to essentially get things done, instead of proponents feeling like there are all of these hurdles to jump through. These conditions would also include mitigation and accommodation measures to protect the environment and to respect the rights of indigenous peoples.

As we heard from His Majesty King Charles III last month, "When Canadians come together, Canada builds things that last." As the Prime Minister has said, "It's time to build big, build bold, and build now." After all, our country and economic security are under threat.

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At this time, I would like to commend the numerous premiers who have already taken vital steps to break down provincial and territorial barriers to trade. This new legislation is aligned with those efforts to accelerate the mutual recognition of rules and regulations.

Earlier this month in Saskatoon, first ministers acknowledged the significant progress that has been made toward removing internal trade barriers and further facilitating the movement of goods, services and workers across the country. They also recognize that there is more work to do, and they are committed “to unlock multi-lateral, economy-wide mutual recognition and labour mobility”. That is their commitment. I think it is great. We are working together. For the first time in my 47 years, I have seen provinces and territories and the federal government aligned to work together. That is a great thing to see. I think we should all be very proud of that. They also agreed on the urgency of building major projects that produce and connect clean and conventional energy, goods and services to markets across Canada and the globe.

Likewise, on June 11, the Minister of Finance and National Revenue convened a virtual meeting with provincial and territorial finance ministers to advance shared priorities and strengthen Canada's economic resilience. The Minister of Finance and National Revenue welcomed the growing momentum among provinces and territories to reduce internal trade barriers and unlock the full potential of the Canadian economy, in line with the federal government's nation-building agenda. In keeping with the positive and optimistic tone of both meetings, the finance ministers agreed to remain in close contact in the weeks ahead and keep driving momentum to build the strongest economy in the G7.

On the subject of building things, the government is also going to undertake a series of measures to help double the rate of home-building while catalyzing a new housing industry in Canada. This will help to meet growing housing demand while strengthening the construction sector. At the same time, I would be remiss if I did not point out or put in a plug for Bill C-4, which is also before Parliament right now. This bill would eliminate the GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes at or under \$1 million and reduce GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

This tax cut would save Canadians up to \$50,000, allowing more young people and families, like the ones in my riding, to enter the housing market and realize the dream of home ownership. By cutting the GST, as proposed in Bill C-4, Canadians would face lower upfront housing costs and keep more money in their pockets. It would also have a dynamic effect on increasing supply, spurring the construction of new homes all across the country.

● (1735)

Back to the legislation at hand, Bill C-5 comes at a time when there is a consensus on the urgent need to strengthen the Canadian economy and make it easier for businesses and Canadians to trade goods and services by removing barriers. It takes all levels of government to make that happen. The spirit of co-operation in the face of adversity, which we have seen in recent months, is one of the things that built this country. It keeps it strong today, but it can become even stronger. I think we have come a long way as a country.

We have built railroads. We have built great things before. Obviously, we want to build big things again. We want to build big, bold and beautiful. That is going to make us a stronger country.

The one Canadian economy act includes legislative proposals to remove federal internal trade barriers and advance national interest projects. It provides a framework to strengthen the Canadian economy, diversify our trade relations and increase domestic productivity, resilience and competitiveness. I encourage all hon. members in this House to support this important piece of legislation. It will make Canada stronger. We have the best country in the world, there is no doubt, but we can always build a stronger country.

I think it matters that we have the will to work together in this House across party lines. I know that Conservative members and all members of this House want to build big things in this country. They want major projects. They want to build a stronger economy. I think that, deep down inside, they want to preserve our environment for future generations. They want to ensure that indigenous communities can be equity partners in major projects. I think these things are core to the Canadian values that we have. I know they are core to our Liberal values on this side.

I feel very proud to be standing here as part of a government that is advancing legislation to build the strongest economy in the G7. I certainly stand for that. I will keep fighting for that. My constituents voted for me and for that vision. I am really happy to be here and participating in this debate. I look forward to all members' support of this legislation as we move forward.

● (1740)

David Bexte (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think that, without a doubt, the oil and gas industry is probably the most nimble high-value and high-impact industry that can react to an opportunity, yet the lost Liberal decade was the result of the same obstructionist members from the previous 10 years who, by and large, still reside in the front bench across the aisle. They would like us to believe they can conduct a ballet pirouette that would put Karen Kain to shame and allow projects to proceed all of a sudden.

A project like northern gateway hit all the high points. Does the member opposite think that it would qualify?

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, Canada has so much to offer the world. It really does. I know that the members opposite tend to focus on pipelines and conventional energy, but Canada has so many advantages around the world. Our agricultural industry is a source of pride for us. Our critical mineral and mining industry is very much a source of pride for us.

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Quebec and many other parts of the country have a strength in AI, which can augment and enhance productivity across industries. Business models can achieve a lot more and productivity gains can be had. The clean-tech industry, which I am obviously privy to, has a really large strength in Canada. We punch well above our weight. We have a lot to gain with a lot of possibilities.

I certainly respect the members opposite for wanting to advocate for conventional energy, but I think we must understand that we need a balanced—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Mirabel.

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge my friend, the parliamentary secretary who said this morning in committee that the Liberals feel that they are right to impose a gag order, cut short debate, fail to send the bill to committee and short-circuit all the work of Parliament because they indicated on the first page of their platform that they intended to introduce a bill on free trade within Canada.

For the Liberals, the fact that there is a line about this in their platform and that there was an election that delivered them a minority is enough to diminish the importance of work in the House to improve the bill. What other items in the Liberal platform are so important that the Liberals could plan to pass them under a gag order after only a few weeks of sittings and thereby deny democracy?

I would like my colleague to give me a list of what other items in their platform are so important so that we know what to expect in the coming months.

[English]

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, it is great to receive a question from my hon. colleague, with whom I have served on multiple committees. I look forward to collaborating with him further. He always asks really good questions.

We are having a rigorous debate on this piece of legislation. I think it is a very important piece of legislation, and it is time-sensitive, given the threats to our economic security. Canada and Canadians voted in a government that had a platform in the last election based on building Canada strong. This particular piece of legislation would help us reduce those internal trade barriers and boost our economy through reducing red tape and deregulating on behalf of Canadians. At the same time, we are moving forward on expediting major projects. That is going to help get goods to market. It is going to help us generate more revenue for our businesses and grow our economy. That is good for Canadians. It is good for workers—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the member for Bay of Quinte.

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the parliamentary secretary has extensive experience and background in the field of sustainable development and environmental issues. We have heard some questions regarding the period of consultation on major projects. I wonder if he can explain for the House how the new bill, Bill C-5, addresses those concerns and whether he is confident that the time frame for the consultations is adequate.

• (1745)

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's question and his reference to something that is a core commitment for me, which is to build a sustainable economy in Canada. I think this bill tries to strike a balance between where we are at as a country, having to move much faster, and also trying to balance that with protecting what we hold as core values on this side, which is to protect our environment. We need to ensure that we have projects and a major project list that contribute to our climate commitments and help Canada take advantage of the clean growth opportunities, but also have mitigation measures, accommodations and adaptations that can be built into the core requirements of any project.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously, as Conservatives, we believe in moving forward and building Canada. I am curious to know if there would be a public list of eligible projects that qualify under this legislation.

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. I am glad the member asked it.

My understanding is that the major projects office would have a list that is developed in consultation with provinces and territories. Obviously, that list is not necessarily formulated yet, because I am not sure that all of the major projects have been vetted or evaluated due to the five-point criteria I mentioned in my speech.

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat my question because it is important.

According to the Liberals, the fact that this was part of their election platform is enough to keep Parliament from doing its job. That alone is enough to short-circuit democracy.

I trust my colleague and his ability to answer the question accurately. What other items on the Liberal election platform does he believe are so urgent and so important that it is worth short-circuiting Parliament and preventing us from doing our democratic work here in the House? What else is on the list? What items on the Liberal platform are more important than democracy and the fact that opposition members were also elected in the last federal election?

[English]

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, as always, I know my colleague asks good questions. We often disagree at committee, and I know we can disagree in this House. That is part of what it means to be a democracy.

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We are not short-circuiting democracy. This legislation has been tabled in this House. We are debating it today. We have debated it on other days. It will be referred to committee. That is my understanding. The process is important, but it is also important to balance that with the moment we are in. We have a short window to get this bill through Parliament. We want to see major projects and see those internal trade barriers come down. That is important in order to respond to the moment of crisis we are in, where our sovereignty and economic security are under threat.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the election was not that long ago. Canadians, including those in the riding of Waterloo, were really concerned and commented about the one Canadian economy. It was a message that was quite well received. We know that premiers are onside.

Today we are having this debate, and the NDP is basically not even present while the Bloc is choosing to oppose the legislation but is not providing any amendments. The Conservatives are supporting it, yet are giving speeches as if they oppose it.

Could the member tell us what the benefits of this legislation are, and could he also reiterate the difference between federal inter-provincial trade barriers and provincial ones?

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, there is a lot in that question, and I thank the hon. member, for whom I have the utmost respect, for asking it. I have served on committees with the member, and she is always insightful.

There are many benefits in this legislation. Obviously, increased labour mobility is key, but so are all kinds of cost benefits and the possibility of boosting productivity and decreasing prices for Canadians, which I know we are all concerned with. As well, there is the cost of living challenges, which I know my constituents and, I am sure, all residents in Canada are concerned about.

We could also get major projects built a lot faster and give investors confidence to mobilize the capital that is needed. We could do big things with timelines that matter, within a short period of time, four or five years, which is fantastic. Canadians could actually realize the benefits of major projects as we move forward.

There is much more I could talk about, but I think that is probably all I have time for right now.

• (1750)

Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Souris—Moose Mountain.

I stand today to discuss Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, a piece of legislation introduced on June 6. The free trade and labour mobility in Canada act and the building Canada act seek to unify Canada's economy by removing barriers to interprovincial trade and expediting major infrastructure projects.

The bill has generated a tremendous amount of feedback from the residents of Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt. I have received dozens of emails from people concerned that the government will manage to turn this initiative from something it claims would be good for northern Ontario into a mess. We have seen the Liberal government, time after time, introduce policies and pro-

grams that it claimed would help the economy, and instead, they had the opposite effect. I must say that I share that view. Bill C-5 should be a step toward economic growth and prosperity for all northern Ontarians, including indigenous people, but I do not have a lot of confidence that the Liberals will get this right.

The Liberal government's approach to this issue raises important questions about balance. Let us explore a few of its key components and the broader context it aims to address.

Part 1 of Bill C-5 is designed to create one Canadian economy out of 13. Canada's economy has long been hampered by inter-provincial trade barriers, which cost our economy approximately \$200 billion per year in lost economic growth. Barriers ranging from differing provincial regulations to restrictions on labour mobility have created disadvantages in our markets, making it harder for goods, services and workers to move freely across provincial and territorial lines. These barriers cannot continue if we are to compete in international markets today. For example, skilled Canadian workers, some who have decades of experience and training, are prevented from working in their fields from province to province. These types of regulations need to stop if we are to grow our economy and improve our productivity.

Bill C-5 should be a practical step toward streamlining trade and enhancing labour mobility, which could boost productivity and competitiveness in Canada. Although I support the notion that all Canadians should be able to ply their trade in any province, the devil is in the details. The Liberal government has not laid out how we are to achieve these goals. How will it get all provinces to sign on to these changes? The bill itself does not lay out the plan to achieve these goals of labour mobility. Will the bill, which allows labour mobility, stand up to legal challenges from provinces and other stakeholders who may not want to see this type of policy implemented? I am not sure the government knows the answer to that question.

I also want to take a minute to discuss the free movement of goods and products between provinces. Provinces have a combined total of about 600 professional credentialing bodies that regulate goods and services within their borders. These barriers exist in virtually every industry. Alcohol, dairy and many agricultural products are subject to these barriers. For instance, some products need to be inspected when they enter a province, even though they were previously inspected in their province of origin. It is these types of regulations that end up costing producers, and ultimately consumers, more money.

• (1755)

Part 2 of the bill, the building Canada act, focuses on fast-tracking nation-building infrastructure projects, such as pipelines, power lines and renewable energy initiatives. By streamlining federal government processes, the bill aims to reduce approval timelines from five years to two years. This part of the bill is particularly significant for my riding and across northern Ontario. Energy security and economic competitiveness in the global market, especially in the mining industry, are critical to the future of our communities.

We have all heard people speak about the vast resources of the Ring of Fire. The Ring of Fire is a massive mineral deposit that contains many components crucial to our modern industries, billions of dollars of minerals beneath our feet that could improve the living standards for all of northern Ontario, including indigenous people. The people of my riding would greatly benefit from the Ring of Fire project. Would the Ring of Fire be deemed a nation-building project? The people of northern Ontario deserve to know this.

I also have some concerns that the bill would empower the federal government to issue a single authorization document covering multiple permits, but it has not laid out a concrete timeline in the bill. There has been no discussion or list of what projects would be deemed as nation-building projects. Who would have input into this list? What would be the criteria to demand a nation-building project?

One of my biggest concerns is that the bill would give a tremendous amount of power to the ministers' offices and the Prime Minister's Office. We have all seen what can happen when too much power is put in the hands of a few Liberal ministers and the Prime Minister's Office. We could very well face a situation where there would be a high degree of political interference by Liberal insiders and decisions made on ideological grounds instead of what is good for the economy and the people of Canada. There must be openness and transparency in this process.

For instance, Liberals claim they will ensure consultation with indigenous people, but there is no definition of what that means or how that process would unfold. On this side of the House, our shadow critics have argued that the bill could be simplified by broadly eliminating project-blocking laws rather than creating exemptions. The elimination of Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 would be a good start. They could also look at removing the industrial carbon tax, which would help industries invest in new environmental technologies and growth.

Private sector companies need certainty, and the fact that this bill would sunset or be reviewed in five years does not give them the long-term certainty they are looking for. If companies are going to invest billions of dollars and create jobs, wealth and prosperity for the people of Canada, they need to know what the government is doing long-term.

Conservatives have long been advocating for the following measures to achieve energy security and a strong economy. We need shovel-ready economic zones. We need to scrap the cap on oil and gas, repeal Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, axe the industrial carbon tax and remove unrealistic and punitive electricity regulations. If the Liberal government is serious about standing up for Canada and not

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having us totally reliant on the U.S., then it will do all of these things.

In conclusion, Canada needs giant steps. Bill C-5 is a baby step that would not completely address the issues that have been created by the totally misguided policies of the Liberal government over the last decade.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member opposite to the House.

Earlier, one of his colleagues mentioned that they support, in theory, the idea of building one strong Canadian economy and removing the barriers. Why are Conservatives opposed to supporting the bill?

• (1800)

Jim Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, I would say to my colleague opposite that it is nice to hear the Liberals copying policies from the Conservatives, but it is not going far enough. We would like to do more, a lot more. What the Liberals announced is a baby step, not a breakthrough, even though the Prime Minister said himself that Canada is in a crisis.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the member's tone tonight. During the last 10 years, we have seen the Trudeau government bring in policy after policy: Bill C-69, Bill C-48, the energy cap proposal and, on top of that, the energy regulations. We said at the time that the Liberals are making it difficult for private capital to form in the country for these big projects because of uncertainty.

The new Liberal government has put forward Bill C-5, which basically says that the whole system the Trudeau government put in place was completely over the top and has chased everything away. I know the member has talked about getting rid of some of these other things. Which would he prefer, Bill C-5 or for the government to address the awful regulatory environment created under the 10 years of the previous government?

Jim Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague said, the bill is an admission that Liberal laws are barriers to development. The way to unleash Canadian resources is to remove antidevelopment laws that block projects, such as Bill C-69, Bill C-48, the oil and gas cap and the industrial carbon tax.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hear some of the hon. member's concerns. It is interesting. The member referred to the same product needing to be looked at twice when it is coming out of a province and going into a province and so forth. I think sometimes things happen, and when it comes to the security of the country and its people, it is important that we take all measures.

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Does the member recognize that the federal government is advancing this legislation to get rid of barriers to interprovincial trade at the federal level and that provinces also have work to do? Will he be working with the provincial government to ensure that Ontario products can make it across this country?

Jim Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, as we have seen, there are a lot of regulations among provinces that are very different, and they all need to come together. I am not sure how the Liberal government would get that done, because we have seen in the past that it takes it a while to admit that it got things wrong, as it did with immigration. The Liberals said it took them a while to figure that out and that they did not quite get it right.

Conservatives want Canada to compete and achieve true economic and energy security. That means shovel-ready—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Foothills.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was here in 2017 when the Liberals touted their Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which had more pages of exemptions than it had of things where interprovincial trade barriers were removed.

The Prime Minister is at it again. He says that we will have free trade in Canada by July 1, and now Liberal members are quantifying that by provincial and federal. Would the member say this is just another example of the Liberals saying one thing and doing something completely different, over-promising and under-delivering?

Jim Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, yes, I would say the Liberals say one thing and then do another thing or take a very long time to achieve anything.

• (1805)

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a nation rich in resources, talent and opportunity. From potash to petroleum, from uranium to wheat, our country has what the world needs, yet our potential is being held back, not by people or the land but by federal policies that make it harder to build and grow. As we debate Bill C-5, the so-called building Canada act, we must ask whether this legislation fixes what is broken or merely patches over the cracks.

This bill acknowledges that Canada's regulatory system has become a barrier to progress, but instead of fixing the system for everyone, it offers a shortcut for a chosen few. In my riding of Souris—Moose Mountain, we do not just talk about resource development; we live it. Our oil fields, potash mines and farmers provide food, fuel and fertilizer to Canadians and our global partners. We understand that development must be responsible, but also possible.

This bill claims it would fast-track national interest projects, but what qualifies as national interest remains undefined. Who decides, based on what and for how long? The answers are not in this legislation, and that is part of the problem.

Clause 5 of the bill would allow cabinet to designate certain projects for special treatment, but the criteria are vague, the process is opaque and the project list is not even public. That raises serious questions about transparency, fairness and accountability. What is more, the so-called fast-track powers expire in five years. That is not a solution. That is an admission that the government does not

believe in its own regulatory framework. If it did, it would not need exemptions, and that is what this bill is, an exemption. It is not a reform or a replacement, and it would not streamline the system for its investors. It picks winners. It does not restore confidence in Canada's regulatory framework; it dodges it.

This is not how we build national prosperity. This is how we sow regional division, because when some projects leapfrog the process while others languish, people start to lose faith, not just in the system but in the fairness of our country. We have seen what happens when politics trumps policy. Major infrastructure projects are cancelled, pipelines are stalled and billions of dollars in investment are lost. That is not progress; that is paralysis.

Bill C-5 would do nothing to prevent activist litigation or inter-governmental obstruction. There is no mechanism in the bill to protect approved projects from being blocked after the fact and no real incentive for provinces or regulators to speed up their approvals. What is the point of declaring a project in the national interest if we cannot ensure it gets built?

Let us talk about timelines. The government says it wants projects approved within two years, but the bill would not in any way legislate a deadline. There is no guarantee and no enforcement. That means more uncertainty for project proponents. Let us contrast that with the United States, where certain federal energy projects are approved within 30 days. That is what it means to get serious about competitiveness.

Here in Canada, we say we are in a crisis, but we act like we are not. The Minister of Natural Resources himself said there is no investment certainty in Canada, but who created that problem? The Liberals have been in power for nearly a decade. Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and layers of overlapping regulation did not appear overnight. They were built piece by piece by the government.

Now we are told to celebrate not a fix but a workaround. What Conservatives are calling for is simple: to make Canada competitive again. Let us repeal the broken laws, create shovel-ready zones, cap review times to one year, fast-track permitting through a single, reliable process and, yes, use section 92(10) of the Constitution to declare major projects like pipelines and transmission corridors to the general advantage of Canada. That is how we ensure that national interest is not held hostage to provincial politics or activist pressures.

We also need to address labour mobility. We have thousands of foreign-trained doctors, nurses and engineers who could fill shortages all across the country but cannot work due to a patchwork of credentialing rules. A Conservative government would implement a blue seal standard, modelled after the Red Seal for trades, that would allow professionals to practise across Canada if they meet national standards. This bill could have included that. It did not. It is another missed opportunity.

I would like to share a story of a couple I met in Estevan. They run a small oil field service company. They are honest, hard-working and deeply committed to their community. They told me their biggest challenge is not financing or labour; it is uncertainty. They never know when the new rules from Ottawa will change everything. They want to invest, expand and hire, but not if the ground keeps shifting beneath them.

● (1810)

That uncertainty is echoed across this country. It is in mining, forestry, clean energy and even nuclear, where world-leading projects in Saskatchewan remain stuck in regulatory limbo. Bill C-5 offers no assurance that things will get better, only that some projects and some companies might get lucky. Dr. Jack Mintz warned that without regulatory certainty, capital will flow elsewhere, and that is exactly what we are seeing.

Investors are not waiting for us to get our act together. They are putting their money where approvals are predictable, often south of the border, and while Canada stalls, the U.S. moves. While we hold consultations, they build. While we argue over definitions, they approve projects in weeks, not years. We are falling behind, not because of a lack of resources or workers, but because we lack a government willing to make the hard choices.

Let me summarize our concerns. This bill leaves too much power in the hands of cabinet; lacks clear criteria for project selection; has no enforceable timelines; invites legal challenges; offers no protection against future political interference; sunsets in five years, offering no long-term certainty; and picks a few winners instead of fixing the system for all. Canadians deserve better. They deserve a regulatory system that is fast, fair and final. They deserve to know that when a project is approved, it will be built. They deserve leadership that does not just manage decline, but believes in building something greater.

Conservatives will continue to support projects that grow our economy, strengthen our sovereignty and create opportunity for all Canadians. We will work with any party to pursue real reforms, not just symbolic gestures. We will always stand up for the people who power our nation, from Estevan to Arcola, from potash miners to oil field welders, because we believe in their future and we will fight for it.

In Souris—Moose Mountain, we take great pride in being builders. Whether it is potash operations around Rocanville, oil wells of the Bakken formation or the grain and cattle operations that dot the landscape, we are a region that contributes to the economic backbone of this country. However, increasingly, people in my constituency are telling me they feel their efforts are being undercut by policy decisions made in Ottawa that fail to reflect the reality on the ground. They ask me this: Why does it take years to ap-

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prove something that should be straightforward? Why are we losing investment to the United States and elsewhere when we have the resources and expertise to get things done here? Why does the government keep announcing grand frameworks that never seem to translate into shovels in the ground or jobs in our communities?

Bill C-5 should have been the answer to those questions, but it is not. Instead, it is a narrowly tailored mechanism that selects a few special projects for acceleration without addressing the fundamental problems that hold the rest of the country back. It creates a two-tier system: one for the politically favoured and one for everyone else.

What Canada needs is a one-tier system that works for all, for everyone in every region. We need a system that respects the regulatory rigour that our environment and indigenous people deserve, but one that does so in a way that is efficient, transparent and accountable. We need to stop creating special lanes and start fixing the entire road.

Our caucus has put forward common-sense proposals that would accomplish exactly that: a one-year cap on project approvals, a six-month fast-track option for strategic projects, transparent national standards that recognize provincial authority, and the repeal of burdensome laws, like Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, that have made it nearly impossible to build anything of consequence. In short, we want Canada to be a country where great ideas get built, where workers get hired and where prosperity is not an accident, but is the result of deliberate, focused policy choices that support growth rather than stifle it.

It is not about ideology; it is about practicality. A strong resource sector helps pay for hospitals, schools, roads and the public services we rely on across the country. It supports jobs in urban and rural communities alike. When done right, it positions Canada as a responsible leader in global energy and environmental standards. Canadians do not just want a government that points at a few shiny projects and says, "Look what we did"; they want a government that builds a system that works reliably and consistently for all.

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● (1815)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments. I do not necessarily agree with them, but I agree that the Conservative Party has recognized the value of this legislation. It was part of the Prime Minister's election platform, and we very much appreciate that the Conservatives voted for us to get it passed by Friday. I think that is a very good thing.

We hear a lot of criticism coming from the Conservatives. Does the member have any specific amendment he would like to see that he believes would improve the legislation?

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, I would love to see Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 repealed.

Scott Anderson (Vernon—Lake Country—Monashee, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have spent 10 years building walls around the Canadian economy, and Conservatives have been asking them to tear them down. The Liberals have thrown Bill C-5 as a sort of rope ladder over the walls, and the Conservatives vote for it. The Liberals' take from this, apparently, is that if we voted for the rope ladder, we must love the walls. I am wondering if the member could explain to the Liberals why we would vote for the rope ladder and still not like the walls.

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, there are so many things wrong with Bill C-5, but as Conservatives, we are just so happy the Liberals are finally doing something about anything. We have spent so many years with them stopping every single project that was proposed in this country. It is basically like a non-tariff trade barrier imposed on our own industries right here in Canada because of our federal laws. This is something that has to stop, but we are glad to see they are actually trying to get at least something done.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member and I have worked together, so I am glad to see him in this place. I know he has served at the provincial level, and it is exciting to be able to work with him at the federal level. We were on the tourism file together, so I know he is a champion for his province, and I try to fight for Ontario as the proud member of Parliament for the riding of Waterloo.

As I listen to the member's speech, I hear his concerns. I think it is important we get this legislation advanced, even if it is only a step, as the Conservatives are saying, in the right direction. I do think another step will be to ensure provinces are doing their part to ensure each of our provinces is able to showcase the best of our products across the country. I know there is stuff in Saskatchewan that Ontario would love, and I am sure vice versa.

Will the member be working with the provincial government, especially with his provincial experience, to ensure there are no barriers in Canada by Canada Day?

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, just by the structure of this bill, there is no chance there will be no trade barriers by Canada Day in inter-provincial trade. I had the privilege of working on the CFTA with the members opposite. Basically, we got a whole bunch of exemptions, put them together in a package and called it a Canadian internal free trade agreement. This is something the Conservatives are not looking to repeat. We want free trade for all, for everyone. It

would unleash our economies and make Canada one of the most powerful countries we could ever imagine.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague if he is aware of the dealings that took place between the Liberals and the Conservatives prior to the vote on Bill C-5.

What did the Conservatives have to hand over to the Liberals to convince them to adopt their game plan, their agenda? What did the Liberals give the Conservatives in exchange for their support of this gag order that is interfering with democracy? These are the questions that keep me awake at night.

We exactly was said? Why are Quebec and Canada in this situation? How much did it cost?

[English]

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives believe energy projects in this country that are responsibly developed and follow the regulations and rules should be allowed to go forward. We can power our economy. We can use that money to invest in our schools, hospitals and roads, and make Canada one of the strongest countries in the G7, if not the strongest country in the G7. I know the Conservatives have a lot of disagreements with the Liberals on this, but one thing I can say for sure is that Conservatives want to see Canada prosper.

● (1820)

[Translation]

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Beauport—Limouilou.

I am a little confused today. I am a new MP, and I naively thought that the debates in the House were meant to advance better policies for all Quebecers and Canadians. I have come to realize that, unfortunately, they are instead being used as an opportunity to doggedly criticize everything the government puts forward. Over here, we have Conservatives saying that the bill does not go far enough. They want carte blanche. Over there, we have Bloc members saying that we are going too far and that we, the Liberals, are the ones who want carte blanche. Maybe what that really means is that we have hit the sweet spot for getting projects of national interest off the ground while staying on track to meet our climate targets and fulfill our commitment and obligations to indigenous peoples.

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What is clear is that Canada must assert itself as a confident and independent nation that is capable of building, producing and trading on its own terms. The trade actions taken by our closest partner have made it clear that our economic prosperity cannot depend on another country's decisions. We are at a critical juncture that will determine the economic future of our children and grandchildren. Now is the time to harness the potential of Canada's rich natural resources, industrial innovation and internal trade, and to invest in the infrastructure that we need to move forward. Now is the time to move forward with projects of national interest that will drive economic transformation.

We are ready to work with provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous partners to eliminate delays and make responsible decisions. Bill C-5 will help get projects built that will produce and transport energy, goods and services from coast to coast to coast. These projects will focus on infrastructure to facilitate trade and get goods and services to the people who need them.

For example, by speeding up project approvals, the legislation would help Canadian farmers who have state-of-the-art equipment to irrigate their fields but lack the access roads and infrastructure needed to get their agricultural products to market. It will also help streamline regulatory processes and cut costs, which will leave more money in the pockets of hard-working Canadian families, workers and communities. This is why we were elected: to make life more affordable.

Investing in infrastructure that facilitates trade and supports the movement of people and goods across Canada is good economic policy. That is why we have already invested in the national trade corridors fund, a \$2.3-billion fund to support infrastructure projects that improve the flow of goods and people within Canada and to international markets. It has already funded 81 projects and supported trade-enabling infrastructure projects, including access roads, railways, airports and ports, to ease bottlenecks and create more efficient and fluid trade corridors.

We also created the Canada public transit fund, which has an annual budget of \$3 billion. These investments support the creation of transit-oriented communities to help attract investment, encourage housing construction near employment hubs and reduce traffic congestion. This can improve the flow of goods in and out of urban centres, particularly near ports, rail terminals and industrial areas. By supporting the development and modernization of public transit systems, this fund is helping to increase labour mobility and attract workers to urban centres, particularly to give them access to jobs in the logistics and service manufacturing sectors, promote trade, and contribute to economic growth.

There has never been a better time to diversify Canada's trade. As we have seen, we need to be able to rely on trustworthy partners. We need to be able to diversify our exports. Our entrepreneurs and businesses have been trying to do so for a long time, and they are finding it difficult. We all need to work together to help them out. The federal government's export diversification strategy already aims to expand Canada's reach by increasing overseas exports by 50% this year.

• (1825)

With a total of 15 free trade agreements with 49 countries, 36 foreign investment promotion and protection agreements and many other negotiations under way around the world, we are well positioned to strengthen our trade alliances and partnerships and create new ones to usher in a new era of economic growth and prosperity for Canadians.

Canada needs to build new critical infrastructure at a pace not seen in generations. We need to support the highways, railways, ports and airports that will power our economy. We need to support our farmers and get our agricultural products to market. We need to facilitate the flow of people, lumber and other goods while catalyzing the housing industry and building more homes faster. We also need to support Canada's many key industries, including both clean and conventional energy, and connect them to global markets. We did not ask to withdraw from our partnership with the United States, but the world is changing rapidly in the face of shifting geopolitics. If we want to be at the forefront, we need to build faster, smarter and with greater certainty. By becoming our own best ally, we can strengthen our national sovereignty and build the strongest economy in the G7.

Bill C-5 will let us seize the opportunity before us. It will let us invest in critical trade-related infrastructure that makes it easier for goods and people to move within Canada. It will streamline regulatory processes to speed up project approvals and reduce duplication and costs. It will improve trade corridors to diversify and strengthen Canada's trade relationships. It will also support labour mobility so that skilled workers can go where they are needed the most. That is what creating one Canadian economy is all about.

To grasp this opportunity, we need to use every tool at our disposal. Not only do we have everything the world needs, we have everything the world wants: Apart from our natural resources, the world needs Canadian values. These are not the values of a single party, but the values of Canadians and Quebecers. These are the values at the core of Bill C-5. We are a resilient people, unafraid of big projects. For proof, look anywhere in Canada, from Labrador to Nunavut to British Columbia.

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This is a time to be proud. The fact is, Quebecers and Canadians have spoken, and they are ready. They are ready for Canada to take its rightful place. They are ready to take charge and achieve great things. Bill C-5 offers our generation a unique opportunity to transform 13 economies into a single Canadian economy and make Canada the strongest economy in the G7. I truly hope that we can put partisanship aside, put the sound bites aside and get down to the real work of passing this bill.

Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague. We are talking about trade corridors within Canada, we are talking about 13 provinces and we are talking about indigenous peoples. How will the government be able to do all that while ensuring that it respects the laws of each of the provinces and, above all, the rights of indigenous peoples?

Caroline Desrochers: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question. Consensus is at the heart of the criteria being put forward in this bill. I could go over the criteria, but I do not want to take up all my time.

The bill recognizes that meaningful partnership and consultation with indigenous peoples are essential to creating projects of national interest while maintaining strong environmental protections and advancing our climate goals.

[English]

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talked about consensus. When I read Bill C-5 and then I see what the Prime Minister has said publicly, that each provincial premier will be able to have an effective veto, that to me does not say one national economy. It actually enshrines 13 different economies, based on the preferences of each premier.

Can the member opposite simply comment on the consensus part being a complete contradiction to the whole aim of the legislation for one national economy?

• (1830)

Caroline Desrochers: Mr. Speaker, I would really encourage my colleague to go back and read the project. Consensus is at the heart of the criteria that have been put forward. The premiers of all the provinces and territories have met. There has never been, in recent history, such collaboration among provinces and territories on this, and consensus on what needs to be put forward. The premiers are representing the citizens of their provinces and their territories, and consensus is at the heart of the project.

My colleague can read the five criteria that are in the project: reinforcement of autonomy, resilience and security; clear economic advantages; ability to be executed; priority for indigenous people; and being in line with our commitments on climate neutrality.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her election.

I listened to her speech and she seems enthusiastic about this bill. However, I would like to know what she thinks about the fact that her leader decided on many of the measures without adopting a budget. The defence budget is going up, spending is going up and taxes are going down, which seems somewhat inconsistent.

What is more, with Bill C-5, the Prime Minister is giving himself quite a few powers. He can decide what projects are of national interest and will not be subject to the applicable rules and criteria. All this authoritarianism is being implemented under a gag order without the bill being studied in committee, without us being able to hear from experts and study this bill.

I wonder what my colleague thinks of that, as a new member in the House of Commons. Does she think this is the right way to manage the affairs of a so-called democratic country?

Caroline Desrochers: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

I am disappointed that people keep repeating the same slogans about the closure motion. Bill C-5 very clearly indicates that for all projects, there will be consultations with the provinces and indigenous peoples, that we will work together to build consensus and that it is projects of national interest that will be implemented.

I think that Quebecers and Canadians are looking forward to being proud of their country and seeing us move forward and develop projects. Quebecers are not afraid of major projects. Just look at all the big dams they have built in the past few decades to be a leader in green energy and in contributing their efforts.

Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate today on Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act. This bill will enable us to remove federal barriers to the internal flow of goods and services and to labour mobility, while continuing to protect the health, safety and security of Canadians, their social and economic well-being and the environment. It will also help advance nation-building projects to produce and connect energy, goods and services across Canada's vast land mass and in global markets. This bill will help Canada become the strongest economy in the G7 and a global energy superpower.

To my mind, what defines an exceptional leader is first and foremost their ability to turn every crisis into an opportunity. With Bill C-5, our Prime Minister is showing that he is of the same calibre as the people who built our country. The bill before us lays the foundation for our government's strategy, not only to address the threats posed by our neighbour to the south, but also to lead the way in building the Canadian economy of the future. That is why I will be supporting this bill.

No one in Canada wanted a trade war with the Americans, but that is where we are right now. Fortunately, with this bill, our government is demonstrating that it can turn this crisis into an opportunity. The people of Beauport—Limoilou and people across Canada expect their government to take swift and ambitious action to address the threats we are facing. No one has ever won a war, trade or otherwise, by improvising. What this bill proposes is a return to boldness.

Over the decades, we have come to believe that we have to make choices when it comes to our economic development and major projects. We could build well or build quickly. Over time, we have unfortunately sacrificed our efficiency and our boldness. It is important not to place all the blame on the current crisis or on the policies of our neighbour to the south. Canada built great things in the past, but it seems as though we have forgotten how to do so in recent decades.

In the United States, thinker Ezra Klein has just published *Abundance*, a book that is making waves and that offers solutions to help nations learn how to build effectively again. Across much of the western world, projects that took a few months to put together some decades ago are now taking years to get off the ground. In Canada, we can no longer afford to be overly cautious in the face of Trump's threats. I am proud that our government is taking action by proposing such a paradigm shift. This is a shift in mindset that goes far beyond partisan lines.

More than 60 years ago, we built the St. Lawrence Seaway in just a few years. It was a huge public infrastructure project that required an investment that only the Government of Canada could make. The St. Lawrence Seaway was not an expense; it was an investment. To this day, dozens of ships bound for or departing from the Great Lakes, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto or Montreal pass my riding every week. Over the decades, they have created so much wealth that the initial cost of the St. Lawrence Seaway now seems like a pittance in comparison. This is exactly the kind of major project that Bill C-5 seeks to encourage. In response to Trump's threats, we will create economic activity by investing in projects like the St. Lawrence Seaway. We will create infrastructure that requires such significant investment that government commitment is virtually essential to its construction. What is more, this infrastructure will provide future generations with a stronger and more resilient economy.

The list of projects may be short, but the projects in question will be anything but minor. These will be projects that have the potential to truly redefine our nation's economic future in a lasting way. A trade war is a major threat to any economy but, on top of that, the current tariffs are hitting us at a time when the Canadian economy is fragile.

That is what the bill's second part, which is inseparable from building major projects, is going to address. It deals with removing trade barriers between provinces. Reducing interprovincial trade barriers and creating one economy out of 13 will have a significant impact on something that experts and economists are deeply concerned about: Canadian productivity.

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• (1835)

That is why I will be supporting this bill. In 2022, Canadians produced 71% of what Americans did per hour. That productivity gap has widening for decades. It was an issue before the pandemic and Donald Trump's return. Now, I think it is a genuine national emergency. I will support this bill because it is a step in the right direction to address our major productivity problem. By removing interprovincial trade barriers, the bill will increase Canadian productivity by 7%. As I said earlier, by encouraging interprovincial trade, this bill is a key tool for fighting the President's tariffs, as well as creating a stronger and more resilient economy.

This bill is at the heart of what our Prime Minister promised Canadians during the election. We are walking the talk, as they say. We promised to find the opportunities hidden in the current crisis, and with this bill, the Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy is giving us the tools to find the gold nuggets hidden in the mud of the trade war with the U.S. Those nuggets will make our economy stronger for future generations.

I also want to take this opportunity to highlight the exceptional work the Prime Minister is currently doing with provincial premiers and indigenous leaders. The government does not want to waste any time, but that does not mean it is willing to forego co-operation with the provinces and first peoples. Together, we will build the Canada of tomorrow. Together, we will build a stronger Canada.

• (1840)

[English]

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for recognizing the consequences of bad Liberal policy, like low Canadian productivity, which is at 71% of that of the United States.

As part of Bill C-5, the Prime Minister said that only projects that are low-carbon or decarbonized would be approved. Canada imports about 500,000 barrels of oil from the United States, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria a year. Would those imports be under the auspices of the same new decarbonized or low-carbon rules and regulations that would be put on Canadian energy projects?

[Translation]

Steeve Lavoie: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

I worked in banking for over 20 years and at the chamber of commerce for four years. Business people often asked us why the government would pit projects against each other. Why are environmental projects and economic development projects being pitted against each other? Why not combine them?

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Surveys have been conducted over the years and have found that people want projects to be carried out collaboratively. That is what the Prime Minister is proposing today with respect to the sustainable economy. It is for Canada and for Canada's economic future. Let us stop pitting our projects against one another and let us combine them instead.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech. He is also new to the House, and I would like to have his somewhat novice, if I may put it that way, point of view on the parliamentary debates.

He says that his leader walks the talk. That suggests that what his leader is doing right now is something that he previously announced. I never saw anything in the Liberal platform about the Liberals promising to adopt the legislation they wanted, when they wanted it and how they wanted it, and that if the other parliamentarians disagreed, they would be forced into it through a closure motion. I did not see that anywhere, but I suspect that if my colleague is telling us that, then it is because he did.

I would like him to tell me where he saw that so that I can read it and refer to it. This could be useful in a future election, to properly inform the electorate.

Steeve Lavoie: Mr. Speaker, what our Prime Minister promised during the election campaign was to make fast decisions and act quickly. That is what people expect. There is a time for talk, and a time for action. We need to be able to get past this crisis with the Americans and provide businesses with predictability. The difficulty facing businesses right now is that nothing is predictable when it comes to investments.

The Canadian government is saying that not only is it going to invest, but that businesses can invest too. It is showing them the way forward. This is what business people and businesses need, and the government is showing them the way.

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would agree with my colleague. The bill is full of very concrete, very positive measures.

Can my colleague tell us about two things that he thinks are essential and should be prioritized? Can he tell us about two things that he finds interesting and would like to highlight for the House?

Steeve Lavoie: Mr. Speaker, what stands out for me in Bill C-5 is two numbers. I used to be an accountant and a banker, so I really speak numbers. We are looking at a 7% increase in productivity. I have been in business for over 25 years, and there has always been a productivity problem.

By making decisions right here in our own country, with our provinces and with indigenous peoples, we can do things better. We can cut \$200 billion in costs and increase our productivity free from the influence of other countries.

We are taking charge of our own fate. That is the main takeaway here.

• (1845)

[English]

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Foothills.

It is a privilege to rise in the House today on behalf of Edmonton Northwest, a constituency that borders the industrial heartland of Alberta, a constituency with some of Edmonton's largest industrial zoning, where men and women work on behalf of the energy sector.

Over the last 10 years of the lost Liberal decade, we have seen so much uncertainty. So much of our potential as a country continues to be held back. In a country with the highest amount of natural resources per capita in the world, Canada should not be in the position that we are in: the weakest economic growth among the G7; sending our allies, like Germany and Japan, to non-allied countries for energy; and sowing division amongst provinces, people and regions. As Conservatives, we want to unleash the power of our natural resource sector in partnership with all stakeholders, investors, indigenous peoples and all partnerships for the win-win benefit of all Canadians. Unleashing the economy needs to be measured and strategically done, rather than driven strictly by ideology.

One way of measuring success is by investment. Do the risk-takers feel comfortable enough to take that risk and make billions of dollars in investment? Well, it has been many years since investors felt safe to build large infrastructure in Canada. I personally was in a room hosted by British Columbia Investment Management Corporation just two short years ago, where a question was asked of those Canadian capital and investment bankers: What percentage of their portfolio was invested into Canadian infrastructure? The response was abysmal: maybe 5%, on average, with no outlook for growth.

Half a trillion dollars of investment has poured out of this country and into the United States over the last decade. This is due to Liberal anti-energy laws; the sowing of division in our country, pitting regions and provinces against each other; ignoring Alberta and the west in particular; and the villainization of our energy sector for all of Canada. It was not always this way, though. There was a time when provinces took the risk to invest in each other.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund invested hundreds of millions of dollars into other provinces. Albertans took the risk and made the prudent decision to invest in Canadian energy across provincial boundaries, such as in Hydro-Québec, the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, Nova Scotia Power and the Prince Rupert Grain Terminal. Still today, multiple generations of Newfoundlanders come to Alberta to build the energy engine of Canada in Fort McMurray.

These investments showed we can work together in energy development. Albertans took the risk on other provinces, their resources and their people because we believed in Canada, and it was worth investing in. We believed it would make us a stronger country, and it did. Contrast that with today. When we ask Canadians what they think of Albertan resources and investing in each other, I do not think we get the same response.

Bill C-5 has all the usual talking points, and that is what this has proven to be. It is the same strategy of safe talking points and rhetoric. What are the measures of success beyond just the rhetoric of Bill C-5 and the legislation? What is the number of projects? How many of these would cross provincial boundaries? What is the investment number? What is the growth in GDP? What are the timelines? How much of that half-trillion dollars would come back to Canada from the United States? Is this tough talk against the States just that, just talk?

Sure, we hear the current government wants to get things built within two years, but it does not put that two-year timeline in its own legislation. I believe we can build at the speed of business. There is evidence. Our country has the capacity, the manpower and the ability to do right by our energy sectors. We have no shortage of experience as a country to get large projects done. Take, for example, the TransCanada natural gas pipeline. Back in the 1950s, Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Ltd. built 3,500 kilometres of pipeline from Alberta to Montreal in just three short years. Still to this day, that Canadian, Albertan resource is heating homes in the east.

We proved as a country then that we can bypass the United States and build projects of national significance, proving that through natural resources, we are a strong, sovereign country. We can get things done. However, the ability to get things done has only worsened under the Liberals. They may tout Trans Mountain as a success, but the project, under them, went from a \$5-billion investment to a \$30-billion mismanaged project.

• (1850)

Is this the same level of excellence we should expect under Bill C-5 out of their new special projects office? The Liberals will also tout new investment of \$5 billion into the national indigenous loan guarantee program, but I can tell members that \$5 billion on a \$30-billion mismanaged Liberal project would not cut it on Trans Mountain, and this same level of incompetence will not cut it on future projects.

Cedar LNG has raised the bar to 51% indigenous ownership on new projects, and this \$5 billion that is supposed to highlight the new level of indigenous participation in this economy will certainly not meet that bar set by Cedar for the number of projects needed to make this country a superpower in energy. All of this uncertainty only undermines indigenous participation in the economy, sends mixed messages and sounds more like the usual reconciliation rhetoric. Uncertainty in indigenous spaces only means more uncertainty for Canadian investors and risk-takers to build the projects needed yesterday to make our country stronger internally and internationally.

Under this Liberal Bill C-5, the government will again have its own laws to make an excuse not to get things built. That is where the real answer lies. The answer needed to make Canada an eco-

nomic superpower is to repeal Bill C-69, the no new pipeline law; repeal Bill C-48, the tanker ban; repeal the cap on Canadian energy; repeal the industrial carbon tax; repeal those things rather than being too cute by half with Bill C-5.

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On this side of the House, we believe in building projects, as was proven and done in the past. What we do not believe in is more government rhetoric. We do not believe in playing politics of convenience with our national economy. On this side of the House, we do not agree with raising expectations of Canadians, the provinces, first nations and investors only to pull the rug out from under them, with excuses down the road from existing legislation. Every day that goes by, the Prime Minister and government are proving to be more of the same as the last Trudeau government, all about the photo op and not the result.

On this side of the House, we support building projects and unleashing the economy, and we will hold the Liberal government to account in that regard. On this side of the House, we believe in energy workers, and we believe in less red tape. We believe in legislation that would last beyond two to five years. We believe in government action that would last generations. We believe in energy security and going beyond photo ops. Canadians need affordable, reliable power and fuel so Canada can be self-reliant and achieve real economic independence from the U.S.

We believe in building things across this country for that mission. We believe in enhancing our ports for this cause. We believe in engaging indigenous nations effectively, rather than the same old talking points through third-party institutions. We believe in creating investment certainty for Canadian risk-takers. We as a country have done it in the past, and we can do it again with the repeal of Bill C-69 and those other laws.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important for all of us to recognize that with Bill C-5, there is going to be an opportunity for it to go to committee.

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I have posed this question to other Conservative members, and I appreciate how they are going to be voting. The question is this: Are there some specific changes they would like to see to Bill C-5? I do not necessarily want to hear about Bill C-69 or other pieces of legislation. What I want to know is whether the Conservative Party has any specific amendments that members would like to see to Bill C-5. I think it is a legitimate concern, and I am wondering if the member could provide an answer.

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, again, it is too cute by half to try to separate out the bigger picture with the smaller picture in Bill C-5 and what it attempts to do.

The Liberals cannot get this economy built by saying one thing today and then, in two to five years, taking it back, which Bill C-5 attempts to do. Repealing Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and the industrial carbon tax, those are the real answers that last beyond two to five years, when the Liberal government may take the convenient action of just pulling Bill C-5 and having us back in uncertainty.

• (1855)

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguaj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague.

The idea behind Bill C-5, a bill that the government is determined to pass quickly, is to allow certain major projects to move forward without too many checks and balances. That is a matter of deep concern to the Bloc Québécois because we believe that the environmental protections put in place over the years serve a purpose.

Why is the part of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act that deals with the disposal of pollutants in marine environments so unnecessary that it needs to be shoved aside to make way for major projects that suddenly need to get done at lightening speed?

[English]

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, I agree that environmental protection has to be done, but I am not exactly confident that the Liberals are the right government to lead that protection. Again, they say they are for the consumer carbon tax, and now that is conveniently gone. I share that same concern about this. One day they say they are for the environment, and then they do things like this.

I would say, going forward when it comes to marine biology and protection, that I want to see ports get built and I want to see the tanker ban removed, but I also want to see more legitimacy in the government to get those things done and to hold the Liberals accountable to the bigger picture rather than just the usual talking points.

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned that we see, again, an example of legislation coming out of the Liberal government that runs a real risk of abridging constitutional rights. Specifically, we know that the Supreme Court prescribed the duty to consult. We do see reference to that in the legislation. However, any consultation has to be meaningful, yet the piece of legislation would prescribe a foregone conclusion. If the office of major projects is interested in a piece of legislation, it would be gone and it would be done, so what is the point of any consultation if the minister is going to override any objections of first nations people?

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, I share those same concerns.

Last week in committee of the whole, the Minister of Energy said he has over 180 consultations with first nations over the next two weeks. How could he actually think that 180 over 14 days is meaningful consultation? The government is not a government that takes things seriously.

There are proven ways of getting things done with first nations. In my own private sector experience working with first nations in Treaty 6, 68 nations out of 72 signed up to buy a pipeline. That was driven by the first nations in the sector themselves, not with government interference from incompetence and with rhetorical talking points. There is a way, but I am not sure this is the way for Bill C-5.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, imagine that we are renovating an old house and we do not worry about the shoddy foundation, the rotted joists or floorboards and the rusted plumbing; we just hope that the new buyer does not notice that we have put some lipstick on a kind of an ugly pig. That is very similar to what the Liberals are trying to do now; they are trying to put forward legislation without dealing with the root cause of the rotten consequences of bad Liberal legislation that has gotten us into this position.

We all want the one Canadian economy act to pass. We want it to succeed. As Conservatives, we want pipelines built. We want energy projects completed. We want to see interprovincial trade barriers torn down and removed to grow Canada's economy.

It has been said many times that the most lucrative free trade Canada could have is the one we do not have within our own country, but as we walk through the process and as we listen to the Liberals, we can see that they slowly walk down on what they have promised and what they can actually deliver. Bill C-5 clearly shows that what they are promising is very different than what they would deliver.

Canadians will notice that the Liberals are building a house on a shoddy foundation, because nothing will get built unless they listen to the opposition members and make some amendments to the bill to ensure that we get things built, like repealing Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, eliminating the production cap on oil and gas and repealing the just transition, Bill C-50. Those are the things that would actually make an impactful difference to ensure that projects get built in Canada.

I want to give an example. The Prime Minister first came out saying that we are going to be building pipelines and national projects, and that we are going to have a free trade agreement in Canada by July 1. What is now being said is that we will have pipelines if there is national consensus, that the projects probably will not actually include pipelines, that provinces will have a veto and that we are not really going to have a free trade agreement by Canada Day because there is a difference between federal inter-provincial free trade and provincial interprovincial free trade.

As we have a chance to look at Bill C-5, we see what is going on. I want to give an example. The Prime Minister keeps talking about how only national projects within the government's own interest would be approved, and that they must include decarbonisation of oil. What does decarbonisation of western Canadian oil and gas mean, compared especially to oil and gas imported into eastern Canada?

For example, in 2023, eastern Canada imported, on average, about 790,000 barrels of crude oil per day, valued at almost \$20 billion. Those imports were from the United States, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia for the most part. By implying that western Canadian energy has to be decarbonised, it would have to be produced and transported under very different regulations, making it uncompetitive with what is imported into eastern Canada. I asked the government earlier if the same regulations and non-competitive rules would be imposed on energy imported into eastern Canada from places like Saudi Arabia and Nigeria. It would not answer that question.

A renowned energy analyst, Dr. Ron Wallace said, "A federal regulatory requirement to decarbonize western Canadian crude oil production without imposing similar restrictions on imported oil would render the one Canadian economy act moot and create two market realities in Canada—one that favours imports and that discourages, or at very least threatens the competitiveness of, Canadian oil export production."

We cannot say we want to build projects and then put metrics and bars so high that Canadian energy projects and Canadian investment cannot actually reach that bar. We also cannot put the same regulatory burdens on energy imported to Canada. That is why it is so important to clear the deck. Repeal Bill C-69, repeal Bill C-48 and repeal Bill C-50. Send a clear message to the private sector and foreign investment that Canada is truly open for business and that we are serious about getting these projects built.

The Supreme Court, as my colleague from Alberta said earlier, said that Bill C-69 is unconstitutional, yet the Liberals refuse to repeal it. As a result of Bill C-69, 16 major energy projects have been abandoned, worth more than \$600 billion. Of the 18 LNG projects proposed by 2015, only one remains viable, LNG Canada, and that project is proceeding only because it was granted exemptions, by the Liberal government, to Bill C-69 and the carbon tax.

● (1900)

Meanwhile, some of our most trusted allies, Japan, Germany, Ukraine, Poland and South Korea, came to Canada asking for LNG. They want Canadian energy that is clean, affordable and sustainable, but nonsensical policies and a decision by the Liberal government forced those countries, our important allies, to go somewhere else for their energy. In fact it was one of the few times that I was embarrassed to be Canadian, when our allies, in their time of need, came to Canada for something that we could supply, that we desperately wanted to supply, and we turned our back on them.

However, those decisions by the previous Liberal government, from which most of the ministers are still on the front bench, have consequences. Germany even signed an agreement with Qatar. Japan signed an agreement with the United States, our biggest competitor when it comes to energy, and the value of that agreement is

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a 20-year LNG agreement with the United States valued at \$200 billion annually, supporting 50,000 American jobs.

Those jobs should have been here in Canada, and that is just one LNG agreement. That \$200 billion a year should have been building schools and hospitals here in Canada. The revenue from that one LNG agreement should have been helping pay down our debt and lower taxes for Canadians here in Canada, but instead that \$200 billion is going to the United States.

While the Americans are creating jobs in the energy sector, the Liberals' ideological policies, by contrast, are killing jobs here at home. For example, the just transition bill, Bill C-50, will cost about 200,000 jobs in the energy sector, 290,000 jobs in agriculture and 1.4 million jobs in construction and building. In total, the just transition bill, Bill C-50, will cost Canada 2.7 million jobs.

The member for Winnipeg North asked me where I got that information from when I mentioned it last week. Well, a memo to the Minister of Natural Resources from his own department said, "The transition to a low-carbon economy will have an uneven impact across sectors, occupations and regions, and create significant labour...disruptions. We expect that larger-scale transformations will take place". In agriculture, it will be about 292,000 workers; in energy, about 202,000 workers; in manufacturing, about 193,000 workers; in buildings and construction, 1.4 million workers; and transportation sectors, about 642,000 workers. That adds up to 13.5% of Canada's total workforce in all parts of the country. Can members imagine a piece of legislation that is going to impact 13.5% of Canada's workforce and perhaps put another 2.7 million Canadians out of work?

In contrast, the Americans are creating tens of thousands of jobs by unleashing their energy sector while we stand by and watch. In fact last fall, the Bank of Canada stated that we all see those signs that say, "In case of emergency, break glass", and it is time for Canada to break the glass. We are saying that it is not time to take baby steps, which Bill C-5 would be doing; it is time to be bold. It is time to be disruptive. It is time to grab the opportunity that President Trump has given us.

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At no time in my life as a legislator, as an elected official, have I seen Canada united, with 75% of Quebecers wanting an east-west pipeline. Canadians across this country want interprovincial trade barriers removed, and at one time they probably did not even realize what we were talking about, but they understand the impact and the potential that Canada has if we just grab it. We cannot just dance around it; we have to be bold. Bill C-5 needs to be improved, and hopefully the Liberals will listen to the opposition and take the steps that are needed to unleash Canada's potential.

• (1905)

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I disagree on a number of points, and I would like to ask a question afterward.

It has been said that I am not proud. Fortunately, we Liberals are very proud to be Canadian and very proud to have been chosen by Canadians in the last election. Listening to my colleagues, I get the impression that the election campaign is still on, but it is over, and Canadians have made their choice.

We have here an important and ambitious initiative. Would my colleague be willing to work with us to move this bill forward, a bill that will truly unify Canada and make its economy much stronger?

[English]

John Barlow: Madam Speaker, my colleague says he wants to be bold. I am waiting to see that. This legislation is not bold. If anything, it is underwhelming. The Liberals are over-promising and will under-deliver for Canadians. Absolutely, I think we have shown today that we are more than willing to work with the government to try to make this work because we want energy projects built. We want interprovincial barriers torn down, but this bill does not do it.

Once again, if the member is truly committed to working together on this, I would encourage him to listen to the proposals and amendments that are brought forward by the opposition to improve Bill C-5 to ensure it actually achieves what the Liberals are claiming it will.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Madam Speaker, to summarize what is in Bill C-5, once cabinet has decided that a bill is in the national interest, 13 laws will be set aside. They say that the ministers thought this bill had to move forward, regardless of all the legislation that has been passed over the years.

Section 21 of the bill is quite alarming. It allows the government not only to set aside 13 laws and several regulations, but also to add new ones. These laws are essentially intended to ensure that the projects implemented are good ones that respect the environment and protect species at risk, for example.

Why does my colleague want to support Bill C-5, which will even allow bad projects to go ahead?

• (1910)

[English]

John Barlow: Madam Speaker, that element of the bill almost seems like a doubling down on Bill C-69. One element of that bill that is so frustrating to private investors and applicants is the loop it puts them through to get any decision on whether their project will be approved. It ultimately comes down to cabinet and the government to make the decision, regardless of input, consultation and science.

This bill kind of reminds me of that. Once again, the government will be approving or picking the winners and losers. These things should come down to what is best for Canada as a result of consultation and science with all Canadians, not just a select few friends and elected officials within the Liberal government.

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I love the hon. member's assertion that we need to be bold, we need to be ambitious and we need to be audacious. This is not the time for Canada to be timid. We talked about this during the election campaign because of the threats coming from the United States, but this bill is anything but bold. It is anything but ambitious and audacious. It is a very timid bill because it does not repeal the things that are holding our natural resource sector and our economy at bay: Bill C-69, Bill C-48, the industrial carbon tax and other mechanisms that need to be repealed for us to be bold.

I wonder if the hon. member can comment a little more about that.

John Barlow: Madam Speaker, I could not agree more. As we saw multiple times before the campaign and after the campaign, the Prime Minister took his fake little red book and signed it like he had some sort of presidential executive powers, which he simply does not. He is trying to jam this bill through as fast as he can. If he had really wanted to do it quickly, the fastest way to do it would have been to repeal Bill C-69, repeal Bill C-48, repeal Bill C-50 and remove the industrial carbon tax and the cap on energy production. That would have been the easiest thing to do.

That would have opened the door to investment and to Canadians. It would have shown them that we are open for business. However, the Liberals did not want to do that, much like Cinderella's stepmother. They want to bring people to the ball. They want them to come, but they are putting on some impossible things for them to achieve knowing they will not be able to do it. That is what Bill C-5 is doing.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to listen to a lot of speeches on Bill C-5 today. It is really important to recognize the essence of the bill, which is to advance nation-building projects that will ultimately lead to Canada having the strongest economy in the G7. This is something that the new Prime Minister and the administration here has made a decision on. That is the essence of the bill.

I will be sharing my time with my colleague and friend, the member for Bourassa.

I would challenge, in particular, my friends in the Bloc and the New Democrats. As I said earlier, I am not one to defend the Conservative Party of Canada, but I can tell members that I respect the fact that they have recognized the value of this legislation. In their minds, they might think of it as a smaller step and that it needs amendments and so forth, but they recognize that this is a bill that should be advanced, and I appreciate that. I think Canadians will appreciate that.

Bill C-5 was talked about at great length throughout the country. It was not referred to as Bill C-5, but everyone in this chamber, I am sure, can appreciate the concerns that were being raised at the doors during the election that ultimately led up to April 28. Our constituents were genuinely concerned about Donald Trump and the trade and tariff issue. They were genuinely concerned about how Canada was going to be able to deal with that issue.

We went through change internally within the Liberal Party of Canada. We now have a new Prime Minister, and he demonstrated that change by taking a look and responding to what Canadians wanted. In fact, the very first announcement our new Prime Minister made was to give a tax break to Canadians. All a member needs to do is to take a look at Bill C-4. They will see the tax break there, and 22 million Canadians will benefit from that.

Members can take a look at page one of the party platform, and we even had a couple of Conservatives make reference to it earlier. I will read one sentence: "To do this, there must be one Canadian economy, not thirteen." At the end of the day, Bill C-5 recognizes that fact.

We have a Prime Minister and a Liberal Party that achieved more votes in that last federal election than any other political party or leader in any previous federal election. We have representation in every region of this great nation. We understood what it is that Canadians were telling us throughout the nation, which is why we have Bill C-5 today.

Like Bill C-4, it is a critical piece of legislation. I am disappointed that the Bloc and the NDP are not necessarily reflecting what they would have been hearing at the doors, whether it was the tax issue or, in this particular case, Bill C-5.

I understand federal and provincial jurisdiction, and I will spend a few minutes talking about that, but I can tell members that this legislation is in the best interest of all regions. It is better for our economy. I am concerned about the aerospace industry in the provinces of Quebec and Manitoba and about the different industries that we need to build to get them healthier, stronger. This is the type of legislation that will make a difference. However, we hear from my Conservative friends that the bill is not going to free everything up.

• (1915)

Let us talk about labour, for example. When we think of labour, there is a significant component from the federal side that would benefit from the legislation, but yes, there is a provincial side to it. I recognize that. It is something Ottawa needs to talk with premiers

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and first ministers about to work it through. We are taking a strong leadership stand on that issue. It is incorporated into this legislation, and two weeks ago, the Prime Minister met with all the first ministers. I trust, know and am confident that labour was part of the dialogue, whether it was during the official agenda or on the side. In all likelihood, it was both.

I can appreciate the urgency. It is not as simple as the Conservatives try to portray it. They tend to believe that we could just have a blue seal program to recognize all the health care workers. That is not a great idea. I was a provincial MLA for a number of years, just under 20 years, and in fact, I was the health care critic. When Conservatives talk about doctors, nurses and professionals, those are bodies certified from within the different provinces.

The most important things Ottawa can do are, one, provide leadership in trying to convince provinces to take down those labour barriers, and two, provide some incentives to do so. I was encouraged by the results of the first ministers meeting. The Prime Minister was working with the provincial and territorial governments, of all political stripes, putting Canadians and Canada's economy first. The general consensus that came from that particular discussion was very positive. We have already seen provinces that have taken down barriers.

From my perspective, I would like to see a lot more. Premier Wab Kinew has brought forward legislation, and he is talking with premiers, such as Doug Ford, to look at ways to take down provincial barriers. As has been pointed out, there is nothing new in the sense of the issue. The issue has always been there, even in the days when I was in MLA. I suspect if we were to check provincial Hansard, we would probably find comments from me somewhere along the lines of taking down those economic barriers.

An important takeaway is that we went from a mandated federal election on April 28, supporting Bill C-5, which was followed up by a first ministers meeting, and now we have the legislation before us. Fortunately, at least the official opposition has recognized the significance of it and agrees that it should be passed this week, but it is unfortunate that the Bloc and the NDP have not seen the merit of having this legislation. I look to the Bloc members in particular and the important role they play being part of a political party. As opposed to trying to sabotage, why could they not look at ways they could potentially improve the legislation if they have concerns about it.

There is an expectation of rebuilding our economy, so as the Prime Minister clearly indicated, we can strive for the goal of being the strongest and healthiest economy in the G7. This is something that is definitely achievable. We have opportunities before us. The legislation could, in fact, enable the government to continue to take a leadership role on building strong and advanced nation-building projects that would add value to our economy and improve the lives of every Canadian, no matter where they live, whether those projects are hydro, pipelines, rails or ports.

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• (1920)

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, if we listen to the hon. member speak about this bill, we could get the sense that there is universal acceptance of this bill, but, quite frankly, there is not. In fact, we heard a Liberal member of Parliament today talk about the concerns he has: the lack of consultation and the fact that this bill would trample on rights, including indigenous rights.

In the little time the committee will have to deal with this, if the committee comes back with substantive changes to the bill that improve it and address many of the concerns that we are hearing from across the country with respect to this bill, would the government accept those changes, yes or no?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, throughout the day, I have had the opportunity on at least a few occasions to ask questions. I asked questions to find out if the Conservatives had any substantive measures they would like to see amended in the legislation. Not one of them would give me an example of any principled amendments. If they have principled amendments they would like to see, I would suggest they talk to the department and the minister.

If there are things that would add true value and can make a positive difference to the legislation, I am sure the minister would be open to them, but it is better to bring them forward sooner as opposed to later.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am always impressed by the member for Winnipeg North's ability to warp reality. He is so darn good at it.

Earlier, he was talking about what people heard while they were going door to door. I can assure him that, at the doors I knocked on, people were outraged about the government paying \$34 billion to expand a pipeline. If anyone were to talk to Quebecers today and tell them about plans to implement a bill that will help accelerate oil and gas infrastructure, not one of them would be okay with that. I would actually encourage his colleagues from Quebec to tell him what they heard, because I am absolutely sure that message would be very different from the one he heard in his riding.

• (1925)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am absolutely confident that if we were to canvass the people of Quebec or the people in my home province, we would find that Canadians are genuinely concerned about the overwhelming issues of the economy, jobs, tariffs and so forth. This legislation is good for all communities.

I will advocate for the people in Quebec as I will for the people in B.C. or any other province, because what is in the national best interest is in the interest of all Canadians, no matter where they live. It is about improving quality of life, and we can do that if we are prepared to think big and stop complaining about our backyards. Let us be concerned about our backyards, but the Canadian interest, which includes those in Quebec, is something that I will always stand up for.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

I wish at this time to wish all the best in the upcoming nuptials of Justin Potestio and Dr. Namat Majaess. They are getting married and I wish them all the best.

I say with sincerity to my hon. colleague that we hear him talk so much. This is on a contentious bill; at what point are the other Liberals going to get the opportunity to ask questions? At what point are the other Liberals going to get the opportunity to give speeches? We hear about how much the government values diversity, and yet it has one person stand up every single day to ask more questions and give more speeches than the whole Liberal caucus. Is the member okay with that?

I cannot figure out why Liberal backbenchers are okay with that. Did they come here to sit on their hands and listen to him speak, or did they come here to make a difference for Canadians?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I get the feeling that the member opposite does not necessarily support my comments, and I can appreciate why. It is because I like to point out the many flaws within the collective Conservative mindset. You might have a few more members that stand up than we have on our side, but I can—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that I have absolutely no members.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives might have had two or three more members speak than on the Liberal side today, but they are all speaking from the same script. Different members stand up and speak, but if the core of their principled speeches is being fed to them from the back room, there are some issues with that, too.

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before I begin my speech, I would like to talk about an amazing event that took place in my riding, Bourassa. I am talking about the ninth edition of the Festival des boulettes, the meatball festival.

Everyone thinks that their mother, grandmother or family had the best recipe. People from many different backgrounds took part in this event. There were folks from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Portugal, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Each participant rightly believed that their recipe was the best. A culinary program was organized by Les Fourchettes de l'espoir and the borough of Montreal North. It was a wonderful opportunity for people to come together and enjoy each other's company and conversation. I would like to thank the three women who are behind this initiative: Chantal Rossi, a municipal councillor from Montreal North; Brunilda Reyes, the director of Les Fourchettes de l'espoir; and our dear Sister Angèle, who has been the driving force behind this community-building project for many years. The most recent edition, which took place on Saturday, was won by a group from Bangladesh. I congratulate all the participants.

With regard to the bill, I will explain something very important when it comes to international competition. When a country wants to build a strong economy, it is very important that decisions are made neither too hastily, nor too slowly. Decisions do have to be made, especially in an international situation full of uncertainty and competition.

The opposition members are giving examples of a number of countries, including Japan, Qatar and many others, that have sped up their decision-making processes. The bill's main purpose is to speed up the decision-making process. As legislators and MPs, we were elected above all to defend the interests of Canadians. We are not here to defend projects that even the official opposition considers to be obsolete. Just last week, the Bloc Québécois was talking about obsolete projects that are delaying economic development.

We are proposing an ambitious, measurable project for which Canadians gave us a clear mandate. This project would make it easier to bring in many domestic and international investors. Now they are saying we are not being ambitious enough and that this bill reverses decisions made in the past. However, sometimes it is a good idea to reverse some of those decisions, because laws have been passed that can harm our economy and impede investment. What we are trying to do with this bill is simplify the decision-making process.

My riding is in Quebec, and I can tell the House what Quebecers told me when I went door to door. Right now, Quebecers are telling us that, with all the international competition, we need a strong, much more efficient economy. Decisions need to be made more quickly. Our political commitment as Canada's federal Liberal government is "one project, one review". That is very important. Sometimes it takes public servants a long time to complete administrative reviews, and that is costing us opportunities. We are in an international environment where quick decision-making can be very important, especially in the current economic context, in which it is absolutely necessary.

I am therefore calling on the opposition to collaborate and ask us questions, but they cannot tell us that we are not ambitious and that this bill lacks clarity. On the contrary, we are proposing something exciting. Let us stop talking about the past and former bills. Let us talk about the future and let us talk about the current context.

Canadians were smart to choose an ambitious and bold government and leader. I am asking members of the other parties to be just as bold. I am asking them to work with us. At some point, it is time to respect the choice Canadians made and work with those who were chosen. I am asking members to collaborate with us and give us their opinion. Let us work in the interest of investors and let us work together to build one strong Canadian economy.

• (1930)

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I must admit, my favourite part was about the meatballs. It went downhill from there.

It is quite simple. I would just like to help my colleague understand that Quebec's interests differ from the interests of the oil and gas companies in Alberta. In the past, we saw that Canada was quick to invest in infrastructure related to the pipelines and the nat-

ural gas sector. I can assure my colleague that the government has never wanted to support the forestry sector. What this bill will do, at the end of the day, is facilitate the construction of oil and gas infrastructure to the detriment of Quebec's economy. I wonder if my colleague realizes that.

Government Orders

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I fully appreciate that. Even at the Festival des boulettes, we really want to get people talking. That is how to build a harmonious society, even in politics.

I might add that I come from a municipal background. I was a city councillor in Montreal, where there are sometimes competing interests between boroughs. Progress can be made despite that. When we say that we are one country, we can move forward, not for the sake of the provinces, but for the sake of Canadians. What matters is having jobs here with investors from here. That is what we are trying to do with this bill.

• (1935)

[English]

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Madam Speaker, anyone who has been involved in private business knows that what we really need to make a project successful is predictability and to know what the rules are. We have seen time and time again that the Liberals move the goalposts halfway through the game. With Bill C-5, they are doing exactly the same thing.

Can the member explain why he thinks this bill is a good idea and why we should not just scrap the bills before it, which caused all these problems in the first place?

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I respect and very much appreciate this extraordinary question.

It is because what has changed is not the rules, but rather the environment. At some point, our government and cabinet need to be bold. We need to focus on leading indicators to be much more proactive. The economic and international environment is changing, and we need to adapt and be agile. We must not govern with the rear-view mirror, as advocated by the Conservatives, who look to the past. On the contrary, we need to review the changes, review the indicators and focus on the road ahead, on the future, especially given the current environment, which is very fluid. We must be much more agile and much more ambitious and bold.

Government Orders

[English]

Braedon Clark (Sackville—Bedford—Preston, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when we talk about energy projects and resource projects, we are a bit too narrow. I hear from the Conservative colleagues quite a bit about oil and gas, which is of course part of the equation, but not all of it. In my home province of Nova Scotia, for example, the premier, with whom I served in the legislature, has talked about the eastern energy partnership, which is a significant wind project of 44 gigawatts. That is 27% of our entire electricity usage.

I wonder if the member could touch a bit on other projects, beyond oil and gas alone, that could be significant and move our country forward.

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, in a much more unstable and worrisome environment like this, it is important for every organization, including governments, to diversify their production and their ability to attract investors.

My colleague did a great job of explaining that ability to diversify our natural resources so that Canada is seen as more than just an oil and gas producer. No, Canada truly has a lot of services to offer, especially in Quebec. It is a service provider and an aerospace manufacturer, and we really need to forge ahead with such diversification, not just with one natural resource. Canada is worth a lot more than that.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, if you permit, let us talk about fear. I will quote from the *Refus global* manifesto, published in 1948: “The reign of fear in all its forms is over.” However, to be quite clear, made-in-Canada fear has always been the only tool of the Ottawa bigwigs and the regime. Today, the bogeyman has a new name: Donald Trump. I am not trying to downplay the genuine tariff threat, but there is also the real-life fairy tale of Canada as the 51st state. We were well aware of the Liberals’ total opportunism during the election campaign, which was not surprising in itself. However, we are also aware that fear is now being used as leverage for a new phase of centralization, as per usual, no surprise there. It goes by a different name: Bill C-5.

Let us take a brief historical detour. Crisis breeds fear. However, Ottawa has always taken advantage of crises to push its unitary agenda and centralize power even further, to the detriment of the provinces and especially to the detriment of the only one among them that aspires to be home to a distinct nation, Quebec. Politics is, of course, about power dynamics, and the government knows how to use favourable circumstances to grow its sprawling apparatus. That is what happened in 1840, when the British took advantage of the crushing of the Patriotes rebellion to force the union of the two Canadas. That is what happened after the two world wars, when income tax, which was supposed to be a temporary measure, became permanent. It has never gone away. That is also what happened after René Lévesque’s sovereignty-association option was defeated in 1980, when Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Jean Chrétien seized the opportunity to unilaterally patriate the Canadian Constitution without the agreement of Quebec, removing its right of veto. Quebec is still not a signatory to this day. That is also what happened after the 1995 referendum, when what was known as plan B

was rolled out, a manoeuvre involving a fiscal imbalance between Ottawa and the provinces through reduced transfers, mainly for health care and employment insurance, and the use of new budget surpluses to create federal programs that encroached on provincial jurisdictions. That is also what happened during the COVID-19 health crisis, when the creation of sprawling new structures was announced.

Bill C-5 is a new form of governance based on arbitrary measures and possibly even cronyism. It was only natural that Ottawa take advantage of this American smokescreen to launch yet another centralizing offensive. Today, the Trump threat is enabling Ottawa to once again pursue the approach of forced unification and attack Quebec’s distinct identity, all in the name of the need for “one Canadian economy, not 13”. We should not be swayed by the motion the elected members of Quebec’s National Assembly adopted unanimously, the one denouncing this call for unification. That will certainly not be discussed or mentioned in government circles, and the 44 Quebec members in the ruling party shall remain completely silent on the issue, regardless of what the National Assembly would like. Bill C-5 will in all likelihood be passed thanks to a gag order supported by the Liberal-Conservative coalition of proud Canadians, in defiance of any democratic process. A bill with such far-reaching implications deserves to be debated, studied and rigorously analyzed; every detail should be weighed. It should not be fast-tracked like this.

Bill C-5 is anything but a half measure. As a political plan, I would go so far as to call it radical. It is profound. It creates an arbitrary form of governance potentially based on back-room cronyism that ignores the legal underpinnings that are normally in force in a country governed by the rule of law. We already know that pipelines took over where railroads left off as markers of identity, as a cross-Canada unification measure no less contrived and colonial a construct than Canada itself. However, Bill C-5 creates an oil monarchy on steroids, with a time allocation motion that both the government and the official opposition will be voting for, which is a rare thing in itself, so much so that we may well wonder whether the Conservatives might be thinking of suing the Liberals for plagiarism.

● (1940)

The Liberals came to power with their T-shirts emblazoned with their one real selling point—the fact that they were not Pierre Poilievre’s Conservatives. They then proceeded to serve up a stunning example of how they will ape the Conservatives now that they are in power.

Bill C-5 establishes an opaque process whereby developers secretly propose projects that will be confidentially reviewed by Ottawa, which will then arbitrarily determine whether they fall within the definition of the national interest, without even clearly indicating the criteria for this concept. All of this remains very vague in the bill.

Once a given project has been deemed to be in the national interest, it may be exempted from environmental impact assessments, from the usual consultations with affected citizens and from respecting the provinces and indigenous peoples.

As soon as the minister responsible for major projects declares that a project is of national interest, it will be pre-approved, provided that it meets the conditions imposed by the approval. After that, the rest is just a formality; there is no turning back. All the consultations and impact assessments that normally take place will be useless. It is a done deal, *ciao*, bye, because the decision is considered irrevocable. Ultimately, these processes will be nothing more than theatre.

Those projects typically take years to complete. By deciding that a project is in the national interest and must be carried out at all costs, Ottawa is going to tie the hands of future generations.

That is not the end of the bleak picture painted by Bill C-5. When Ottawa designates a project as being in the national interest, the sponsor can be exempted from any federal law or regulation. The Liberals tried to turn the last election into a referendum on Donald Trump, and now they are trying to institutionalize governance by order, on par with what we are currently seeing in the White House.

Unlike statutory instruments that have to be published in the Canada Gazette for consultation for at least 45 business days before they can come into force, the decision to designate a project as being of national interest is not subject to consultation and can take effect as soon as the order is published. There are no guidelines outlining how the minister will have to assess the project, no criteria for assessing the impact and no deadline for consultations. Using orders in council to decide which law will apply to which entity, depending on the circumstances, is the type of abuse that is about to be established in Liberal-Conservative Canada.

In fact, the schedule to the bill lists 13 acts and seven regulations that proponents will no longer be required to adhere to, as though the oil companies' power exempts them from basic accountability in a country governed by the rule of law. These acts and regulations have been listed several times, but I will list them again: the Fisheries Act; the Indian Act; the International River Improvements Act; the National Capital Act; the Canadian Navigable Waters Act; the Dominion Water Power Act; the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994; the Canada Transportation Act; the Canada Marine Act; the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999; the Species at Risk Act; the Canadian Energy Regulator Act; the Impact Assessment Act; the migratory bird sanctuary regulations; the Dominion water power regulations; the wildlife area regulations; the marine mammal regulations; the port authorities operations regulations; the metal and diamond mining effluent regulations; and the migratory birds regulations.

It goes even further, beyond the acts and regulations I just mentioned, because proposed section 21 in the bill states that the government may, by order, exempt proponents from the application of any act, not only those I just mentioned. On paper, oil companies could be exempted from the Official Languages Act, the Income Tax Act, the Canada Labour Code and even the Criminal Code. That would set a precedent that is both vague and dangerous. Is a government that can shield its friends from the law not starting to look a lot like what is happening in Washington? This is coming from people who committed to doing things very differently from what is happening in Washington.

Government Orders

• (1945)

It seems that they are in fact building the 51st U.S. state on the quiet, under time allocation, with no regard for the serious studies conducted by parliamentary institutions such as committees, and on the pretext of a bogus emergency.

It should be noted that the Canadian parliamentary system already has a rather poor record when viewed as part of the long history of democracies. In addition to being a monarchy, Canada has a parliamentary system that is not proportional. It allows a government to be formed without having received a majority of the votes. The system also grants veto power to a Senate that is made up of unelected members appointed by the Prime Minister who are free to prevent legislation from being passed even though it has passed all the stages of the House of Commons. There is also a trend towards an increasing concentration of power within the Prime Minister's office and among a few key ministers, but not too many, to the detriment of the institution of Parliament. Bill C-5 is yet another step towards radicalizing this aristocratic form of governance, which is already deeply rooted in Canadian political culture.

On top of that, we are seeing a new phase of predatory and rampant mutation of the system wrongly referred to as federalism. When Bill C-5 was introduced on June 6, the Prime Minister was asked by journalists whether the bill would make way for a pipeline to be built on Quebec territory if Quebec refuses. The Prime Minister said no, since there needs to be a consensus. The Prime Minister's word is good. However, if this were set out in the legislation, that would be even better.

When we read clause 5(7) of the new building Canada act in Bill C-5, it states:

Before recommending that an order be made...the Minister must consult with any other federal minister and any provincial or territorial government that the Minister considers appropriate and with Indigenous peoples whose rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* may be adversely affected by the carrying out of the project to which the order relates.

It says "that the Minister considers". This means that a minister is free to consult or not consult Quebec, the provinces, first nations or another minister on a project that would be located in Quebec. He can choose to do so, but it is not a requirement. Let us say, for the sake of argument, that the minister says he will pick up the phone and make a call. If that consultation does not yield a positive result, the legislation still allows the minister to proceed. This does not even remotely resemble a veto right, far from it.

Today, the term "oil monarchy" is taking on its full meaning. Canadian oil dependency crosses party lines, as was made clear again today. However, scientists agree that 80% of oil must remain underground if we want to show some modicum of responsibility. What is more, 96% of Canadian oil comes from oil sands, meaning that the portion that does not come from oil sands is marginal. However, the oil sands are among the dirtiest sources of oil in the world.

Government Orders

The focus on exporting such raw materials has a major impact on public policy. Politicians believe that they need to constantly provide infrastructure and adjust environmental and health regulations in order to maintain national competitiveness. We have more proof of that today. The resources dedicated to supporting exports are set to grow indefinitely. It is a never-ending cycle.

The railway that led to the creation of Canada was supposed to be made profitable by the transportation of commodities. That halted the exploration of new technological avenues. The result was an even greater dependence on raw commodities. There is a consistent, self-reinforcing pattern. The increased reliance on raw material exports will require increased investments in transportation infrastructure. That is money that will not be invested elsewhere in the economy. Is that a wise bet?

Oil shareholders are mainly foreign, since their profit centre is offshore. This shows how ridiculous Canadian oil patriotism is. Despite this, the share of foreign companies investing in Canadian oil has been steadily declining for several years. It generates very little in royalties.

Let us talk about shale oil. This is a particularly poor development opportunity in which Canada appears to be trapped.

• (1950)

One of Canada's biggest disappointments is that, in the global marketplace, in the midst of the great geopolitical struggle around oil, Canada is ultimately a minor player with basically no influence. In any event, it persists in trying to unify around this single basis because, as an artificial country, it needs to have something to build a common identity around.

After its post-national torpor, Canada is now looking to speed up construction from coast to coast to the detriment of Quebec and the first nations. We have seen this movie many times before, and we think it is time for something new. We thank the Liberals and Conservatives for giving us this umpteenth demonstration of why Quebecers need to have an independent country, a country of their own. We are not short on reasons, but this gives us one more, to add urgency to our argument.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I truly believe that advancing nation-building projects will make a positive difference for all Canadians, no matter where they live in the country. I suspect that if we take a look at any individual province, there are initiatives that would be beneficial for the national government to take a look at, working with the different stakeholders.

I am wondering if the member opposite could give any indication whatsoever as to what project he believes might be in the national best interest to develop, outside of a separatist perspective.

• (1955)

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, the first thing to clarify is that, from the outset, we do not belong to the

same nation, so our national interest and national values will not be the same.

There are obviously a lot of projects that are in the national interest of Quebec, and we have never been afraid of doing them. With Hydro-Québec, we built the big dams, and we were able to do it responsibly. In Quebec, there are no projects related to energy sources of the past, polluting energy sources, energy sources that today are condemned by science and by economic and environmental common sense, which seem to be in what we could call the national interest. I cannot think of any.

If my colleague is so convinced that there are projects that would benefit the provinces, if he is so convinced that, of our own free will, we would all be very excited about the prospect of obvious success, why is it necessary to institutionalize arm-twisting?

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, does my colleague agree with me that, with what we saw today at the G7, “pucker up” has replaced “elbows up”?

[*English*]

Throughout the campaign, the Prime Minister incited fear among many Canadians, and I assume many Quebecers, that the greatest threat that existed was the United States. I would suggest the greatest threat we have seen has existed within this country over the last 10 years because of the economic malaise and because of many of the regulatory and legislative policies the government has imposed.

Would the member not agree with me that this incitement of fear has actually gone from Trump derangement syndrome on the part of the government to Trump appeasement syndrome?

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, I have already talked about the Liberals' fearmongering. They campaigned on it, claiming they were the best at standing up to Trump. Now they are aping him by attempting to govern by order and to enshrine the practice in our institutions.

They also campaigned on the claim that their sole qualification and sole value lay in the fact that they were not Pierre Poilievre's Conservatives. Now they are aping him too.

I agree that it was a campaign of fear and that consistency is not the Prime Minister's strong suit, so why are the Conservatives abetting this today?

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I sincerely thank my colleague for delivering a very important lesson to prove that Quebecers and indigenous people are distinct.

I have a feeling that June 16 will be marked as the day the Bloc Québécois said that we told them so. What is also happening in the news is that Donald Trump is leaving the G7 summit tonight, and there seems to be an understanding with Mark Carney that there will be a tariff agreement within 30 days.

During the election campaign, were Quebeckers told the opposite of the truth so that they would support this government? What will the long-term consequences be?

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, it may still be too early to judge what will happen.

The content of the agreement remains to be seen. I am very much looking forward to seeing what conditions were discussed, though. I am very much looking forward to seeing if they were discount conditions. I am very curious about that. However, I would like to reassure my colleague that we will be there to keep an eye on things. We are going to put on the pressure from the other side.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I share many of the concerns that the member has identified and highlighted.

Like the Bloc Québécois, the Green Party has a lot of issues with the gag order on an omnibus bill like Bill C-5. My question is simple: What can we do now, in a minority Parliament, to gain the other parties' support for opposing the current effort against age-old democracy and the work of Parliament itself?

• (2000)

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, yes, what is happening right now is scandalous.

The official opposition, whose role is to oppose, the very same opposition that criticized all forms of real or imagined coalition with the government in the last Parliament, now finds itself in a what is effectively a Liberal-Conservative coalition. We will not have the opportunity to examine this bill properly, because this coalition is writing a blank cheque and completely disregarding the need to seriously study such a significant, profound and radical bill. My message to my colleague across the aisle, however, is that there is still time for the Conservatives to change their minds.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It being 8:01 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Government Business No. 1 now before the House.

[Translation]

The question is as follows.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The question is as follows.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[English]

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

Government Orders

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we request a recorded vote, please.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Call in the members.

• (2045)

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

(Division No. 11)

YEAS

Members

Barsalou-Duval
Blanchet
Bonin
Brunelle-Duceppe
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Deschênes
Garon
Gazan

Idlout
Kwan
Lemire
McPherson
Perron
Simard
Thériault — 29

Beaulieu
Blanchette-Joncas
Boulerice
Champoux
DeBellefeuille
Fortin
Gaudreau
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Johns
Larouche
May
Normandin
Savard-Tremblay
Ste-Marie

NAYS

Members

Aboultayf
Aitchison
Albas
Allison
Anand
Anderson
Arnold
Auguste
Bailey
Baker
Bardeesy
Barrett
Beech

Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold
Bezan
Blair
Blois
Borrelli
Brassard
Brock
Caputo
Casey
Chambers
Chang
Chatel
Chenette
Chong
Clark
Cody
Cooper
Coteau
Dalton
Danko
Davies (Niagara South)
Deltell

Acan
Al Soud
Ali
Alty
Anandasangaree
Anstey
Au
Baber
Bains
Baldinelli
Barlow
Battiste
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bendayan

Bexte
Bittle
Block
Bonk
Bragdon
Brière
Calkins
Carr
Chagger
Champagne
Chartrand
Chen
Chi
Church
Cobena
Connors
Cormier
Dabrusin
Dandurand
Davidson
Dawson
d'Entremont

Government Orders

DeRidder	Deschênes-Thériault	Mingarelli	Moore
Desrochers	Dhaliwal	Morin	Morrison
Dhillon	Diab	Morrissey	Motz
Diotte	Doherty	Muys	Myles
Dowdall	Duclos	Naqvi	Nathan
Duguid	Duncan	Nguyen	Noormohamed
Dzerowicz	Earle	Ntumba	Oliphant
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Olszewski	O'Rourke
Epp	Erskine-Smith	Osborne	Patzer
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Paul-Hus	Petitpas Taylor
Falk (Provencher)	Fancy-Landry	Powlowski	Provost
Fanjoy	Fergus	Ramsay	Rana
Fisher	Fonseca	Redekopp	Reid
Fortier	Fragiskatos	Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Fraser	Freeland	Richards	Roberts
Fry	Fuhr	Robertson	Rochefort
Gaheer	Gainey	Romanado	Rood
Gallant	Gasparro	Ross	Rowe
Généreux	Genuis	Royer	Ruff
Gerretsen	Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Sahota	Saini
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Sarai	Sari
Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Sawatzky	Scheer
Gladu	Godin	Schiefke	Schmale
Goodridge	Gould	Seebach	Sgro
Gourde	Grant	Sheehan	Shipley
Greaves	Groleau	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Guay	Guglielmin	Small	Sodhi
Gull-Masty	Gunn	Solomon	Sousa
Hajdu	Hallan	Steinley	St-Pierre
Hanley	Hardy	Strahl	Strauss
Harrison	Hepfner	Stubbs	Sudds
Hirtle	Ho	Tesser Derksen	Thomas
Hoback	Hodgson	Thompson	Tochor
Hogan	Holman	Tolmie	Turnbull
Housefather	Hussen	Uppal	Valdez
Iacono	Jackson	van Koeverden	Van Popta
Jaczek	Jansen	Vandenbeld	Vien
Jeneroux	Jivani	Viersen	Villeneuve
Joseph	Kayabaga	Vis	Wagantall
Kelloway	Kelly	Warkentin	Watchorn
Khalid	Khanna	Waugh	Weiler
Kibble	Kirkland	Wilkinson	Williamson
Klassen	Kmiec	Yip	Zahid
Konanz	Koutrakis	Zerucelli	Zimmer
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Zuberi — 305	
Kronis	Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)		
Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Kusie		
Lake	Lalonde		
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux		
Lantsman	Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)		
Lapointe (Sudbury)	Lattanzio		
Lauzon	Lavack		
Lavoie	Lawrence		
Lawton	LeBlanc		
Lefebvre	Leitão		
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)		
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound		
Lloyd	Lobb		
Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)		
Ma	MacDonald (Malpeque)		
MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Mahal	Majumdar		
Malette (Bay of Quinte)	Malette (Kapusking—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)		
Maloney	Mantle		
Martel	Mazier		
McCauley	McGuinty		
McKelvie	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)		
McKnight	McLean (Calgary Centre)		
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Melillo		
Ménard	Mendès		
Menegakis	Michel		
Miedema	Miller		

PAIRED

Members

Carney
Joly

Dancho
Plamondon — 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion.

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

The hon. chief government whip.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote, please.

● (2055)

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

(Division No. 12)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Acan
Aitchison	Al Soud
Albas	Ali
Allison	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Auguste	Baber
Bailey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Bardeesy	Barlow
Barrett	Battiste
Beech	Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Bendayan
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Bittle
Blair	Block
Blois	Bonk
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Calkins
Caputo	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chambers	Champagne
Chang	Chartrand
Chatel	Chen
Chenette	Chi
Chong	Church
Clark	Cobena
Cody	Connors
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Dandurand
Danko	Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
Deltell	d'Entremont
DeRidder	Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan
Dzerowicz	Earle
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Epp	Eyolfson
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Falk (Provencher)
Fancy-Landry	Fanjoy
Fergus	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gaheer
Gainey	Gallant
Gasparro	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Grant	Greaves
Groleau	Guay
Guglielmin	Guilbeault
Gull-Masty	Gunn
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardy

Government Orders

Harrison	Hepfner
Hirtle	Ho
Hoback	Hodgson
Hogan	Holman
Housefather	Hussen
Iacono	Jackson
Jaczek	Jansen
Jeneroux	Jivani
Joseph	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khanna
Kibble	Kirkland
Klassen	Kmiec
Konanz	Koutrakis
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kronis	Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)
Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Kusie
Lake	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lapointe (Sudbury)	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lavack
Lavoie	Lawrence
Lawton	LeBlanc
Lefebvre	Leitão
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ma	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Mahal	Majumdar
Malette (Bay of Quinte)	Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Maloney	Mantle
Martel	Mazier
McCauley	McGuinty
McKelvie	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McKnight	McLean (Calgary Centre)
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Melillo
Ménard	Mendès
Menegakis	Michel
Miedema	Miller
Mingarelli	Moore
Morin	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Muys	Myles
Naqvi	Nathan
Nguyen	Noormohamed
Ntumba	Oliphant
Olszewski	O'Rourke
Osborne	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Provost
Ramsay	Rana
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Robertson	Rocheffort
Romanado	Rood
Ross	Rowe
Royer	Ruff
Sahota	Saini
Sarai	Sari
Sawatzky	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Sgro
Sheehan	Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Small	Sodhi
Solomon	Sousa
Steinley	St-Pierre
Strahl	Strauss

Government Orders

Stubbs
Tesser Derksen
Thompson
Tolmie
Uppal
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Viersen
Vis
Warkentin
Waugh
Wilkinson
Yip
Zerucelli
Zuberi— 305

Sudds
Thomas
Tochor
Turnbull
Valdez
Van Popta
Vien
Villeneuve
Wagantall
Watchorn
Weiler
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

NAYS**Members**

Barsalou-Duval
Blanchet
Bonin
Brunelle-Duceppe
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Deschênes
Fortin
Gaudreau
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Johns
Larouche
May
Normandin
Savard-Tremblay
Ste-Marie

Beaulieu
Blanchette-Joncas
Boulerice
Champoux
DeBellefeuille
Ersikine-Smith
Garon
Gazan
Idlout
Kwan
Lemire
McPherson
Perron
Simard
Thériault— 30

PAIRED**Members**

Carney
Joly

Dancho
Plamondon— 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I declare the motion carried.

* * *

ONE CANADIAN ECONOMY ACT

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (for the Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy) moved that Bill C-5, An Act to enact the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act and the Building Canada Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, as we have seen in the strong cross-party support for this legislation, members understand that Canada is at a critical moment. U.S. tariffs are battering our economy and threatening to push the entire world into a recession. Hard-working Canadians are losing their jobs, businesses are losing their customers, and investors are holding back.

[Translation]

That is why now is the time to act decisively where we have the power to do so, here in Canada. Now is the time to build Canada, to make our country more prosperous, more resilient and stronger.

[English]

I joined the Prime Minister, along with my colleagues the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and the Minister of Energy and

Natural Resources, and met with the premiers at the first ministers' meeting in Saskatoon a few weeks ago. We talked together about our plan to get nation-building projects moving in Canada. We agreed to act quickly together to get this done. We must, and so we are confident that we will.

However, even acting with great focus and urgency, these nation-building projects will take a little time. That is why it is so essential for us to press ahead with a project that costs nothing and can be accomplished at the stroke of a pen: delivering free trade in Canada. Economists estimate that truly free trade within our country, making it as easy to do business between, say, B.C. and Nova Scotia as it is within one province itself, would add as much as \$200 billion to Canada's economy. At this time of crisis, that is a boost we definitely need. Free trade in our own country is a great idea whose time has come.

Now that the LCBO is not stocking American wine, it makes more sense than ever to be sure that Nova Scotia and B.C. wines can be found on its shelf. A registered nurse qualified in Saskatchewan should be able to get right to work if her family moves to Newfoundland to be close to aging relatives. A plumbing firm in Winnipeg should as easily be able to expand to do jobs in Kenora as it can in Brandon, and a trucker should be able to drive from Halifax Harbour to the port of Vancouver without buying permits to cross between provinces and wasting precious time making technical adjustments after he rolls across each provincial line. Freer internal trade and easier labour mobility will also help boost our housing industry, including the construction of modular homes, which can bring down the cost of building new homes and get them finished faster.

• (2100)

[Translation]

Ultimately, the decision to build one Canadian economy out of 13 is a decision to trust one another. It is about deciding that the delicious steak that people eat in Calgary is surely good enough to serve in Charlottetown and that the dental hygienist whose patients in Moncton adore her can be counted on to do the same excellent work when she moves to Quebec City.

Australia, a country with which we have so much in common, made the decision to build a single continental economy 30 years ago. Australians decided to trust each other. Over the past three decades, that trust has enriched every Australian and strengthened the bonds that unite that beautiful country.

[English]

Now is the moment for Canada to do likewise. The wave of patriotism that has swept across our great country over the past few months has been truly inspiring and invigorating. Let us seize the moment to turn that love of Canada into action by trusting each other and creating one single Canadian economy from coast to coast to coast.

[Translation]

That is why we introduced this bill. We want to eliminate domestic trade barriers and build one Canadian economy. For far too long, senseless barriers have curbed trade. It is time to mutually recognize provincial and territorial regulations to facilitate trade by Canadian companies throughout the country and allow skilled workers to seize opportunities, wherever they may be.

[English]

Momentum is growing across the country toward this laudable goal. P.E.I., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have all passed legislation to remove barriers to internal trade. British Columbia has passed its historic economic stabilization act, and Quebec is advancing its own reforms. Memoranda of understanding between Ontario and other provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P.E.I., Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as powerful regional agreements like the new west partnership, signal new levels of co-operation and a commitment to bring down barriers to internal trade and to make labour mobility easier. I want to salute my native Alberta for its pioneering leadership on this issue.

• (2105)

[Translation]

At the national level, through the committee on internal trade, we are accelerating efforts to eliminate remaining exceptions to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, advance mutual recognition in sectors such as trucking and consumer goods, and facilitate housing construction by addressing interprovincial material and labour barriers. Progress is also being made on credential recognition and direct-to-consumer alcohol sales.

I encourage all members of the House to support this work to strengthen transportation and trade infrastructure and deliver on the promise of a truly unified economy.

[English]

This is something leaders from all political parties agree on. After the first ministers' meeting in Saskatoon, premiers of all political stripes were enthusiastic about our shared mission to build Canada. Premier Kinew said, "It's a generational opportunity for Canadians, but it's also a generational opportunity for some of the poorest communities in our country."

[Translation]

Premier Legault said, "We had an excellent meeting."

[English]

I say to my dear colleagues that this is truly not a partisan effort. These are nation-building priorities, ones that benefit every region, every business and every Canadian. What a delicious irony it would be for us to respond to tariffs imposed from abroad by finally tearing down the tariff and trade barriers we have imposed on each other.

Let us get this done once and for all and deliver free trade in Canada. Let us get this important work done together. I know that we can do it.

Government Orders

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the Minister of Transport's speech here today. First of all, she did mention interprovincial trucking, yet the bill has nothing to do with interprovincial trucking. I would like the minister to account for whether or not she is prepared to show some leadership in that area.

More than that, the minister has talked about consensus. Essentially, the Prime Minister has given a veto to every provincial premier. That means that the bill would enshrine 13 different economies by giving each provincial premier a veto. Would the minister please explain why there is this contradiction? We cannot have one national economy if we have 13 different decision-makers when it comes to getting big projects built.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, let me begin by recognizing, as I did before the Senate today, the pioneering work the member for Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna has done on this issue. I think all of us remember, who could forget, his slogan to "free the beer". He was ahead of his time.

I have emphasized that this is not a partisan bill. This is about work that I believe all Canadians can support. We are very lucky. There is a window right now to get this work done, and I am really grateful to the members opposite for supporting it.

I also want to address the issue of trucking. Trucking is absolutely essential, and it is essential to make it easier to drive trucks across the country. That is why I mentioned it in my opening remarks. We are going to have a trucking hackathon at—

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue for questions and comments.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister a question about this bill, which some might see as a declaration of war against first nations.

Earlier on, I made a little pilgrimage to the Senate to hear what National Chief Woodhouse Nepinak had to say. One of the things she mentioned was how important and urgent it is to respect the obligation to conduct advance consultations in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This process was clearly botched. The government did not obtain the free, prior and informed consent of first nations.

Will the minister commit to responding to the national chief's request by extending consultations with indigenous peoples? She is asking that this be done over the summer or in the fall. Will the minister give her a timely answer?

Government Orders

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, this bill clearly states that we will work closely with indigenous peoples, first nations, Inuit and Métis. We have established five criteria to determine a project's importance. One of them states that the project has to serve the interests of indigenous peoples.

I would also like to point out that we have announced nearly \$20 million in annual funding to support consultations and essential work in co-operation with indigenous peoples.

Finally, I want to emphasize the importance of the \$10-billion investment to support indigenous peoples' involvement.

● (2110)

[English]

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the hon. minister for all the work she is doing to make sure we honour the mandate that Canadians sent us to the House to do.

Earlier in the House, I heard a lot of questions asking if the government was moving too fast, if there are benefits to removing these internal barriers to trade and if that was actually going to have an impact on jobs within communities across Canada. Maybe the member could answer those questions.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, at up to \$200 billion, our internal trade barriers are effectively a 7% tariff that we have imposed on ourselves. Members can think about how much national focus there is on tariffs being imposed on us by other countries, yet we impose a 7% tariff on each other. Let us trust each other. Let us seize this opportunity. Let us help ourselves and help each other.

Gaétan Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great humility that I rise today for my first speech in the House of Commons. I would like to use this opportunity to thank my constituents of Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk for electing me to represent them here. I am honoured to have earned their trust and to serve as their voice in our nation's Parliament. I would also like to thank my team for their dedication throughout my campaign and my family for their unwavering support in this new chapter.

The riding is a vast and diverse region, rich in natural resources, strong culture heritage and resilient communities, and I am committed to ensuring their voices are heard and their priorities are upheld.

Over the last Liberal decade, our economy has experienced the worst economic growth in the G7. We have become more dependent on the United States, and the buying power of our workers' paycheques has declined because Liberal laws have blocked resource development.

Despite having the most resources per capita of any country on earth, we continue to fall short of our economic potential. The recent tariffs from the United States have turned this problem into a full-fledged crisis, one that underscores the urgent need to rebuild economic prosperity for all Canadians. The Prime Minister has recently introduced Bill C-5. A very small number of interprovincial barriers would be eliminated by this bill, which is better than nothing, but tens of billions of dollars of obstacles at the provincial level would remain untouched.

In my professional experience as a forestry executive and through my 45 years of work in the forestry and mining sectors across northeastern Ontario, I have seen first-hand the barriers that stand in the way of productivity, investment and opportunity. Bill C-5, in its current form, fails to meaningfully address or eliminate such barriers. It is not the economic breakthrough the Liberal government wants Canadians to believe it is. Rather, it is a minor baby step and a missed opportunity to reach independence and self-reliance.

● (2115)

[Translation]

Bill C-5 does not actually address the structural issues that are holding back Canada's economic development. Although the bill does not propose anything that slows down free trade or infrastructure projects, it lacks a practical vision for adapting to our current situation.

[English]

For those listening at home, Bill C-5 is split into two parts. The first part is about free trade and labour exchange across Canada. The second part is about projects deemed to be in the national interest, which will have their approval process streamlined by reporting to one point of contact. It includes provisions for the federal government to determine whether a major project is in the national interest based on consultation with provinces, territories and indigenous people.

Despite its ambitions, Bill C-5 falls incredibly short of delivering true free trade and getting major projects built quickly. There are simply too many fault points in Bill C-5 for us to accept the bill in its current state.

[Translation]

Bill C-5 does not present any concrete timelines. It does not provide for a public list of priority projects and it lacks clarity, and yet these key elements are essential to ensuring speed, accountability and public trust in the process. Without those safeguards, the bill cannot achieve its objectives or live up to Canadians' expectations.

[English]

The Liberals' own laws are barriers to development, and this bill is an admission to that. There is a way to fast-track unleashing Canadian resources. It is to remove the Liberal antidevelopment laws that block projects in first place, such as Bill C-69, Bill C-48, the oil and gas cap, and the industrial carbon tax.

[Translation]

This bill, like many of the Liberal government's bills, reflects a limited approach and reinforces the idea that maintaining its restrictive legislation is hampering much-needed economic growth.

[English]

Canada has 28 projects stuck in federal review, in nuclear, uranium, mining, oil and gas, hydro and roads to unlock critical minerals. Those are real projects with real proponents. By the Liberals' own argument, the obvious place to start, which would not even require legislation, would be to fast-track those assessments and approvals.

Look at what is already being done south of the border in the United States. The U.S. approves major energy projects, such as oil, gas, critical minerals and uranium, on federal lands in as few as 28 days.

The Liberals now promise a two-year timeline, where Conservatives proposed a one-year maximum wait time for approvals, with a target of six months for projects of national importance, and to also uphold the duty to consult and actually get projects built.

The Liberal government needs to get with the times. If it really wants to make Canada truly self-reliant and competitive with the U.S., we need to actually compete. The world is becoming only more chaotic and fast-paced. We need realistic times to deliver our projects, or we risk staying left behind. Canada has what the world needs. We need to give it to them when they need it.

• (2120)

[Translation]

The Prime Minister says this is an exceptional crisis. If that is true, why do we need to agree to a two-year wait time? In a real crisis, leadership calls for urgent action. Two years is simply too long. Canada is dependent on and vulnerable to the United States. The Liberals' proposal will continue to hold Canada back and leave its resources unused in the ground.

[English]

Conservatives want Canada to compete and to achieve true economic and energy security. That means shovel-ready economic zones and scrapping the cap on Canadian oil and gas. Canadians need affordable, reliable power and fuel so Canada can be self-reliant and achieve real economic independence from the United States. The way we handle our resources lays the ground for the future of our country, a country that is self-reliant and independent, and restores the Canadian promise that anyone who works hard gets a good life in our great Canada.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member across the way on his maiden speech to the House.

I am taking a look at Bill C-5, and I have had the opportunity to ask this question of the member's colleagues in the Conservative caucus. We appreciate the fact that the member is supporting the legislation and that we are going to see it pass on Friday.

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Is there anything specific? I have yet to hear anything from the Conservatives saying there is an amendment that they believe would make a difference. Does the member have any sort of a change that he would like to see made to the legislation itself?

Gaétan Malette: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there are 28 projects right now, in nuclear, uranium, mining, oil and gas, hydro, roads and critical minerals, and they are stuck in the process. These would be great ones to start with, and the laws would not need to be changed.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-5, as it currently stands, would allow the federal government to say that it will consult Quebec, for example.

Quebec says no, it does not want a pipeline project within its borders. However, there is absolutely nothing in Bill C-5 to indicate that a consensus or Quebec's approval would be required before a pipeline could be built.

Is the member aware of this reality? Does he agree that the provinces should have the final say on projects located within their borders?

Gaétan Malette: Mr. Speaker, I listen to the news on Radio-Canada every day. What I believe I am hearing from the people of Quebec and their premier is that they are open to serious negotiations for a pipeline in Quebec.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Kapiskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk on his first speech in the House of Commons. He mentioned that he had worked in the forestry sector.

What measures could we take to support the forestry sector in Canada through Bill C-5 or other initiatives here in the House of Commons?

Gaétan Malette: Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that our forestry industry used to be a world leader.

[English]

During the trade wars that started in the eighties, which are still going on after 45 years, there were sawmills and pulp and paper mills in every single province. In Ontario, where I worked, there were 21 pulp and paper mills when I started; there are three left. Let us make sure this does not happen to the rest of our industries.

It is easier to fix than to rebuild. It will take us 20 years to rebuild the forestry industry. We have huge, healthy forests, and we need to process them. If not, they will burn down.

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Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question. This is a very complex piece of legislation. I understand the Conservatives will be voting with the Liberals to support it. What I do not understand is why, with such a complex piece of legislation, the Conservatives voted with the Liberals to prevent the Prime Minister from testifying at committee. They had an opportunity to have the Prime Minister come and explain why this omnibus bill needed to be rushed through so quickly, why this omnibus bill was not—

• (2125)

Brad Vis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not believe, after we have taken a vote on a matter, that it is appropriate for a member to refer to the comings and goings of the Prime Minister.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I understand where the member is coming from.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona, on the same point of order.

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, the Standing Orders clearly indicate we are not able to indicate how a member voted. However, we are able to discuss how parties voted. That is in the Standing Orders.

I would like the member to explain why the Conservatives voted with the Liberals to not bring Mark Carney to committee.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. I know where the member is coming from. We cannot use proper names. Let us move on.

We will allow the member an opportunity to respond to the question.

Gaétan Malette: Mr. Speaker, could the question be repeated?

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, why did the Conservative Party of Canada vote with the Liberal Party of Canada to prevent the Prime Minister from coming to committee to explain why he brought forward this piece of legislation?

Gaétan Malette: Mr. Speaker, it happens.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we debate Bill C-5, I think we should all be inspired by La Fontaine's fable, *The Tortoise and the Hare*. The federal government is behaving like the hare; it wants to make everything happen fast. It is not taking the time to do things properly. It wants to act right now and thinks everything is a matter of life and death. That is just not the case. The tortoise, in contrast, moves slowly. It analyzes everything. It thinks, it ponders and it assesses the situation. It makes sure to do its job properly and it gets to the finish line on time. "To win a race, the swiftness of a dart availeth not without a timely start."

Here in the House, we are doing the exact opposite of what that famous fable teaches us. Bill C-5 is the top of a slippery slope. People invoke the U.S. President every day to justify the need for haste. The President used the national interest as a pretext to im-

pose tariffs. The response proposed in this legislation is for the government to have essentially the same powers. Yes, a project of national interest will make it possible to override federal laws, and especially the laws of Quebec and the Canadian provinces. It is the Canadian version of "drill, baby, drill".

I come from Abitibi—Témiscamingue, a mining region. Laws and regulations exist for a reason. The number of abandoned mining sites in our area is unbelievable. Yes, in the past, the mining industry was a bit careless. Things have changed since then because attitudes have changed, but also because Quebec has passed strong environmental laws. According to Janique Lambert, Quebec's commissioner of sustainable development, there are currently more than 36 former mining sites that will cost close to \$600 million to remediate.

As I said, the mining industry has changed. It is a lot more responsible now. For example, to avoid the mistakes of the past, financial guarantees are provided for the redevelopment and remediation of mining sites. Innovative technologies, including those used by businesses in Abitibi—Témiscamingue, also make it possible to do better.

Take, for example, the Dumont Nickel project, which has had an agreement with the Abitibiwinni First Nation since 2007. The Dumont Nickel project will begin in the next year. This proves that agreements can be reached with first nations when they are involved in discussions from the start of a project.

In no way does this bill respect this important philosophy, because the government's bill is fundamentally flawed. Ottawa is going to commit everyone to major projects that will take years to complete, with lifespans measured in decades, meaning future generations will be involved. That is precisely why it is necessary to act like the tortoise. We need to identify the subtleties and provide answers. We must ensure that our bills respond to what we want. Do we want mining permits to be issued more quickly? Yes, but not by sacrificing key aspects and the necessary environmental assessments. The environmental studies that Quebec requires could very well be the "one review". The Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement is fully qualified to do this.

When the time comes to make a decision on a project, Quebec must always have the last word on its own projects. Proposed section 21 in Bill C-5 even gives the federal government the right to issue an order to exempt a proponent from the application of any law. It makes no sense. The government will sacrifice everything just to make things go faster. This is like back when big business used to make the government follow its rules. That is exactly how this government is behaving toward first nations. Enough talk; now, sign here.

In drafting this bill, the government fulfilled none of its obligations to first nations. Sending a short letter asking for input in the form of a two- or three-page letter within five or seven days does not count as consultation. Consultation is not just ticking a box. Consultation means meeting with people, sitting down, listening, discussing problems and finding solutions. Consultation does not mean agreeing on everything. It means having a real, ongoing dialogue.

Furthermore, while the federal government recognizes the provinces to some extent—I am being generous—the rights of first nations should be given more consideration. This bill violates the most basic criteria of their rights.

My presence on the ground among the first nations stems from an unequivocal desire to work on reconciliation and ensure that our indigenous communities have the resources to fulfill their ambitions. Bill C-5 is a serious barrier to reconciliation.

• (2130)

Taking their interests into account means more than just writing “advance the interests of Indigenous peoples” in a bill, especially since this bill targets 13 laws and seven regulations that seek to protect the environment, fauna and flora.

One of these laws is the Indian Act. Among first nations, there are certain principles that guide chiefs and indigenous communities in considering future generations. They think about the next seven generations. That is why, among first nations, the turtle is the symbol of the Earth's creation. In addition to representing America in its shape, it is also a symbol of prudence and longevity.

Today, I went to the Senate to hear what Grand Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak had to say. She said that many of her colleagues could not be there today, as some were dealing with forest fires. She recommends slowing down, taking the summer, getting out and talking to people, talking to Canadians and talking to first nations. First nations know how it feels to have Trump at their borders. She recommends not having Trump-like policies here, but rather taking our time and doing things properly.

Later, she recommended taking the summer, taking the fall, taking the time to go through this bill carefully, talk through it and talk with first nations about it. Nothing is off the table. First nations are thinking about it already. They have had some conversations, but the grand chief was not in a position to tell us what those were. The chiefs will talk it over and decide on a position. She said that we have an opportunity to do things differently and to work together, and she recommended getting everyone to the table.

This is a heartfelt cry from the national chief of the first nations. Her position is shared by the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, AFNQL, which strongly and unequivocally opposes Bill C-5.

This is a bill that, under the guise of reducing red tape and building the nation, threatens the very foundations of Canada's constitutional order, the rights of first nations and their shared journey toward reconciliation. The obligation to consult and accommodate first nations is not a procedural hurdle. It is not an inconvenience to be dealt with or a box to be checked off. It is a constitutional imperative that is recognized and guaranteed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. It has been repeatedly confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada and reaffirmed in Canada's commitments under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This bill does not demonstrate legislative reconciliation. It demonstrates indifference.

In her appearance before the Senate earlier, Julie McGregor, the legal counsel for the Assembly of First Nations, raised a very inter-

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esting point. She said that the duty to consult and the standard of free and informed consent are not operationalized in Bill C-5. It is interpretive, not included in a concrete way. With more consultation, it would be possible to meet those requirements. Amendments would be required, but we did not take the time to consult first nations. Consultation comes down to consulting rights holders about how to respect wildlife and the hunting and fishing rights that will be affected by the project. That would be the essence of the consultation. Rights holders should determine who should be consulted. That is meaningful consultation.

It is a matter of trusting others. I say that because in the meantime, we are seeing the provincial legislative assemblies mobilize the first nations, as though there were agreements in the different provinces of Canada. B.C.'s Bill 15, Ontario's Bill 5, Nova Scotia's Bill 6 and Quebec's bills 67 and 97 all include the duty to consult indigenous peoples.

Right now, there is a movement afoot to refuse to respect first nations' rights, which will likely create a crisis in Canada. Indigenous leaders in Quebec spoke out against an act to strip them of their land. AFNQL Chief Francis Verreault-Paul says we need to protect biodiversity and our way of life. Respecting the ancestral rights of first nations is not optional for governments. Chiefs in Ontario have made it clear that they completely reject Bill C-5. They maintain and defend their position, as Ontario Regional Chief Abram Benedict mentioned. First nations rights holders must be at the table and the government must uphold its constitutional and treaty obligations.

• (2135)

We are headed for a crisis that, unfortunately, will probably not be resolved today, but before the courts, unless we listen to first nations—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could elaborate on the fact that, for the first time in a very long time, indigenous people will finally be allowed to participate in projects, to be part of projects and therefore be able to work on the very design and development of these projects, as well as benefit economically from them.

I would like the member to comment on that, because this is new. Bill C-5 includes this promise of a much brighter future for indigenous peoples.

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, what the member for La Prairie—Atateken just said demonstrates a flagrant lack of respect for first nations.

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The whole problem with this government is that it promises consultations at a later date. First nations are being asked to sign everything over, and then the government will walk away. It wants to take away first nations' established rights and then trample on them. I am taking a stand against this kind of behaviour on behalf of first nations.

[English]

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my Bloc Québécois colleague for his speech.

The last Liberal questioner raised the issue of first nations consultations and made it sound like the Liberal government has that all covered. It has decided to appoint an advisory board. Does the member share my wonder as to why the government makes no legal reference to this advisory committee or panel in Bill C-5, in legislation? It seems the government wants to say that consultations are part of the law, yet it does not include any reference to the advisory committee it has put together.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, this is the same fundamental problem. Indigenous peoples are being put in a box. They get offered something so that it can be said that they were given a little sandbox to play in. They will then be told that they have been consulted.

This is not reconciliation. This is not ongoing dialogue with first nations. Action needs to be taken right from the start. The way that this government is acting is irresponsible.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave a brilliant presentation. I would like him to come back to the notion of free, prior and informed consent by first nations.

The government keeps saying that it is going to consult with first nations, but the bill only mentions the word “consultation”.

Can my hon. colleague help the government understand the difference between consultation and obtaining free, prior and informed consent?

● (2140)

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, free, prior and informed consent is given by the person in question. It is not something that is imposed on someone else. Basically, it is when the person feels ready to give it, because they have the sovereignty to make the decision and to say when they feel ready to give free, prior and informed consent.

It is not up to Parliament to dictate when first nations feel ready to do so. This is where the nuance lies. It must be done through ongoing dialogue, while giving the other party time to get ready to give their consent. Otherwise, it is what we would call a violation of rights.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my question will be clear, simple and short. Are the Bloc Québécois and the opposition members prepared to work over the summer to make the necessary and required changes to Bill C-5?

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands for her question and her sincere interest in

this subject. Of course I would like that. The work will continue, because we need to have this ongoing dialogue.

Unfortunately, if Bill C-5 is passed as quickly as is planned, the repercussions of this bill will be dealt with in the courts for the next few years, if not decades.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my speech this evening is dedicated to all those we meet on the campaign trail who tell us that their vote does not matter and will not make a difference. We are here to tell them that a solemn election promise does matter.

On the very first page of our election platform, we spoke about the need to refocus the Canadian economy. We are here tonight for the second reading of this bill to assure people that their vote counts. Once elected, a government fulfills its promises. We are here to respond to this heartfelt plea from all Canadians, including the Gatineau constituents whom I have the honour of representing here in the House. We are here to tell them that their vote counts. Indeed, we are here in the House, driven by a sense of urgency and a desire to serve and to fulfill our promises.

Canadians gave this new government a clear and urgent mandate: to build a stronger Canada and an economy that works for everyone. They sent us here to eliminate barriers, unlock opportunities and deliver the results that matter in their daily lives. This is exactly what we are doing.

Just days after this Parliament was convened, we introduced Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act, because we are in a period of economic uncertainty. People are worried. Canadians cannot afford inaction.

This bill aims to remove barriers that are holding our country back. It aims to build a Canada that works better together. It aims to deliver real, tangible benefits to Canadian workers, Canadian businesses and Canadian communities.

[English]

For too long, our economy has been divided, not by ability and ambition but by artificial borders and outdated rules. The one Canadian economy act would address this directly. First, it would remove federal barriers to internal trade and labour mobility. It would make it easier for businesses to operate across the country with no more needless duplication of approvals, no more inconsistencies that raise costs and delay investment. A company in one province will have a clearer, faster pathway to sell its goods and services in another, and the same goes for workers.

In the House, we hear all too many voices that do not recognize the workers having trouble getting licensed in one province or another. Right now, a certified professional in one province may still have to go through redundant processes just to work in another. This slows down hiring, frustrates skilled Canadians and limits where people can go to find opportunity. The one Canadian economy act would help break those barriers down. By facilitating greater coordination across jurisdictions, we will move closer to a truly national labour market, one where people can take their skills where they are needed without unnecessary red tape.

• (2145)

[Translation]

Second, this bill would allow for faster completion of large-scale projects, infrastructure projects that are essential for nation building, projects that support clean energy, conventional energy, housing, transportation—the backbone of Canada's future economy.

Through the building Canada act, this bill will simplify federal review and approval processes for major infrastructure projects. It will encourage coordination, reduce duplication and pave the way for faster and more efficient decisions.

I want to be clear. This will not come at the expense of environmental protection, indigenous rights or public consultation. We will continue to honour our responsibilities. However, we must also recognize that we cannot meet the urgent needs of Canadians if the processes are overly slow. This bill ensures that we are efficient and in line with our shared priorities.

[English]

This bill would deliver what Canadians expect from their government: action, ambition and collaboration. We are not here to talk about why things are difficult. We are here to remove the barriers and get things done.

Make no mistake that the barriers we are targeting come at a real cost: a cost in productivity, a cost in jobs and a cost in confidence. The reality is, Canada has some of the most fragmented internal economic rules in the industrialized world. We make it easier, in some cases, for goods to move across international borders than between our own provinces. That is not only inefficient, but it is irrational.

The Senate, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, economists, chambers of commerce and unions have all pointed to the significant ongoing costs of internal trade barriers. That is billions of dollars in economic activity lost every single year. That is billions of dollars that could be invested in growth, in clean energy, in housing and in innovation. We can no longer afford to leave that opportunity on the table.

[Translation]

This bill respects provincial jurisdiction. It represents a partnership, but it is also clear and defines a national understanding: This country's economy must function as what it is, one Canada.

[English]

We are introducing this legislation with urgency because the moment demands it. We are facing labour shortages across sectors

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such as construction, health care and transportation. No one's riding is immune. There are also the skilled trades. We are facing a growing demand for infrastructure, and we are facing a global economy that is moving fast, with countries investing heavily in supply chains, clean energy and productivity. Canada cannot afford to be slow. We must match our ambition with action, and that is exactly what this bill represents.

[Translation]

This bill is also based on optimism, on the belief that Canada works better when we work together. We believe in a country where people are free to build a life, a business and a future without being held back by useless barriers. We believe in a country where provinces and territories work together for economic growth rather than competing with each other through unnecessary duplication. We believe in a country where governments rise to the challenge, recognize the moment and act with determination. That is what we are doing today.

We have all heard people say that some projects will never see the light of day, that they cannot be completed because of excessive bureaucracy and regulations. The various levels of government are often criticized for not communicating enough with each other. This bill is a solemn and very effective response to those criticisms. It allows us to dream.

The other day, I said that a project like the one in James Bay would never have been thought possible. The same goes for Expo 67 and the construction of the Montreal metro. Even building a bridge across the Northumberland Strait to Prince Edward Island would seem out of reach. We have lost the ability to dream. This bill rekindles that ambition. It gives Canadians the opportunity to dream again.

• (2150)

[English]

Before this House rises for the summer, we are asking Parliament to give this legislation the urgent attention it deserves. We want to give Canadians back the possibility of dreaming to build and dreaming to build bigger. We want to debate this bill, we want to examine this bill, and yes, we want to vote on this bill.

In the election campaign, our leader said it is time to build. We truly believe that it is Canada's time. It is time to rid ourselves of these needless delays, bureaucracies and rules. It is time to get our ambition and strap it on to meet the needs of this new economic era. Canadians are counting on us to move forward, not stand still. The one Canadian economy act is a win for people, for the Canadian economy, for Canadian workers, for Canadian investment and for Canadian unity.

[Translation]

Long live Canada.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Let us get this work done.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the bill, in part 1, sweepingly replaces multiple ministers in multiple departments and multiple quasi-judicial entities with a single minister. In clause 6, it says, “The Governor in Council may, by order, designate a member of the King’s Privy Council for Canada as the Minister for the purposes of this Act.”

Can the minister tell the House who the minister responsible for this act would be?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that we—

An hon. member: You do not know?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend from Manitoba seems very exuberant this evening.

What I will tell him is that this bill is animated by a single spirit to streamline these approvals and make sure that we have the ability to dream big in this country, to take on major national projects that can transform our economy and to get rid of these needless overlaps and duplications, whether they be between jurisdictions or inside jurisdictions. That is why a minister is clearly designated in this act for the purpose of shepherding these major projects across the line.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I get the impression that the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons dreams of the same Canada as Pierre Poilievre.

If the past is any indication, it is all fine and good to say that regulations are what slows projects down, but the truth is that no proponent wants to pay for oil and gas infrastructure. The last oil sector project was the Trans Mountain expansion. The government got taken for \$34 billion.

I would like to hear the government House leader tell us whether public money will be invested in oil or gas infrastructure.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, we have invested heavily in the transition to renewable energy. Every province has success stories to tell, including Quebec. We can be very proud of that.

We Quebecers can be proud of our green record thanks to people like Robert Bourassa, who dreamed big and had ambitions for Quebec. That is the same ambition that we are trying to harness so we can leave our children and grandchildren an awe-inspiring, ambitious Quebec. The days of a small Quebec are over.

[English]

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that was a great speech that captured the spirit of Canadians who sent us to the House to make sure that we deliver on some of the most important key things. The member mentioned labour, and I know that he was Minister of Labour at one point. He went across the country talking to workers, so he actually understands the importance of removing these barriers for workers.

Maybe the member wants to expand on the benefits of removing these internal barriers across the country and the benefit that would have on workers, not just in his riding, but across Canada, in all our ridings, as well.

• (2155)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, we have all heard the stories. Whether they be in Newfoundland or in any part of our country, there are workers who want to take their skills and make them portable so they can go to another place. That is why we put in place, for example, the labour mobility tax deduction, so that workers could take their skills more easily and be compensated, just like any white-collar worker would be paid his or her moving expenses for moving to find opportunity in another location. However, the largest frustration is among those who have a Red Seal, who have their ticket, and want to be able to practise their skilled trade from one province to the next but could not get through the red tape and the hassles. We would take that away.

The federal government is showing leadership, and so are provinces. We are going to get it done for them.

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to have free trade in Canada by Canada Day. He also promised that all federal and provincial trade barriers would be gone. That raises the question of whether a nurse from British Columbia would be able to work in Ontario, after this legislation is passed, without re-accreditation?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I want to give credit where credit is due to Doug Ford. Maybe my hon. friend should call him someday. We talk to him regularly, and he has put in place a bill that ensures there is reciprocity for any province that wants to pick up the challenge of these barriers to working. Doug Ford will tell the member if he calls him that the work has been done.

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment to your position as well. It is great to see you in the chair.

Allow me, as well, to thank the great people of northwestern Ontario for sending me back to serve a third term in Parliament. This is my first opportunity to rise and give a full speech in the new Parliament. It remains a distinct honour and privilege to represent the people of Kenora—Kiiwetinoong in the House of Commons.

I do not have time to list everyone, but I will briefly thank my family, the volunteers, the campaign team and all the people who put in the time and effort to knock on doors, put up signs and do all the work to ensure that we had a successful outcome and that I could be back serving the people of northwestern Ontario.

To the matter at hand, Bill C-5, I would like to focus more specifically on the building Canada act within Bill C-5. Of course, it has been mentioned throughout the debate that it would require a new major projects office to render decisions within a two-year timeline. This is a good step. I am personally happy to see the government finally moving in this direction, but it is interesting to note that after 10 years of the Liberal government, we see it finally recognizing that things are not moving quickly enough and that major projects are being stalled across the country. I truly believe that, in bringing forward this legislation, the government is admitting to 10 years of failure, 10 years of roadblocks, 10 years of red tape and bureaucracy that have stalled projects, particularly when it comes to mining.

The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has admitted that it does take too long to get a mine approved in Canada. It is incredible to hear him say that. It is welcome news to hear him say that, to some extent, but again, the Liberal government has to recognize who has been in power and who is responsible for the fact that it takes too long to build a mine in Canada.

Today, the Mining Association of Canada, for that matter, notes that it takes 15 years, on average, to get a mine approved in Canada. I have seen other estimates that are higher, but the Mining Association of Canada says it takes 15 years. Obviously, that is an incredibly difficult situation for any investor, any proponent who wants to invest in our country, knowing that they are staring at, potentially, a 15-year or longer timeline.

This is of important note because Canada is, of course, a top mineral and resource producer. Resource development is critical to our economy, and not just to the great jobs it provides for people across northwestern Ontario and across all of Canada, the livelihoods and the paycheques that put food on tables, that put gas in the gas tanks of vehicles and that ensure that people can have the life they want to succeed and be prosperous. Mineral development is critical to our economic independence, truly now more than ever, coming out of the lost Liberal decade. It is important that we get our critical minerals to market. Over that decade, we have seen roadblocks, barriers and red tape, and now we have the worst growth in the G7.

The Liberals, obviously, talked a good game in the election. They said that it is time to build. They said a lot of the things that we have been saying for 10-plus years, and it is now time for them to step up and put it into action. A lot of Canadians want to be fair and want to give them the benefit of the doubt, maybe, but they really have a hard time believing that the Liberal government, after all it has done for 10 years, is actually going to step up to the plate and get our critical minerals developed.

The world needs more Canadian minerals. The International Energy Agency says that the demand for clean energy will require at least 71% more critical minerals than are currently being produced globally. In Canada, according to the Mining Association of Canada, many minerals are not even being produced at the level they were a decade ago. The demand is going up, and our production is going down. Who is stepping up to fill the void? It is other countries, such as China, where there are not as strong environmental regulations and not as strong protections for labour and for jobs.

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It is other countries, dictatorships, that are stepping up to fill the void that Canada is leaving behind.

● (2200)

I mentioned the economic independence angle of this as well. With the threats from the United States, the uncertainty from the United States that has been produced, now more than ever we know we have to move forward with these developments so we can bring home the paycheques, the wealth and the security to our own country.

These delays and red tape have held back the industry in Canada. There are actually 42 projects that are under federal assessment right now; 22 pertain to mining, nine are for transportation and four are in oil and gas. The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has said there is a lack of investment certainty. Well, it is no wonder that after 10 years of his government there are 42 projects in a backlog currently under assessment. Twelve of those projects that are delayed are in northern Ontario, representing a combined 2,100 jobs and nearly \$2.7 billion of investment, and I would like to touch on a couple of them, if I may.

One is the Crawford nickel project north of Timmins. It has been under assessment since 2022, and it would add 900 jobs if approved.

There is the Springpole gold project, in my riding, which is northeast of Red Lake. It has been under assessment for seven years and represents potentially \$2 billion in GDP growth. It is an incredible opportunity for people in northwestern Ontario and for our economy as a whole if this government is able to get out of the way.

There is the Great Bear gold project southeast of Red Lake. There is a lot going on in Red Lake; it is very exciting, with lots of opportunity if we can capitalize on it. The Great Bear gold project has been under assessment since 2023.

The northern road link project, north of Thunder Bay, is a project proposed by Marten Falls and Webequie first nations. It has been under assessment since 2023 as well. There is a lot of opportunity for true partnership, I think, between the federal government and these two nations. It is really a corridor to prosperity not just for these two nations but for our country as a whole.

Again, these are all the positive things that could be happening, but 42 of these positive things, these projects, are being stalled. The government is bringing forward this bill now. It says it is going to get things moving in two years, but I say, why not start with the 42 projects that are currently under assessment? The Liberals are bringing forward this whole new regime, this whole new bureaucracy to, hopefully, move things forward within a two-year timeline. In many respects, I appreciate that step they are taking, but after the neglect, after the constant roadblocks for 10 years, why not go for the low-hanging fruit, these 42 projects that are there, ready and waiting for some certainty?

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I will end by saying that Conservatives are happy if even one project gets accelerated, but more must be done. We definitely have to repeal Bill C-69, the "no new pipelines" bill; Bill C-50, the so-called Sustainable Jobs Act; and the industrial carbon tax as well, to help ensure we can make Canada more competitive and thrive in the current economic situation.

Conservatives are ready to work in this chamber with all parties to unlock the resources that we have across our country. We propose shovel-ready zones that provide permitting, clear conditions and boundaries to start building the pipelines, the mines and other major projects that we need to grow our economy, provide great jobs for people in northwestern Ontario and across the country, and of course, secure that economic independence and security that I spoke about previously. The resource sector certainly needs a break. It needs some relief and some support from the federal government, and Conservatives stand ready to get that done.

I look forward to any questions and comments from my colleagues.

• (2205)

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his explanations.

I think that all the comments he made are covered in the bill. As for the decision-making process he was talking about, which is quite slow, the bill shortens that decision-making process with less delay and less waiting. When he talks about oil projects, it is very interesting, but there are other projects as well. We truly need to diversify our economy, and that is what we want to do by requiring only one review for each project.

I have a very simple question for my colleague. Given that the bill responds to all the concerns he raised in connection with one strong Canadian economy, would my colleague be prepared to work with his party to help this bill move forward as quickly as possible for the good of Canadians?

[English]

Eric Melillo: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier in my comments, Conservatives are happy to see even one project accelerated. We think it is high time. It is long past time, after the government has dragged its feet, or I would say has put up barriers and distinct roadblocks purposely to stop development over the last 10 years.

In some respects, it is heartening to see that the Liberals are coming around. We are ready to work with them. We are ready to work with all parties in the House to ensure that we can unlock the vast potential of the resource sector across Canada, provide good jobs and provide more economic independence and security.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleague, with whom I serve on the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs. Since he was reappointed to that committee, I will have the pleasure of working with him again.

I would like to know what questions he would ask first nations representatives if Bill C-5 were to be studied by the Standing Com-

mittee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs. Would he be interested in the issue of free, prior and informed consent? What responses would he expect from first nations representatives?

Does he think that Bill C-5 has met the expectations of first nations?

[English]

Eric Melillo: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate working with the member also, and I look forward to getting back to committee shortly and working with him.

The question was pretty hypothetical. I am not going to try to guess what a hypothetical individual may or may not say, but I will just comment with respect to some of the discussions I have heard and some of the things I have spoken about in my speech as well.

I talked about Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation, two communities that are hoping to see a major project move forward. They have been stalled in the government's current process, and they are looking to continue to move forward so they can bring prosperity to their communities and to the country. It is important that when we do get to committee, we hear all voices across the country and ensure that we are doing as much consultation as possible.

• (2210)

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to specifically point out that I believe that the member for Kenora—Kiiwetinoong was saying that the previous Trudeau government had failed, over 10 years, to create a regulatory environment where private sector capital could form and come together to build big projects, whether they be mines or other forms of infrastructure we need to be successful in our economy. Bill C-5 is literally an admission of that.

One of the fatal flaws of the legislation is that the Prime Minister would be giving a carve-out to each provincial premier, and saying that something is in the national interest is essentially saying that it overweighs provincial interests. Does the member believe, as I do, that by saying that a provincial premier has a veto, the legislation would essentially create, again, 13 economies and not one national economy?

Eric Melillo: Mr. Speaker, it is definitely a concern I have. Obviously, as Conservatives, we want to see one Canadian economy; we want to see the barriers broken down, but allowing any province to have a veto really flies in the face of that.

The government has talked a lot about the need for consensus to get major projects built, but it does not even know how it will actually define consensus. It is very concerning, and I definitely agree with the member and his sentiment in that.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to come back to Bill C-5, a bill that has been described by Ecojustice, a recognized Canadian environmental law organization, as giving the Prime Minister sweeping powers not seen before in the history of modern Canadian environmental law. What is being presented today as a bill the Liberals claim Canadians are asking for goes much further than anything announced during the election campaign.

The government is literally overhauling the project approval system. It is overhauling the environmental assessment system. It is completely changing the laws it put in place to protect the environment and the health of Canadians. It is doing all this without any mandate. In fact, during the election campaign, the Liberals did not show Canadians any clear proposal to scrap 13 environmental laws whose scope goes far beyond the environment. That legislation includes the Indian Act and the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. It also includes seven regulations that the government is giving itself the right to completely ignore. It is giving itself the right to no longer have to obey laws that were democratically passed in the House.

Furthermore, how is this government currently operating? It is operating on a time allocation, at full speed. It is silencing parliamentarians to prevent us from even asking questions or hearing from witnesses. It is moving full speed ahead with a system that even Stephen Harper would have been embarrassed to introduce, a system that slavishly caves to the demands of the oil and gas sector to speed up approvals and remove barriers and environmental protections. That is what we are talking about here today.

We have a bill that has two parts. The Bloc Québécois was wise to ask that the two parts of this bill be split.

For the first part, on trade, we said that we would be able to reach a consensus, that some improvements are needed, but that it is reasonable. As the adults in the room, we figured that we would do our job as elected representatives. What Canadians expect from us is to take a close look at the bill, study it and ask questions properly, but that is not what is happening at all. We are not the only ones to notice this. First nations have spoken up and said that what is currently being presented is wrong. First nations have not been consulted. The government is rushing things through without any justification.

This is the beginning of a new term. There is currently no urgency. There are not even any projects on the table. No proponents have come forward with any projects.

The government is being utterly undemocratic. Despite what the government says, it is not true that the bill states that consensus will be required for these projects to move forward and for them to be recognized as projects of national interest. The Prime Minister said that there should certainly be consensus for the projects and no project would move forward if the provinces do not agree. In the bill, the word consensus is not mentioned once. Why did the Prime Minister not write very clearly that he would seek a consensus and ensure that the provinces and the first nations agree with the projects that will be identified as being in the national interest? He did not include that because he does not want that to happen. He

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intends to give himself superpowers that would allow him to impose pipeline projects despite the refusal of a province or a first nation. If the Prime Minister's intention is clear and it is to seek a consensus, then he needs to include that in his bill, but it is not there.

● (2215)

Then, it says that so-called projects of national interest will be selected by order. The government will decide by itself, as it sees fit, what projects will be of so-called national interest. There will be no mandatory criteria. The feds will decide on Quebec's behalf what the national projects will be, without any mandatory criteria. That is very clear.

Fighting climate change is one of the factors that may be considered, emphasis on "may". In other words, the government may choose to disregard such factors completely, build oil pipelines, build gas pipelines, develop oil and gas expansion projects and forget about fighting climate change, as it has done since it came to power. That is what this bill will do.

People will say that the Bloc Québécois is fearmongering, but first nations have very clear concerns. That was the first nations national chief talking, after all. When I see that, I realize something is going on. The current member for Beaches—East York, a former Liberal cabinet minister, warned his colleagues about what he called economic growth at all costs during a debate on closure. He said that the government's response to Trump is leading it to sacrifice other important values. We are not the ones saying so; that was a Liberal member who is concerned that the government is moving forward without any justification by using undemocratic strategies such as closure.

As for the former environment minister and present Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, he refused today to say whether he supports the bill in its current form. Why? Because he wants amendments. The current minister refuses to say whether he supports the bill in its current form because amendments need to be made. What is the government doing? It is rushing through the consultation process, limiting the number of people who will be heard and limiting the number of questions. As a result, it is limiting opportunities to improve this bill. That is what democracy is for. Unfortunately, even within the government, I can see that there are concerns.

The member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country is a third current government member who has expressed reservations. In his opinion, Bill C-5 gives the government extraordinary powers because of the trade war, but it is giving itself powers for five years, and that is too long. Why have those powers for five years if the free trade agreement will be settled in two? There is nothing in this bill that justifies what the government is doing.

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We have witnessed bouts of anti-democratic behaviour before. The Duplessis era, for example, was no stranger to scandals involving agreements made behind closed doors. This bill is the antithesis of transparency and slams the door shut on public participation.

Proponents are going to submit their projects to the government in private, and the government is going to come to terms with them. No information will be made public. Decisions will be made and projects will be designated as being in the national interest. They will be pre-approved before environmental assessments are even done. That is unheard of. Pre-approvals will be handed out before projects are even assessed. How will we know whether these projects will impact communities if the communities have no say? In this country's history of environmental assessments, the government has never before proposed taking such a huge step backwards. Breaking one's own laws for no reason is not only a serious mistake, it is something that everyone here should oppose. It is definitely cause for concern.

What is apparent, however, is that people are blinded by oil, gas and the fantasy of infinite growth without a second thought for future or even current generations. That is what we are witnessing.

Naturally, the Bloc Québécois will be presenting a series of amendments. We are constructive, and we hope that the government and the opposition will be reasonable and responsible. Right now, the government is using a bazooka. This bill actually looks a lot like the War Measures Act in terms of the powers the government is giving itself.

• (2220)

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, even though I do not agree with many of the points he raised today. I would like to set the record straight.

They said it will be done behind closed doors, so we really need to set the record straight so as not to mislead Canadians. Federal agencies will be working on these things. What my colleague forgot to mention is that the decision-making process will be streamlined. It will replace a process that was much slower, with long periods of inaction that resulted in lost opportunities. The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, which is a federal agency, will be involved. There will be consultations with first nations, which is something my colleague definitely forgot to mention.

Our esteemed colleague talked mainly about oil and gas. We are losing other economic opportunities too. Would my colleague be willing to get back on track and work to bring back the aerospace industry—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I must give the member time to respond to the question.

The hon. member for Repentigny.

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comment made by my colleague from Bourassa. However, I would invite him to take another look at the bill. It is very clear that a proponent will be able to submit a project to the government and that the minister responsible will be able to issue an order declaring it a project of national interest without any information being made public, without any individual being informed and without any details about the project being disclosed.

This bill could even result in Canada's impact assessment law being thrown out so that the government would not have to comply with it. Why is the government putting this in a bill if it has no intention of throwing it out? I would be concerned if I were the member for Bourassa, and I look forward to speaking with him and explaining the extent of the democratic decline we are experiencing.

[English]

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are at an interesting moment in Canadian politics, I think, because the Liberal government is trying to run against many things that were core to Justin Trudeau's governing agenda with the Liberal Party over the last 10 years. Part of the governing agenda under Prime Minister Trudeau was to set up an impossibly complex web of regulations and processes that made it very difficult for economic activity to proceed. In particular, it made it very difficult for major projects to move forward. Now we have the same people coming in and saying, "Oh my goodness. Since we have a problem with major projects not being able to proceed, we are going to pass a bill that will, in a limited and temporary way, allow some abridgement of that process for chosen projects." Would it not be better to simply undo the mess Justin Trudeau created rather than abridging that process through this bill?

• (2225)

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I understood the question and I am not sure it was directed to me.

I think it is important to remember that the Earth is not flat and that climate change is real. Even if the Conservatives want to bury their heads in the sand and insist that it is not real, that there is nothing we need to do and that we can keep sidestepping environmental assessments, pre-approving projects and rolling out the red carpet for oil and gas companies, the reality of the forest fires that are currently ravaging western Canada will not change. The fact that last year was the most expensive year ever for Insurance Bureau of Canada insurance claims will not change.

We are going to be responsible. We are going to stand up to defend the people who elected us and who are asking us to protect the environment, who are asking us to grow the economy while protecting the environment, not destroying it.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for my hon. colleague from Repentigny because I know he is an expert in the environment.

What the consequences might this bill have for Quebec specifically? Could the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement, which is highly respected and is a competitive advantage for Quebec projects, be tangibly threatened by this bill?

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, what is clear in this bill is that despite what the Prime Minister says, Quebec's environmental sovereignty is not recognized. That threatens Quebec's power to say no to projects, to ensure that robust environmental assessments are done, and that is why we are asking for a real debate.

We are going to propose amendments. We hope that the Liberals and the Conservatives will be open to improving this bill, because in its current form, it is running us straight into a wall with respect to the environment.

[English]

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is my first speech in the House this Parliament, and I would like to take some time to thank the constituents of Edmonton Strathcona for putting their trust in me again. I would also like to thank my incredible team, both in Edmonton and in Ottawa, for all the work they do to help me.

Of course, it would not be a maiden speech if I did not take a moment to thank my dear husband, Duncan, and my two children, Maclean and Keltie, for their support.

Tonight we are discussing the way that Bill C-5 is being pushed through Parliament, and I have to start by saying that Canadians are not short on ambition. Canadians want big, ambitious projects. We want nation-building projects that create good unionized jobs. We want to create secure futures for our families and for our communities, and we want to create infrastructure that meets the needs of the 21st century. We want that; that is clear. That is not up for debate in the House this evening.

In fact, I support the objectives of Bill C-5. The problem I have is that Canadians require a government that can actually deliver. We all want a government that has ambition and has big ideas, but we need a government that can deliver. The way that Bill C-5 has been drafted and the ham-fisted way the government is pushing it through mean that I have a lot of doubt that these projects will get built.

Today I rise to speak out against the way the Liberal government is attempting to ram through Bill C-5. This piece of legislation is not just flawed, but has dangerous overreach that threatens the democratic principles that underlie this House and, in fact, this country.

Let me be very clear. I support the idea of transformative investment. I support creating good unionized jobs. I support building infrastructure that will serve generations to come. However, we cannot and we must not trade away workers' protections, transparency, accountability, environmental protections and indigenous rights in the name of expediency. That is what this bill does. It is an attempt to push forward a nation-building agenda without democracy. That is a problem.

Let us look at what this bill does.

Bill C-5 has two parts, and the first part I have a lot of support for. This piece of legislation would make it easier for workers to work around this country. It would make it easier for us to have one Canadian economy, not 13 economies. It would help. There is potential for it to have some very good outcomes for workers. Of

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course, as parliamentarians, we have an obligation to do our due diligence to look at this legislation and ensure it is strong.

It is the second part of the legislation that I have really big problems with. It would expand federal authority over how major infrastructure projects are approved. It would centralize power in the hands of a few cabinet ministers, giving them sweeping discretion to decide which projects are strategic or urgent and therefore exempt from the usual federal processes: environmental reviews, consultation requirements, public debates, etc. This means that ministers, not Parliament, not indigenous groups and not Canadians, would decide what gets built.

I am from Alberta and I have seen what happens when decisions about lands and resources are made behind closed doors. I have seen what it looks like when economic development ignores environmental costs. Right now, Albertans are rightly furious with their provincial Conservative government, which has opened up coal mining in the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains once again. I have seen time and time again how indigenous communities are left out of decisions that directly impact their lives and futures. When I see legislation like Bill C-5, which strips away the few checks and safeguards we have, I cannot remain quiet.

This is not just about the Liberal government. Let us imagine a different government, perhaps a Conservative government with Pierre Poilievre. Under Bill C-5, that government would have the power to green-light mines, pipelines or highways without any meaningful environmental assessment, without any duty to consult with indigenous nations and without any debate in this House, all with the stroke of a pen.

• (2230)

Does this sound like the Canada that the Prime Minister ran on? Is this what he told Canadians they were voting for? I do not think so.

Let us be very clear about what kind of power grab this will actually mean on the ground. When transparent processes and meaningful consultation are taken away, what happens? Projects do not get built any faster. They end up in court. Communities feel shut out. Protests and blockades happen. Legal battles drag on for years, and we get no progress. We get gridlock.

This is not hypothetical. It is the history of Canada's broken attempts at nation-building without democracy. Let us remember when Stephen Harper tried something similar. He pushed for Bill C-45, the Jobs and Growth Act. It is a piece of legislation that was designed to streamline infrastructure approvals by curtailing environmental reviews and consultations. As political reporter Althia Raj has mentioned, the building Canada act, Bill C-5, is "the type of legislation that Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper might have been too timid to bring forward, fearing a public backlash."

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Now, why do we have this? It is because Canadians have rejected being out of decisions. Indigenous people have rejected being sidelined. Environmental groups have rejected the erasure of safeguards. Under Stephen Harper, nothing got built. Projects failed. The backlash was real, and the consequences were clear.

Bill C-5 is not some brand new plan. It is a recycled strategy. It is one that history tells us will not deliver on its promises, but instead will fuel conflict, division and delays. If the Liberal government wants to build real infrastructure, real jobs and real nation building, it needs to start by respecting democracy and not undermining it. If anyone is worried about the climate crisis, they should be even more concerned. This bill would allow projects to be declared strategic and pushed forward without evaluating their long-term impact on our water, air, wildlife or emissions. That is not planning for the future; that is gambling with the future.

I want to speak directly to the workers in my province, those who built this country and weathered the ups and downs, the booms and busts of Alberta's economy. They deserve good jobs. They deserve stability, but those things cannot happen if the federal government thinks that it can sidestep environmental and indigenous concerns. Anyone who has ever built anything knows it has to be built right the first time.

Let us not pretend that there is not an urgency. Donald Trump has turned everything on its head. There is an economic urgency to act. There is a climate crisis, and there is urgency to act.

Canadians need to build more. We need to start building more with Canadian workers, Canadian products and Canadian resources. It is urgent, but urgency does not give the Liberal government, or any government, a blank cheque. I am proud to be part of a party that fights for good jobs and good governance. I will not accept the false choice between economic ambition and democratic accountability. We can have both. In fact, we must.

I say to my colleagues in the House, let us build. Let us build things. Let us build big things with Canadian workers. Let us build things with Canadian products, but let us do it right. Let us protect workers' rights. Let us protect indigenous rights. Let us protect the environment. No more pushing legislation through, because what happens then is that nothing gets built.

● (2235)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always find it somewhat interesting that we have the NDP here in the House, and then there are NDP governments, whether it is in British Columbia or Manitoba. Wab Kinew has been absolutely fantastic, recognizing the value of legislation of this nature. The former premier of Alberta Rachel Notley was a very strong advocate for the importance of pipelines. Then we get the NDP members here in Ottawa, who continue to go to the far extreme left.

I know there are leadership ambitions, potentially, on the other side. Does the member not recognize that the legislation we have before us today is good for all Canadians? Why would she not support the principles of the legislation?

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I think the member perhaps did not hear what I said, because I said that I actually do support big nation-building projects. However, when we do it wrong, as Stephen Harper did, when we do it wrong, as Bill C-5 would, those projects do not get built. They end up in court. There end up being protests. There end up being blockades, because the Liberals are not doing the hard work to ensure we are doing adequate consultation.

That is to say nothing of how undemocratic it is to ram a giant bill like this through with two days at committee and with no parliamentary oversight. For a man who speaks so much in the House of Commons, one would think the member would have some sort of respect for Parliament.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleague back to this place.

There are many things I could focus on from her remarks, but I think it is worth drilling down on one piece of clear misinformation. She made the comment that Stephen Harper got nothing built, which is outrageous and verifiably false. Many pipelines were built under Stephen Harper. The northern gateway pipeline to tidewater was approved, and significant progress was being made on the east-west pipeline. The Liberals passed legislation designed to kill those projects, which were already approved or in the process of being planned.

Will the member maybe seek to clarify her false claim that nothing was built under Stephen Harper and identify the projects that were built under Stephen Harper?

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the one thing we can actually prove Stephen Harper built in this country was a whole bunch of division, a whole bunch of groups that were muzzled, scientists who were muzzled. Oh, and he also built what I believe was seven affordable homes during his decade.

[Translation]

Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona on her excellent speech. It was reasonable and heartfelt.

I would now like her to comment on the impact that the lack of a proper environmental assessment process would have on the people in her riding in Alberta. What repercussions will this have on future generations in terms of pollution or the destruction of habitats and ecosystems?

● (2240)

[English]

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, in Edmonton Strathcona, what people want to see is a reasonable approach to developing nation-building projects. My dad was a truck driver. My family works in the oil and gas sector. Having projects stopped in court and held up in gridlock because we do not do the proper work is a real problem.

We also need to make sure we are protecting our wild spaces, protecting our wildlife and ensuring that the environmental protections Canadians have worked so hard for are not able to be run roughshod over by a minister. I think that is what Albertans want to see from the government.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to speak at second reading to Bill C-5, but I wish I never had to speak to the bill, because I wish I had never had to read the bill. Reading it and understanding it has been one of the most crushingly depressing experiences I have had since I was first elected to this place in 2011.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona quoted noted journalist Althia Raj saying this is the kind of bill Stephen Harper would have liked to bring forward, but he would not have had the nerve.

This is an abomination, and it is not necessary in the quest for building a strong Canadian economy. It does not remove the inter-provincial barriers to the extent they need to be removed, because that is not within the federal government's purview to do with the stroke of a pen. However, it says it is going to. It is going to remove some of the barriers the federal government can.

The next part of the bill, part 2, which is rather a separate bill and should have been dealt with separately, is an entirely different construct and unlike anything I have ever seen before in legislation.

Let us try to walk through this calmly and dispassionately and urge the government to rethink the way this bill is being run through Parliament within four days. This is not defensible. The bill requires amendments; it requires study. I have heard many Liberal members in this place, including the government House leader, stand up and say they want it studied. Well, if they want it studied, they have to schedule hearings. They cannot take place in less than 24 hours and be called hearings that heard from witnesses and experts. The programming motion is as offensive as the bill itself, and that is actually saying quite a lot about it.

I have been struggling with trying to decide which adage this bill really proves, "Haste makes waste" or "The road to hell is paved with good intentions", because both are undoubtedly true.

[*Translation*]

What we have here is an astounding bill that gives cabinet and the Prime Minister, and only them, the power to make decisions alone in the cabinet room, and implement their own ideas, with no mandatory criteria.

[*English*]

Let us look at part 1, which is the part that is getting the least attention. When I read it, I thought, "Well, labour mobility is a good thing." I have been railing for years about the need to get rid of inter-provincial trade barriers, particularly for creating an east-west, north-south electricity grid. That is something we desperately need in the quest for climate action.

There are things we need to do across this country to make us a truly modern, industrialized nation. Living up to the calls for justice for the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls commission inquiry, I would say we must have safe, reliable and affordable

public transportation across this country. We have lost bus service, and Via Rail is inconsistent. That is a true nation-building project; it was actually Pierre Berton's national dream kind of nation-building project. However, we do not need to start out by saying in part 1 that we know what we are doing and that we are in such a hurry that we run the risk of reducing standards that protect health and the environment.

I was called up short when I got an email from the Canadian Cancer Society, because my initial response to reading part 1 of the bill was that I did not have to worry about it; labour mobility is a good thing and harmonizing standards is a good thing. It was not until I read the Canadian Cancer Society's memo that I remembered how getting rid of regulations in the U.K. under Margaret Thatcher led to mad cow disease, because all the red tape, all the things that seemed meaningless, actually protect health and the environment. Getting rid of regulations just to get rid of them is not very smart, as the U.K. realized during the mad cow horrors.

What we have in part 1 that is identified by the Canadian Cancer Society is the idea of comparable standards, which are not defined, and saying that if there are standards that are exercised at a provincial or territorial level, they could be adopted for goods that are in commerce even if they are weaker than the federal standard. The Canadian Cancer Society asks us as parliamentarians to exercise some caution and to amend the bill so there would be a carve-out for health and environmental standards so they would not be weakened.

● (2245)

Businesses looking for profits are, of course, looking for a weaker standard if it helps them make more money. That is the way business works. It is just the reality. We do not want to put in place and incentivize a race to the bottom. Part 1 was getting a lot less attention, so I wanted to stress the Canadian Cancer Society's concerns.

Again, part 1 and part 2 should have been split. They do not have enough in common to be treated as a single bill. I appreciate the Bloc Québécois's efforts to get these two quite separate bills decoupled, but that will not happen, as we will be rushed to finish everything within four days.

Just moments ago, it was referenced that we will have a committee study starting tomorrow afternoon for a bit and then again on Wednesday. One committee will study the bill, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, which means that the bill, with profound implications for the environment and indigenous rights, will never be studied by the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, nor by the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development or the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

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What part 2 says is that there would be a decision by cabinet about what project qualifies as being in the national interest. There is a definition of national interest if members want to find it, but it is entirely a tautology. A national interest project means what cabinet has decided is a national interest project.

Members can see what would lead to the decision that it is a national interest project. I am sure unintentionally, but many members in this place have stood up and said not to worry because a project must meet all these factors, so it is certainly going to be a good project. The factors listed in subclause 5(6) are good factors, and if they were requirements before a project was listed in the national interest, I would have an entirely different view of this act. It says in subclause 5(6) that cabinet may consider any factor cabinet thinks is relevant, including the extent to which a project can meet the factors that I guess are here for public relations benefit:

- (a) strengthen Canada's autonomy, resilience and security;
- (b) provide economic or other benefits to Canada;
- (c) have a high likelihood of successful execution;
- (d) advance the interests of Indigenous peoples; and
- (e) contribute to clean growth and to meeting Canada's objectives with respect to climate change.

All of that means exactly nothing, exactly zero, because it is a suggestion that cabinet may consider anything cabinet may want to consider. Cabinet members may want to consider some of these things, but they do not have to, and that is a question of just considering them.

I have never seen anything like this in any legislation, so forgive me, because I would rather analyze than talk about how many pieces of propaganda have been woven into this discussion. However, subclause 6(1) is so remarkable that it needs to be at least referenced quickly. From the moment cabinet decides a project is in the national interest, it says:

Every determination and finding that has to be made and every opinion that has to be formed in order for an authorization to be granted in respect of a national interest project is deemed to be made or formed, as the case may be, in favour of permitting the project to be carried out in whole or in part.

In other words, the instruction to future decision-makers, different ministers, for different pieces of legislation is that before they look at the evidence, they have to remember they are exercising their discretion toward getting a project done, regardless of what they find out when they start studying it. This is the ultimate in leap before we look. As environmental lawyer Anna Johnston from West Coast Environmental Law said, "Bill C-5 tosses aside the notion of informed decision making, the precautionary principle and the imperatives of reconciliation, the climate crisis and democratic decision making."

When we look at a bill like this, we think that we have a parliamentary process for a reason. We have a debate at second reading, it goes to committee, we hear from witnesses, it gets studied and then we amend it. However, everybody is in a hurry. No jobs are going to be saved, because we moved too fast to notice that what we are passing is an abomination. Yes, it would lead to more court cases and, yes, it would lead to more delays, but if nothing else, it would lead to an excess of power in the hands of cabinet that would never be reversed. In that, it is an abuse of Parliament itself.

• (2250)

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank my friend and colleague from the Green Party for always raising issues of importance, for being the conscience of this place in so many instances and certainly for being such a stalwart for environmental protection.

As is often the case, we get kind of stuck on one idea or one notion, and a couple of words come to mind, certainly from the Conservative Party. The only kind of idea that they think about when they suggest a project of national interest is an oil pipeline. However, I see lots of other opportunities in this bill. I see wind west, an electric grid from coast to coast and a corridor for high-speed rail. I see a lot of opportunity here for green infrastructure and infrastructure that increases our opportunities on renewables.

I thought I would give the hon. member an opportunity to expound on some of those.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, surely and yes indeed, we support our economy in Canada and projects in the national interest, but even with a really great goal, we need interties. As I said, the road to hell can be paved with good intentions. We need to link our electricity grid east-west and north-south.

Suppose we want to link eastern Manitoba with western Ontario, but we decide we really do not need to worry about all those boreal forests and indigenous rights, and we just railroad right through something. It then turns out that we have breached treaty obligations to indigenous peoples, and they have traplines throughout those boreal areas that need to be protected. The siting of electrical grids needs to be carefully considered with indigenous rights in mind.

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Ayn Rand once wrote about the way that socialist societies work. On the one hand, they create so many regulations that everyone is in violation, but then, on the other hand, the government will give individuals a "get out of jail free" card if they have preference and benefit from crony capitalism. That is the way that socialism would work. This might be an area of agreement with the member.

Does the member believe that we should just reduce those regulations and let everyone build those projects or that we should keep those regulations the way they are and no one should build those projects?

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I am going to say something that perhaps will shock some. Bill C-69 was an abomination. It continued the Harper process of moving to discretionary project lists instead of the tried-and-true, 40-year experience this country had with federal jurisdiction and the federal government having an obligation to review its own projects under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. That act was working well until the spring of 2012, when Harper repealed it. When he put in place his own act, that was the act that Kinder Morgan was being reviewed under and that is what caused the delays.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear what my hon. colleague has to say in light of her extensive experience. I believe she has had the good fortune of working alongside governments for many years, if not decades.

Does she recall ever having seen anything like the government's plan in terms of powers and the danger of weakening environmental protections?

• (2255)

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, this is unlike anything I have ever seen. It is actually unprecedented. I have never seen a government grasp for quite this much power. It is truly unbelievable.

[English]

Every time a government or prime minister's office seizes more power, the next government seizes more after that. Therefore, the things that we decry today as opposition members, whether Liberals in the past now do the things that Liberals used to decry, Conservatives now will decry things that they will expand upon another time if they get—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a tremendous amount of respect for my colleague.

My question is in relation to indigenous rights, which the member referenced on a number of occasions. Nothing in the bill that I can see would override constitutional rights for indigenous communities. Can she elaborate on why she feels that is in jeopardy by virtue of the bill itself?

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, it is a tautology problem. In order to designate a project in the national interest, we have already denied indigenous people free, prior informed consent. It is the way it works. We need a time machine to make this thing work not to offend the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As to section 35 rights, the problem again is that it says there must be a consultation, but it does not use the term “meaningful” consultation.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill now before the House.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party

participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, I ask that it be carried on division.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I would like a recorded vote.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Call in the members.

• (2340)

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

(Division No. 13)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Acan
Aitchison	Al Soud
Albas	Ali
Allison	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Auguste	Baber
Bailey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Bardeesy	Barlow
Barrett	Battiste
Beech	Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Bendayan
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Bittle
Blair	Block
Blois	Bonk
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Calkins
Caputo	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chambers	Champagne
Chang	Chartrand
Chatel	Chen
Chenette	Chi
Chong	Church
Clark	Cobena
Cody	Connors
Cooper	Cornier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Dandurand
Danko	Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
Deltell	d'Entremont
DeRidder	Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan
Dzerowicz	Earle
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)	Fanjoy
Fergus	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser

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Kibble
Klassen
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Kram
Kronis
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Lapointe (Sudbury)
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Lavoie
Lawton
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Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
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Rana
Reid
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Fuhr
Gainey
Gasparro
Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)
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Goodridge
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Jansen
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Kmieciak
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)
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MacKinnon (Gatineau)
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McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Ménard
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Miedema
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Morin
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Sodhi
Sousa
Stevenson
Strahl
Sudds
Thomas
Tochor
Turnbull
Valdez
Van Popta
Vien
Villeneuve
Wagantall
Watchorn
Weiler
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

Robertson
Romanado
Ross
Royer
Sahota
Sarai
Sawatzky
Schiefke
Seebach
Sheehan
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Johns
Larouche
May
Normandin
Savard-Tremblay
Ste-Marie

PAIRED

Members

Carney
Joly

Dancho
Plamondon— 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I declare the motion carried.

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Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It being 11:40 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 11:40 p.m.)

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