



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

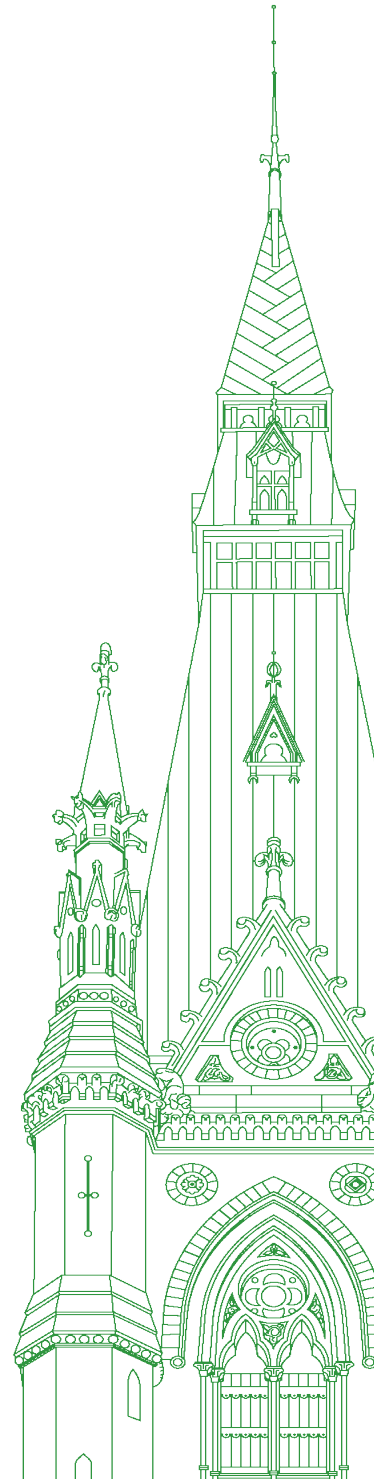
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 152 No. 024
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

RELIEVING GRIEVING PARENTS OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ACT (EVAN'S LAW)

Hon. Terry Beech (Burnaby North—Seymour, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-222, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Labour Code (death of a child).

He said: I rise today to introduce my private member's bill entitled the relieving grieving parents of an administrative burden act, also known as Evan's law.

Every year, 1,600 families in Canada have to deal with the death of a child while on parental leave. In this case, the family technically no longer qualifies for parental benefits, so unless they contact Service Canada that day, the family begins to accrue a liability that CRA will eventually have to claw back. They could switch to EI sickness benefits, but then they have to call Service Canada every two weeks to confirm that they still need the benefit because of the loss of their child. It is a cruel and unnecessary burden.

The bill provides an elegant solution. It simply states that if someone qualifies for parental leave and their child passes, they continue to qualify. There is no incremental increase in cost, because parental benefits are almost identical to the EI sickness benefit. In fact, there would be a cost savings, because we would be significantly reducing administrative costs and red tape. It is one of those rare measures that would not just help parents in the most tragic of circumstances but also would be relatively easy to implement. It is the right thing to do. It would reduce red tape and save the government money all at the same time.

I hope all members will support the legislation, and I invite my colleagues to come talk to me if they have any questions or comments.

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

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ACT

Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-223, An Act to amend the Divorce Act.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is a true honour for me to table today an act entitled the keeping children safe act, which is a groundbreaking amendment to the Divorce Act. I want to thank the National Association of Women and the Law, in particular Suzanne Zaccour and my good friend with a family law practice Susan Berry for working diligently with me on this legislation.

This bill seeks to give children a voice during divorce proceedings. It would require legal advisers to take coercive control and family violence into account and mitigate their effects. It would change the existing premise in family courts that children are property that must be split equally between parties in a divorce. It would stop the increasing and egregious practice of disregarding children's views and preferences under the pretense they have been manipulated or alienated by a parent. It would prevent judges from restricting time with one parent in order to improve the relationship with the other parent, and it would prevent courts from forcing children to attend so-called reunification therapy.

There is much more to say about this bill, but at the moment, suffice it to say that nearly 300 organizations have called for these reforms. These changes echo the conclusions of the United Nations special rapporteur on violence against women and girls, and its causes and consequences. Therefore, I implore all of my colleagues to please support this legislation. It is really important.

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

* * *

• (1005)

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-224, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (natural health products).

Routine Proceedings

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to table my private member's bill to reverse the changes that the government made in Bill C-47 with regard to the definition of natural health products. In the last Parliament, the bill was known as Bill C-368.

Eighty per cent of Canadians use natural health products, and virtually everybody in the industry was against the changes that the government made in Bill C-47. They want to restore the traditional definition of natural health products and not have them included in the same definition as therapeutic products, which are drugs with large pharmaceutical companies.

There was great support for my legislation across Canada. Canadians thought the bill was very popular in the last Parliament. I had the support of other political parties in this place. I truly hope that the government this time changes its position, much like it has changed its position on pipelines, changed its position on criminal justice, changed its position on carbon taxes and changed its position on virtually everything it has been doing wrong for the last 10 years, and actually gets behind my bill.

This is what Canadians want. This is what Canadians expect Parliament to do. In fact, when Health Canada did its consultations, it had over 3,000 people respond to the proposed changes in Bill C-47. There were two in favour and everybody else was against it. It is time the government take these things into consideration.

I am very happy to table this bill, and I look forward to the debate and the support of everybody in the House this time.

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

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CRIMINAL CODE

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-225, An Act to amend the Criminal Code.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, but today I also rise on behalf of all Canadians, as this bill would make the most substantive changes on the subject of intimate partner violence in history.

Intimate partner violence is an insidious crime that often occurs behind closed doors. It affects all socio-economic groups and is vastly under-reported. Most homicides involve an intimate partner. For far too long, we as parliamentarians have sat idle.

This bill is a monumental change. First, it would create the unique offence of assault of an intimate partner, harassment of an intimate partner, and so on. Second, it would create a presumption that intimate partner violence that results in murder is first-degree murder. Third, it would create a mechanism by which a judge can order somebody into custody for a seven-day risk assessment in order to protect the intimate partner. Last, it would make a new stream for evidence to be streamlined and for the detention of evidence to be considered in a more appropriate way.

I ask that the House streamline the passing of this bill as quickly as possible. We have seen, far too often, examples like that of Bai-

ley McCourt, which happened just a couple of hours from me. Intimate partner violence has gone on for far too long. We have sat idle for far too long. This is about giving voices to the voiceless, names to the nameless and faces to the faceless.

Let us pass this bill right away.

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

* * *

• (1010)

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD PRICE TRANSPARENCY ACT

Gurbux Saini (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): moved for leave to introduce Bill C-226, An Act to establish a national framework to improve food price transparency.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to introduce my private member's bill, an act to establish a national framework for food price transparency.

This bill is putting Canadians first. It is about empowering consumers every time they shop. The bill would ensure that all families have fair prices for the quantity of product they buy at their local supermarkets. By implementing unit pricing across the country, Canadians will have the tools to compare prices, make informed choices and save money.

As a member of Parliament, it is my responsibility to promote fairness and make life more affordable. I urge all members of the House to do the same by supporting this bill and by standing with Canadians.

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

* * *

NATIONAL STRATEGY ON HOUSING FOR YOUNG CANADIANS ACT

Braedon Clark (Sackville—Bedford—Preston, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-227, An Act to establish a national strategy on housing for young Canadians.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my private member's bill, Bill C-227, an act to establish a national strategy on housing for young Canadians.

All members of the House know that there is a housing crisis in this country. I believe all members also know that no group of Canadians has been more impacted by that crisis than young Canadians in particular. Whether they are seeking to rent an apartment, find housing while at university to study or save up for a down payment for their first home, young Canadians increasingly find the path to stable housing more and more difficult. Without secure housing, it is much harder for young Canadians to study, work and plan for the future.

This bill that I introduced today calls on the federal government to work with partners across the country, such as provinces, territories and housing organizations across the board, to better understand the unique barriers facing young Canadians in today's housing market and to build lasting solutions that meet their needs.

About three years ago, I introduced a similar bill in the Nova Scotia Legislature. I did not have the votes at that time to make it a reality, but still, today I think the issue is as important, if not more important now. There are so many young Canadians in all of our ridings who are having a hard time finding housing. I think this strategy would help them achieve that goal and have a healthier, more prosperous life.

I would ask all members of the House across all parties to please support this bill and to reach out if they have any questions.

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

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[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-228, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (prior review of treaties by Parliament).

He said: Mr. Speaker, today, the Bloc Québécois is keeping a promise by introducing a bill to enable Parliament to not only review but also vote on the text of trade agreements before the Government of Canada ratifies them.

This bill will basically do two things. First, it will require the government to table the text of the agreement in the House, debate it, examine it in committee, receive recommendations from elected officials and vote on its wording. Second, the bill will require the government to publish the text of the agreement or any amendments to agreements that are already in effect in the Canada Gazette, on its website and in the Canada Treaty Series.

It is inconceivable that, in 2025, the government still unilaterally decides what is on the table. It does not report to anyone on how the negotiations are progressing and it assumes the right to sign treaties before their text is made public. It does not even have to ask the public's opinion. The public deserves greater transparency from the federal government. This bill therefore strikes a good balance between the right of elected officials and the public to know what is in the treaties that their government is signing on their behalf and respect for the Crown's prerogative to enter into such treaties.

Routine Proceedings

I hope that my colleagues will recognize the importance of this bill.

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

* * *

● (1015)

[English]

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER ACT

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-229, An Act to establish a national framework respecting attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is my great honour to stand in the House today and table this legislation.

We all know somebody who has ADHD. For me, it is my son Maclean. When my son was young, we were able to get him the treatment and care he needed, but I found during the time that it was very difficult for people to get treatment and get the identification of ADHD. We know that if people living with ADHD have the resources they need and the services available, the outcomes show minimal to zero effects of ADHD. However, if those people are not identified and do not receive treatment, the implication is that their ability to succeed at school, at work and within their relationships is greatly diminished. For me, recognizing that there is no strategy or framework across this country that ensures doctors and teachers are given the tools they require to diagnose, treat and support people living with ADHD showed a gap that the legislation would be very good at filling.

I am so grateful to my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni for all the incredible work he has done on mental health supports. For him to second the bill means a great deal to me. I am also very grateful to the advocates for all their work and for supporting me and supporting the legislation. These are the teachers, the doctors and the people who have been working on this issue for so long.

I hope everyone in the House will recognize the value of having a framework to support people living with ADHD in this country, both children and adults.

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

*Routine Proceedings***PETITIONS****RACIAL EQUALITY**

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to rise today to table e-petition 6484, which was initiated by Black People United for Change, who are in Ottawa today. These Canadians and petitioners are calling on the government to take urgent action to confront anti-Black racism.

The petitioners highlight the long history of systemic racism in this country, and they point to historic injustices, as well as recent tragedies and hate crimes, as evidence of the urgent need for change. The petitioners call on the government to issue a formal apology and acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices experienced by Black Canadians to enact comprehensive legislation addressing anti-Black racism, including hate crime protections and institutional accountability measures, and to put in place policies to dismantle systemic discrimination and ensure safety, dignity and equal opportunity for Black Canadians.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise again to present a petition on behalf of constituents. I rise on behalf of the people of Swan River on the alarming increase in violent crime that has threatened the safety and well-being of families across the region.

The petitioners are experiencing the consequences of the soft-on-crime Liberal policies, such as Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. Bill C-5 repealed mandatory jail time for serious crimes, and Bill C-75 forces judges to release repeat violent offenders right back onto our streets. Petitioners are concerned that, since 2015, extortion in Canada has increased by 330% while violent crime is up 55%.

Petitioners in the Swan River Valley want to see an end to the Liberals' reckless catch-and-release policies so that they can feel safe in their own community. This is why the people of Swan River are demanding jail, not bail, for repeat violent offenders. I support the good people of Swan River.

● (1020)

GAZA

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions to present today.

The first petition comes from citizens across this country. More than 30,000 Canadians have signed this petition. It is a petition recognizing that there is an ongoing genocide happening in Gaza, that civilians in Gaza are enduring prolonged periods without food as aid is blocked, that UN agencies confirm mass starvation, that nearly 90% of Gaza's population has been forcibly displaced and that the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and human rights experts have opened or supported investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Gaza.

The signatories to this petition plead with the Government of Canada to immediately suspend all arms exports to Israel, to support war crime investigations, to demand unrestricted aid access and to end its complicity in violations of international law.

The second petition has been signed by almost 20,000 Canadian citizens.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of innocent civilian lives, including the lives of innocent children. The people who have signed this petition are urging the Government of Canada to work with international partners, including the United Nations, to urgently deploy peacekeeping forces to Gaza to protect civilians, to support the delivery of humanitarian aid and to uphold Canada's commitment to international humanitarian law and the responsibility to protect vulnerable populations.

PAKISTAN

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the third is a petition that is being presented in the context of the deteriorating political situation in Pakistan, concerning democracy, human rights and the safety of Canadian Pakistanis who have been vocal in their support for these causes.

Those who have signed this petition ask the Government of Canada to call for an immediate inquiry into the tragic events of November 26, 2024, in which the military regime opened fire on unarmed protesters, as well as an inquiry into the tainted February 2024 general elections. They call for the immediate release of Imran Khan and other political prisoners in Pakistan. They ask the Government of Canada to issue a statement in solidarity with the restoration of the people's mandate and democratic governance in Pakistan.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, finally, I present a petition that has been signed by Canadians from coast to coast. They note that during the dissolution of the 44th Parliament, petition e-5345 was not able to get a response, and this muzzled the voices of the 66,562 Canadians from 10 provinces and three territories who signed the petition.

The petition declared that Donald J. Trump is a convicted and sentenced felon of the United States of America; that he is an insurrectionist, having engaged in one on his own U.S. Capitol; and that he is making ongoing threats of both a monetary and a sovereignty-related nature against Canada. The petitioners ask that Donald Trump be refused entry to Canada until such time as he ceases and desists from making threats or taking actions contrary to the well-being of Canadians.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to present e-petition 6636, which has been signed by about 2,500 Canadians. I will summarize it, but the presentation deals with a slightly complicated transaction, in which Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, a former Atomic Energy of Canada Limited subsidiary that is currently managed and controlled by what used to be called SNC-Lavalin, now AtkinsRéalis, has entered into a relationship with a consortium of U.S. firms.

The petitioners explain that these are called the Nuclear Laboratories Partners of Canada, but they are U.S. firms scheduled to receive the largest public contract in the history of Canada, at \$24 billion over 20 years, proposing to manage the facilities of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories and ancillary assets.

The petitioners also point out how many billions and tens of billions of dollars have been directed to Canadian Nuclear Laboratories since SNC-Lavalin took over.

The petitioners call on the government to ask and instruct the Auditor General to conduct an independent, objective and systematic assessment of how well AECL is managing its activities and responsibilities and to prohibit the agencies or other parts of this consortium from entering into contracts with the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories Partners of Canada or any other private body until an audit is complete and results are publicly available and discussed in Parliament. I cannot call them “Canadian” because they are from the U.S.

• (1025)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if there would be willingness to allow leave for the Minister of International Trade to quickly table a report that we were hoping to table a little earlier.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 32(2), and consistent with the policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled “Protocol on the Accession of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership” done at Auckland and Bandar Seri Begawan on July 16, 2023; an accompanying legally binding instrument on culture done at Auckland on July 16, 2023; and an accompanying legally binding instrument on intellectual property done at Auckland on July 16, 2023.

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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 would ask that all questions be allowed to stand at this time. I thank members for allowing leave earlier.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Business of Supply

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—VIOLENT CRIME AND REPEAT OFFENDERS

Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC) moved:

That, given that the Liberal government has changed the law to allow for house arrest for serious offenders and lets repeat criminals go free within hours of their arrest, which has resulted in a 50% increase in violent crime, the House call on the Liberal government to replace these changes with a “Three-Strikes-And-You’re-Out” law that will stop criminals convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, probation, parole or house arrest and keep violent criminals in jail for at least 10 years.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

It is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the great citizens of Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations. I rise today in strong support of our Conservative motion calling on the government to end the failed experiment of leniency and to adopt a common-sense “three strikes and you’re out” law so that the worst repeat violent offenders serve real time, not living-room sentences, and communities are finally safe again.

For 10 long years, the Liberal government has put the interests of criminals ahead of the safety and dignity of victims. It has prioritized the rights of repeat offenders over the safety of law-abiding Canadians. I say this as someone who served nearly two decades as a Crown attorney. I have looked victims in the eye. I have sat with families shattered by repeat offenders who should never have been back on the street. Over those years, the offenders I saw grew more dangerous and more emboldened because the system kept signalling that the consequences were optional.

This soft-on-crime philosophy did not begin with the current Liberals. Its roots stretch back more than 50 years, when Pierre Trudeau’s Liberal government openly declared its intent to stress the rehabilitation of individuals rather than the protection of society, even if it involved community risk. Canadians have been paying the price for those risks ever since. The Young Offenders Act dramatically reduced sentences, even for those convicted of murder. Statutory release shortened jail time by a third, and parole policies make a mockery of sentences pronounced in court. Today, full parole can come as early as one-third of a sentence, and unescorted temporary absences as early as one-sixth.

The practical effect of this Liberal philosophy was clear: The faint hope of rehabilitating an offender was elevated over denouncing unlawful conduct, deterring crime or protecting society. The result has been a revolving door of hardened criminals being arrested and released and then reoffending, leaving victims to suffer the consequences.

Business of Supply

That is why the Conservative government of Stephen Harper worked to restore balance to our justice system, re-establishing the importance of denunciation, deterrence and the protection of society. However, the Liberals have spent the past decade undoing that progress, scrapping mandatory minimum sentences for serious gun crimes, making bail even easier to obtain and carrying on the soft-on-crime legacy.

This became crystal clear in 2019 when the Liberals passed Bill C-75. Among other things, it legislated a principle of restraint that pushes release at the earliest opportunity on the least restrictive terms. That may sound tidy in a briefing note, but in real life it tilted the system away from public safety. The Department of Justice itself describes the bill's goal as timely release with the least onerous conditions.

Then came the notorious Bill C-5 in 2022. This law repealed mandatory minimum penalties for dozens of serious offences that were constitutionally upheld, and brought back conditional sentence orders, what most Canadians now call house arrest. At the time, Liberal justice minister David Lametti said the Liberals were "turning the page on a failed Conservative criminal justice policy", but what did that really mean? It meant making conditional sentences possible for serious offences like sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, even fentanyl trafficking, and robbery with violence. These are not small crimes; they are violent, scarring, life-altering offences. Imagine telling a victim of kidnapping that their attacker can now serve a sentence from the comfort of their own living room. That is the reality Bill C-5 created.

When the public backlash grew, the Liberals tried to save face with Bill C-48. The then justice minister, Arif Virani, promised it would make Canadians safer, but then he admitted in his own words that he cannot measure what exactly that would look like. That is not a plan; that is simply a press release.

When those reforms failed, Liberal ministers tried to pass the buck. We heard the public safety minister, who was the justice minister at the time, say that the bail system is sound. We saw Liberal ministers and the Prime Minister blaming provinces, telling premiers to "step up" while refusing to fix the failed Criminal Code policies that they themselves broke. Canadians do not want a blame game; they want a justice system that works and is fair.

• (1030)

It is not just Conservatives sounding the alarm. For years, police chiefs, premiers and mayors from across the country have been begging the Liberal government to fix the mess. The Liberals have been obstructionist ever since. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police said that changes were "urgently needed" to stop repeat violent offenders from cycling through communities. The Toronto Police Association repeatedly warned of the dangers of letting repeat violent offenders back on the streets. Mayors in Vancouver, Winnipeg and Toronto have all publicly pressed for real reform because their citizens are living with the consequences every single day. All 13 premiers from across party lines signed joint letters for the federal government demanding immediate action, yet the government continued its obstructionist ways. It dug in, defended its failed laws and ignored voices from the very same stakeholders it should have been listening to.

What has been the result? The numbers do not lie. Since 2015, crime has exploded across all categories. Extortion alone has had a 300% increase. These are not just statistics. They represent real Canadians whose lives have been shattered by violence.

Consider the Saskatchewan tragedy in 2022. Myles Sanderson was already out on statutory release after 59 convictions. Let that sink in. He went on a rampage, killing 11 people and injuring 17 more. If he had been kept in jail, as common sense dictates, those families would still have their loved ones today. In Peel Region, police arrested 18 individuals tied to home invasions, armed robberies and carjackings. Shockingly, half of them were out on release at the time. In Vancouver, police reported that just 40 prolific repeat offenders were arrested more than 6,000 times in a single year. That, by definition, is the revolving-door justice system.

That is why, if the Liberal government were truly serious about tackling violent crime, it would adopt the Conservative plan for a "three strikes and you're out" law. Here is what that means in practice. When someone has been convicted of three serious violent offences, they would no longer be able to serve their time at home or walk out with probation. There would be no more conditional sentences and no more house arrests. Instead, they would face a mandatory minimum period of incarceration of 10 years, with the possibility of life in prison depending on the severity of their crimes. They would be designated as dangerous offenders, which means they would not be released until they can prove they are no longer a threat to the public. If they ever wanted to earn back their freedom, they would have to show it. That means spotless behaviour, clean drug tests and real steps toward rehabilitation.

The principle is simple. After three serious violent crimes, someone has shown society they cannot be trusted to walk free. They would serve real time, not living-room sentences. That is how we effectively protect communities, restore faith in the justice system and finally put victims ahead of repeat violent offenders.

Canadians are tired of Liberal governments that coddle criminals and abandon victims. The motion says that enough is enough. It would end the failed approach of Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. It responds to the pleas of police, premiers and mayors. It would give Crown attorneys and judges the tools they need to keep dangerous offenders where they belong: behind bars. Most importantly, it would restore the fundamental duty of any federal government, and that is to keep Canadians safe.

Canadians want their children to walk to school without fear. They want seniors to feel safe in their homes. They want women to know that their abusers will not be back on their doorstep the very next day. They want law-abiding citizens put before repeat violent offenders.

The Conservatives are bringing forward this motion because Canadians deserve more than excuses. They deserve more than obstructionist ways. They deserve safety, first and foremost.

• (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I question a number of the motivations and some of the facts the member has put on the record.

What we know is that in the last federal election, Canadians elected a new Prime Minister who understands community concerns in regard to crime and safety. The new Prime Minister has made it very clear that we will be seeing bail reform legislation this fall. Members know that full well, but it does not stop the Conservatives from, as much as possible, milking Canadians through email blasts to try to raise money on crime.

Why does the member not acknowledge that we will be seeing bail reform? He knows full well we have a Prime Minister who is committed to bringing it in this fall.

• (1040)

Larry Brock: Madam Speaker, our current Prime Minister, this particular member, all previous members of the Justin Trudeau government and even the new members of this Liberal government have obstructed every opportunity for us to advance common-sense solutions to deal with the criminal justice system. For the last 10 years, the member has continually prioritized the needs and the comfort of criminals at the expense of community safety and victims.

The Prime Minister has had over five months to introduce this legislation. Why are we waiting so long? Community safety is not a partisan issue right across this country. I keep repeating that. Why have the Liberals waited as long as they have, when over the last four years, every major stakeholder has said, "Do your job"?

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will ask my question in a non-partisan spirit. The issue of rising crime is worries the Bloc Québécois. On a more personal level, as the status of women critic, I have seen the numbers showing the rise in crime and particularly crimes against women.

This is what drove me to move a motion, which will be the first motion before the Standing Committee on the Status of Women this

Business of Supply

fall when we get back to work, specifically to determine whether section 810 of the Criminal Code adequately protects women in the justice system. In the spirit of non-partisanship, I even allowed my motion to be amended. At the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, we will be working together to consider issues relating to Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

My colleague's bill is all well and good, but are the Conservatives going to take note of the serious study that the Standing Committee on the Status of Women will be carrying out on this matter?

[English]

Larry Brock: Madam Speaker, when I classify victims, I highlight that women across this country have long felt that there is absolutely no justice to our system. They view it as a legal system, because for 10-plus years, they have been abandoned in the process. The sentencing guidelines do not reflect the true gravity of intimate partner violence.

To answer my colleague's question, absolutely we will prioritize victims, particularly women of intimate partner violence, to ensure that their offenders are sanctioned appropriately and meaningfully so that there is not only a denunciation impact, but a deterrent impact.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, we cannot open up social media, turn on the TV or radio or open a newspaper without seeing another violent repeat offender being released and wreaking havoc in our communities.

In my riding of Cariboo—Prince George, I think of Mr. Bob Hubbard, a senior who returned home last fall to find his house being robbed. When he tried to stop the robbers, they ran him over with his own vehicle, dragging him and leaving him for dead. Within hours they were caught, and within hours they were turned loose.

Why is it that the Liberal government continues its obstructionist ways and continues to put the rights of violent offenders before those of everyday Canadian citizens?

Larry Brock: Madam Speaker, that is a fantastic question. It is very simple: The entire philosophy of the Liberal government for the last 50 years has been to put the needs of criminals before the needs of victims and community safety. It is an ideology that is wack.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my strong conviction that Canada's complacency toward dangerous repeat offenders must end. Canadians are tired of seeing the same criminals back in court. They are tired of seeing repeat offenders ruin lives over and over again. They are tired of living in fear. When we say enough is enough, I think it is clear. Bill C-5, which allows house arrest, and Bill C-75, which makes it too easy to obtain bail, have triggered a public backlash. People no longer have confidence in the criminal justice system.

The motion presented by our shadow minister for justice provides a simple and fair response. Once a person has been convicted of three serious offences, society, represented by Parliament, has the right and the duty to take firm action. It would be a simple "three strikes and you're out" rule. Three chances are enough. The fourth should rightly go to the victims, not the criminals. The law that we are urging the Liberals to adopt will prevent criminals who have been convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, probation, parole or house arrest.

All too often, the victims are forgotten. In Quebec and elsewhere in the country, recidivism rates are on the rise. For example, in Trois-Rivières, a man named Jean-François Gagnon was convicted of fraud. Within a month of leaving prison, he was back to scamming seniors. Over 50 seniors were duped, ripped off and humiliated. That is the price of our complacency. In Quebec City, a convicted pedophile named Pierre Gaudreault was released on mandatory supervision. What did he do? He downloaded hundreds of nude pictures of kids. He did not even wait until his conditions were up to start again. In Saguenay, Bruno Hudon, a man described by police as one of the most violent repeat offenders in the region, was placed in a halfway house despite a long history of violence. Police officers themselves voiced concerns about that. Then there was Miroslav Dragicevic, who received a lengthy sentence after committing aggravated assault on a woman, who was left with severe injuries. This was not the first time he had become violent. It was just the next chapter in a long history of threats and assaults. Unfortunately, I have plenty more examples I could give.

In June alone, the Sûreté du Québec arrested 22 high-risk sex offenders as part of a special operation. These individuals were already known to the authorities and had already been deemed dangerous, yet they were still living in our communities. That is the reality. That is the price of inaction. We often hear about rehabilitation. Yes, it is right to give people a second chance. Yes, it is necessary to offer help. How long do we have to keep offering it, though? Giving the same individuals too many chances means that the victims pay the price. If someone with two serious convictions chooses to reoffend a third time, they are sending a clear message. They have no intention of changing. Justice is not only about giving chances to the guilty; it is primarily about protecting the innocent. As parliamentarians, we must ensure that justice is served.

Some will say that a longer prison sentence will not deter criminals. We could debate that endlessly. However, when it comes to the victims, we on this side of the House are much more concerned about justice being served. Victims live in fear every day. How many Quebecers no longer dare to walk at night? How many se-

niors hesitate to answer the phone out of fear of being scammed again? How many parents worry about whether a convicted pedophile is living in their neighbourhood? Our constituents are not asking for much. They just want to be able to live without fear. Some will say there is a high cost to that. What is the real cost? Some say the prisons will fill up, that it will be expensive. Yes, it is true, an inmate costs \$150,000 a year. However, the cost of rape is that the victim's dignity is stolen forever. The cost of fraud is that victims lose their life savings and are left feeling ashamed. The cost of murder is that a family is destroyed forever. Taking action is not too costly. What is too costly is inaction.

Together, we must all send a strong message to criminals. We are asking the Liberals to send a message that Canada will no longer be a haven for repeat offenders. After three serious crimes, three convictions, three chances, there should be no more excuses, no more half-measures and no more victims. This is a moral choice.

● (1045)

At the end of the day, the question is simple: Who are we choosing to protect? Are we choosing to protect repeat offenders who laugh at the system and keep offending, or are we choosing to protect families, seniors, children and law-abiding women and men who want to live in peace? For me, the choice is clear. I choose victims, families and safety.

Over the past several years, we have seen a steady decline in public safety and an increase in violence and crime, resulting in a pervasive and pernicious state of fear. My riding of Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles used to be peaceful and crime-free, but we are starting to see a rise in petty crime and other violations. People are starting to feel unsafe in a riding where we never used to see that kind of violence.

It is starting slowly. There have been gang-related murders, which is obviously very serious. Crime is ramping up, and people are asking questions. They turn to us. They call my office to ask what we are doing about it and to tell us they need to be protected. In many cases, we have to tell them that, unfortunately, because our Liberal friends changed the laws, the police have fewer tools to make arrests that stick.

We need to get back to the basics of public safety. We need to get back to a sense of security that people understand, that they accept. People will be able to say that we finally have laws that protect them, laws that let police officers do their job and let judges ensure that criminals go to jail where they belong.

All too often, we see the same faces. We have repeat offenders. Repeat offenders are people who commit crimes over and over again. Why are we letting them continue to commit these crimes? We have a duty to strengthen our laws so that these individuals end up in prison where they belong.

Here is what we are proposing and humbly asking of the new government, as it likes to call itself. We look forward to seeing some proof that it really is a new government, because the government we had for the last 10 years was a disaster. We hope there will be a major change. I personally introduced Bill C-325 in the last Parliament to undo the provisions of the act arising from Bill C-5. The Liberals and the NDP voted against it. I thank my Bloc Québécois colleagues, because they understood that there was cause for concern and supported me and my bill at the time.

I would like to believe that this is a new government, but its actions will show whether there has been a real change. We are reaching out to the government and suggesting ways to improve public safety and protect victims. I hope that our friends on the other side of the House will accept our offer and pick up the pace. We will be there to vote in favour of stronger laws for our country.

• (1050)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the Prime Minister, through the campaign and post-campaign, made a very significant commitment to bring in bail reform. That has been a high priority for the government, to the extent that the Prime Minister indicated that he would do the necessary consultation and bring forward the legislation. I believe that consultation will result in a bail reform package that Canadians and parliamentarians can actually take on in a very positive way.

Is the member prepared today to say, upon that legislation's being brought forward, that the Conservatives will show co-operation and in fact at least look at passing it into the committee stage in a reasonable time frame, let us say before the end of the year?

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, we have 10 years of experience here questioning this government's actual intentions. Nothing we have seen adds up. Today, we are hearing proposals that run completely counter to what has been done over the past 10 years. Will the Prime Minister have the support of his Liberal caucus?

It seems to me that over three-quarters of the members on the Liberal side were very proud to call us every name in the book when we were attacking Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. I was even called racist in the House for speaking out against Bill C-5.

I will need to see a big ideological change on the other side of the House in order for me to trust them. Yes, if there is a clear and specific bill that repeals Bill C-75 and brings justice back to this country, of course we will support it.

• (1055)

[English]

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, we know that in the communities in my riding, 98% of the crime is created by five or six prolific offenders. When they are in jail, the crime rate goes down. When they are out of jail, the crime rate goes up. Municipalities are crying for reform, police associations are crying for it and the provinces are crying for it, yet the

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government continues to refuse to act. It is being obstructionist on it. Why is that?

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, at the end of my speech, I mentioned Bill C-325, which I introduced. It received support from every police association and from victims' groups, including several groups in Quebec. For some incomprehensible ideological reason, however, the Liberals and the NDP voted against the bill.

Will the Liberals stop being obstructionist now and accept our ideas? If they act promptly, the bill could be implemented quickly. They were quick to implement bills for the economy back in the spring. When it comes to crime, they should move just as quickly.

I hope that the Minister of Justice will pick up the pace and that a bill will be tabled in the House as soon as possible.

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles for his speech and for his passion on this particular topic. I know he is a strong advocate for cracking down a little more on repeat offenders.

There are a number of ways to achieve this. We in the Bloc Québécois generally agree on the substance, but we may disagree or have other ideas about the form. We have proposed various measures in the past. I would like to discuss some of them with my colleague. We proposed creating an organized crime registry. We also proposed guidelines for using the Jordan decision for serious crimes. I think these are worthwhile measures.

Another issue is the religious exemption in the Criminal Code. It is just wrong that comments inciting violence are tolerated because religious speech is protected under the Criminal Code.

I would like to know whether the Conservatives will support us when we come back with this proposal.

Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, there are three parts to my colleague's question. The last part of his question might bring to mind Adil Charkaoui, who incited violence in the streets of Montreal as he called on Allah to attack and kill Jews.

I understand that one part is about the religious speech exemption, but the Criminal Code already contains provisions allowing police to arrest people who say such things. Therefore, I think it is possible to have the police intervene under existing legislation, but I agree that these issues do need to be taken into consideration.

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[English]

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Madam Speaker. I rise in the chamber to address today's opposition day motion, which was brought forward by the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot. The motion proposes a “three strikes and you're out” law aimed at keeping repeat serious offenders, particularly those who commit violent crimes, behind bars longer; limiting their access to bail, probation, parole and house arrest; and establishing a mandatory minimum sentence.

The government is deeply troubled by violent crime and is committed to keeping Canadians safe, strengthening confidence in the justice system and ensuring that the bail system promotes public safety first. It is committed to doing so in a smart, evidence-informed way, drawing on empirical research and real-world experience to address repeat and dangerous offenders effectively while respecting the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The member for Battle River—Crowfoot has raised the issue of violent offending. I want to speak to two areas of particular concern for Canadians: extortion and auto theft. These are not abstract or distant problems. They involve violence, or the very real threat of violence, and they leave lasting impacts on victims and families, particularly many in my community. Auto theft and carjacking put Canadians in immediate physical danger and threaten their sense of safety in our neighbourhoods. Extortion preys on fear and vulnerability, targets individuals and small businesses, and can destabilize entire communities.

Take, for instance, a recent and deeply troubling incident in Brampton. On April 30, 2025, a local business situated near Queen Street and Kennedy Road South was targeted with gunfire. While no one was inside at the time, the owner began receiving threatening messages demanding money. This act of extortion not only endangered the victim but also instilled fear within the broader community.

In response, Peel Regional Police swiftly initiated an investigation leading to the arrest of three individuals on charges of extortion: Harpal Singh, Rajnoor Singh and Eknoor Singh, all from Brampton. These arrests underscore the severity of the crime and the commitment of law enforcement to uphold public safety. Such incidents highlight the urgent need for comprehensive measures to combat extortion and ensure the protection of our communities.

That is why the RCMP has created a national task force to coordinate investigations and share intelligence across the country, focusing in particular on cases that have affected the South Asian communities in Brampton, Surrey, Edmonton and Abbotsford. It is expanding to other regions as well. This task force is working not only with domestic law enforcement but also with international partners to track and disrupt organized crime networks.

Addressing these challenges requires more than words. It demands concrete action. The government has taken, and continues to take, meaningful steps to strengthen the tools available to law enforcement and the justice system, ensuring that repeat and dangerous offenders are held accountable and that Canadians can feel safe in their homes, on their streets and in their businesses.

Key changes to the Criminal Code's bail provisions came into effect on January 4, 2024, under the former Bill C-48. Individuals charged with serious repeat violent offences, particularly those involving weapons such as firearms, knives or bear spray, now carry the burden of demonstrating a reverse onus, in particular demonstrating why they should be released on bail, rather than Crown counsel having to fight against the bail. Courts are required to consider an accused person's history of violent convictions and to state on the record how community safety, as well as circumstances of Indigenous peoples and other overrepresented populations, have been taken into account.

These reforms ensure that public safety is at the forefront of bail decisions, while they respect individual circumstances and their rights protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and provide judges with clear guidance to make informed, evidence-based decisions, but we are going to take this even further. In our new upcoming bail and sentencing legislation, we are going to make sure that the courts are committed to these basic principles. Public safety should be at the forefront for the reason for denying bail. If somebody is a public safety risk, they should not be provided bail.

• (1100)

I hope the courts and Crown counsel are taking this under advisement, or will take it under advisement, and that we see decisions made in accordance to that in the future. It is quite concerning to me as well, and this new government is a tough-on-crime government. It takes public safety very seriously. That is why the Prime Minister has created a new rule, in particular, just to address the issue of crime in our country.

Turning back to extortion, we know that extortion has increasingly moved online. Nearly half of reported cases involve cyber elements. Bill C-2, legislation that we just debated in the House yesterday, has many measures in it that would provide law enforcement with the tools needed.

This summer, I spoke to many extortion victims across the country. I received advice from them and from law enforcement as to the challenges they face in investigating these cases. Some of the challenges are with being able to get information on IP addresses and phone numbers across our borders, and Bill C-2 would help in that regard.

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I hope Conservatives will support Bill C-2 and the measures in it, because all of the measures have been guided by recommendations of law enforcement across the country, particularly with examples of cases where they have not been able to put criminals behind bars due to those challenges. This bill would give them those tools. It is our new government's second bill in the House. However, it has been disappointing to hear that a lot of Conservatives take issue with the bill, although the chiefs of police in their areas are all in favour of the elements that are contained within it. I hope they will reconsider and support the entirety of the bill.

Turning back to extortion, the government has also responded by equipping agencies with the resources they need to combat cyber-enabled crimes. For example, Cybertip.ca is supported in its work to intervene directly with platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat, to help protect young people in Canada in real time. The Department of Justice Canada's victim services directory is expanding access to community supports for victims of sextortion and on-line child exploitation, which is a rising concern for me and a rising issue for children in Canada. Bill C-2 also addresses this, and would give the capabilities that are needed to put criminals that exploit our young children behind bars.

As well, the government has updated legislation in response to these troubling offences. Recent changes expanded the national sex offender registry to include serious crimes, such as sextortion and the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, ensuring that police have access to critical investigative tools when responding to these offences.

Turning our attention back to auto theft, which has rightly been described as a national crisis, last year, we saw the government put together an auto theft summit at which law enforcement and government at all levels came to the same table to work on how we can address this issue. Since then, we have been having a lot of success. Organized crime groups that are stealing cars at an alarming rate are using new technology to do so. In response to this, in particular, the government has invested significantly in prevention, enforcement and international co-operation.

I will list some of the results that came out of that auto theft summit.

Public Safety Canada has committed \$15 million over three years to help law enforcement combat serious and organized crime, including auto theft. This includes bilateral agreements with provincial, territorial and municipal police forces to strengthen their ability to seize stolen vehicles from the Canada Border Services Agency.

International collaboration is also key, and that is why Canada has invested in Interpol's transnational vehicle crime project, which is enhancing information sharing and investigative tactics to identify and recover stolen vehicles across borders.

• (1105)

When speaking with those in law enforcement across the country, they mentioned the help Interpol has been able to provide to seize these vehicles and basically freeze criminal organizations from being able to successfully get proceeds from the crimes they

are committing. If we are able to stop them from making money on auto theft, as a result, we see a decrease in that type of crime.

The government, in addition to that, has also provided \$28 million to CBSA for the investigation and examination of stolen vehicles at ports. Supported by new detection technologies and advanced analytics, including artificial intelligence, Transport Canada is working directly with port facilities to address security vulnerabilities and update security plans. At the same time, we are partnering with the automotive industry to ensure that vehicles are harder to steal in the first place.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is working with Canadian companies to develop solutions to prevent theft and assist with vehicle recovery.

We are also pursuing ways to remove devices used by organized criminals to override wireless entry systems from the Canadian marketplace.

The government's decisive actions to combat auto theft are already yielding tangible results. According to the Équité Association's "First Half of 2025: Auto Theft Trend Report", Canada has experienced a 19.1% national decrease in the theft of private passenger vehicles compared to the same period in 2024. Notably, Ontario and Quebec, previous hot spots for vehicle crime, saw declines of 25.9% and 22.2% respectively. These improvements are attributed to a coordinated effort involving federal and provincial governments, law enforcement agencies and the insurance industry. Initiatives such as the national action plan on combatting auto theft, led by Public Safety Canada, have been instrumental in implementing comprehensive strategies to protect Canadians from the organized crime behind auto theft.

While challenges still remain, these early successes demonstrate that targeted, collaborative efforts can effectively reduce auto theft and enhance public safety as a result. These actions show that the government is not standing still, but providing law enforcement with the resources they need, modernizing technology and regulations, and strengthening partnerships at home and abroad. This is how we address the complex threats posed by serious and organized crime and ensure that Canadians are safe. The government is responding in a coordinated, thoughtful and practical way. Canada's bail system already allows for detention where there are risks to public safety. Courts can impose strict conditions where release is appropriate. Our responsibility is to ensure that these decisions are informed by robust law enforcement capacity and strong tools to manage and prevent crime.

I would like to also say that in some instances courts should be allowed to enforce strict sentences on one strike. Why stop at three? In certain cases, there should be the stiffest penalty given depending on the circumstances of that case and the seriousness of the crime committed.

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There are many provisions we are going to put forward that I think the House and all of its members can support. They are going to be informed by law enforcement and experts. We are going to make sure that we act responsibly, not just put forward ideas and implement things the Supreme Court would then overturn, which would end up putting us in the same spot we began in. Oftentimes, I hear the Conservatives talk about these ideas that may sound interesting in theory. They have done this before. They have put in place provisions that the Supreme Court has overturned and that our government then had to deal with. Therefore, it is really important that we act responsibly and come at this with the view of making sure we have comprehensive bail reform.

• (1110)

I am looking forward to sitting down with the provinces and territories, as well, in the upcoming days because there are lots of responsibilities that are within their jurisdiction that they have to implement.

I spent some time in courts in my area this summer, sitting in on bail hearings. I have to say that I was really sad to see the lack of resources, including the inability of Crown counsel at times to effectively argue a case for bail because they are overworked. They have a lot of files.

We need to make sure our provinces have the appropriate number of Crown counsel and well-trained judges. This is really important. A lot of Canadians may not be aware, but the administration of justice, when it comes to the majority of criminal cases, happens in our provincial courtrooms, so it is really important that the provinces do their part and efficiently handle the volume of cases coming in. They can use technology. I think there are many ways we can improve our court data sharing to better inform ourselves as to where the issues and blind spots are, how we can address them and how the federal government can also help at the provincial level.

We have heard that many judges are releasing people due to not having space in provincial holding centres. That, too, is an issue that needs to be addressed.

At the end of the day, I know all of us are here for the best interest of Canadians, and we want to make sure people are safe. That is exactly my interest. I am going to work hard to make sure that we collaborate and do everything possible to make sure some of the headlines we are reading in news articles that are very upsetting do not continue to repeat themselves, but we are going to do it in the proper way.

It is also very important, and many constituents of mine also talk about, how we address the root cause. How do we prevent crime from starting in the first place? How do we make sure that we continue to have some of the lowest rates of recidivism around the world? We do.

It is very important that we continue to invest in our correctional facilities as well, to make sure proper programming is there so that at the end of someone's appropriate sentence, they reintegrate into society and do not reoffend and also to make sure there is good programming at the youth level so kids have an opportunity to succeed. All of these things are very important when we talk about

public safety, and I think sometimes the Conservatives are missing a key component of the puzzle.

It is my commitment here today, and my government's, to make sure we address all of these issues in the coming time and create a safer Canada for everyone.

• (1115)

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, to me it is rich when I hear the secretary of state across the way say it is a “new government”. The Liberals have been in government for the last decade, and under their watch, crime waves have gone across the country.

This is from Dawson Creek, the small town where I was born in northern B.C.: “The City of Dawson Creek recognizes that there has been an increase in shootings in our community over the last few weeks.” This is a rural town where normally shootings are something we never see. We are seeing it in Fort Nelson. We are seeing it in Prince George, as my colleague from Cariboo—Prince George has already said.

I just think it is rich that you would say that you are a “new government”. In 10 years, you had a chance to fix things.

Alexandra Mendès: The hon. member.

Bob Zimmer: Yes, through you, Madam Speaker. It is a little rich for the member to say to the House and to Canadians, “Hey, we are going to do better now.” You have had a chance to fix things over the last 10 years. You have actually made things a lot worse, with the drug crisis you have caused on the city streets that has caused this new rise in crime. I frankly do not believe a word you are saying about how you are actually going to fix—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member forgot that he speaks through me.

The hon. secretary of state.

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Madam Speaker, I think that is a severe oversimplification of things. Some of the highest crime rates we saw in our country were in the nineties, and I know we are facing particular challenges today. There are many causes for these issues, but we are going to be addressing all of those issues.

We have put an unprecedented emphasis on our borders to make sure the illegal drugs and guns that come into our country can be intercepted, and we have been seeing success, so we are going to continue to do the work needed to address those issues. Also, a growing issue of mental health in our communities is also causing a lot of disorder and disruption. Everywhere I have travelled, there are different issues. We have seen, since the pandemic, a rise in vulnerability and these types of issues, so I think a comprehensive approach is the best approach.

We will address these issues to the best of our federal capacity, but we need our provincial and municipal partners to join us.

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, this issue of rising crime is deeply troubling, and women in particular are being targeted. At the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, we will be resuming the studies we started in the previous Parliament that were interrupted by the election. We will be resuming one study on gender-based violence and another on coercive behaviour and the criminalization of such behaviour. These issues are crucial to addressing crimes against women.

During both of these studies, several witnesses raised the issue of the Jordan ruling. According to them, the Jordan ruling does nothing to help restore victims' confidence in the justice system. Among other things, they are asking for guidelines to be issued for the use of Jordan.

I would like to ask my colleague if she would be willing to support the bill introduced by the Bloc Québécois, which seeks to create guidelines for the use of the Jordan ruling for serious crimes, particularly against women.

• (1120)

[English]

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the important work the member is doing at the status of women committee. I think those studies will be very informative and very helpful.

On the issue the member is speaking of, when it comes to Jordan's principle and gender-based violence cases, sexual assault cases, she is absolutely right. These have resulted in lengthier cases and sometimes in cases being withdrawn in provincial courtrooms.

We will be addressing this issue. I cannot speak to the specifics of legislation, but I can assure the member that those issues are going to be considered and addressed in upcoming legislation. I appreciate the work that she will do. It will further inform the decisions that are made for the legislation.

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, the speech on Bill C-2 has been good. There are some good parts to it, but there are some that are very questionable, for our side of the floor, that need to be addressed.

The thing that concerned me, and that I picked up on, was the comment that there are a lot of mental health issues in our country right now and that they have grown. The question has to be, why? When Canadians are struggling with the economy, with their ability to pay their bills, with food banks, with loss of freedoms and all kinds of issues going on in our society over the last 10 years, how can the member not take responsibility for the fact that Canadians are really struggling and that this causes them to get into situations they should not be in?

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Madam Speaker, the member raises a very interesting point.

Social support groups, not-for-profits across the country, academics, everyone is trying to identify the root causes of a lot of these problems. We have seen a growth in mental health issues in Canada and across the world as well. We have seen other challenges too.

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Although the new Liberal government is a tough-on-crime government, we also came in with a very strong and primary mandate to make sure we continue to grow our economy and create the fastest-growing economy in the G7. Our Prime Minister is one of the world's foremost experts on economics. I have full faith that the team he has built around him will be able to ensure that Canadians facing these challenges will have hope for a better economy in the coming days.

Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the secretary of state for her excellent speech and bring her back to the moment when she discussed how she spent some time this summer watching bail proceedings happen in court. As a former journalist, I have watched a lot of bail proceedings.

I would like to hear more about some of the conclusions she came to and some of the things that informed her during that time, with the process itself and the justices of the peace who preside over those processes.

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Madam Speaker, one interesting thing I learned is that in Ontario, the provincial detention facilities are holding about 80% pretrial detention prisoners. That is really interesting to learn. Obviously, those people have been denied bail. It is important for the judges to be able to make the decisions that are needed, foremost, to keep Canadians safe.

In the upcoming legislation, it will be very important to, once again, guide the courts and talk about the basic principles, such as if somebody is a public safety threat or a flight risk, they should not be given bail. Also, the confidence in our judicial system is very important. While I was sitting in those courtrooms, I did not have a lot of confidence that those courtrooms were adequately supported and resourced. I know the provinces could do a much better job to make sure the outcomes coming out of those courtrooms are the best outcomes for Canadians.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to our hon. colleague from Brampton, which is a hotbed for violent offenders, repeat offenders and a lot of crime, a lot of headlines in recent weeks and days.

Her speech focused on a number of different areas. She said the province was not doing its job, that the municipalities were not doing their job and that everybody else needs to be doing their job. In my mind, the municipalities are doing their job. Policing is the number one cost for municipalities. Provinces are doing whatever they can. The police and first responder organizations are absolutely doing everything they can.

Do we know the one group that continues to say, "Trust us. We're going to do better next time"? For 10 years, it has been the Liberal government. Why should Canadians believe the government now?

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● (1125)

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Madam Speaker, my comment has been mis-characterized. I am inviting all levels to co-operate, coordinate and maybe evolve. All of us need to evolve to address the current rise in crime, violent crime, that we are seeing in some of our communities. I think that is really important.

That is why we are putting in place changes in upcoming legislation and in current legislation that we are debating, such as Bill C-2, the strong borders act. I hope the member across the way will support us, because it is exactly what law enforcement has been asking for. It is important that we give law enforcement the tools they need because they do have a very difficult job on the ground. That is exactly what we intend to do. We are going to support law enforcement and our officers who work at the forefront of these issues.

* * *

PRIVILEGE**MEMBERS' ACCESS TO FEDERAL PENITENTIARY**

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am rising to respond to the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, who raised, on September 15, the question of privilege respecting an allegation of obstruction and intimidation when accessing a federal penitentiary.

With respect to the member raising this point of order, there is no clear and necessary connection between his parliamentary work and his visit to the penitentiary. The member was allowed to enter the premise and to tour the facility. I regret to hear that the member alleges he was not treated with the level of respect he expected. That is unfortunate, but the point stands that the member was given access to the penitentiary and was able to tour the facility.

It would be a completely different situation if it had been in the course of a study agreed to by the Standing Committee on Public Safety, to visit certain penitentiaries to inform members in the course of their parliamentary study. If that were the case, if members were refused entrance by an official and were threatened not to return, the members of the committee could raise an argument of intimidation and obstruction. That is not the case here. I would further suggest that there are likely protocols in place in these institutions to escort visitors when touring the facility.

Lastly, the member is correct in citing that “The primary meaning of proceedings, as a technical parliamentary term, which it had at least as early as the seventeenth century, is some formal action, usually a decision, taken by the House in its collective [responsibility].”

This visit was not specifically sanctioned by the House. The member was given access to the institution in question and was accompanied on his tour of the facility. I can see no other source of intimidation or obstruction in this matter, so in my opinion, this does not meet the threshold of constituting a question of privilege.

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—VIOLENT CRIME AND REPEAT OFFENDERS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House this morning on behalf of my constituents from Rivière-du-Nord, who once again placed their trust in me last spring.

Today, we are talking about the Conservative Party's motion, which raises an important issue, the 50% increase in violent crime. The Bloc Québécois is concerned about this issue and has raised it in the House many times in recent years.

However, the motion calls on the Liberal government to replace a certain number of laws with what is referred to as the “three strikes and you're out” law. The first problem is that we are not familiar with that law. We have an idea of what it entails from what we have been told, but I cannot see myself asking the House today to suggest that the government pass a law when we do not know the content of that law.

Since 2014, there has been a worrying increase in crime in Canada. The overall crime severity index for Canada rose from 66.9 in 2014 to 77.9 in 2024. For Quebec, the same index rose from 57.66 in 2014 to 63.01 in 2024. These are obviously significant and worrying increases. If we look at the statistics on violent crime in absolute terms, it is a bit tricky, because the population has varied greatly over the last 10 years.

We can therefore look at the rate per 100,000 inhabitants. In Canada, the number of violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants was 1,076.2. In 2024, it was 1,433. This represents a 33% increase in violent crime in Canada in just under 10 years. In Quebec, the number of violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants was 966 in 2015, and rose to 1,424 in 2024, an increase of 47%. There has therefore been a real increase in the proportion of violent crimes in Quebec and Canada over the past 10 years.

In Canada, the number of sexual assaults per 100,000 inhabitants rose from 57.3 to 87. In Quebec, it rose from 45 to 98 over the same period, an increase of 119%. That is a significant increase. The number of firearms offences in Canada rose from 6.6 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2015 to 13.1 in 2024, an increase of 100% in 10 years. In Quebec, for the same offences, the number rose from 3.5 to 8.9 offences per 100,000 inhabitants, an increase of 157%.

I also want to talk about cases of extortion, which are an ongoing concern and have been on the rise in recent years. This is increasingly worrying, especially with what is happening on the Internet. Across Canada, the number of offences rose from 8.5 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2015 to 31.8 per 100,000 inhabitants. This is an increase of 272%. In Quebec, for the same period, from 2015 to 2024, the number of offences rose from 14.8 to 38.09 per 100,000 inhabitants, an increase of 158%.

As we can see, all of those crime rates have increased significantly over the past 10 years. In that regard, we fully share the concerns the Conservatives are raising about how the justice system is being managed. Changes are definitely needed. This needs to be fixed. However, as I said, at this point, we do not know the exact details of our Conservative colleagues' bill, since it has not been introduced in the House. The Conservative leader simply announced that his bill would be sponsored by a member of his party, who is 10th in line in the draw for private members' business.

● (1130)

Therefore, all we know about this motion is what the Conservative leader said in his media scrum and what was reported in the press a few weeks ago. First, he announced that he would make sure that “three-time serious criminals get a minimum prison term of 10 years and up to a life sentence.”

Second, he said that these criminals “will also be designated as dangerous offenders, meaning they cannot be released until they prove they are no longer a danger.”

Third, the only way for them to “obtain their freedom will be through spotless behaviour and clean drug tests” during their prison sentence, among other things.

Fourth, for them to be granted parole, he said earned release will depend on “improving themselves and their life opportunities, such as by learning a trade or upgrading their education.”

Finally, the bill would also repeal Bill C-75 from the 42nd Parliament. One thing that bill did was amend the provisions on interim release.

There are some good and not-so-good things in this Conservative Party proposal. The parts that talk about offenders learning a trade or upgrading their education are very commendable, in my opinion. In any case, these options already exist in all our prisons. Encouraging inmates to register for these programs, in our view, is a good thing.

However, there are other aspects of the Conservative proposal that make us feel a bit uneasy. It aims to toughen sentences by imposing life sentences for certain crimes, such as those relating to human trafficking, firearms trafficking and fentanyl production. As I have said, the Bloc Québécois will be voting against the Conservative motion.

To be clear, we see rising crime as a major concern. Over the past few years, we have proposed a series of tough measures to address criminal violence, and we will continue to do so. For example, I myself have introduced a bill to create an organized crime registry three times in the past 10 years. We all know that criminal organizations are a growing scourge. Not only do they undermine our society and violate the rules of coexistence, but they also corrupt the morality of many of our young teens to a great or at least significant degree. Criminal organizations have been known to direct minors to commit offences, theft and even murder and acts of violence because those minors are prosecuted under a different judicial system than adults charged with crimes and they face less severe consequences. We feel this is despicable. Theft is illegal; it is a crime. Assault is a crime. Murder is a crime. However, when a 40-

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or 50-year-old adult gets a 14-year-old to commit those crimes, it is not just illegal, it is despicable. We vigorously oppose such crimes.

How, then, do we address that? Clearly, we need to introduce legislation. We are committed to working on this over the coming weeks. However, the idea of creating a registry of criminal organizations, which has already been debated in the House on several occasions, is one that we will revisit. I have no doubt about that. I therefore want to ask our colleagues in the House of Commons for their support on such a bill.

During the last Parliament, in parallel with the creation of the registry of criminal organizations, we proposed a series of measures, including going after the proceeds of crime. Currently, if police officers search a criminal organization's property, they have to prove that the property was acquired illegally. During the last Parliament, we proposed the opposite, namely that once someone is a member of a criminal organization and their property is searched as part of an investigation into criminal offences, it should be up to that individual to prove to us that the property was acquired legally, and not the other way around.

● (1135)

This reverse onus seems useful, even essential, for fighting organized crime effectively. We will come back with some suggestions as we move forward.

We also proposed clarifying the application of the provisions imposed by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Jordan* for serious crimes. Let me be clear about this: As far as I am concerned, the Supreme Court is right. When someone is charged with a crime they should be judged within a reasonable time frame. That is already set out in the Charter. These time frames were rightly defined by the Supreme Court. The problem is that the current system is unable to handle these cases within a reasonable time frame. In my opinion, the fault lies largely with the lack of necessary resources made available to the courts by our governments. I have also repeatedly asked that greater diligence be shown in filling judicial vacancies. There have been delays that I consider completely unreasonable. That is the first thing that needs to be done to prevent stays of proceedings, especially when it comes to violent crimes that are rebuked by society as a whole. That is one thing.

Obviously, the justice system needs to be provided with courtrooms, clerks, bailiffs, court officers, and so on. On the federal government side, the appointment of judges within a reasonable time frame is essential. These judges must be impartial, having no political allegiance and showing no bias toward any of the political parties in power. That, too, is a blight that truly tarnishes our justice system.

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Limiting the use of the Jordan decision by appointing judges is one thing, but we proposed going further in the last Parliament. We said that when there are unreasonable delays, which we deplore, a court should be allowed to extend the time frame imposed by the Supreme Court of Canada for certain serious or category 1 crimes. Obviously, this exemption must be limited and used sparingly. It should not be a free-for-all. However, sex crimes, murder, kidnapping, gun crime and terrorism are crimes that must be tried. We cannot tell the public that someone charged with murder, rape or kidnapping will be let go because we dragged our feet for two years and ran out of time to try him. That does not work. In a self-respecting, properly-run society, that is not the way to go.

First, we proposed creating an organized crime registry. Second, we proposed allowing the courts to waive the time frame imposed by the Supreme Court in the Jordan decision for serious crimes, and in limited circumstances.

The third measure we proposed to combat rising crime was to remove the religious exemption. Here too, we have seen situations that are completely preposterous. On October 28, 2023, in Montreal, preacher Adil Charkaoui said, in Arabic, “Allah, take care of these Zionist aggressors. Allah, take care of the enemies of the people of Gaza. Allah, identify them all, then exterminate them. And don't spare any of them!” That seems pretty clear to me. In my mind, there is no room for interpretation. Unfortunately, the director of public prosecutions, who is responsible for prosecuting such cases, decided not to prosecute the imam for lack of evidence, even though the speech was filmed, recorded, and broadcast on virtually all media outlets. We know that sections 318 to 320 of the Criminal Code criminalize hate speech. There are two religious exemptions: one that allows for a reasonable defence against a charge of hate speech if the speech is based on a religious text in which one believes, and the same applies to anti-Semitism. As far as we are concerned, these are exemptions that have no place in our society and must be removed from the Criminal Code.

● (1140)

We introduced a bill on this subject in the previous Parliament. We will come back to that. This is another way of fighting the increase in crime effectively.

Then, there is the matter of mandatory minimum sentences. When the Conservative Party took office over 15 years ago, it brought in mandatory minimum sentences. The Supreme Court ruled that they were illegal, that these sentences violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that they had to be done away with. Under Justin Trudeau, the previous Liberal government eliminated these mandatory minimum sentences. Now, the Conservatives want to bring them back.

This is a worthwhile debate. In my opinion, there is no position that is indefensible. However, there is a middle ground that we could consider. In Quebec, we believe in rehabilitating inmates, particularly young inmates. Mandatory minimum sentences tie the hands of the judge hearing the case and prevent him or her from handing down a sentence that is often better suited to the circumstances, to the situation of the individual being heard by the court. We think that the courts must be allowed to waive mandatory minimum sentences.

Let us restore certain minimum sentences as long as we comply with the provisions or criteria set out by the Supreme Court. Obviously, we will not be going back to the Supreme Court every 10 years, or at least I hope not. Let us comply with these criteria. Let us bring back some mandatory minimum sentences. However, we could make it possible for a trial judge to depart from them in exceptional circumstances. This would require the judge to justify the exceptional circumstances, where applicable, and then depart from the minimum sentence if they really have to. We think that is an interesting proposal.

The Bloc Québécois is generous. We are letting our Conservative colleagues pick and choose from among our proposals, adapt them if they wish and make them their own. They can also simply support our bills when we introduce them. However, we must always keep in mind that the goal is not to fill up prisons. The goal is to live in a safe society where people can thrive, where young offenders can be rehabilitated. We want to invest in rehabilitation. We want to live in a free democratic society that respects everyone's rights.

The idea of punishing repeat offenders more harshly based on past offences is not new. A number of U.S. states already do this. It was introduced in the 1990s. Since then, American prisons have been filled with people who could perhaps have been rehabilitated. I will not comment on that, as I am not an expert on the American legal system. However, we have our own justice system, our own society and our own values, and I think we have to be careful when it comes to importing measures in effect elsewhere into Quebec and Canada.

I want to reiterate the idea of the organized crime registry. It was in Bill C-420, which we introduced during the 44th Parliament. We also introduced Bill C-392, concerning the Supreme Court's Jordan decision deadlines, and Bill C-373, concerning the abolition of religious exemptions, during that same Parliament. Together with the minimum sentence proposal I was just talking about, all of these ideas can help fight crime.

We generously invite our Conservative colleagues to draw inspiration from these ideas. The current government should do likewise, to help us live in a society where everything works and where offenders can be rehabilitated and successfully rejoin society.

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• (1145)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity during the nineties to be the justice critic in the province of Manitoba. I say that because I am very familiar with provincial responsibilities. When we think of the issue of crime and safety, it is not only Ottawa that plays a role. The Prime Minister has recognized on this issue the important role the federal government plays, and he has made a commitment to Canadians to bring forward bail legislation this fall. We will see significant changes to the bail legislation, based on the feedback that Liberal members of Parliament heard from their constituents, whether during the election or post-election.

However, it needs to be recognized that local law enforcement officers and provincial jurisdictions also have a role to play and can have an impact. I know that for a fact because I was a justice critic.

I wonder whether the member could provide his thoughts on the fact that, yes, it is important that we do our job here in Ottawa, but that the provinces and municipalities also have to work together to deal with this serious issue that Canadians want us to face.

• (1150)

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin: Madam Speaker, my colleague is correct in saying that the responsibility for fighting crime and managing the justice system does not fall solely to the federal government. It is shared with the provincial governments.

However, I want members to understand that if we set an example by doing what needs to be done here, it may help the provinces follow suit. If the government fills all the judicial vacancies, the provinces will follow suit. However, it is important to note that the provinces lack funds. The money is here in Ottawa, but the needs are in the provinces. Building courthouses, opening courtrooms, paying clerks and bailiffs: that all costs money. I think it is important to take that into account during the federal-provincial negotiations around transfers.

As I have often said, we are neglecting our judicial system, yet it is the backbone of society. The day our citizens lose confidence in that system, we will regret it.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is also important that we brought forward Bill C-2. Within the bill, there are in fact measures that would deal with issues such as Canada Post and the possibility of fentanyl being put into envelopes, the sharing of information to deal with issues like extortion, and so forth.

I wonder whether the member could provide his thoughts on this: We can bring legislation forward, and it is good to have a healthy debate in the House on it, but we must also recognize that debates can continue in the standing committees, where, along with consultations with Canadians, they can potentially lead to positive amendments.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin: Madam Speaker, I do not have to speak to Bill C-2 right now, so I will not bother. I will reserve the right to speak to it when the time comes.

Bill C-2 has both good and bad aspects. One of its proposals is an invasion of people's privacy, and this type of intervention strikes us as deplorable and dangerous. We will have to look at this bill and clarify some things. However, it does have some positive aspects.

Regarding Bill C-2, I have to say yes and no. We will see. We said we would vote in favour of the bill to send it to committee. I am not sure we will still support the bill after it comes back from committee. We will have to decide at that time.

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, in the speech he gave just now, my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord quoted comments made by Adil Charkaoui, a very controversial religious leader, during a demonstration literally calling for Jews to be hunted down and exterminated. These extremely violent and hateful comments were made under the guise of religion. As my colleague quite rightly pointed out, the authorities did not even bother to arrest him and bring him to justice, because such statements are protected under the Criminal Code. Whenever we raise this issue with our fellow MPs, particularly the Conservatives, they say that the police already have the power to arrest people who make such statements, but that is false.

Here is my question for my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord. Does he see this as another example of the divide between what Quebec society values and what the rest of Canada seems to value when it comes to freedom of expression in a religious context?

Rhéal Éloi Fortin: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. There is indeed a great divide between Quebecers' values on this religion issue and those of the rest of Canada.

I am not saying that Quebecers are better than anyone else. That is not the point. There is a difference, though. We believe that religion should remain in the home, in each individual's heart and mind. In our view, when it comes to religion, public practice and public statements lead to crisis and discord.

When it comes to hate speech, it goes even further. People are allowed to tell other people not only how to think, but also how to think about destroying, killing and eliminating religious adversaries. I do not even think "religious adversaries" is the right term. It goes even further. When someone's religion tells them to kill a person, I think their religion should be cast aside. We are against that. We will almost certainly come back with a bill on this subject.

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These exemptions have no place in the Criminal Code. Many of my colleagues on both the Liberal and Conservative sides tell me that I am right on this issue. However, when they come to the House to vote, they vote no. Now I am calling on them once again. These two religious exemptions that allow hate speech based on religious texts must be banished from the Criminal Code.

• (1155)

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I consider my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord an ally. As the Bloc Québécois critic for the status of women, I have had discussions with him on the issues of violence against women.

My colleague talked about the possibility of occasional exceptions, and bringing back certain mandatory minimum sentences. We talked about that during debate on Bill C-5. We will come back to it because in committee our next study is on clause 810 and whether it is appropriate in cases of violence against women. In any case, the issue of Bill C-5 will be brought up.

I would like my colleague to talk about the fact the Bloc Québécois really wanted to act on the issue of sexual offences and violent crimes against women, propose this exception and restore some minimum sentences.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right. Crimes involving violence against women, but also against any individual, are unacceptable in our society, and we are proposing to fight this type of crime. As for mandatory minimum sentences, yes, we should consider using them in such cases.

That being said, I want to reiterate that the Bloc Québécois is generally against mandatory minimum sentences. We trust our courts and want judges, those human beings who hear cases, to be able to decide the appropriate sentence without being tied to a concept established in a law or a code that is often, but not always, appropriate.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I truly appreciate my colleague's comments. He made some very good points. Could he provide more information with regard to judicial independence?

Rhéal Éloi Fortin: Mr. Speaker, we heard about Justice Leckey this week. This judge has donated money to the Liberal Party and criticized Quebec's laws on secularism and the French language, and we feel it is inappropriate for him to become a Quebec Superior Court justice. That is but one example. There are many others. I would be delighted to talk about them with my colleague.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back in the House of the common people. This will be my first speech in the current Parliament, so let me begin with thank yous.

I thank my brilliant and beautiful wife, Anaida, a fierce fighter and a problem-solver. She is our very own MacGyver; she can solve any problem. She is an entrepreneur, the love of my life, the greatest adviser I have ever had, someone who inspires me to keep on going through all hardship, and most of all, a courageous and strong mother who is always there for our kids, Cruz and Valentina,

fighting every day and in every way to make sure our little Valentina has all of the opportunities every other child enjoys.

[Translation]

I also want to thank *tío* Pablo and *tía* Maria, who are there to help us and take care of our children so that we can do this work. We are very grateful to them.

I also want to thank our children, Valentina and Cruz. I am sorry that their father is often away. He is often in a hotel, a plane or an important meeting far from home. I know that my son Cruz says that he is mad at daddy, because daddy works too much. I want Valentina and Cruz to know we are working for an important cause: the country in which they will live for the rest of their lives. Our country is worth the sacrifices and effort we make each day.

• (1200)

[English]

I want to thank the great people of Battle River—Crowfoot. Some people said it must have been a burden to go straight into a by-election campaign right after a national election. I say it was a blessing to spend time with such amazing, extraordinary people. These are the people who feed, power and protect our country. They welcomed me with open arms, even though they knew I was a city boy from Calgary and that Calgary is a long way from consort, coronation or even Camrose. They brought this city boy in and gave him some good rural education. They schooled me in much wisdom, whether it was at the bronc matches, the rodeos, the farmers markets or the other gatherings. They taught me and reinstalled in me the great values of hard work, of family, of community, of self-reliance, of strength and of patriotism. To them, I will always be grateful.

Most of all, I will be grateful to the great Damien Kurek, a wonderful patriot who put his country before himself. He is a father and, of course most of all, a farm boy. He brought me to the farm and taught me a few lessons. He even brought me into his new seeder at the beginning of the season. I got inside and asked question after question. Eventually, I could see he was getting impatient with me. He told me, "You know, this machine depreciates at a rate of \$400 an hour, so in the time you've been asking these questions, it has cost me 100 bucks." I am not a farmer, but Damien told me that if I were, I would be outstanding in my field. Oh, come on. I get at least one dad joke, maybe a laugh. It is a tough crowd around here.

These are the people who feed, power and protect our country. Farmers and the ranchers feed our nation. These are not just any farmers. Many of them are century farmers, meaning their families have been there for over 100 years. They survived through boom and bust, through depression and drought, on some of the toughest farmland in the entire world. In fact, when many of the early pioneers arrived in the special areas of eastern Alberta, they were told not to bother, as there was not enough rain or soil to farm there. They said they would do it anyway.

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Five or six generations later, those same family names are engraved on signs that we can see up and down the highways and byways of this incredible community. Through all the hardship, it has been because of their dedication to their families, by passing on to the next generation what they inherited from the previous, that these incredible families continue to make the dry, thin soils of the region blossom and bloom, and take food from their farms to feed families across the country. The great ranchers who put their herds onto the great grasslands of eastern Alberta are second to none in the world, and I pledge to forever be their most loyal customer.

It is not just that. These are the people who power our country. There are oil workers of all different trades. I will give just one example. The 600 people of Hardisty, Alberta, live in a town where there is a tank farm that moves over \$90 billion of petroleum products. This \$90 billion is more than the GDP of about 50 of the world's countries, if anyone can imagine. It is 600 people who move this oil through roughly a half-dozen pipelines, an amount that grows every single day.

Finally, we have those who protect our country. They are the soldiers at CFB Wainwright, who are willing to lay their lives down for their country, and the prison guards in Drumheller, who keep the most dangerous people away from our children and communities, taking risks every day with their lives that none of us would be prepared to take. It is because of these soldiers and prison guards that we can live in a safe country, and it is a privilege to represent them.

It is for them and all Canadians that Conservatives are here fighting today. Our purpose is to restore the Canadian promise, to make this a country where hard work is rewarded, where food and homes are affordable, where streets are safe, where borders are solid and where we are all united under a single Canadian flag, Canadians first, regardless of our origins.

The people of Battle River—Crowfoot are a microcosm of the suffering that has unfolded over the last 10 years of Liberal government. Let us start with their paycheques and take-home pay. In Battle River—Crowfoot, energy workers are under attack. They have seen Canada's biggest industry under a direct assault by a federal government that sought to “keep it in the ground”, an objective imposed by previous prime minister Justin Trudeau on the advice of the current Prime Minister. He wrote that 50% of Canada's oil would have to stay in the ground and testified against building a pipeline from Hardisty, Alberta, to the Pacific to allow us to go around the Americans and reach 2.5 billion customers overseas.

The Prime Minister promised that he would be different after his protege, whom he advised, drove hundreds of billions of dollars out of our country, but in fact he has been worse on matters of energy. There have been many photo ops and meetings, papers have been shuffled and new offices have been created, but all of that has created a show that has amounted to nothing. In reality, he is blocking 38 projects that are currently sitting before federal regulators. He has kept in place the industrial carbon tax, the energy cap, the new carbon tax under a different name and the fuel standard, and he has created a new bureaucracy that will further slow down progress on these projects.

In the six months the Prime Minister has been in power, a net \$50 billion of investment has fled our country due to his high taxes and increased regulation and red tape. In fact, just this week, 96 energy CEOs wrote that nothing he has done will reverse the damage the Liberals have exacted on our energy industry. The only way forward is to remove these terrible laws.

The irony of his approach is this. He admits that his laws block energy production, but instead of getting rid of those laws, he passes another law to go around the bad law. He admits his bureaucracies block energy production, but instead of getting rid of those bureaucracies, he creates a new bureaucracy to get around the old bureaucracies. It seems that he confuses the problem with the solution. Why not just accept that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line? If there is an obstacle, get rid of the obstacle. Put simply, he should get out of the way.

● (1205)

That is one example of how he blocks people from earning paycheques, and if they should be lucky enough to earn any paycheque at all, he takes a big bite out of it. Liberal taxes now represent a higher cost than food, clothing and shelter combined for Canadians, meaning that government is the single-biggest cost in their lives, a cost that has risen dramatically in the 10 years of Liberal government. What is left of people's take-home pay gets eaten up by Liberal inflation, which occurs when governments create cash faster than the economy creates the goods that cash buys.

The Prime Minister is a notorious inflationist. He has a terrible record on the subject. Of course, when he was the governor of the Bank of England, he had the second-highest inflation rate in all of the G7, and only worse than what the Liberal government provided here in Canada. He caused the housing crisis there by printing cash, and of course, the British media said that he was the unreliable boyfriend of central banking, constantly changing his mind and engaging in decisions that drove up costs and drove down growth. Here he is repeating the same mistakes in Canada that he made over there, the same mistakes he advised Justin Trudeau to make. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

We as Conservatives want to slash the bureaucracy, the consultants, the foreign aid, the corporate welfare and the handouts to phony refugees to bring down costs so that government will no longer print money and we can preserve the purchasing power of our dollar. Our purpose is to have stronger take-home pay, which means we have to unlock paycheques by repealing Liberal anti-development laws to make this the fastest place on earth to get a building permit and by unlocking the free enterprise system with an open-for-business policy.

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We ask the government to accept our positive solutions. We ask it to adopt the Canadian sovereignty act, which would make our economy strong, self-reliant and stand on its own two feet. Let us cut income taxes so that hard work once again pays off and people bring home more of each dollar they earn. Let us preserve purchasing power by ending the money-printing and allowing our dollar to go further. These are among the positive solutions that we ask the Liberal government to get out of the way of and support.

Increasingly, people feel endangered in their own communities. I saw this in rural Alberta, where people did not even lock their doors 10 years ago. Now they worry about burglars breaking in and about thieves siphoning fuel and stealing copper wire on their properties. In big cities, people are terrorized by story after story of increasing crime. The Liberals love to say that it is just sensationalism and that all the brainy experts will tell us crime is down. I am sorry, but that does not work either. Violent crime is up 55%, gun crime is up 130%, extortion is up 330%, homicides are up 29%, hate crimes are up 258%, sexual assault is up 76%, auto theft is up 25% and overdoses are up 152% under the catch-and-release Liberal justice system. All of this happened as a direct result of Liberal laws that turn criminals loose on our streets so they can reoffend with no consequences.

We warned of this when these bills were first passed, but the Liberals went ahead anyway. Every single member of the current Liberal caucus who was here before the last election voted for all of these laws and voted to keep them in place, including the new Liberal justice minister, whose very appointment is a signal that the Prime Minister is not serious about reversing the damage his party has done. The fact that he would name Justin Trudeau's worst minister to be in charge of crime shows that he is happy to continue with the disastrous criminal justice policies that got us into this mess.

This minister was in charge of immigration when population growth went up 300%. He single-handedly destroyed our immigration system, overcrowding housing, our job market and our health care system. The Liberals then moved him over to housing, where he delivered the most expensive housing costs in Canada's history and in all of the G7. As a punishment for all of this failure, the new Prime Minister has now appointed him to be in charge of crime. We can imagine the results we will get.

What have they done together ever since?

An hon. member: Nothing.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: No, they have not done nothing; they have done worse than nothing.

Mr. Speaker, they have obstructed action. There is obstructionism by the Liberal Party to keep in place the failed laws that are unleashing chaos on our streets.

• (1210)

Conservatives said in the spring, right after the election, let us immediately reverse catch-and-release Liberal laws and lock up the criminals that the government was turning free. Instead, the Prime Minister said we would go on vacation. What has been the consequence of that decision? It is real a human cost. In Kelowna, 15

people were arrested 1,300 times in one year, which is almost 100 arrests per offender per year. In Penticton, there is one guy named Levi who does so much crime that police told me that when he is out of prison, he raises the crime rate for the entire city. That is one guy. In Vancouver, 40 offenders were arrested 6,000 times, which is 150 arrests per offender per year. How is this possible? Well, they are automatically released under a Liberal law, Bill C-75, which requires judges to release the offender at the earliest opportunity under "the least onerous conditions".

Here are the stories of the catch-and-release system.

Myles Sanderson stabbed 11 people to death and injured another 18 on the James Smith Cree Nation reserve and in nearby Weldon, Saskatchewan. This is an offender who had already been arrested for 46 prior offences, including things like armed robbery and assault. He also had a pattern of domestic abuse before he was released.

Matthew McQuarrie was sentenced to life in prison for stabbing Emerson Sprung to death and burying him in a shallow grave in a park in Meaford, Ontario, in May 2020. McQuarrie, who had an extensive criminal history dating back to 2001, was in jail in the months leading up to Sprung's murder on separate charges but was released at the height of COVID.

Tyrone Simard killed his sister and attacked several others in Hollow Water First Nation in Manitoba on September 4, 2025. He had been charged with violent offences, including assault with a weapon, sexual assault, sexual interference and invitation to sexual touching, which are all offences that happened before his release and alleged instances going back over eight years. He was out on bail when he carried out his attack.

In March, a suspect in a trio of unprovoked stabbings was found to have been previously released on bail.

On August 31, 25-year-old Daniel Senecal was arrested and charged by Niagara police after a violent sexual assault on a three-year-old child who was in her own bed, the place where she should have been safest. He was out on release even though he had already assaulted a 12-year-old.

All of these scumbags should have been in jail, and if Conservative laws had been in place, they would have been in jail. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister thought his summer vacation was more important. Even since he has returned, he and his justice minister have been obstructing our efforts to lock up these criminals and change the law. Once again, if the Liberals are not prepared to reverse their own mistakes, then get out of the way and let Conservatives make Canadians safer. We do this not out of hatred for the criminal but out of love for the victims, and out of determination to make our communities safe again. We as Conservatives want to restore a country where hard work pays off with beautiful homes, nutritious food and safe streets where people are united under a proud flag. We set four main priorities for our return to Parliament: stronger take-home pay, safer streets, secure borders and a self-reliant nation.

We are here to oppose the bad the government does and expose its corrupt behaviour, and also to propose solutions that will improve the lives of the Canadian people. We call on the government to stop the obstruction, put aside the partisanship, work with us on the solutions that all Canadians have asked for and bring about the real change that Canadians are demanding. We will put our country ahead of party, as always, because we are Canadians first. We love our country and we want to restore its promise.

● (1215)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot back to this place.

The member started his speech by talking about the importance of agriculture and the ranching community in Alberta and across the Prairies. To him, I say that he has an ally here in me and this government in supporting agriculture. I am glad to hear that he will be a champion for agriculture in the House.

However, I had the opportunity to look through the Conservative platform from back in April 2025, and there is next to no mention of farmers or ranchers whatsoever. I was in a debate with the hon. member for Foothills during the election, and it was sad to see that there was next to nothing in the platform around agriculture despite the fact that we hear a lot about that from the Conservative Party.

Moving forward, will the member for Battle River—Crowfoot make sure that he will have more to say about farmers to make sure they are not taken for granted?

I also want to ask a question about the clean fuel standard.

I met with the Canola Council of Canada this week, alongside the Prime Minister. They believe that the clean fuel standard is an important driver for western Canadian agriculture, especially at this moment.

Why is the member against that policy at a time when it really matters for western Canadian farmers?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the standard the member talks about is actually a new carbon tax. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who relied on information supplied by the government itself, it will add 17¢ a litre to the cost of fuel at the

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pump. That 17¢ a litre is exactly the price that Canadians were paying on the previous Liberal carbon tax.

Thankfully, the Conservatives forced the Liberals to reverse themselves after they brought in and increased that tax, and after the current Prime Minister had written about the need to raise that tax. At the time, I said thank goodness we have a short reprieve, but if the Liberals are re-elected, they will bring in another carbon tax. Sadly, I regret to inform the House that I was right about that. The Liberals are bringing in a new carbon tax, which will not only harm consumers but also harm farmers because farmers use fuel in order to produce food. We are against all carbon taxes. We want to get rid of all carbon taxes for everyone, for real and for good.

● (1220)

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is one thing on which the Bloc Québécois is in agreement with the Conservative Party. We are partners in that we also view rising crime as a major concern. We will therefore be partners when it comes time to discuss this issue. However, I would like to draw my colleague's attention to another statistic. In 2024 alone, 274 criminal cases were dropped in Quebec because of the Jordan decision.

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

People who wish to have conversations during the question and comments period may do so outside the House.

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Drummond. Indeed, if there are any parliamentary secretaries who wish to have discussions with members from across the aisle, I would encourage them to do so outside the House.

The member for Shefford may finish her question or comment.

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is also very concerned about rising crime. We will therefore be partners when it comes time to discuss this issue. However, I would like to draw my colleague's attention to another very troubling statistic. In 2024 alone, 274 cases were dropped in Quebec because of the Jordan decision.

If we want to restore the confidence of victims and the public, would it not be better to have a law that addresses the issue created by the Jordan decision and that reforms the justice system, rather than a populist law?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question, and I share my colleague's concerns about the Jordan principle, which has even enabled some offenders to avoid trial and prison time.

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Why is it taking so long for cases to be heard by the courts? It is because there is a small group of criminals who keep coming back into the system again and again. Why do they keep coming back? It is because they are released. If these criminals were kept in prison, then they would not be back out on the streets committing more crimes, getting arrested and standing trial, consuming court resources.

Let us keep repeat offenders in prison with a “three strikes” law. These criminals will stay in prison for at least 10 years without parole, bail or any other form of release. That will unclog our justice system, so that the courts can hold other trials rather than simply trying the same criminals over and over again.

[English]

We need a “three strikes and you’re out” law so we do not have to recycle the same group of criminals again and again through the system and cause delays. After three strikes, there is no bail, parole, probation or house arrest, and at least 10 years behind bars.

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for raising the case of Emerson Sprung, somebody from my own riding who was murdered by an individual out on bail.

I have been hearing for years now from the local law enforcement in my riding about the need for this bail reform and the fact that we have these repeat violent offenders. I know the Leader of the Opposition has been around the country over the last few years talking to police associations and police chiefs.

Could the Leader of the Opposition please expand on what he is hearing from the police, the people who are out day after day keeping our Canadian citizens safe, yet facing these criminals and rearresting every single one of them?

• (1225)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I thank that member for his incredible and distinguished service to the Canadian Armed Forces. He is a very distinguished member.

The other heroes who also wear a uniform are police officers. They tell me they are exhausted from arresting the same offenders over and over again. They say that the criminals laugh at them. They say that, often, criminals now confess to their crimes in the back seat of the car because they do not care if they get convicted, knowing that there will be no penalty whatsoever. This is the direct result of a Liberal law, Bill C-75, requiring the immediate release of the offender at the earliest opportunity and under “the least onerous conditions”, and of Bill C-5, the house arrest law.

What I say to those police officers is that we want them to have fewer return customers. We will bring in “three strikes and you’re out” to keep these dangerous offenders in the slammer. We will lock them up and throw away the key.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no one does it better than the leader of the Conservative Party. He understands—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, when it comes to Conservative Party policy and the leader’s approach to crime and safety in the community, the first priority is not Canadians. It is raising cash for the Conservative Party. We see numerous emails that go out saying slogans on crime and what the Conservatives are going to do, all in an attempt to raise money. That is what it is, a cash cow for the Conservatives.

We have a newly elected Prime Minister who is looking at what Canadians are saying and who has made a solemn commitment to Canadians to bring in bail reform before the end of the year.

Will the leader of the Conservative Party put aside his cash ambitions and fundraising and make a commitment to Canadians, as the Prime Minister has, that he will, at the very least, allow bail reform legislation to go to committee if it is introduced before the end of this year? Will he make that commitment to Canadians today?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, allow me to begin by thanking the member for his kind words at the very beginning. He stated half a sentence that was right, which proves that even a broken clock is right twice a day.

For the rest of the day, he gets it wrong. He asked me if I would be prepared to fast-track the passage of bail reform. Where is it? He wants me to fast-track the passage of a law his government has not even introduced. Has he totally lost his marbles? Did he mean to say that he would fast-track the law that Conservatives are bringing forward, which is “three strikes and you’re out”?

Let us put partisanship aside. Let us pass that law now so we can lock up the worst criminals and throw away the key.

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be here this morning and to have the opportunity to engage with respect to today’s opposition day motion.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I want to start by reminding both the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Winnipeg North that I have the floor. I will be splitting my time today with the hon. member for Pickering—Brooklin.

I want to pick up on the exchange that I just had with the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Battle River—Crowfoot. It was interesting to ask the question on agriculture, because he now represents a riding that has more agricultural industry than Carleton.

The hon. member for Peterborough represents an agricultural riding in Ontario and comes from a farming background. We were talking outside about how the Conservative Party of Canada has generally taken farmers for granted. I went through the platform of the Conservative Party. There were three mentions of the word “farmers”, but there was no substantive policy about what the Conservative Party, if it had been elected government, would have actually done for farmers. With the Leader of the Opposition now representing a more rural, agriculture-heavy riding, it will be interesting to see if we will see more agricultural policy from him and his party.

I will get to the opposition day motion, but given that the canola industry was raised in the debate, right now, that industry is under duress. There are challenges around market access in China. I was just with Premier Moe for a three-day opportunity to engage on that question. I thought the conversations were constructive. There was an opportunity, I believe, for a pathway forward.

The exchange was interesting, and I apologize to my hon. Bloc colleague, as we had a little bit of banter back and forth. The member for Regina—Lewvan was actually involved in that conversation as well. It is going to be important for western members of Parliament, when they want to talk about supporting a \$43-billion industry with approximately 35,000 farmers, to recognize that those farmers rely on demand signals for canola products, whether meal, oil or seed. The clean fuel standards and biofuel policy in this country are extremely important. When we go to the farm gate and talk about those demand signals, they matter.

At a time when we need to be supporting our canola industry, when we are going to be looking for new markets and continuing to engage with the Chinese, we have an opportunity on domestic policy. However, the Conservatives just want to throw it away. That is not what the industry is asking for. That is not what farmers are looking for. They are looking for certainty and a pathway forward.

I would encourage the western Canadian members of Parliament from the Conservative Party who have farmers, who have the opportunity, to actually say, what is your domestic policy driver? The Conservatives are trying to take away something that actually matters. It is interesting. We know when we are actually able to land a little bit of a punch, because it gets them irritated. That is fine. We have a fun back-and-forth. However, it is something for the Conservatives to reflect on. It will be an important message when we are in Western Canada, and I hope local farmers will be reminding their Conservative members of Parliament that it is an important policy that actually matters for farm gate prices.

We are here today to talk about criminal law reform. The opposition day motion raises the idea of a “three strikes and you’re out” policy. We see this from certain quarters of the United States. I want to start by saying that the issue of public safety is an extremely fundamental one in Canada. All parliamentarians, regardless of where we sit in the House, take this question seriously. I have to assume that, and I know it. We want to make sure that our neighbours, friends and people in our communities feel safe. Frankly, I think we can agree that there has to be reform.

The justice minister has talked about reforms that are coming. As parliamentarians, we do not have all the details on that. The minis-

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ter has talked about some of the principles of what the government is going to be pursuing in the next few weeks. I really hope that all parliamentarians can focus on a quick expedition. Our job is to critique, review and scrutinize legislation, but we do not want any unreasonable delay. We want to be able to move on this reform to toughen up bail provisions and make sure that we have stronger sentencing and an ability to integrate with and do important work alongside public safety to tackle crime in our communities.

I want to highlight a few things. From my time in this place, members know that when I come here, I really try to hone in on the text of the opposition day motion. It is fine. Sometimes we as parliamentarians can talk in generalities, but our job is to litigate specific pieces of the text that are put forward. The Conservatives are talking about a 50% increase in violent crime. It is not actually quoted, in the text, where this comes from. As the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said, we have heard about broad references to Statistics Canada.

● (1230)

It is important to put another perspective on the table. For Toronto, and obviously for a lot of the members from the GTA, this is something that is not about what colour jersey we wear. When we come to this House, we are bringing the issues of our communities. We know that, in the GTA in particular, there is a desire to tackle and have more action on crime, but the Toronto Police Service did release a report, just on September 9, that actually said there is a downward trend in violent crime in the city. In fact, there has been a 40% reduction year over year, and numbers are getting back to where they were in 2020.

I do not stand here and suggest that any government would be satisfied with that. There is a whole host of work to be done, but I think it is very incumbent on any party or member of Parliament, when they introduce the text of a motion, to know that further context is important.

We see in the largest metropolitan area in this country that we are having success in the integrated work that the government has been doing and that the new government, under our new Prime Minister, is going to be deeply focused on in the days ahead. I want to make sure that is on the record.

As a member of Parliament, I think we need to have more databases that can actually share some of that important information. Even in the lead-up to today’s debate, I found that some of those key statistics that inform parliamentarians and that can inform our authorities in response could be tightened up so that we could have more information and know better how to tackle these elements.

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Of course, this is a nationwide dynamic, and we want to make sure that, regardless of where they live, Canadians are safe in their communities. However, there are more acute areas where we have to have a more targeted approach. The text also says, and we heard this from the leader of the official opposition, “allow for house arrest for serious offenders”. We have to tackle the premise of that element of the text.

Again, the message we are sending today on behalf of the government is that we take this issue seriously, but we have to be careful not to have a message of things that maybe stretch the truth a bit or that maybe do not give the entire context. The provision that the leader of the official opposition talked about around the principle of restraint is actually from two Supreme Court decisions. Beyond Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, which were referenced, this is in the common law, so these decisions that are made by the highest courts in the land take precedence unless we legislate over the courts.

This gets into an important factor that I think all parliamentarians have to contemplate. We stand here in this House, and we can have ideas and thoughts about what we want in our community. There is a role for Parliament in that, and there is also a role for individuals who are tasked with hearing the salient facts of a particular case and making those decisions around sentencing and around what the provisions on bail could be. Sometimes, it is fair to say, those individuals are in a better position, but it is the legitimate role of Parliament to scrutinize decisions from the courts and determine whether a decision has perhaps gone too far.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that in all the decisions around anything on bail, public safety and repeat risk are paramount in that decision-making. We could criticize something and perhaps say a judge may have gotten it wrong, but that is when Parliament will have to make its decision about whether we are going to put stricter provisions in place that actually dictate to the courts. There is a balance between Parliamentary supremacy and the independence of the judiciary, which is also important.

What is also missing from this text is context on provincial resourcing. In the administration of justice, we actually need to have a complement of judges, and we need to have the court access time. Certainly, for provincial jails and federal correction facilities, we also need to have the capacity, if we feel it necessary, to actually contain individuals whom we do not want to release into our communities.

Missing from this conversation on the opposition day motion today is the role of the provinces in partnering with federal changes that are forthcoming from the government. This is extremely important, because part of the reason around some of the Supreme Court decisions is there have not been adequate resources in the justice service.

The last piece I am going to say is how there is no mention of the social determinants of crime. Yes, we need to make sure we have adequate deterrents. That comes down to criminal sentencing. That comes down to bail reform. However, there is no conversation about how we are actually tackling housing, mental health services and the integration of services at the provincial level to try to make sure that the individuals in question who commit crimes are not even in those circumstances in the first place to be able to do them.

We agree there is work to be done. The Minister of Justice is going to present that in the days ahead. I look forward to taking questions from my hon. colleagues.

• (1235)

Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, through you to my hon. colleague, there is a disconnect. Canadians are not buying it. Tonight, unfortunately, someone is going to tuck in their loved ones for the last time, because of what is going on in our streets. If we believe what the member is saying, that crime is down for the people in his province, for those who are watching the evening news, it is hoped that something horrific has not happened out there, but more times than not it does. That is because of repeat violent offenders getting bail, not jail. I would like those members to say if they honestly feel that crime is down in their province, because the constituents that you represent in your province are not feeling that.

The Deputy Speaker: Before I allow the parliamentary secretary to respond, the use of the word “you” is when referring to the Speaker. It is through the Speaker to the member. I will not be responding to the member's comments, but I invite the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister to respond.

• (1240)

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, it is important that, yes, we bring the emotion of our constituents to this place. We have to be able to tell stories about the experiences on the ground, but we also have to stay rooted in statistics and facts. If we get beyond that, where do we go? Where does the debate go? It becomes tribalism.

In our province, and my position is very clear, our government is going to be introducing stricter bail conditions. We are going to be introducing stronger sentencing provisions for repeat violent offenders. We think this is extremely important.

Again, the nuance of the conversation is that we need the provinces on board. Those are conversations that are being had with Premier Houston in our community. The statistics I had available and provided today are directly from the authorities of the policing agency in Toronto. I think we all need to look at the relevant statistics. This is a nuance. We want to make sure there are policies across the country that matter. However, there are more acute challenges with crime in certain areas of this country, particularly in the GTA, that we need to tackle.

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend the parliamentary secretary for his speech. As we said a few times this week, my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord did incredible work on the issue of judicial appointments. Judicial appointments are supposed to be impartial. However, we know that nothing could be further from the truth.

The shortage of judges in the system is one of the problems we are speaking out against today and one of the problems that today's Conservative motion seeks to remedy. The shortage of judges means that cases are dragging on. Offenders are not being tried quickly enough. They are being released because their cases are not being heard quickly enough. However, recently, the federal government quietly appointed as a judge a Liberal donor who does not even meet the basic criteria for being appointed as a superior court judge in Quebec or the provinces. Now, his appointment is being challenged and we are once again talking about the issue of judicial appointments.

Will my colleague commit to persuading his government to review these procedures and to ensure that judges are appointed in a responsible, fair and independent manner?

[English]

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I will say a few things.

First, I would push back on the idea that there is no judicial independence in this country. Yes, prime ministers and, ultimately, ministers of justice make appointment decisions, and it is a political representative who makes those decisions. However, this is not a politicized process in Canada. This is something we should take deeply personally. It is something we should make sure we continue to protect. The government and I both believe it is transparent. Individuals are able to identify themselves as wanting to go forward. I do not think there is a problem.

There is a problem around resourcing. I would agree with the member insofar as governments, especially at the federal level, have to ensure that appointments happen quickly. As well, provincial governments need to make sure that, at the provincial level, their judiciary is properly resourced and that we have access to trials so that we are able to move forward.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague can provide his thoughts and reflections on the last federal election, when we had Liberal members of Parliament, and in fact, Liberal candidates from coast to coast to coast, talking about the issue of crime and safety in the community. Now we have a Prime Minister who is committed to bringing in significant bail reform changes. That is, in essence, a part of our platform.

Could he provide his thoughts on how important it is to our Prime Minister to materialize on that issue?

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize that this is a new government under the leadership of a new Prime Minister. This was a strong platform commitment that the Liberal Party committed to tackling.

Our Prime Minister has said before that he is a pragmatic leader. If he identifies issues in society in Canada, we are going to be able to go out and tackle them. This has clearly become an issue that I think all partisan sides of the House are going to agree on. We are going to introduce that legislation. We hope it can be moved quickly, because it matters across the country, again, regardless of ideology and party.

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Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about the important issue of bail and the role of the criminal justice system in keeping our communities safe. This is an important opportunity to reaffirm the government's commitment to public safety and to highlight the critical role provinces and territories play in the administration of Canada's bail system.

Canada's criminal justice system is a shared responsibility. While the federal government is responsible for enacting criminal law and procedure, including the laws that govern bail, the provinces and territories are responsible for the daily administration and management of the bail system. This includes conducting most bail hearings, enforcing and monitoring bail conditions, operating remand facilities and collecting and reporting bail data.

In short, it is an important partnership with the provinces and territories on the front lines of bail administration. Their role is central to ensuring that the bail system functions effectively and fairly. Their central role also means they are uniquely positioned to identify and work with us to address all the systemic challenges within the bail system, whether delays in hearings, access to legal aid or the availability of community-based supports.

Strengthening bail administration requires not only legal expertise but also investments in infrastructure, data systems and front-line services. When provinces and territories are empowered and resourced to lead, the entire justice system benefits from greater efficiency, fairness and public confidence.

I want to emphasize that while law reform is important, law reform on its own is not enough. Over the past several years, the federal government has taken meaningful steps to modernize bail laws. Bill C-75 also made it more onerous for people accused of intimate partner violence to obtain bail.

Specifically, the amendments created a reverse onus at bail for an accused charged with a violent offence involving an intimate partner if they had a prior conviction for violence against an intimate partner. Amendments also required courts to consider prior intimate partner violence convictions when determining whether to release the accused or impose bail conditions. These amendments reflect Parliament's recognition that intimate partner violence is a serious issue and that the bail system had to be reformed to better respond to this violence and to better protect the victims.

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In 2023, Bill C-48 expanded reverse onus provisions for repeat violent offenders and required courts to explicitly consider public safety when making a bail decision. Specifically, the amendments created a new reverse onus to target serious repeat violent offending involving weapons, expanded the list of firearm offences that trigger a reverse onus and broadened the reverse onus targeting repeat offenders of intimate partner violence, among others.

These reforms were developed in close collaboration with provinces and territories. They responded directly to concerns raised by premiers across the country. The amendments were also informed by engagement with law enforcement, community organizations and other key partners and stakeholders. However, legislation is only one part of the solution.

As a start, we need better data. There is a critical lack of national bail data, and this is preventing a full understanding of how the bail system is operating across Canada. The federal government does not collect bail data; provinces and territories do. That means they hold the key to unlocking the evidence we need to assess the effectiveness of bail laws, identify gaps and make informed decisions. We are working with provincial and territorial partners to increase the efforts to collect and report bail data. This is essential for evaluating the impact of bail reforms, understanding regional differences in bail outcomes, supporting evidence-based policy developments and enhancing public confidence in the justice system.

• (1245)

Public safety depends on collaboration. We know that people in Canada are concerned about repeat violent offending and threats to community safety. The government shares those concerns, but effective bail administration requires more than just legal tools; it also requires resources, infrastructure and coordination. We are working with our provincial and territorial partners to ensure that they are investing in bail supervision programs, community supports for accused persons, enforcement mechanisms for bail conditions and improvements to remand facilities.

We also need to work together to address the root causes of crime, including poverty, mental health, substance use and housing insecurity. These are areas where provincial and territorial governments have jurisdiction and expertise. Their leadership is essential to achieving long-term reductions in crime and to improving public safety.

At the same time, we must recognize that meaningful progress requires sustained collaboration across all orders of government. The federal government has a role to play in supporting innovation, funding evidence-based programs and ensuring national coordination, but it cannot act alone. By working in partnership with provinces and territories, we all can invest in upstream solutions that prevent crime before it happens, strengthen communities and promote equity. Public safety is not just about enforcement; it is also about creating the conditions where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

People in Canada deserve a bail system that is fair and effective. They also deserve to see all orders of government working together to ensure the proper functioning of the system, not just through legislation but also through monitoring and prevention. This is why the federal government is working closely with provincial and terri-

torial partners to enhance bail data collection, figure out what is driving crime in different jurisdictions and develop actual solutions that will reduce reoffending at the bail stage and beyond.

The federal government stands ready to continue this work. It is committed to continuing to reform the bail system and to support its partners. The federal government continues to work closely with the provinces and territories, including representatives from law enforcement, and is committed to addressing concerns with the bail system and developing meaningful solutions. This commitment was articulated in the government's election platform, which called for stricter bail laws for individuals charged with violent and organized crimes related to auto theft, home invasion and human trafficking and smuggling.

The Prime Minister also committed to strengthening bail and sentencing laws following the June 2 first ministers' meeting. More recently, the Prime Minister, as well as the Minister of Justice, publicly expressed an intention to table a bill this fall, introducing stricter bail and sentencing laws, particularly in relation to organized crime, human trafficking, home invasion and auto theft, but the federal government cannot do it alone. We are working with our provincial and territorial partners to ensure that they continue to play their critical role in administering bail and providing the data and support systems needed to make the system work.

Together we can build a justice system that protects communities, respects rights and earns the confidence of people across Canada.

• (1250)

Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are issues in every city in this country. I will give a few statistics from the police in my city of Saskatoon: Violent crime this year is up 12.5%, assaults are up 20% and criminal harassment is up 150%. This is why we feel, on this side of the House, that the Liberals have been obstructing every police force in the country with Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

I do not have to tell members about the gruesome killings in my province a couple of years ago at James Smith reserve. Myles Sanderson killed 11 people and hurt 16 others. He had 59 convictions, yet he was out on bail. This is why we are bringing forward the motion today.

I want the hon. member to comment on Myles Sanderson's killing 11—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to give a chance to the hon. member to respond.

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, heinous crimes need to be punished, and we recognize that. This fall, our government will introduce legislation to strengthen Canada's bail system so things like that will not repeat themselves and to make it harder for repeat violent offenders to be released on bail. It would also increase sentences for the most serious repeat violent crimes, particularly those linked to organized crime, home invasion, auto theft and human trafficking, and address court delays so that serious cases will proceed quickly and victims will not be retraumatized by procedural backlogs.

We call on all parties to put partisanship aside and work with us to deliver the evidence-based solutions Canadians expect from us and deserve.

• (1255)

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing the bill that the government will be introducing this fall. The Standing Committee on the Status of Women briefly discussed the fact that this bill would be introduced. It looks like we will have another opportunity to talk about it. In the meantime, I would like to address another issue.

In her speech, my colleague spoke at length about the justice system, and one of the federal government's roles is to appoint judges. Right now, it is taking unreasonably long to do it, but that should not be the case. The problem is that the federal government has not fulfilled its role of appointing judges in a timely manner to ensure that the justice system can function properly. This creates delays and undermines victims' confidence in the justice system.

This week, thanks to my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord, we once again raised the issue of the process for appointing judges, which should be challenged from time to time.

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, as the parliamentary secretary said, we will take this under advisement.

We will always make sure that people's voices are heard. The justice system will always prioritize community safety, respect victims and ensure that dangerous repeat violent offenders are kept off the streets, without sacrificing fairness, charter protections or the effective administration of justice.

While the federal government is responsible for setting the rules around bail and sentencing, it is the provinces that administer the system and appoint the judges.

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I want to assure the hon. member that we will take her comments under advisement.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's comments speak to a very important issue. Like my colleague, we all canvass our constituencies, not only during elections but also between elections. I know she is reflecting many of the thoughts her constituents have.

Could my colleague provide some additional thoughts from her perspective, in terms of reflecting on the last election and how important the issue of crime and safety is to her?

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, everyone deserves to be safe in Canada. That was definitely reflected when I was at people's doors in April. Community safety is not a talking point; it is a responsibility, and we understand that. Everyone needs to feel safe in their home.

This summer, I met with police chiefs as well as provincial and municipal leaders across Canada to ensure that—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

Resuming debate, the member for Niagara South.

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say I am happy to participate in this debate today, so I will rephrase it. I am grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this debate today because there have been a lot of incredibly horrendous things happening in my community over the last couple of weeks.

Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Justice when legislation would be brought in to stop repeat sex offenders from being released into the community. I made reference to the case of Daniel Senecal, who currently lives in the city I live in. He sexually assaulted a three-year-old toddler in the most vile way. He had recently been released after being sentenced to prison for the assault on a 12-year-old boy.

I would ask members to forgive me if I get a little emotional because it is tearing my community apart. The street on which this crime happened is the street I practically grew up on. My grandparents lived on that street.

Within hours, the community stepped up. There was a vigil in downtown Welland and hundreds and hundreds of people showed up within hours of this person being arrested. Victims told me their stories about how they had been abused during childhood, or how relatives had been abducted, and about the pain, anguish and scars they have carried with them all their lives. They pleaded with me to come to this place, stand on this floor and talk about this issue. Municipal leaders also stepped up by asking the federal government to change the Criminal Code for violent offenders.

Business of Supply

A few days later, the annual firefighter memorial was held in Ottawa. The chief, deputy chief and a number of people from the Welland Fire and Emergency Services came to Ottawa for that ceremony. Among them was my son, who is a firefighter in Welland, and the two first firefighters to be on scene of that horrific crime. I brought all of them to the floor of the House of Commons, and we stood in front of the mace for at least an hour. They all told me about their experiences, including the two who were first on scene of this horrific crime. It is hard to describe the emotions they felt, but after coming to this place, they talked about the need to change the Criminal Code to keep repeat violent sex offenders in jail.

I should mention that I am splitting my time with the member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South.

The firefighters who came to Ottawa really appreciated the opportunity to stand on the floor of the House of Commons, where we pass laws. All of them asked that I urge the government to introduce changes immediately. The Minister of Justice said the government is going to be introducing changes some time in the fall. Why do we have to wait until the fall? It is not like we do not know what needs to happen right now.

Someone came to my constituency office a couple of weeks ago. One of the responding officers from the Niagara Regional Police Service, whom I had known as a customer of one of my businesses, came to my office. He is a relatively new constable with the NRP. I asked him what he is finding on the streets, if there are a lot of repeat offenders and if he is arresting the same person over and over again, as we have been hearing across the country. He said that I have no idea how many times he has arrested the same person over and over again.

● (1300)

The officer said within a two-month period, one person who had been arrested and released on a promise to appear was arrested 30 times for car theft, break and enter, and assault. This guy had been charged with everything. On a promise to appear, he was released back into the public. The officer also said that oftentimes, they do not even bother arresting people anymore because they know it is simply catch-and-release. That has got to stop in this country. We are better than that.

The violent criminals play the system. There is no reason this individual, Daniel Senecal, should have been released six months early on a year-and-a-half sentence after violently sexually assaulting a young boy and then, within months, violently beating a little girl in Welland within an inch of her life.

Our communities are under siege, and I am not exaggerating about this. My leader pointed out the changes in our country, the statistics and how things have changed in Canada over the last number of years. It is not a slogan to say that the government has been soft on crime. Much of the changes that we have seen and many of the criminals being released have been released through changes over the last 10 years.

The Conservatives are advocating for serious changes to the Criminal Code so we do not have catch and release. These violent criminals need to stay in jail and, as my leader said, we should throw away the key. That is what the public is asking us to do. We

have a responsibility in the House to represent the interests of our constituents. I would urge the government to not wait until the fall, but to introduce this legislation.

I agree with the Minister of Justice. We do not have to make this a partisan issue. We need to put these criminals behind bars, not let them on the street and not let them reoffend for the sake of little E., the three-year-old toddler in the city of Welland. Give her some hope. Give her family some hope. Give my community some hope. Give our country some hope that vile, abhorrent, despicable human beings like Daniel Senecal will never see the light of day again.

That is my message today, and I am grateful to my community members for sending me here. I will be presenting a petition on their behalf. They are going door to door now. That is how many people have stepped up. This is not a partisan thing. People have shown up at my constituency office for this petition asking the federal government to change the Criminal Code.

Right now, my guess is that we are going to hit about 100,000 signatures. That is an amazing demonstration of democracy in action. People in my community want to see change, and I am hoping to present that petition to the floor of the House of Commons in the next week.

● (1305)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by a number of the words the member has stated, in particular those about putting aside some of the partisan politics. When I think of the commitment that has been made, whether it is from the member opposite to his constituents, or from the Prime Minister to Canadians, I see that bail reform is critically important.

The Prime Minister has made a substantial commitment that we will see bail reform legislation brought in. The issue is going to be, in part, after all the consultations, that we are going to need to get that bail legislation passed more quickly as opposed to more slowly. I am not necessarily saying it has to pass everything.

Would the member not agree that seeing it, at the very least, get to that committee stage, where we can get those outside experts coming to committee, would be a positive thing? Would he support that?

Fred Davies: Mr. Speaker, there is not a word of that I can fundamentally disagree with, although I would like to see the legislation. It is not good enough to just say the Liberals are going to bring in bail reform.

Fundamentally, I am not just talking about bail reform. I am talking about people who are being released after violent sexual assaults and beating children within an inch of their lives. That is the problem, letting these vile human beings out before they have served their sentence, a sentence that is not nearly long enough. This individual should never have seen the light of day. It is his second conviction for violently assaulting a child.

What more do we need in this country to show that a person like that does not deserve bail, but deserves jail?

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to get my colleague's opinion. The Bloc Québécois has a proposal.

Today, we are talking about law and order, and public safety too, but we know the Bloc Québécois moved a motion to repeal the religious exemption for hate speech. It is a very slippery slope that can lead to unfortunate situations.

I would like my colleague to tell me whether he agrees with that proposal. If the underlying intent, which we glean from the motion before us, is truly to ensure law and order, I think he should agree with me on this.

[English]

Fred Davies: Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I am not well informed enough to actually talk intelligently about that. Hopefully, the hon. member will be able to spend some time with me to give me his views on that.

However, my comments today are on the intention of the motion that is before the House, which is to talk about serious crimes and the need for serious reforms in the Criminal Code. I look forward to being engaged, whether in the House or in committee, on the legislation that must come forward, because it is desperately and sorely needed in this country.

• (1310)

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question for my hon. colleague actually builds on the question from the member for Winnipeg North, who keeps bringing up this promised bail reform. I just want to set the record straight, so my learned colleague, who is relatively new to the House, understands that these are the same promises we have been hearing here for years from the Liberal government. This is something we have been calling for.

I would just give the member an opportunity to expand on what he is hearing in his local riding from law enforcement, because I am hearing, day in and day out, from my law enforcement officers about their frustrations in re-arresting the same violent repeat offenders.

Fred Davies: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my remarks, I have spoken to many first responders, from the fire services and the police in the community to people in the medical community. People who are involved in health care have to deal with a lot of the issues of people who are being brought to hospital who have been victims of violence. It is widespread and pervasive, and it has to stop.

In my community we used to be able to leave the doors open. We felt safe. The street that I have talked about with this individual is the street I grew up on, and it is not safe today. It is not safe in my community.

My colleague is absolutely right. The first responders are fed up, and they want to see change. I hope to God that we can see it very soon.

Business of Supply

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the motion that we put forward today is a motion that I am quite ashamed has to exist in this country. We are calling for the House and the Liberal government to acknowledge the gravity of repeat and rampant criminality in Canada, in communities of all sizes across the country, and to replace the Liberal approach to bail with a “three strikes and you're out” law, one that will stop criminals convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, parole, probation or house arrest. It would keep violent criminals behind bars for at least 10 years.

If we were to talk to Canadians, a lot of them would be shocked that this is not already law, but Canadians know that the system is broken. Canadians know that they used to be able to walk down streets at any hour of the day or night and feel safe and secure, but they can no longer do that. Business owners, not just in large cities but also in small communities like those across my riding, are replacing windows over and over again that are getting broken into. We have a government that has, through its policy, through legislation that it has continued to defend, told victims of crime that they do not matter, that they have no rights, that the rights of offenders matter more.

A small number of offenders, relatively speaking, are being arrested and released over and over again. It is not uncommon to hear a police department say that it has a list of 100 or 150 people who are responsible for the overwhelming majority of their calls. This is not just vandalism or property crime, although I will firmly say that property crime is real crime because we know that it is a precursor to crimes that target individuals and that are often violent. It is all sorts of criminality that is causing injury, that is causing the degradation of communities, that is causing a serious and real public safety threat.

I have talked to experts on this, police chiefs in my riding, like the chiefs of the police services in London, St. Thomas, and Aylmer, Ontario. When we look at the messaging that has been put out by police associations and frontline officers, they all draw a direct line to Bill C-75, which introduced a suite of changes, among them the introduction of something called the principle of restraint.

The Minister of Justice got up in the House a few days ago and accused Conservatives of not having read the law. I have read it many times, as have the police officers I speak to on a regular basis and the provincial governments that have been calling for this to be repealed. It says very clearly that judges must release offenders under the least onerous conditions at the earliest opportunity. It is very rare that we can draw a direct line from a social problem on Canadian streets to a policy, but everyone involved in this space, everyone except the Liberal government, by the way, has done exactly that, because they have seen a night and day difference between before Bill C-75 and after Bill C-75.

Business of Supply

I have shared, in a few interviews and online, a story that happened in my riding this summer in St. Thomas, where a historic building, 140-plus years old, was burned down by a repeat offender who was out on bail and had been previously convicted of arson. This is not the way the country is supposed to be. This is not the way things used to be, and it is certainly not the way things would be if the Liberal government would agree to provide real bail reform.

This is beyond parody now, these heart-breaking stories from across the country of repeat, rampant criminality and prolific offenders, as police will call them. However, evidently, since the Liberal government has dug in its heels on this, I need to give a few stories.

There is one from Langley, where a man was charged with violently beating a woman on June 1, a complete stranger in downtown Langley, British Columbia. It was his 37th court appearance in three years. This is what the system is doing on a regular basis.

• (1315)

In another case, a 12-year-old boy was charged with attempted murder in a shooting in Toronto. The fact that we are talking about 12-year-olds being involved in this level of criminality is bad enough, but it is even worse when we consider that the 12-year-old was out on bail. This is what the system is.

In Edmonton, on August 30, Priscilla McGreer was shot to death outside her home by her cousin, who had been charged with first-degree murder, aggravated assault and breach of probation. He had an extensive history with the courts, including a homicide charge from 2018.

There are more of these cases than I could read in the time this chamber has. My question is, what would it take for the government to acknowledge that there is a problem, first off, and then acknowledge that it caused the problem? Remember that when the Liberal government continues to tell us that it is championing bail reform, its members leave out the part that the so-called reforms that have caused this problem were also pitched to us by the Liberal government as bail reform. These are their changes that have led to the problem we are now trying to seek a real resolution for.

My colleague, the hon. member for Oxford, has put forward a significant bail reform bill that would go forward with actual action. However, instead, we have the Liberal government obstructing the efforts we have been making to advance this issue and push forward real solutions. That is why the motion we are putting forward, as I said at the beginning, is one that I wish was not necessary in Canada. However, it is necessary, and it is tremendously important.

I will provide a couple of other examples here, because I like to lean on what the experts are saying. I like to lean on victims' rights groups, attorneys general in the various provinces of the country, police chiefs and frontline police officers. I will read one line that I think is incredibly relevant to the discussion at hand: "Recidivism, or repeat offending, impacts public safety and the victims affected by those new crimes". The quote continues with this later on: "reducing recidivism can generate additional substantial benefits to society by reducing criminal justice costs and preventing new victimization." This comes from Public Safety Canada.

The government's own messaging recognizes the significant harms that recidivism causes, yet the government has not provided real action. Its members keep alluding to this future bail reform bill that may or may not exist and that we do not know the contents of, but they expect us to get behind it. Well, we are providing, through today's motion, a very real, very tangible solution that hits directly at the concerns that have been raised by concerned citizens across this country. We also have the bill from the hon. member for Oxford, which is forthcoming and would provide real, tangible solutions.

Whenever this issue comes up, we hear from the government "blame the provinces". It blames everyone else, and we see everything other than the introspection to look at what everyone else in the country sees, which is that Bill C-75, among the many things it did that we do not contest as a party, through the principle of restraint, has made bail easier to get for serious offenders and has made the conditions of bail that repeat offenders are getting less onerous. This has resulted in police officers not even being able to enforce bail conditions, because the sheer volume of offenders out on bail at any given moment is so large that scarce resources have to be deployed to clean up after the failures of the Liberal government.

Since the government is claiming that it cares about bail reform, I am asking it to commit to real bail reform and to put the rights of victims and the rights of people who do not feel safe in their own communities ahead of the rights of offenders. This is not a radical or partisan proposal. It is the bare minimum for a country to keep its citizens safe, to keep its communities safe.

I sent a letter to my constituents a few weeks ago on this issue, and my office has been overwhelmed by the response, including from people who say they have always been a Liberal. They cannot abide by what the Liberal government has done in abandoning and abdicating its duty to preserve and protect public safety.

I am asking the Liberal government to commit to supporting our motion and providing real bail reform rather than obstruction.

• (1320)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned that the member for Oxford will be introducing Conservative legislation with respect to criminal law reform. The motion today references the "three strikes and you're out" policy of the Conservative Party, which is being put forward by the member for Battle River—Crowfoot. Why is it that this provision does not exist in the legislation from the member for Oxford? There seems to be some non-alignment in Conservative policy. I am wondering if the member could explore that and help us know why.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, it is a bizarre question. I think the Liberals have broken so many things that it will take several different stages to undo this damage. I would ask a more important question: Where is the Liberal legislation that they keep promising, the contents of which they have never provided even an iota of detail on? That is the real question the government should be answering, not wondering why we should be doing more. We would be happy to take over this entire file if the Liberal government would let us.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I understand the intention to strengthen law and order and I understand how noble the goal is. However, we must always be careful not to replace the courts. As legislators, we can propose measures, but we must always allow for flexibility. Perhaps we could allow for discretion on mandatory minimum sentences. The Bloc Québécois would be willing to increase them for serious crimes, particularly gun crimes. We think that is a mistake.

Here is my question for the member. We suggested creating a registry of criminal organizations. People are walking around publicly displaying their affiliations with criminal organizations that we know are dangerous and problematic. Such a registry could enable law enforcement to respond more effectively and could make it easier to charge criminals. What does my colleague think of that suggestion?

[*English*]

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I know that people in Quebec are just as affected by these crime and justice issues as people across the country. We need people who are going to champion solutions, and I admire and respect my colleague for actually coming forward with a tangible solution, which the Liberal government has not done, except to say there is a mythical bail bill that we will eventually see, while obstructing the real, tangible proposals that we are putting forward. I look forward to working with my hon. colleague on resolutions that are real and will make our streets and communities safer.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague has spoken eloquently about the impact of these Liberal policies on his riding. One thing I have heard about repeatedly in my riding is the trauma that victims of crime experience and the retraumatization that happens when repeat offenders are present in the community and walk by them on the street or show up in their neighbourhood. I am wondering if my colleague might speak to his experiences in his riding.

• (1325)

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, it is an important question. I have a lot of small communities in my riding where these are very real issues. Very known people continue to retraumatize communities and victims. By the way, the probation and parole process also continues to retraumatize people, as they are forced to see even serious multiple murderers, who continue to bring victims and the families of victims back to retraumatize them over and over again. We are the only party that is providing real solutions to this.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr.

Business of Supply

Speaker, the member made reference to mythical bail legislation, but we have a Prime Minister who has made a very strong commitment to bringing it in this fall. The concern I have is that the Conservatives like to talk tough on crime, but when it comes to passing legislation, they have to be shamed into getting it through second reading so it can go to a standing committee, where the public and stakeholders can provide thoughts and feedback on it.

I wonder if the member would be prepared, if the legislation materializes, to—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member to allow the member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, in 20 seconds or less, to respond.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North just said “if the legislation materializes”, so even he does not know if it is real. I would encourage him to leave this chamber for even an hour or two from time to time, look at what is happening on the streets and realize that Canadians are calling for real action. We are prepared to deliver it, even though the Liberal government is not.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thought that was an interesting question in the sense that I have had the opportunity to ask numerous Conservatives over the last couple of days about the whole process of passing legislation. Time and time again, depending on the member, they will stand up and talk about how they want to serve their constituents and see legislation passed that would make our communities safer.

At the end of the day, that is all they do: talk. They are not prepared to allow things to go to the next step. A good example of that is Bill C-2. We have now had many hours of debate on Bill C-2. It was introduced back in June, we have had more hours of debate, and now we are having 10-minute speeches. We still cannot get a Conservative to commit to at least allowing it go to the committee stage, yet it deals with issues that are important in terms of making our communities safer.

Conservatives come up with excuses, that they want every member to be able to speak to it and so forth. Interestingly enough, one of the critics introduced his private member's bill today and said it is transformative and would really change the justice system in a very big way. On second reading, it will get two hours of debate and then go to committee. There is an absolute double standard there, I would suggest, coming from the critic who stood in this place saying that we need to talk more about Bill C-2. Why? What we have witnessed in the past is that the Conservative Party talks tough on crime, but when it comes time to deliver, Conservatives just want to talk, and that is it.

Business of Supply

The last time we had bail reform come to the House of Commons, the Conservatives had to be shamed into allowing it to get to committee stage and ultimately to third reading. I know that because I was one of the MPs who had to remind them at the time of the importance of bail reform, which they, in part, said they supported.

If we look at the Hansard record, we will see that they actually voted in favour of the legislation, not only at second reading and third reading, but they wanted to see it receive royal assent. It did receive royal assent. There was a consultation process done for that.

Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, but when I hear Conservatives talk tough on crime, their real priority is raising money for the Conservative Party, and that is what it is all about. That is the reason I specifically asked the leader of the Conservative Party earlier today about his commitment to see substantial legislation pass, at least through second reading. It is not that much to ask for. He virtually ignored the question and would not give a commitment. If history has anything to do with the future, with regard to this particular leader and the Conservative caucus, they will talk about it, but when it comes to taking action, unless they are shamed, they are very slow on it.

Let us reflect on the last federal election. Every Liberal candidate from all regions of our country knocked on doors and listened to what Canadians had to say. Crime and safety in our communities was an important issue. There is absolutely no doubt about that. The Prime Minister, Canada's newly elected Prime Minister, made a solemn commitment to Canadians that we would in fact bring forward bail legislation and we would see significant changes to bail reform.

If we listen to the Conservatives, they are asking why it has not been brought forward and saying they want to see the legislation. Then, if we had brought it forward at this point, they would ask if we had done any consulting.

• (1330)

The Prime Minister made the commitment not only to deliver on bail reform but also to do the consultation necessary so we could encompass within the legislation a true reflection of Canadians' expectations. In essence, this is what we are going to see when the minister tables the legislation. We will see substantial changes to the system that reflect what we have been hearing at the doors, which is what Liberal members of Parliament have been advocating for, and what the many different stakeholders have been talking about.

Whether it is municipalities, the provinces or the federal government, we need to recognize it is not the federal government alone that is responsible for ensuring safe communities and streets. It is a shared responsibility. We all have a responsibility, but at the very least, we need to recognize it is not just Ottawa that is responsible for this.

As our newly elected Prime Minister has indicated, Ottawa will step up. We will act where we can, where our responsibilities lie. We will see that legislation tabled this fall. This is a guarantee from the Prime Minister and Liberal members of Parliament. We need to recognize it is not just Ottawa's responsibility.

Some might say I am somewhat biased in my opinions at times, so I thought it would be advantageous to quote a few things from an editorial in the Winnipeg Free Press. This editorial was published on September 9, with the headline "More Crown prosecutors needed—now".

The editorial reads, "The Manitoba Association of Crown Attorneys has filed a formal grievance, saying the office requires at least 20 per cent more prosecutors". Those are prosecutors that the province is responsible for hiring. Further down it reads, "But blame only goes so far." This refers to the current government blaming the previous government. I quote:

But blame only goes so far. After two years in power, the government of the day owns the problem and the responsibility for fixing it.

Further:

The NDP has spoken frequently about its commitment to safer communities. It has announced more funding for police and has supported federal efforts to tighten bail laws.

That means consulting with the new Prime Minister, which is a little off topic, so I will go back to the quote.

But those measures mean little if there are not enough prosecutors to move cases through the courts in a timely manner.

Without an adequately staffed Crown's office, government promises to crack down on violent repeat offenders are little more than political slogans.

Again, this is an editorial about provincial responsibilities. I will repeat the last part: "Without an adequately staffed Crown's office, government promises to crack down on violent repeat offenders are little more than political slogans." It continues:

The cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of investment. Failing to fund the Crown's office means risking collapsed trials, emboldened criminals and disillusioned victims. It means communities losing confidence in the courts' ability to protect them. Ultimately, it means eroding the very rule of law.

In fairness, it is not just the responsibility of the Province of Manitoba and the federal government. All levels of government have a responsibility.

• (1335)

Let us look at that responsibility and the expectations of the different levels of government. The Prime Minister, who was elected just a few months ago, had to deal with the important issues of building one stronger Canada and bringing forward legislation of that nature. He brought forward legislation to deal with affordability so that 22 million Canadians get a tax break. He had numerous meetings and consultations on a wide spectrum of issues, including crime and safety. He has a responsibility to ensure that the minister responsible for the legislation is getting us into a position to fulfill the commitment he made to Canadians, which was to deliver substantial legislation on bail reform. That is the federal responsibility, and we have a Prime Minister who is committed to doing just that.

Business of Supply

In the 1990s, I was an MLA, and for a short period of time, I was the justice critic. I understand how jurisdictional responsibility is not necessarily the most efficient way to deal with problems at times, but that is part of our Canadian system, and I respect that. During the early 1990s, I assisted in forming what we call the youth justice committees. One was the Keewatin youth justice committee, and after a few years, I became the chair. It was interesting to see how things changed over time. A youth justice committee, I should say for members who are not familiar with them, was composed of individuals who live in the community and volunteer to deal with young offenders who commit a crime, typically the first offence.

In the first few years, we dealt with quite a few crimes. They were primarily petty theft, such as shoplifting crimes and things of that nature, but as the years went by, things started to change. Petty thefts were not happening to anywhere near the same degree as in the early 1990s. As the chair, I discussed it with the provincial parole officer responsible for our justice committee. Apparently, there was a decision made between the province and the city that it was better for the city police to deal with young offenders as opposed to a youth justice committee. There were a number of them in the province.

I use that example to highlight that we need to recognize, and I will continue to amplify this, that the issue of crime and safety is a shared responsibility. However, we would not know that if we listened to the Conservatives. Looking at their fundraising emails, and I have seen many of them—

An hon. member: Are you donating?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: No, I have not donated, and I do not plan to, either.

Mr. Speaker, we can talk about misinformation and slogans. They have turned crime and safety into nothing more than the creation of slogans, propaganda and bumper stickers just to feed a certain element of their party to generate funds. That is what it has come down to. That is why they criticize Liberals constantly on crime.

At the end of the day, we need to look at the actions Conservatives have taken to date on the issue. We will wait to see what happens when the bail reform legislation comes forward. I am somewhat of an optimist at times, even though I have been discouraged in recent years with how the Conservatives have dealt with federal legislation.

• (1340)

However, if they recognize what we have recognized in terms of what Canadians and the many different stakeholders are saying on the issues, I would hope that the leader of the Conservative Party, to whom I asked the question, would be open to, at the very least, allowing bail reform legislation to hit the committee stage before the end of the year. That does not mean they have to pass it; it just means that they are prepared to allow it to get to committee stage. That is a reasonable request.

The Conservatives will say they have not even seen the legislation yet, which is a valid point. It is much like their wanting us to vote on a motion today, when we have not seen any legislation on it

yet. We have no sense of what consultation was done on it, but they will expect us to vote.

The Conservative critic introduced for first reading today a bill that talks about massive changes to our justice system and is guaranteed only two hours of debate, not to mention limits in committee plus limits in third reading. With respect to the massive change that he is proposing to the justice system, he would consider that as being done. What kind of consultation did he conduct? What kind of debate did he allow for? I will assure members that we will guarantee more debate than he would have had during the private member's bill debate, if that is all it takes to get Conservatives to get legislation ultimately passed.

They can say they do not have the legislation, and stick to that line, but then I will go back to Bill C-2. What would Bill C-2 actually do? In part, it would enable RCMP to share data. Extortion is a very serious issue in Canada. By enabling the legislation at the very least to get to committee, we would be able to have more debate on it. Stakeholders from across Canada could come to provide opinions and address concerns.

The Conservatives say they have some amendments. They would be able to propose amendments to the bill and continue to debate it. After second reading, if it goes into third reading, they could debate it as long as they like there too. Let them just realize one thing: If they are serious about dealing with crime, they should not just talk about it but also allow things to take place.

With respect to Bill C-2, extortion is just one aspect of it. If we were to do a Hansard search for the word “fentanyl”, we would find that the Conservatives are talking a lot about the issue of fentanyl. So are the Liberals, but the Conservatives are being very critical of the government for not doing enough. Bill C-2 would enable law enforcement agencies to open a letter if they get a warrant from a court because they suspect that there could be fentanyl in the envelope.

The Conservatives do not even support it. We heard that yesterday. Why would the Conservatives not support an RCMP officer, for example, who gets a warrant to be able to search an envelope for something like fentanyl? Fentanyl and other drugs are actually being distributed through Canada Post. We need the legislation to enable our RCMP officers to open those envelopes if they get the warrant.

Business of Supply

If the Conservatives really do care about the issue of bail reform or issues that are encompassed by Bill C-2, they need to recognize that at some point they have to allow legislation to get to the committee stage. That is why, at the beginning, when the leader of the Conservative Party stood in this place and spoke today, I made the accusation that the Conservative Party needs to be less focused on raising money for the Conservative Party, using crime and safety as a mechanism to do that, and more focused on addressing the needs of Canadians, which is what the Prime Minister has actually done.

We are anticipating that there will be substantial bail reform legislation. Hopefully the Conservatives will do the right thing when that happens and will get behind it, at least get it to committee where they could potentially make amendments. I realize that at the end of the day this would make a whole lot of Canadians happy.

• (1345)

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was a bit dismayed that the member for Winnipeg North did not talk about the mayor of Winnipeg's comments in the last couple of days, in which he talked about "an urgent need for federal bail and sentencing reform" and said that "the bail and sentencing system is not working." The mayor of Winnipeg talked about a repeat offender who has committed 24 violent crimes over the last 11 years and has violated his bail and probation conditions 12 times.

My first question for the member is, how many strikes does he think this violent repeat offender in Winnipeg should get before he is in jail? The second question is this: He talks about the mythical bail reform bill that is going to come out this fall; is "this fall" before December 12?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity, not once but on a couple of occasions, to talk to Mayor Gillingham in regard to the issue of crime in the city of Winnipeg, and it is very serious. At the end of the day, as I have explained to the House, it is not just Ottawa. In four or five months, Ottawa, and in particular the Prime Minister, has done the work necessary in terms of the consultations, reaching out, getting the feedback that is so critically important, and then putting together substantial legislation that will be coming out this fall. I think you have to provide the new government the opportunity to do the work necessary in order to table the legislation.

I can assure you that the mayor of Winnipeg and many others—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the parliamentary secretary to remind him about using "you". Everything is through the Chair; I am not responding to the debate.

The hon. member for Rivière-du-Nord has the floor.

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I hear his concerns about keeping our streets safe.

What does he have to say about the Bloc Québécois's proposal to create a registry of criminal organizations and treat them like terrorist organizations? What does he have to say about our proposal to amend the Criminal Code to remove the two religious exemptions that permit hate speech? What does he have to say about the possi-

bility of not meeting the Supreme Court of Canada's Jordan deadline for the most serious cases of violent crime?

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Jordan case was addressed in part when the former government brought in legislation. I know the Conservatives oppose certain aspects of that legislation, which means, at least from what I understand, they are going to reintroduce the stuff that was actually struck down by the Supreme Court, but that helps them in terms of their fundraising efforts.

At the end of the day, during the nineties in Manitoba, at the provincial level, we thought it was advantageous to focus on gang activities, identifying them and putting extra resources into dealing with them. It did make a difference.

What the member opposite is proposing, some sort of organized crime registry, I think would be something that would be great to hear more discussion about at the appropriate standing committee.

• (1350)

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was an MLA as well. Seven years ago we started to hear about the crime in our communities, and that is when I first started to hear the blame game: B.C. and the provinces blaming Ottawa. Now I come here and the Liberals are blaming the Conservatives. The Liberals have been in government for ten years. I also hear the idea that somehow they need a consultation to relax their soft-on-crime legislation. The stories we have heard in Skeena—Bulkley Valley for the last seven years are horrendous. They are horrible.

Why did the Liberals need so much time to consult, when all the records, victims and families are there? Why did they spend seven years consulting, when really all they had to do was repeal Bill C-75, for example? When is the blame game going to stop?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member was an MLA for seven years; I was an MLA for just under 20 years. I understand the provincial system, no doubt, as well as he understands it. He should also understand and acknowledge that both levels of government have a very important role.

The member talked about what has happened over the last 10 years. The Speaker will not give me enough time to be able to expand on that, but I need to remind the member that the Prime Minister was elected just a few months ago. The member might disagree with me, but it is important that the Prime Minister and the cabinet consult before we bring substantive legislation on the issue of bail reform, for the simple reason that it has been a major issue coming out of the last federal election, and the Prime Minister has made a commitment to Canadians to deal with it by bringing forward bail legislation.

I think the Conservatives have to at least provide a few months to ensure that we get the bail reforms that are going to reflect what Canadians and the different stakeholders want to see, as well as the expectation of the new Prime Minister.

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord asked a simple question. However, it seems that the Liberals are afraid to talk about this. Right now, there are exemptions in the Criminal Code that allow someone to stand on the street and call for violence without facing consequences as long as they are speaking in a religious context. The Bloc Québécois has an important bill on this, and we are going to introduce it again.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about this. Will the Liberals agree? Will my colleague commit to talking to his government colleagues and asking them to support this measure, so that there are no more exemptions and no one can call for violence in the streets?

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member is asking what I personally would do, in terms of a sense of commitment. I would be more than happy to talk with any member of the Bloc party if they are prepared to explain to me what they are talking about. As I say, I think the more appropriate place for that discussion to take place is probably the justice standing committee. I do not know whether the Bloc has had the opportunity to have that discussion there, but I would suggest that could be a good starting point in itself. However, I always welcome talking to members of the Bloc.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member read from a September 9 Winnipeg editorial citing the need for more provincial prosecutors. Does the hon. member understand that it is the Liberal government's revolving door that is keeping prosecutors busy and that scrapping Bill C-75 would free those prosecutors up to focus on other cases?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, no.

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to pick up on the question that my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé asked the member for Winnipeg North earlier, because it was a simple question.

We talked about a bill that we introduced in the previous Parliament and that the member must be familiar with. It sought to eliminate the religious exemption in the Criminal Code that allows peo-

Business of Supply

ple to call for hatred and violence under the guise of religious speech. We have already had this discussion. It took place at the Standing Committee on Justice. The member for Winnipeg North already knows the ins and outs of this discussion.

What my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé was asking, and what I too would like to know, is whether our colleague will talk to his caucus about the possibility of introducing a bill that would eliminate the religious exemption that is currently in the Criminal Code.

• (1355)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, from a personal perspective, if members of the Bloc want to come talk to me about the issue, I am open to doing that, but I do stand by my earlier comment that the issue is something that, if I were a member of the Bloc, would be an excellent opportunity to set as an agenda item at the Standing Committee on Justice, and that would involve more parliamentarians. However, if the member would like to have further discussions with me with respect to it, I would be more than happy to do that.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member expects us to just trust him and the government that they are going to be taking all the concerns about bail seriously. He says there is going to be some bill coming this fall. Will the government, in the bill, be repealing the principle of restraint, yes or no?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, if I were to answer the specific question that the member asked, that would require me to say something indicating that I have privy information, and if I did that, then tomorrow he would stand up on a question of privilege, asking how the member for Winnipeg North knew this. Then we would get every member of the Conservative caucus talking about their privilege having been breached, and they would have another way to prevent legislation from—

The Deputy Speaker: The time has elapsed.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Edmonton Gateway will have just under three minutes before being interrupted for Standing Order 31 statements.

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, time and again, I hear from constituents in Edmonton Gateway and from people right across the country about how deeply frustrated they are with the Liberal government's reckless bail laws. They do not know what to do anymore. After this lost Liberal decade, the results are clear. Our justice system now puts the comfort of violent criminals above the safety of everyday Canadians.

Statements by Members

The numbers speak for themselves in Canada. Violent crime has surged by over 50%. Gun crimes have more than doubled. Gang-related homicides are up 80%. Extortion cases have exploded almost 400%. Auto theft is up over 50%. In 2022, shockingly, 256 people were charged with homicide while already out on some type of release, such as house arrest, parole or bail. With 874 homicides in total that year, these criminals have counted for nearly one-third of all murders. These are people who were out on release. That number has only grown since that time. Behind these statistics are victims with names and families, their lives cut short.

In Edmonton, we lost a 52-year-old father, a refugee from Congo who was stabbed at the LRT station. It was the attacker's fourth violent offence in Edmonton's transit system. In Welland, Ontario, a convicted sex offender serving probation after sexually assaulting a 12-year-old boy was released early. He then broke into a home and brutally assaulted a three-year-old girl. In Toronto, the man accused of attempting to murder a police officer in 2024 was already out on bail despite multiple breaches and orders not to possess firearms.

What do these cases all have in common? Each victim was harmed by someone who should have been behind bars.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

NORTHERN AND ARCTIC AFFAIRS

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, Inuit such as Jesse Tungilik are brilliant. Jesse posted on his social media that an increased military presence in the Arctic will mean putting Inuit women at greater risk of sexual violence. He says that building a highway connecting Nunavut to the south will make human trafficking and the murdered and missing indigenous women problem worse and bring more hard drugs to vulnerable communities. He also says that increased marine traffic will mean more accidents and fuel spills.

He asks what measures will be put in place to mitigate these factors and whether these issues have been discussed at all by leadership. He wonders if anyone cares, or if these are the acceptable costs of business so a few can line their pockets.

Jesse and Inuit should keep using their voices. The world needs to hear them.

* * *

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the incredible impact of the Canada summer jobs program in my community of Whitby. This summer, I had the privilege of visiting workplaces and hearing directly from youth about how these opportunities have made a real difference in their lives. Their stories were inspiring and filled with moments of growth, confidence and purpose. Thanks to the program, young people in Whitby are stepping into meaningful roles, gaining hands-on experience and discovering their full potential.

I want to acknowledge organizations like Girls Inc. of Durham, Melly's Workplace, Arnts landscaping, the Whitby Yacht Club, the Reptilia zoo and Port Whitby Marina, to name a few. These are just a few employers who are opening their doors, nurturing talent and creating inclusive environments where young people can thrive.

The Canada summer jobs program is more than just a program. It is about us believing in our young people and giving them chances to succeed. It is great to see all the youth having such a great summer.

* * *

WELLAND CANAL

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Welland Canal is the lifeblood of the community in Niagara South. Connecting Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, the Welland Canal is a major economic driver for southern Ontario, creating thousands of jobs by enabling grain, steel, critical minerals and other aggregates to be transported across our Great Lakes.

Every year, my hometown of Port Colborne celebrates its marine heritage, rich history and the economic importance of the canal. Unfortunately, several of the wharves along the canal have fallen into disrepair, restricting economic growth and new development. Transport Canada earmarked \$20 million for repair, but the project remains dormant, with no work having been completed in over two years. It is not enough for the government to simply make announcements and table press releases. Sooner or later, the shovel-ready work also needs to get done.

Conservatives will continue to hold Liberals to their commitments. My community is ready to build.

* * *

HON. DONALD OLIVER

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former senator Donald Oliver, whom we sadly lost a couple of days ago.

Known to many as Donnie, he was a trailblazer for Black Canadians and a lifelong champion for equality and justice. Senator Oliver was instrumental in the creation of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia and made history as the first Black man appointed to the Senate of Canada. His legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

This loss is a personal one for me, as Donnie owned a Christmas tree farm in my riding, which he cherished, and was a very close friend of my grandfather. I came to know him through his work with the south shore Christmas tree industry and when he used to pop by at the local hardware store where I worked as a kid.

On behalf of South Shore—St. Margarets and Nova Scotia, I extend heartfelt condolences to his family and deep gratitude for his lifetime of leadership, service and kindness.

* * *

EDMONTON FOOD DRIVE

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Edmonton's Food Bank is at a breaking point. Each month, more than 47,000 people, a 42% increase, rely on food hampers. Behind those numbers are families and children who cannot afford groceries because Liberal deficits have led to Liberal inflation, which makes everything cost more. Across the country, parents are forced to choose between rent, clothing or food for their children. More and more children arrive at school hungry every day.

Thankfully, our community is stepping up where the government has failed. One example of this is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints organizing Edmonton's largest door-to-door food drive. On Saturday, September 27, volunteers will be going door to door in many neighbourhoods to collect donations. People can also donate at their local grocery store or fire station.

I give a big thanks to all the volunteers and donors. Their hard work and generosity will make a real difference in the lives of people who need it in Edmonton.

* * *

• (1405)

[Translation]

MICHEL BISSONNET

Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after nearly 50 years of unwavering dedication, Mayor Michel Bissonnet has announced that he is retiring.

From his first election as mayor in 1978, to his decades as an MNA and his return as mayor in 2008, Michel has been more than a leader. He is the heart and soul of our community. His tireless dedication, openness to everyone and deep love for Saint-Léonard has touched many lives. He built more than just a borough. He built trust, hope and a true sense of belonging.

I had the honour of joining his team in 2015 as a city councillor and working alongside him. His mentorship, passion and commitment shaped me in ways that cannot be articulated.

I wish to thank Michel from the bottom of my heart. His legacy will live on in every street, every home and every heart of Saint-Léonard because he is, as I have always said, a political institution.

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CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal governance, Canadians have lost confidence in the Canada Revenue Agency, and for good reason. Has anyone tried reaching anyone at the CRA over the phone? Barely 5% of calls are being processed.

For weeks, the CRA was unable to say how much we invested in our TFSAs. There are thousands of cases of phantom income.

Statements by Members

There are thousands of cases of interest demanded on money that has already been paid. Every day, our constituency offices receive calls from honest people who are fed up with being treated like fraudsters. The problem is not the CRA employee answering the phone. It is mismanagement.

One of the government's primary missions is to provide good service to Canadians, especially when it comes to money. The minister was so proud to announce that he is assigning the CRA a 100-day action plan. That is quite the challenge. I must remind him that the government has been in power for 10 years, that he has been minister for six months and that it took him 172 days to ask for and demand a 100-day plan—

The Speaker: The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

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[English]

WHISTLER'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this month, Whistler turns 50. What started in 1975 as a gravel road, a few cabins and the bold dream of pioneers like Nancy Greene and Franz Wilhelmsen has grown into a world-class destination. From the first gondola at Creekside to the rivalry between Whistler and Blackcomb mountains and partnering with the Squamish Nation and Lílwat Nation to host the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Whistler has always been a place of possibility. If we could ski it, if we could hike it, if we could bike it or if we could build it, we did.

Today, Whistler is Canada's premier year-round tourism destination and a vibrant community where visitors' energy blends with the hearts of the residents, families, workers and volunteers who make it special. Whistler has always had a special place in my heart since I started skiing there at age three, and I am confident it will meet the next 50 years' challenges like climate change, housing and reconciliation with the same spirit that made it what it is today.

Happy 50th, Whistler.

*Statements by Members***HOUSING**

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' latest idea for housing is a fourth bureaucracy. The Liberal Prime Minister promised Canadians that he would double homebuilding and build 500,000 homes a year, yet his new housing bureaucracy is only committing to 4,000 new homes. Too many people in my riding are teetering on the verge of homelessness. Our housing crisis is most evident in my hometown of Penticton, where a growing tent city at Highway 97 and Fairview Road has become unsafe for everyone. That tent city was not there 10 years ago.

The Prime Minister promised to build homes at a record pace. Instead he is building more bureaucracy, another Liberal promise because the Prime Minister is just another Liberal.

* * *

● (1410)

[Translation]

CHARLES PAGE

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, some superheroes wear capes and fly, but the one I am honouring today wears warm clothes, a toque and boots with crampons, and he is a climber.

On August 12, while most of us were enjoying the summer sun, Charles Page from Drummondville was facing the worst weather conditions imaginable as he reached the summit of K2, the second-highest mountain in the world at 8,611 metres, and the most dangerous for the daredevils who to dare to scale it. Charles conquered Everest last year. K2 was his fifth mountain over 8,000 metres in three years.

He is the only Quebecker to have climbed both Everest and K2. He still has mountains to conquer because, believe it or not, Charles has been mountain climbing for only the past three years. The day before he left for Nepal, on June 23, Charles Page gave a fantastic patriotic speech at our national holiday celebrations in Drummondville. That is when I realized how proud he is to plant our flag, his fleur-de-lis, at some of the highest summits in the world.

We are so proud of Charles, and I thank him for that.

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[English]

MOSSOM CREEK HATCHERY

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for nearly 50 years, Mossom Creek Hatchery in Port Moody has been powered by outstanding volunteers dedicated to restoring salmon and educating generations of students.

After a devastating fire in 2013, the community rebuilt the hatchery stronger than ever. What began as a small hatchery is now a welcoming world-class education centre where students and community members experience the wonder of wild salmon and learn about the importance of watershed stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the extraordinary volunteers whose decades of dedication have brought salmon back to

Mossom Creek and, of course, Kevin Ryan, president of the Burrard Inlet Marine Enhancement Society, who is here in Ottawa today.

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LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that Canadians would judge him by the cost at the grocery store. Let us judge him by the cost at the grocery store. Since March, sugar is up 20%, coffee is up 22%, canned soup is up 26% and cuts of beef are up 33%. It is no wonder food inflation is up 40% since the Liberals took office. That is why more than 25% of households now struggle to afford food.

I have heard heartbreaking stories from Canadians. Parents cannot afford to feed their kids hearty meals, seniors are skipping their meals altogether and food banks have never been busier. However, yesterday, the Liberal Prime Minister arrogantly bragged that he knows many things. Well, clearly, he does not know about the cost of food.

Canadians cannot afford higher grocery prices, and they certainly cannot afford the Liberal Prime Minister.

* * *

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752

Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on July 5, a monument was unveiled in my riding to commemorate the victims of Flight PS752. This tragedy claimed 176 lives, including eight members of Winnipeg's Iranian community. Five years later, the pain remains profound for families, loved ones and communities, who continue to bear the weight of this tremendous loss.

I had the honour of visiting this memorial, titled *An Open Wound In The Sky*, which is located within sight of where some of the victims lived. I was joined by Kourosh Doustshenas, who was instrumental in the creation of this monument and who lost his fiancée on that day.

It is the only permanent memorial in the world dedicated to the victims of Flight PS752, and it serves as a place for reflection, remembrance and healing. I want to recognize the dedication of those who brought this important project to life. Their work ensures that the victims of this tragedy will never be forgotten. Canada continues to stand with their families in pursuit of justice and truth.

FINANCE

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister proclaimed himself a fiscal and policy expert and promised Canadians that Canada would have a “declining level of debt.” However, another expert, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, instead warned Canadians that “the deficit will absolutely” increase because of “additional spending.” Now one does not have to be an expert, let alone a self-proclaimed expert, to know that more spending means more debt, and more debt means higher housing inflation, higher food inflation and harder times for Canadians. The budget watchdog went on to warn that “it’s impossible...to assess the likelihood” that the government will meet any of its fiscal anchors.

Justin Trudeau’s deficit was \$46 billion. In the election, the Liberals promised it would only be \$62 billion. Now BMO says it might be \$80 billion, and the C.D. Howe Institute estimates it could be \$92 billion.

Canadians deserve to know how high the deficit will go before the November 4 budget.

* * *

• (1415)

[Translation]

BACK TO SCHOOL IN LASALLE—ÉMARD—VERDUN

Claude Guay (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks into the school year, many families in LaSalle—Émard—Verdun have been able to get off on the right foot thanks to a great outpouring of solidarity. With support from a number of community organizations, including the Centre d’aide à la réussite et au développement, or CARD, Mission Bon Accueil, and Bienvenue à l’immigrant, we have handed out several hundred backpacks full of school supplies to children in the riding.

I want to extend special thanks to Claudia Olga Kadima, Samuel Watts and Henriette Mvondo and their respective organizations for their outstanding commitment.

I also had the pleasure of awarding 74 certificates to young people from my riding who took part in the Canada summer jobs program.

[English]

These concrete actions help support youth employment, reduce inequalities and build a stronger community.

[Translation]

I thank all the partners and volunteers for their dedication. I wish them a great school year.

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[English]

FOOD PRICES IN THE NORTH

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised lower grocery prices. “Canadians will hold us to account by their experience at the grocery store”, he said.

Oral Questions

In my travels to northern communities this summer, this is what I saw: In Tuktoyaktuk, a can of Alpha-getti is \$6.79, a jug of milk is \$14.79 and a 900-gram jar of Cheez Whiz is \$17.29. In Cambridge Bay, a can of baked beans is \$9.99, a 1.5-litre bottle of ketchup is \$19.88 and a box of soup crackers is \$22.99. Lastly, in Iqaluit, a can of mushroom soup is \$10.19, a gallon of ice cream is \$25 and a can of Tim Hortons, get this folks, is \$48.89.

If northerners’ experience at the grocery store is the measure of the Prime Minister’s success, then he has been an abysmal failure.

* * *

WOMEN’S SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Ernie Klassen (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the many successful events held this summer in South Surrey—White Rock.

It was a true privilege for our community to once again host the Canada Cup. Over the past three decades, the Canada Cup has grown into a celebrated international event that showcases the talent, dedication and sportsmanship of female athletes from around the world. This event is a celebration of the strength, passion and unity that define the sport of softball.

We honour the players, coaches and volunteers who make it all possible and the fans who bring the energy. I would like to recognize the outstanding leadership of Greg Timm and the board of directors. I would also like to extend a special thanks to my colleague and friend, the hon. Minister of Industry, for attending, throwing the first pitch and proudly sharing her own connection to the sport as a former softball player.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is in Mexico today for a photo op and fake agreement, but it is a great opportunity to compare, because both countries are neighbours of the United States. In the last quarter, Canada’s economy shrank by 1.6% while the Mexican economy grew by 2.4%. Canadian exports to the United States crashed by 18%, while Mexican exports to the U.S. are up 1.4%. The Canadian unemployment rate is three times higher than Mexico’s rate.

Will the Prime Minister ask his Mexican friends what they are doing right that he is doing so wrong?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister believes in having a strong relationship with Mexico, our second-biggest trading partner. That is exactly why he is in Mexico today meeting with the president to make sure that we can have our trading relationship on par.

The other thing the Leader of the Opposition needs to understand is that we are living in a much more dangerous and complicated world, with trade tensions having impacts on trading partners all around the world. We will stand up for workers, we will stand up for our businesses and we will build Canada strong.

• (1420)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is the time in the life cycle of any Liberal government when it goes from making promises to making excuses. It is blaming its collapsing economy on global tensions.

Interestingly, Mexico shares the same neighbour as we do. We are both right next door to America, so we can compare performance. However, in the most recent quarter, the Mexican economy has actually grown by 2.4% and the Canadian economy is down by 1.6%. Our unemployment is three times what Mexico's is.

Why?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is shocking about the Leader of the Opposition's comments is that he is always talking down Canadian workers, Canadian businesses and the Canadian economy. The good news is the Bank of Canada reduced rates yesterday. We should all be celebrating. This is good news.

Liberals will be there for businesses in the tariffed sectors, including aluminum, steel, autos, copper and all the other sectors, because we know that these workers are important, these businesses are important, and we have a plan to build Canada strong.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we support workers, especially the 86,000 workers who lost their jobs because of Liberal policies that are causing our economy to collapse.

Mexico boosted its economy by 1.4% in the last quarter. Canada saw a decline of 1.4%. Mexican exports to the United States increased while ours saw a drop of 18%. Our unemployment rate is three times higher than Mexico's.

Why?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, clearly, the opposition leader does not know what he is talking about. Let us look at the Canadian economy right now: Interest rates have gone down, and the Bank of Canada announced a key interest rate of 2.5%. That is good news for anyone who owns a home or is about to buy one.

We know that we must work with Mexico. We must also work with the United States. That said, our strategy is not only to build Canada strong, but also to look for other trade partners in Europe, Asia, certainly in Mexico, to grow our economy.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have had a free trade agreement with Mexico for almost three decades. The Prime Minister is going for nothing more than a photo op, another fake engagement.

The minister talked about interest rates; the Bank of Canada said the reason it is cutting rates while inflation is rising is because our economy is collapsing.

The Liberals promised the fastest-growing economy in the G7. They have delivered the fastest-shrinking economy in the G7. They promised more home building. It is falling by 13%. They promised to spend less. Their deficit spending is 100% more.

Talk is cheap, but why is it so expensive when the Prime Minister does it?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the Leader of the Opposition believes in isolationism, which means basically that Canada is by itself in the world. The Liberals believe that we need to engage in the world. We need to make sure that Canada is working with trading partners from Mexico, and from Europe to Asia.

That is why the Prime Minister will continue to travel to make sure to engage with leaders in the world. We believe that this is the way to build a strong economy at home, save and protect jobs, create new ones, attract foreign direct investments and, ultimately, make sure that Canada's voice of peace and multilateralism is heard in the world.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have had free trade agreements with all of those countries and regions for over a decade, yet the Prime Minister is busy looking busy, flying around, grip and grin, pretending to do a lot while doing very little. He could make use of all that expensive travel by asking all of those other places why their economies are so much stronger than the one that he now leads. We have, under his leadership, the second-highest unemployment in the G7, the worst economic growth in the G7, the worst household debt in the G7 and the worst housing costs in the G7.

Why is it that when he promises to be the first, he is the worst?

Oral Questions

● (1425)

Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we look at what is happening with global trade headwinds, we need to step up as a country and be there around the world to make sure countries know that we are here. They want to deal with a reliable, stable trading partner. It is our 15th free trade agreement with 51 different countries, with access to the 1.5 billion consumers countries rely on and Canadian workers rely on. That is why the Prime Minister will be there to make sure we are opening up new markets for Canadian businesses and workers.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these are not new markets. The member might have been asleep. Actually, he seems like a very young man. Maybe he was not born when Brian Mulroney negotiated NAFTA with the Mexicans. Maybe the Prime Minister was sleeping the day the Conservatives negotiated a free trade agreement with the Europeans. He is going around taking credit for things that he never did while his economy collapses here at home.

Canadians cannot eat or heat and house themselves. Will the Prime Minister stop making excuses and taking fake trips and get down to his job?

Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will not go to personal attacks, as the member opposite did. We will focus on the facts. There are people watching in the gallery.

I think it is very important to know that Canada and Mexico have shared over 30 years of strong friendship and economic partnerships rooted in trust, trade and mutual respect. In fact, Canadian direct investment in Mexico was over \$45 billion in 2024. The Prime Minister will be meeting with President Sheinbaum to defend our industries and grow our economies.

Canada is committed to CUSMA, and we are actively collaborating with Mexico. That is why the Prime Minister is there to make sure we open the door to—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Jean.

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[Translation]

JUSTICE

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is not only Bill 21 and state secularism that Ottawa is attacking at the Supreme Court, it is worse than that.

By attacking the notwithstanding clause itself, Ottawa is attacking the ability of our National Assembly to vote democratically on any law that is supported by Quebecers without having to beg Canada for permission first. This is an attack against secularism, but it is also an attack against our historical ability to protect the French language. It is an attack against our values and against the sovereignty of our legislative assembly.

Will the Liberals drop this offensive attack against Quebec?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is responsible for defending one of the pillars of our democracy, that is, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. All across Canada, the government must stand up for the rights of all Canadians. It is our job to defend this charter and to ensure that everyone in this country is protected.

We are doing our job. The matter is before the Supreme Court and we will be following it closely.

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is no such thing as pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause. It is a myth invented to keep Quebec from deciding for itself. The federal government is openly asking the courts to nullify part of the Constitution with no political debate and no say from politicians, in a bid to take fundamental powers away from Quebec. This is not a legal debate. It is a constitutional power grab against Quebec's right of self-determination that is hypocritically being carried out through the courts.

Will the Liberals have the guts to fight their own political battles instead of weaponizing the justice system?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows full well that the federal government's intervention in the Supreme Court case will not prevent any province or territory from continuing to use the notwithstanding clause. That is very clear, and she knows it. If there are any problems, I would be happy to ask the Department of Justice to offer a briefing, but the purpose of our intervention is to protect Canadians' rights.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the partisan appointment of Robert Leckey as a judge of the Quebec Superior Court also challenges Quebec's unique legal system. By appointing Mr. Leckey even though he does not have the necessary experience at the Quebec bar, the federal government is choosing a judge who does not have sufficient knowledge of Quebec's unique civil law system. By appointing Mr. Leckey, who is a public opponent of state secularism and the Charter of the French Language, the federal government is knowingly choosing a judge who opposes Quebec's distinct character.

Will the minister rescind this appointment?

● (1430)

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, judicial appointments to the superior courts are a federal government responsibility. Quebec already participates in the appointment process.

We are discussing this in good faith, with no obligation to reach an agreement. The Minister of Justice is in contact with his counterpart, and a meeting is scheduled for September. Judicial independence remains a cornerstone of our democracy.

*Oral Questions**[English]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of passing catch-and-release laws that let dangerous offenders free just hours after getting arrested, the Liberals are still obstructing efforts to undo these laws. They voted down our motion, shut down Parliament, called a snap election, went on summer holidays and still have not even started the process of fixing what they have broken, so the Conservatives will do it for them. Our plan will end catch-and-release and give 10-year jail sentences to anyone convicted of three serious offences. We could pass these laws today.

When will the Liberals stop obstructing Parliament and pass the Conservative “three strikes and you're out” law?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 28, Canadians gave this government a mandate to govern this country and to bring forward new legislation that will ensure that our streets are safer.

“Three strikes and you're out” laws do not work. Evidence-based decision-making tells us that “three strikes and you're out” is a complete failure in the United States. It has been a failure in every single jurisdiction where it has been applied.

We will have smart criminal justice reform. We will ensure that bail is strengthened to ensure that repeat violent offenders are off our streets.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, is that the best they can do, that one day they might get around to doing it? The evidence is in. Their plan is what caused the crime and chaos plaguing our communities. They deliberately changed laws to let thousands of dangerous and repeat offenders back on the street. Now they are admitting that they were wrong, but they are obstructing any efforts to fix the problem.

Thousands of Canadians' lives have been shattered, and too many Canadians have paid with their lives for Liberal mistakes. If they will not stop obstructing Conservative plans to fix what they broke, will they at least look the families of those victims in the eye and just say sorry?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader always wants to bring U.S.-style politics to Canada. Let me be clear. This did not work in the U.S., and many states are already repealing that law. We are focused on real, practical, proven solutions that are constitutional and will keep criminals behind bars.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 157 kilograms is the amount of cocaine that was recently seized by Alberta police. This type of drug is often laced with fentanyl and carfentanil and goes on to kill thousands. The reality is that there is a lack of incentive for drug dealers not to do this because of soft-on-crime policies by the Liberals, so the question is this: When will they stop obstructing and start repealing their soft-on-crime agenda?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to thank those in law en-

forcement for their diligent and hard work in ensuring that guns are off our streets.

If the member is serious about protecting our borders, he will support us in passing the strong borders act, Bill C-2. It would help us crack down on fentanyl, auto theft, money laundering, illegal firearms, irregular migration and organized crime, while upholding the privacy and charter rights of Canadians. It would give law enforcement the tools needed to dismantle increasingly sophisticated organized criminal networks.

A secure Canada is a strong Canada, and we are taking action to ensure the safety and security of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in just three weeks, Vaughan has seen seven shootings, seven incidents of violent crime. Since the Liberal government changed bail laws, violent crime is up by 50%. Our Conservative motion calls for a “three strikes and you're out” law to keep repeat violent offenders in jail. Why is the Liberal government waiting until next month to introduce bail legislation, putting more Canadians in danger every day?

The Prime Minister's failure to act is a betrayal of the victims of crime. When will the Liberals stop obstructing so people can feel safe in their own homes?

• (1435)

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the ways that the Conservatives can be effective is they can help us pass Bill C-2. Currently, all mail couriers, like UPS, FedEx and Purolator, can be checked for drugs. What cannot be checked are Canada Post packages under 500 grams.

Two grams of fentanyl is lethal. It can kill a human being. Why are the Conservatives on the side of drug traffickers?

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if anyone has an interest in taking dangerous guns off the streets, it is the police. In a stunning indictment of the Liberals' gun confiscation scheme, the Ontario Provincial Police has just told the government it will not participate in the Liberals' ridiculous gun grab. The OPP knows what we have been saying all along: that spending hundreds of millions of dollars to confiscate the property of law-abiding Canadians will not make our streets any safer.

Today, the Liberals have the opportunity to do the right thing and put an end to their catch-and-release justice system. Will the Liberals stop obstructing and support our motion to keep violent repeat offenders off our streets?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 28 this year, Canadians gave this government a mandate to ensure that guns are off our streets, which included completing the gun buyback program. I respect the decision of the Ontario Provincial Police in this regard. It is important to remember that OPP represents about 26% of overall policing in Ontario. This does not mean that we cannot and will not continue with the program at collection facilities and with the municipal police.

We cannot be tough on crime without being tough on guns. This is exactly what we are doing to keep Canadians safe.

[Translation]

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I normally love jogging and walking outside, but I no longer do that during the weeks I am here in Ottawa for work. I no longer go out alone after dinner, because I am afraid. I have had people scream at me and shout abuse at me for being a woman.

Another problem is intimate partner violence, which is hidden and under-reported. We have to stop looking the other way. We are introducing Bill C-225, which aims to protect women from intimate partner violence, as well as a motion to adopt a “three strikes” law.

Will the Liberals support us?

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard to be able to introduce legislation shortly. In fact, the Minister of Justice has already committed to introducing a bill in the House this fall.

We know that the safety of our communities does not depend on slogans. It is our responsibility. While we are focused on delivering real results, the Conservatives are focused on recycling slogans and fearmongering.

Canadians deserve to feel safe in their own communities, and we will take action.

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a woman, I am somewhat taken aback and disappointed to hear that.

Women have to be hypervigilant at all times. Behind closed doors, the situation is disturbing. Intimate partner violence is the most common form of violence against women. This morning, our colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola introduced Bill C-225, which would protect women who do not have a voice.

Can we count on the Liberals to ensure that this bill is passed quickly, yes or no?

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand. I understand my colleague when she talks about how hard it is to walk down the street as a woman. I have experienced that and still experience it from time to time.

However, what is being proposed today will not help make our streets safer. Common-sense laws and regulations, drafted after dis-

cussions with the community and all levels of government, are what will enable us to come up with a collective solution.

Together, by passing Bill C-2, we will be able to do something for Canadian women.

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● (1440)

CLIMATE CHANGE

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, an expert report released today by the Canadian Climate Institute confirms that Canada will not meet its 2030 greenhouse gas reduction targets. It is the Liberals' fault. By abandoning policies such as carbon pricing and continuing to encourage increased oil production in the oil sands, the Liberals are standing in the way of reaching their own target. That is what the experts are saying. What is even more alarming is that the Prime Minister is not committing to respecting his 2030 target.

Will the Liberals respect the 2030 target or not?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the Bloc Québécois member shares my interest in protecting the environment and fighting climate change. We always knew it would be tough, but we are ready to do the work. If the member really wants to know where things stand, I can tell him that the Conservative Party across the way has no plan. It was the Conservatives who increased greenhouse gas emissions.

If my colleague wants to work on this, he should work with our government to do the necessary work to fight climate change.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are abandoning the fight against climate change to sell more oil and gas. They are abandoning carbon pricing and incentives for zero-emissions vehicles. They are imposing their Bill C-5 to circumvent environmental legislation and impose energy projects. They are backtracking on capping greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas sector. In short, they are acting as though promoting oil and gas is part of Canada's identity.

Are they undermining the fight against climate change? Is that the legacy they want to leave?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am always very clear and our government is very clear: We are going to build a very strong country, a strong Canada, a Canada that will be good for future generations. To do that, we need to fight climate change. We are well aware of that, and we are doing that work. We will continue to do so.

Oral Questions

Last week, I was in Manitoba to talk about how to help low-income individuals modernize their homes. This shows that we are working with the provinces, and we will continue to do so.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal bail laws have broken the system beyond parody. In St. Thomas, a repeat offender was arrested for breaking and entering and released on bail with a curfew. He had to be in his home by 10 p.m. every night, but there is an issue: He is homeless. He does not have a home. The Liberals have made it so ridiculous that people are getting released on bail with a curfew to nowhere. Violent offenders are getting out after being arrested. The Liberals are doing nothing about it.

If the Liberals are not going to stand up and commit to supporting our “three strikes and you’re out” motion now, how many strikes do they think are enough to lock up a repeat offender?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combating Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is tough on crime. We are introducing new legislation this fall to strengthen our bail system for those charged with violent offences. Through our proposed stronger borders act, Bill C-2, we are cracking down on organized crime, auto theft, fentanyl and human traffickers, and securing our borders. We are listening to Canadian law enforcement agencies, and we are going to ensure we put forward measures that keep Canadians safe.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, soft-on-crime Liberal laws are hard on Canadians and our communities. Just yesterday, Halton region passed a unanimous motion demanding action from the Liberals on repeat violent offenders now, not in October, and not next year. After a decade of Liberal catch-and-release laws, which have allowed criminals to terrorize our communities, they are now obstructing Conservative jail not bail laws that will lock up criminals.

How many lives have to be lost before the Liberals finally wake up and get out of the way?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, slogans are not going to resolve crime on our streets. What is important for us is that we bring forward legislation to address the issues of serious violent offenders as well as bail reform. That is exactly what the Minister of Justice is doing. He has been consulting with Canadians across Canada. I have been able to meet with a number of police chiefs, as well as police unions, to talk about smart criminal justice reform. That is exactly what we will be doing.

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, irresponsible Liberal policies that allow violent criminals to be held under house arrest and repeat offenders to be released early have led to a 55% surge in violent crime since 2015. Quebec communities have not been spared, and law-abiding citizens live in constant fear because they do not feel safe.

Our Conservative motion proposes a “three strikes” law that would impose minimum sentences of 10 years without parole for repeat offenders who have committed three serious crimes.

If the Liberals truly care about the safety of Canadians, will they support our motion?

• (1445)

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working closely with the provinces and territories to reform our bail system, look at sentencing and address court delays. This will give police and prosecutors more effective tools to keep violent offenders off our streets, particularly in cases of violent or organized crime, breaking and entering, car theft and human trafficking.

Canadians elected this new government to improve public safety, restore confidence in the justice system and ensure—

The Speaker: I must interrupt the parliamentary secretary.

The hon. member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga.

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[English]

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was elected on the promise that he was the only one who could deliver a trade deal with the United States. Instead, here is the dismal record. He promised a deal by July 21, and there is no deal. He promised elbows up and, instead, antagonized an unpredictable administration. He promised strength at the table and, instead, delivered concession after concession with nothing in return.

Meanwhile, Mexico got a deal. Its exports to the U.S. went up 1.4% last quarter, while ours dropped 18%. What has Mexico done so right that the Prime Minister has done so wrong?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have the best deal on earth right now when it comes to exporting because 85% of all our products being sent to the U.S. are without any tariffs. We know that we need to be there for the businesses and workers in the sectors that are now tariffed, and we are here with \$6 billion on the table to help them.

We also know that we are over-dependent on the U.S., and all members of the House should be getting behind the government's plan because we need to diversify.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if we have the best deal, then why do we have the worst economy in the G7?

Deadline after deadline has come and gone, and the government's promised trade deal is nowhere to be found. After failing at the negotiating table in Washington, the Prime Minister is now off to Mexico City, desperate to claim any kind of win. Let us compare that to our Mexican counterparts, who successfully negotiated a deal. Their exports to the U.S. were up 1.4% last quarter, while ours fell 18%.

Again, what has Mexico done so right that the Prime Minister has done so wrong?

Tim Louis (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy (Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada and the U.S. share the world's most integrated and mutually beneficial trade partnership. That is not up for debate. Millions of jobs in Canada and the U.S. depend on our trading relationship. Canada already, and it is unequivocal, has the best deal among U.S. trading partners.

While we continue to negotiate with the U.S. and with Mexico, our government is focused on what we control the most, which is diversifying our trade relations and supporting Canadian businesses and all sectors.

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CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Emma Harrison (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, residents of my riding have contacted me and my team to express their frustrations with the delays they have experienced when contacting the CRA. We know that the dedicated employees of the CRA provide invaluable services to Canadians, but the reality is clear that demand has increased significantly in recent years and the system needs to be improved.

Could the Secretary of State for Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions inform the House of the measures taken by the government to improve services delivery at the CRA?

• (1450)

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, delays at CRA call centres are completely unacceptable. We all know that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: When there are interruptions like this, I cannot really follow the clock, so I have no control over how much time I give for the answer. I would ask the secretary of state to start from the top.

Hon. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, we all know that the delays Canadians face at CRA call centres are completely unacceptable.

Oral Questions

This is not on the CRA employees. They are world-class public servants. This is a systemic failure that has unfolded over decades. We have implemented a 100-day plan to improve service and access—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member did not finish his answer. He may stand up again.

Hon. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, Canadians from coast to coast to coast are frustrated with CRA call centre delays. I know that.

This is not on CRA employees. They are world-class public servants. This is a systemic failure over decades. That is why we are implementing a 100-day plan to improve service and accessibility, and we are going to eliminate delays. The Union of Taxation Employees and the Taxpayers' Ombudsperson have also expressed support.

I am going to work with CRA leadership. I am going to hold them accountable. We are going to fix this.

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FINANCE

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government's plan is to pile on debt, but to obscure that picture with accounting changes.

Now the Parliamentary Budget Officer is warning against making these changes, saying that, if the government obscures its own books, it will, in the PBO's words, "bet your boots...paying more for debt".

Will the finance minister agree that doubling the size of the deficit not only puts Canada's credit rating at risk but also exposes taxpayers and households to higher borrowing costs and higher interest rates?

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.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the member opposite, we respect the work of the PBO and the independence of the institutions that make our democracy so great in this country.

Our government is focused on delivering generational investments in the upcoming federal budget, which the minister announced will be on November 4. This is good news for Canadians. A budget is coming that will ensure Canadians that we have a prosperous future. We are building Canada strong. Opposition members should get on board.

Oral Questions

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this tired, old Liberal government has doubled the deficit and has abandoned any fiscal anchors it once had, putting Canada's AAA credit rating at risk.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer warns that rating agencies are not going to tolerate Liberal accounting tricks and that, if they even have a sniff of a change in the budget presentation, Canadians will be paying higher interest rates immediately.

Why is the government playing political games with the budget and risking higher costs for all Canadians?

• (1455)

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.): Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians are getting tired of the Conservatives' Chicken Little routine.

This week we had the great news that inflation is at 1.9%, which is actually within the Bank of Canada's target range. That is good news for Canadians because the Bank of Canada dropped interest rates this week by a quarter of a per cent. That means more money in the pockets of Canadians. That means Canadians save more on their mortgages this week compared to last. That is the bottom line.

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EMPLOYMENT

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised more jobs, but the only thing that is booming is unemployment. EI use among women aged 25 to 54 is up 12% in just one month, and overall, EI claims are up nearly 13% year over year. It is yet another Liberal broken promise.

In Newmarket, I met a mother. She cannot find a stable job. She worries about feeding her three kids and paying her rent, and that worry follows her every hour of the day.

When will the Liberal government face the damage it has done and apologize to Canadian women for the hardship its policies have caused?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, four months ago, Canadians chose to invest in themselves. They chose a government that sees the promise and potential in creating great jobs across this country, in investing in major projects and infrastructure and in ensuring that people have the skills they need as our economies change and technology changes jobs. They knew that, on this side, a Liberal government would protect them and their families now and into the future. They knew they risked all of that with the cuts the Conservatives proposed.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was truly a striking answer from the minister. My colleague pointed out that EI claims have gone up by 12% among women in that age group in just one month, and the minister's response was, "At least we have jobs. At least the Liberals are still here." They should think less about themselves and their own

jobs, and more about women and people of all ages who have been negatively affected by their policies.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer said the labour market sucks and wages are not going up. The Liberals are presiding over an employment disaster. When will they reverse course?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, take it from a Conservative to try to torque the words that I clearly did not say.

In fact, what I said was that Canadians chose a government that would invest in them and that would adjust EI measures to reflect a changing economy so that people could access EI where previously they could not, so that people could keep more of their earnings if they were separated from their job and so that people would have more weeks in case of a collapse of their industry.

We know there are sectors struggling through increased tariff action, and we have not stopped. We have not stopped protecting Canadian families. That is what they voted for—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is so busy congratulating herself for I do not know what that she has not actually listened to the numbers we heard from Statistics Canada today. The situation is truly dire when it comes to unemployment: a 12% increase for women aged 25 to 54 in one month alone and a 23% increase year over year. Unemployment has been going up steadily for three years. Youth unemployment is at recession levels. We have the worst youth employment numbers in over 25 years.

This is not the time for self-congratulation. This is the time to change the policy.

• (1500)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am congratulating Canadians because Canadians chose a government that knew that when things were tough, the government would protect them. What did we do even before the election and enhance after the election? We made sure that if a Canadian's job was threatened through unfair tariff action, they would be protected.

They knew Conservatives would not take care of them in these economically challenging times. They knew they could not count on Conservatives. Why? It is because every time Conservatives had a chance to stand up for Canadians, they voted against them.

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THE ECONOMY

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, food inflation is up 70% since the Liberals took office. Groceries are up 3.5%, which is 70% above the inflation target. Beef is up 33%, canned soup is up 26%, and grapes are up 24%.

The Prime Minister said Canadians would judge him by the cost at the grocery stores. The new report from Food Banks Canada gives Canada a failing grade on food insecurity. He has failed.

Does the self-proclaimed great economist Prime Minister think that long lines at the food banks are good for our economy?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Food Banks Canada conducts important research and also makes very important recommendations for governments. It says we should strengthen the social safety net to support Canadians facing affordability challenges. We are doing that with dental care, with the middle-class tax cut, with “build Canada homes” and with \$10-a-day child care. Those things are making a difference in Canadians' lives, and the Conservatives voted against every single one of those measures.

Are the Conservatives content to just keep pointing fingers, or are they going to make some recommendations? Maybe they should read the report from the experts, like food bankers across the country serving Canadians.

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Nicole from the Stoney Creek Community Food Bank informed my office that one in four households need to visit a food bank, and one in three individuals walking in are children. It was serving 30 to 40 families per day before the summer and now 55 to 65 per day, which is up 71% since spring. This is “Christmas season demand without Christmas level donations.”

Canadians were promised that food prices would decrease, but they have gone up. Would the Prime Minister please explain to the good people of Stoney Creek why this promise was broken?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I take the time to sit down with food bankers and experts in poverty reduction right across the country, they make recommendations. They talk about strengthening our social safety net and making sure there are services, like EI, available to Canadians.

We also have challenges with northern food insecurity, and that is something we are working on directly on the advice of experts in poverty reduction.

Again I ask: Will the Conservatives just continue to point fingers or make some real recommendations? Maybe, perhaps, they can read the food bank's report, garner a little bit of insight from the experts on the front lines and work together to end this crisis.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' compulsive deficits over the past 10 years have had a direct impact on food inflation. We know that, in just a few weeks, the deficit will be even higher than it was under Trudeau. Unbelievable.

Food inflation is affecting all Canadian families. The Prime Minister said this week that the tariff war is a factor. Is that so?

If it is, can he explain why the price of apples that are grown in Canada, picked in Canada, sold in Canada and eaten by Canadians went up by 14% thanks to inflation?

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

It always fascinates me how the Conservatives find a conscience during question period, but lose it when it comes time to vote, as they did when it was time to vote for the Canada child benefit. The CCB has had a major impact on reducing child poverty in both his riding and mine.

The same thing happened when it came time to vote for affordable housing in his riding, in the Quebec City region and across the country; for breakfast programs, which help 100,000 children across Quebec; and for child care spaces, which help families.

That is what I find fascinating: the hypocrisy on the other side of the House.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that we are talking about food, something that is essential to life. Right now, thousands, if not millions, of Canadians are flocking to food banks.

He knows full well that demand has doubled at Solidarité familles on Ornière Boulevard. He knows full well that Chez Amélie et Frédérick on Bastien Boulevard has received 50% more requests for urgent food assistance.

That is the reality after 10 years of Liberal government. Why the hypocrisy when it comes to food inflation for all Canadians?

Oral Questions

• (1505)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is precisely why Canadians chose to put their faith in a Liberal government that is able to grow the economy with major projects and unleash the power of the Canadian economy while maintaining the necessary social programs that Canadians depend on.

I would invite my colleague to talk to the St. Vincent de Paul in my riding, for example, which saw an immediate impact when the Canada child benefit was introduced and when investments were made in affordable housing that is helping families across the country keep a roof over their heads.

That is the Liberal plan. We plan to unleash the power of the economy and increase Canadians' purchasing power while having quality social programs across the country.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Canada implements major infrastructure and clean energy projects, the vocational instructor in me is well aware that skilled workers will be essential.

Can the minister tell us about the measures being taken to support workforce mobility and training?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadian workers are ready to build. Over 100,000 workers have been trained through the union training and innovation program. We are facilitating national recognition of their credentials. This government is committed to building back better, and so are Canadian workers.

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*[English]***MARINE TRANSPORTATION**

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, The Globe and Mail has revealed that the former minister of transport was warned in May about BC Ferries buying ships from a Chinese state-owned shipyard, six weeks before the public was told, yet the minister claimed surprise in this House.

I am going to give the new minister the opportunity to break tradition with his predecessor and tell us the truth. Did she mislead Parliament, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like many of us in the House I was disappointed, as a British Columbian, to learn that BC Ferries had procured the ferries from offshore. The reality was that there were no Canadian bids on that procurement. That is something this side of the House is taking action on, first and foremost making sure we are supporting Canadian workers, Canadian materials and Canadian technologies. We are focused on a buy Canada strategy, we are rolling it out, and we expect support from around the House.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable. With so many steel and shipbuilding jobs at stake, it is beyond belief that the former minister refused to push back and demand that these boats be made in Canada. Canadian unions and shipyards deserve a federal government and provincial governments that believe in them, listen to them and, most importantly, stand up for them.

When BC Ferries first flagged the deal to the federal government, did the former minister not have a duty to inform the House, and I am asking the new part-time minister, or do the Liberals think Canadians cannot handle the truth?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opposition is twisting the facts around here. This is a BC Ferries procurement. These ferries were procured by BC Ferries, which is part of B.C. It is important to distinguish between levels of government and arm's length from government with respect to the independent decisions that were made by BC Ferries. Of course, we are all disappointed with the decision because we want to invest in Canadian jobs. We want to invest in the Canadian shipbuilding industry, and we are ramping up the initiative to build Canadian ships.

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Parliament was misled. New emails show that BC Ferries warned the former minister of transport's officials six weeks before announcing that the ferries would be built in China, yet the minister stood in this House of Commons and claimed that she was blindsided. At the same time, her staff was working with the Prime Minister's Office on how to spin this billion-dollar deal.

Canadians just want to know the truth. Why did the Liberals ship Canadian tax dollars and jobs straight to China?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I do not know why this is so confusing for the members opposite. This is a BC Ferries procurement. BC Ferries makes decisions about where it buys its ships. That decision rests with those at BC Ferries.

We can do our part to invest in Canadian jobs and Canadian workers. We are focused on a buy Canada strategy, and we will deliver for Canadian workers.

• (1510)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the people of Davenport, many of whom trace their Canadian story to Brazil and across South America. This summer, I hosted a round table with Brazilian Canadian business leaders and organizations to discuss the opportunities for growth in these emerging markets. I want to thank the Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce and the Minister of International Trade for participating in this discussion ahead of his visit to Brazil and Colombia.

Could the minister update this House on how the government plans to diversify Canada's trade relationships?

Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Davenport for her efforts in bringing together the Canadian Brazilian business community. It is those insights that I took to Brazil a few weeks ago as we announced the launch of Canada-Mercosur discussions, a trading bloc consisting of over 250 million potential consumers who want to buy more Canadian products. This is just one of the many initiatives that our government is taking to get world-class Canadian products to new markets around the world.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this year the Liberals will pay \$300 million for the mayhem in Toronto's homeless shelters. Toronto's shelters now hand out needles and drug accessories to anyone who walks in. The shelters have now turned into injection sites, bringing more crime and chaos to the streets of Toronto.

Now Olivia Chow wants the Liberals to pay for the construction of 20 more shelters inside Toronto's residential neighbourhoods. Proposed for my riding, the shelter at Keele and Wilson would be between a middle school and a day care. Torontonians do not want shelters that function like drug dens close to our schools and playgrounds.

Will the Liberals say no to Olivia Chow's shelters, or will they pay for their construction, to have Toronto's children picking up used needles?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite's giving me the opportunity to talk about an unprecedented \$1-billion investment in supportive housing for people who are homeless or in shelters, so they can move into transitional housing, supported by health supports. We have an unprecedented investment ahead of us to make sure people can move from shelters into housing. We expect the members opposite to support that.

* * *

LABOUR

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, postal workers are the backbone of our communities. They deliver prescriptions, they deliver cheques and they deliver vital communications. They could expand services as well, to include

Oral Questions

things like postal banking and seniors' check-ins, yet instead of supporting the workers and allowing them to bargain, the Liberal government has chosen to fight with over 65,000 workers. The government has used section 107 to suspend postal workers' legal right to strike.

Why is the government siding with Canada Post instead of standing up for fair wages, safe workplaces and a stronger—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Government Transformation has the floor.

[Translation]

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada Post is a vital national institution for the country and serves many remote and rural communities. I commend the work of its employees, its mail carriers, who have been delivering mail across Canada for 158 years now, in all kinds of circumstances. I want to thank them for their work.

As for the current dispute, I hope that both sides will be able to reach an agreement.

* * *

[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): Uqaqtittiji, the high cost of groceries makes life in the harsh Arctic more difficult. The discontinuation of the ICFI hamlet food voucher program hit Nunavummiut hard. People often ask for donations just to feed their family. This is a direct result of chronic underinvestment in Nunavut by both Liberals and Conservatives.

I have written to the Minister of Indigenous Services. Will she respond with much-needed investments?

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our new government is making life more affordable in the north through practical action that reaches families, strengthens communities and reflects northerners and what they have told us. We are supporting indigenous-led housing solutions and building more homes right across the three territories.

In Inuit Nunangat, we are making sure that 14,500 families can afford essential food through the Canada child benefit. We are expanding access to traditional foods with the harvester support program and improving nutrition north so families can put real, local food on the table.

Business of Supply

Most important, we are listening. We are refining our approach with the guidance of indigenous leaders and building real partnerships that deliver results.

* * *

● (1515)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it being the first Thursday after the summer holidays, I want to welcome my counterpart, the government House leader, and ask him if he could inform the House as to what the business will be for the rest of this week and into next week.

I will make two quick points. We have extended an olive branch, in the spirit of co-operation and non-partisanship, that we would quickly pass Conservative laws to end the catch-and-release system that the Liberals created and impose tough penalties for dangerous and repeat offenders. We could pass that legislation very quickly and get it off to committee and to the Senate so we could finally put an end to the crime and chaos that Liberal soft-on-crime policies have caused.

Second, my colleague, the shadow minister for employment and jobs, has asked the government if it would schedule an emergency take-note debate on the issue of youth unemployment. This is something that is affecting young Canadians in every corner of the country. There are a lot of bleak reports out there about young Canadians who are giving up on the hope of finding a job leading to home ownership and starting their life and family. I think it is an excellent suggestion by my colleague. I am wondering if the government House leader agrees that this is an urgent issue that needs to be debated and when he will schedule that debate for the House to participate in.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to welcome the House leader of the official opposition and all of his and our colleagues in the House. I am confident that we will have a productive session. We will see.

This afternoon, we will continue to debate the Conservative Party's supply day motion. Tomorrow, we will resume debate at second reading of Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act. I would also like to say that, next Wednesday, we will begin debate at second reading stage of Bill C-8, an act respecting cyber security.

[English]

I would like to inform the House that Monday, Tuesday and Thursday of next week shall be allotted days.

Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I request the designation of an order of the day to allow the presentation of a budget speech at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, November 4.

As to the question of a take-note debate, I would note that the Conservatives have, as I just indicated, two opposition days scheduled for next week, and they can certainly choose this very important topic, on which the government will have a lot to say, for debate if they believe it is that important.

With respect to the crime legislation, I would simply point out that there is before the House crime legislation presented by the government that meets the test of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and I would very much urge my Conservative colleagues to get on board with it right now so we can fight crime in this country.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1520)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—VIOLENT CRIME AND REPEAT OFFENDERS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Oxford.

One aspect of the Liberal crime disaster is out-of-control extortion in this country. Many towns and suburbs, once safe, are now being terrorized by gangs who threaten neighbours with violence and arson, as well as criminals who shoot into homes and even burn down homes and businesses. We have even heard of reported murders as well.

In the Vancouver area alone, extortion has jumped over 400%. I received a text message from a resident in that area, and this is one of many that I have received over this time. It says, "I am reaching out with a very humble request regarding the alarming situation in Surrey. Right now, families are living in fear. There were approximately 39 reported extortion cases and about 28 shootings just recently. Every day, things are getting worse. If this situation is not handled properly and quickly, it will encourage copycat cases and give more criminals the confidence to act. The crime rate in Surrey is very high and at an alarming point. I respectfully ask you to raise this concern in the House of Commons at the earliest opportunity. Our community needs stronger laws and real actions."

Mr. Speaker, this is a text message I got from a resident in Surrey just the other day. This is how bad it is. Canadians are lost; they do not know what to do. Many have said that this is not the same Canada they remember.

The fact is, when talking to Liberals and others, even in the House, we find that they are trying to blame provincial governments; they blame it on someone else. It is the same thing they have done with the economy; they blame it on somebody else. That is what they have done with this issue as well. They try to blame it on the provinces, but this is not a provincial problem.

The Criminal Code is federal. The RCMP is federal. The laws the Liberals brought in, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, made it easier for criminals to get out on the streets as soon as they are arrested. Even violent offenders are given bail the same day, sometimes the next day. Those are all federal and within the Liberals' power to scrap. It is no wonder that Canadians have lost faith in the justice system to deliver justice for victims.

Conservatives are calling on the government to act, because Canadians need that action. We need the Liberals to strengthen mandatory jail time to a minimum of three years for all extortion, four years if it involves a firearm and five years if tied to organized crime. This is the least we could do. Arson must be treated as an aggravating factor in extortion. Also, we need to repeal the Liberals' catch-and-release laws, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. We need laws to keep serious offenders behind bars. These laws make it much easier for criminals to get bail and be released into the communities.

I brought forward a private member's bill that did this. Unfortunately and quite shockingly, the Liberals voted it down. It is hard to explain why. The Liberals and the NDP at the time did this, actually.

Enough is enough. That is why we are calling for a “three strikes and you're out” law today. If a criminal is convicted of three serious offences, they would no longer qualify for bail, probation, parole or house arrest. They would face at least 10 years in prison and up to a lifetime as a dangerous offender. The only path back to freedom will be spotless behaviour, clean drug tests and rehabilitation efforts, such as learning a trade or upgrading education. In other words, there would be no more revolving door. The Liberal revolving door has to end. Serious offenders would stay behind bars until they are no longer a threat.

We have to keep Canadians safe. Right now, we have the opposite under the Liberal government. Bill C-5 allows violent offenders to serve sentences from their living rooms. Bill C-75 ensures many of those same offenders are back out on the streets within hours. After the police have done the hard work of trying to arrest somebody, they are given bail right away.

The consequences of the Liberal soft-on-crime policies are devastating.

● (1525)

Myles Sanderson, with 59 prior convictions, was released and went on to murder 11 people and injure 17 in Saskatchewan.

In the Peel Region, 18 criminals were arrested for home invasions and carjackings. Half of them were out on bail.

In Vancouver, police arrested the same 40 offenders 6,000 times.

Then there are the tragedies that will haunt Canadian families forever. Bailey McCourt, a young mother, was murdered by her ex-husband just hours after he was released on bail for assault and threats. Bailey deserved better. Her family deserved better. Canadians deserve better.

These are not just statistics. These are people whose lives were stolen because the government puts criminals first and victims last. Conservatives will change that. Our “three strikes and you're out”

Business of Supply

law would lock up dangerous criminals, stop the Liberal revolving door and bring home safe streets for Canadians. It would give victims and families peace of mind, knowing that offenders who harmed them will not harm anyone else, because the offenders will be behind bars. Conservatives will always fight to protect law-abiding Canadians and prioritize the safety of our communities over the comfort of repeat violent offenders.

Enough is enough. Canadians are counting on us to act. They need us to act to keep them and their families safe.

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the constituents in my riding of Port Moody—Coquitlam. They are concerned about crime, and they are also concerned about when our government will work with members of the opposition to pass important legislation. We know that our Prime Minister cares about Canadians and their concerns. We also know that this fall, we will bring forward important legislation on this very matter of bail reform.

Will the Conservatives work together in co-operation with us to support this important legislation for Canadians?

Hon. Tim Uppal: Mr. Speaker, an important part of that question is “when”. This is not something that has happened just recently. The problem is that the crime rate has been going up for quite some time, for years now.

When the Liberals took over, they brought in legislation that made it easier to get bail, that reduced sentences and that got rid of mandatory minimums. Since then, we have been asking the government to take crime more seriously and bring in tougher laws to make it harder to get bail. There has been no action from the government at all.

Just before the summer break, we again asked the government to bring in legislation because the crime rate continues to rise. There has been no action. Canadians need action now.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, crime reduction is an important issue that is worth discussing.

Business of Supply

I have a question for my colleague. This act seeks to incarcerate more criminals for longer periods of time. Can my colleague provide us with even one statistic showing that this type of legislative measure eventually reduces crime in places where it is implemented?

[English]

Hon. Tim Uppal: Mr. Speaker, that sounded as though the member wants me to answer how keeping criminals behind bars longer would stop them from committing crimes. They would be behind bars. That is what we want, to keep them behind bars so that they are not released into the community to reoffend in those same communities. That is what has been happening under the Liberals.

Our plan would keep them behind bars and keep Canadians safe.

Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have all gone on ride-alongs. When someone goes on a police ride-along, the police officer might say, "There's Jerry. I picked him up on Monday. This is Wednesday and we're going to pick him up again." The Liberal government has caused this through obstruction, with Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

We have had two horrific incidents in Saskatchewan. A fatal shooting of a 44-year-old woman on a highway near Weyburn left people in that area scared. She was just driving along on the weekend and was shot and killed in her car. Two men have also been charged after a targeted shooting in Regina, with 23 bullets shot in the Eastview community. An 11-year-old girl was injured.

I want the hon. member to comment on those incidents.

• (1530)

Hon. Tim Uppal: Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry to hear about those incidents, and the fact is that we are hearing about more and more cases like that right across the country. Serious crime is at a point that we have never seen before in this country. If we look at why this is happening, it is because people do not have respect for the law anymore.

We hear from police officers, who tell us they have gone through the hard work of arresting somebody, even a serious violent offender, who then gets bail the same day or the next day. Getting bail and then going back to doing crime is just part of the business now. It is just the cost of their business.

The fact of the matter is that the laws need to change. The Liberal laws, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, need to be scrapped. New laws need to be brought in that would keep serious violent offenders behind bars and keep Canadians safe.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise and to follow the deputy leader, whom I thank for a great intervention.

I would also like to start by thanking the farmers in Oxford and across our country who are now busy harvesting. I want to wish them a very successful and bountiful harvest and to remind all those who share the road to watch out for farm equipment. When someone sees a farmer, they should thank them, because our food comes from their fields to our fork, and they feed our families. It is an honour to represent such a strong rural community in Oxford.

We see a wave of crime being unleashed right across our country. Whether it is a rural town like mine out in Oxford County or a big city out in B.C., we are seeing a record number of crimes happening. Violent crime is up over 55% under the Liberals' watch. Extortion is up over 300%. Homicides are up and shootings are up. What the Liberals do not understand is that their policies are driving these numbers up.

There is the out-of-touch justice minister, who literally thinks that it is not the Wild West. He was commenting on social media; it must have been one of his late-night texts. However, it is worse than the Wild West. It is a lot worse. We are now living in a war zone in Canada. Canadians are waking up scared. More than half of Canadians are not even safe in their own neighbourhoods. There is anxiety. There is real fear. There is an anxiousness that is palpable. We hear out-of-touch comments from the Liberals, such as the public safety minister saying that it is not them and that the Conservatives are deflecting, denying, delaying and obstructing.

I find it very ironic and rich when I hear members opposite saying that bail reform is coming. Liberals did bail reform and they made it worse. In 2019, they brought in Bill C-75. They codified, under section 493.1, the principle of restraint. I hope the justice minister reads his own documents.

The principle of restraint very clearly states that a judge, a justice or a peace officer must release on the least restrictive conditions at the earliest opportunity. This is codified in law. Liberals have now handcuffed judges from using discretion when it comes to repeat violent offenders. The problem is that their failure on bail reform is now costing lives. It is now hurting Canadians.

We hear insane stories. In Oxford County, there was a violent bank robbery right downtown, on Dundas Street. A TD Bank was robbed by a repeat offender, who had firearms. The police arrested him; they did the great work they always do. Woodstock police arrested him, and he was a repeat offender. I received a message from one of the officer's daughters, who asked me, "Why is my father putting his life at risk over and over and over again to catch the same people?"

Law enforcement members across our country are now demoralized. They catch a person in the morning, with all the evidence they need for a strong case, only to find out hours later that the person is being released on bail. I could be here all day sharing stories like this. We heard the story of Bailey McCourt, which is a story the deputy leader talked about as well. What did Bailey do wrong? What did she do wrong? The person who was uttering threats and was a risk to her life was arrested, charged and convicted. A court found him guilty of those charges. He was then released on bail pending sentencing. Just three hours later, he found Bailey and a friend in a parking lot, took a hammer and brutally smashed her. Bailey is now dead.

● (1535)

I have met and spoken to the family. They are sick and tired of hearing the message from the government that its thoughts and prayers are with them and that it is going to keep fighting for them. Quite frankly, that is nonsense. They want action, not more platitudes, not more photo ops and not more promises that there will one day be some sort of bill or law that will fix this crisis. They want action now.

Just yesterday, Halton Region passed a unanimous motion asking the government to act on this crisis. The Liberal member of Parliament from that riding wrote them a letter, and I encourage all members to read it. That letter said that it was not the government, that it brought in laws and changes. Halton Region unanimously passed a motion for action, and they want it now, not a year from now, because they are seeing a massive spike in violent carjackings and home invasions. Canadians are scared. The Liberals can delay this as much as they want, but they will be judged for their record and their failures.

Bill C-75, their so-called bail reform law, is one of the root causes of why we have this problem. Quite frankly, Canadians do not believe that the Liberals can fix what they themselves have broken. It is like an arsonist who burns down a house, and when the house is gone, all of a sudden he puts on his firefighter equipment and says he is there to save the day. The Liberals cannot fix the problems that they created. What is surprising is that they are not even willing to listen to the heartbreaking stories from law enforcement, victim advocacy groups, survivors and families.

I know in my colleague's riding of King—Vaughan, there have been seven shootings in a matter of three weeks. One family member stood beside our leader, the member Battle River—Crowfoot, and I when we made the announcement for our jail not bail act. Abdul Aleem Farooqi, a father, was killed when violent home invaders showed up at his house and put a gun to his child's head. He did absolutely everything right. He did what any father would do. He defended his family but sadly lost his life.

The Liberals are telling us that bail reform is coming at some point in the future. Every single day that goes by, 1,600 violent crimes happen in our country. That is an insane amount. Because of the Liberals' soft-on-crime policies, police chiefs are now telling Canadians to comply, to leave the keys to their vehicles at the front door. That is not an environment for deterring criminals. The Liberals are literally making it easy for criminals to do what they do best, and the criminals know it. They understand the law that the Liber-

als do not understand. Criminals know that if they get caught in the morning, they will be released at lunch, maybe to commit another offence in the evening and be released by breakfast the next morning, over and over again.

The Conservative Party and Conservative caucus have been putting legislation forward to stop the crime. We want to make sure that repeat violent offenders with long rap sheets are put behind bars. Guess how many justice bills the government has put forward in the last 600 days. It is zero. Now the Liberals are showing up and saying they are going to fight crime. That is absolute nonsense. There is only one party in this House that will fight for the rights of victims and law-abiding Canadians, and that is the Conservative Party.

● (1540)

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second bill we put forward in this House was a public safety bill, and I would urge the member opposite to support that bill. It has been informed by law enforcement from across this country. Today, if a father catches a predator preying on their child, has an IP address and takes it to the police, the police cannot lawfully investigate and carry the case forward. This is a real example. Bill C-2 would allow that to happen.

I hope the member will support this bill. I would like to hear if he will, to put an end to child sex offenders.

Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, we stand with victims and their families every step of the way. Unfortunately, the mess the Liberals have created with Bill C-75 and Bill C-5 has caused the chaos we see in our communities today.

The catch-and-release policies and revolving door are things the Liberals created. If we look at the numbers, the previous Conservative government's numbers were at an all-time low. As soon as the Liberals were elected in 2015, what happened? Crime went up, and it continues to go up because they are not going after the root causes of these problems. They cannot be firefighters when they are the arsonists themselves.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will ask my colleague the same question I asked earlier.

Is there any evidence to prove that keeping people behind bars longer reduces crime?

Business of Supply

The member for Edmonton Gateway gave a rather simplistic answer to my question. He said that when someone is behind bars, they cannot commit crimes in the community. That is true, but eventually they will be released and re-enter society. In 1999, the U.S. Attorney General compiled 50 studies on 300,000 inmates. They found there is no link between longer periods of incarceration and the crime rate. Instead, when people spend more time in prison, they learn things. When they get out, they run a greater risk of reoffending.

What is my colleague's response to that?

[English]

Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, I understand this is a huge concern for those in Quebec as well. In Kelowna, the same 15 offenders have committed 1,300 crimes. In Vancouver, the same 40 offenders have committed 6,000 crimes in a single year. There is a direct correlation. I know the member was asking about correlation.

If we lock up the repeat violent offenders who are clogging up our justice system and going out in our communities to terrorize Canadians, we will see crime go down. That is what we are going to do. It is common sense. We need common-sense laws to put repeat violent offenders behind bars. I hope the Bloc will support our bill.

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day in Canada, a woman dies from a violent crime. Sexual assault is up 75% in this country, and 60% of the violence against women is intimate partner violence. I am so proud of the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola for bringing forward a private member's bill to address that crime.

The government has had six months. A woman dies every day. Where is the sense of urgency on the other side of the aisle? The Liberals know they have the support of the Conservatives to repeal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. They could instantly do that with a programming motion, but they have done nothing.

Does the member agree that there is no sense of urgency with the Liberal government?

• (1545)

Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, the government prides itself on being a feminist government, yet its policies are hurting women the most.

Cait Alexander from End Violence Everywhere, who has supported our Conservative approach to stopping crime, was left to die in her home by her ex-partner. Guess what. He was let out on bail with only a condition of \$500. She has had to leave the country. Bailey McCourt was killed by her ex-partner because he got bail.

I could sit here and talk about these stories all day long. The government talks a big game, but when it comes to action, it is missing from it.

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I always feel privileged to represent Nunavummiut on any matter in this House. Today, I will be splitting my time with the member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj.

I speak as the NDP critic for justice. All Canadians want to live in safe communities protected from dangerous offenders, but three-strikes policies, such as those in the United States and the one in the Conservative motion before us today, fail to address the root causes of crime. They are fearmongering, and like other Conservatives I have heard say, we are not living in war zones in Canada.

Let me be clear. The Conservatives' tough-on-crime policies will not work to decrease crime. They are unconstitutional, they would bind judges' discretion and they would not tackle the real causes of crime.

The New Democrats believe the best way for the federal government to ensure safety for Canadians is to invest in housing, schools, health care, and addictions and mental health supports to help prevent crime in the first place. Offenders must receive adequate rehabilitation to prevent recidivism. The New Democrats believe that rehabilitation is the only appropriate avenue for ensuring healthy reintegration into society. Eliminating such opportunities ignores or prevents opportunities for addressing the root causes that most likely resulted in criminal behaviour.

The Conservatives' choice to ignore the rehabilitation of incarcerated people divides people. It isolates people. They pretend rehabilitation is not possible and advocating punishment is not justified. Rehabilitation is not part of the Conservatives' values. Their position is one of grandstanding, with maximum punishment and with no mind toward what happens when offenders begin their re-entry into our communities.

Studies have shown that rehabilitation is the most effective way to prevent crimes from being recommitted. Norway is a great example. Their recidivism rate decreased from as high as 70% in 1992 to the lowest in the world, at 20%, after it started community-based correctional facilities and focused on rehabilitation programs. The United States has one of the highest rates of recidivism: 76% of prisoners are rearrested within five years. In Canada, our recidivism rate was 23% in 2020 and 2021.

The Conservatives, with this motion, are ultimately targeting indigenous and BIPOC communities. It is well reported that the prison population in Canada is mainly made up of indigenous people. They make up more than a quarter of designated "dangerous offenders" but account for only 4% of the population in Canada. According to data, since 2010, the indigenous population in prisons has grown by nearly 44%.

Indigenous people are more likely than non-indigenous people to be labelled as dangerous or maximum-security offenders. Indigenous people are more likely to be involved in use-of-force incidents with prison staff and are more likely to be placed in solitary confinement. Systemic racism in Canada's criminal justice system requires urgent attention, particularly with respect to indigenous people.

The Correctional Investigator of Canada, Dr. Ivan Zinger, described the disproportionate representation of indigenous people in prisons as “nothing short of a national travesty”. Systemic racism in our criminal justice system will only be exacerbated by a three-strikes policy. Policies like the one in the Conservatives' three-strike motion target BIPOC committees and worsen opportunities for reconciliation with indigenous people.

• (1550)

To address justice for indigenous people, the Liberal government must implement the TRC calls for action on justice and the MMIWG calls for justice, as well as the Assembly of First Nations' and the Métis National Council's justice strategies.

Canada's correctional system is based on the principle that the rule of law follows sentenced persons into prison. Imprisonment does not mean total deprivation or absolute forfeiture of rights. The system is fundamentally based on the rehabilitation of offenders, even if some remain incarcerated for the rest of their lives. Again, Canadians want their communities to be safe and to do so, the federal government must adequately fund rehabilitation programs. These programs are key to reducing rates of recidivism. When public policy diminishes transition to release, it increases the likelihood of reoffending.

New Democrats know that building community safety starts with having laws and policies that put the safety and security of Canadians first. This includes proper federal funding to community-based crime prevention programs. It includes investing in indigenous programs that keep indigenous cultures and indigenous languages alive.

New Democrats believe in giving correctional officers the tools they need to do their job safely and effectively. This includes proper support while on the job and the resources to manage the physical and mental stress that comes from it. After years of chronic underfunding by both Liberals and Conservatives, it is no surprise that our correctional officers have to do more with less.

This Conservative motion only serves to fan the flames of fear rather than suggesting effective measures that would contribute to public safety. New Democrats know that real solutions to the challenge of prolific and repeat non-violent offenders are to be found in better mental health and addiction services and in action to reduce poverty and inequality.

New Democrats want to see the Liberals deliver on their promises to provide increased funding for mental health and addiction programming and to enact measures to lift Canadians out of poverty. The NDP will not be supporting this Conservative motion.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made reference to a quote. I want to go right to that quote.

I have heard a couple of what I would classify as weird comments from Conservatives today. The first one I heard was when the MP for Cariboo—Prince George made this statement: “in my riding, 98% of the crime is created by five or six prolific offenders. When they are in jail, the crime rate goes down.” Then, as the member made reference, there was a quote by the member for Ox-

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ford that we are “now living in a war zone in Canada.” How ridiculous a comment that is to make.

This is a type of behaviour that we often see from the Conservative Party. They take these extreme positions. I would argue that they are using the issue of crime and safety in our communities—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. I do have to give time for the member to respond.

• (1555)

Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, I think that showcases why it is important to have more parties in the House than just two.

As an NDP member, I miss many of my colleagues. We have lost opportunities for more intellectual conversations and for more conversations about what great solutions we need to see. Due to the election, we are seeing more of these extremist conversations in the House, even though it was still like that in the last Parliament. We need to start making sure that we give facts back to Canada. I had the wonderful opportunity this summer to travel all over Canada, and I did not see war zones in Canada.

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as an aboriginal, I face the same issues that the member is talking about in my own community and in a lot of different first nations communities all across Canada. Really, what we are talking about is a long-term commitment to doing something better. I presume the hon. member is talking about a stopgap measure in the meantime.

“In the meantime” means toddlers getting raped in their beds during a home invasion. We have a criminal in Winnipeg who is suing store owners for loss of income because he got beaten up. We have a homeowner being charged with assault because he tried to defend his home and family.

If this is a stopgap measure, then what does the member recommend we do in the short term to stop the violence and the rape and the assault?

Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji, first of all, we need to stop over-dramatizing what is going on in Canada and creating more fear among Canadians.

I think that when there are crimes being committed, as I said in my speech, disproportionately, members are indigenous peoples. I highlight that because of what has happened in the past, such as the Conservatives making cuts to important programs like the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Those cuts prevented people from having their healing completed. These are important ways to make sure that we do have a better society. Let us focus on trauma-informed services. Let us focus on healing and—

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[Translation]

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

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her speech, which was eloquent. I heard what she said about environmental factors that can partly explain crime, such as overcrowded housing and problems related to poverty.

My question for my colleague is this: Why does she think rehabilitation is a better way to reduce the crime rate than lengthy prison sentences?

[English]

Lori Idlout: Uqagtittiji, rehabilitation can help because it helps people to learn new coping skills. It helps people to learn ways to deal with stress, and it helps to reconnect them with people who might be important in their communities. This includes having action plans to make sure that they have the skills they need to be reintegrated into society.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, crime is up. Statistics show this to be true, in both Quebec and Canada. Between 2015 and 2024, there was a 47% increase in violent crimes in Quebec and a 63% increase in Canada. Between 2015 and 2024, there was a 138% increase in sexual assaults in Quebec.

If we look at the figures per 100,000 inhabitants, they are slightly lower, but still, we see that crime is on the rise and that we have reason to be concerned. We have good reason to discuss the best ways to reduce crime. Therefore, the question is this: How do we respond to the rise in crime?

We have to ask ourselves what causes crime. This is a complex question, one that has no definitive or final answer. Based on what I observed as a legal aid lawyer in the Gaspé region and from my interactions with people accused of crimes, I tend to think that environmental factors partly explain criminality. We cannot ignore people's individual responsibility, of course, but environmental factors do play a role in criminality.

Perhaps an even more pertinent question is what enables people to leave crime behind. How can we ensure that someone who commits a crime or is a repeat offender can leave crime behind and get back on the path to a life without crime, a life that is more conducive to public safety and to that individual's personal development?

Should we impose harsher penalties? That is what the Conservatives are proposing. Criminals should be incarcerated for longer periods of time, and, in their opinion, this would reduce the crime rate. Personally, I believe we need to focus on rehabilitation. What I learned during my 10 years working in legal aid, dealing with all kinds of people in very difficult situations, is that we need to give people hope. We need to give them a way out.

Yes, we must give second chances and believe people have the ability to improve themselves and overcome their demons to lead a more acceptable life in society. With their motion, the Conserva-

tives are telling us we should instead adopt a “three strikes” law. The question I asked earlier remains the same. Does the “three strikes” approach work?

The studies I have read say that this has no impact. I will cite these studies again. The U.S. Attorney General compiled 50 studies involving 300,000 prisoners. Comparisons were made between different parts of the U.S. Some jurisdictions had legislation whereby, after three offences, criminals end up in prison for much longer, whereas others had no such legislation. This law was found not to have any impact. No study could prove that longer or shorter prison sentences reduce recidivism.

It was also noted that when someone is put in prison, they are surrounded by criminals. There are things that are discussed between criminals. It is often said that prison is crime school. Studies seem to indicate that the longer the sentence, the greater the risk of reoffending because people who spend 10 years in prison are not fit to return to society. They spent far too long surrounded by criminals.

We are a long way from knowing whether this idea will reduce crime. However, I appreciate that we are told that this is common sense, that it is basic common sense, that if we put somebody in prison they will not commit a crime. Still, I believe that a more informed approach is needed because simply putting somebody in prison does not make them disappear forever. This person will come back to society. The question is, what state will they come back in?

The idea behind rehabilitation is to give people a purpose. It means telling them that they have committed a crime for reasons that are their own and that they are responsible for their actions but that they will receive support. They are offered therapies and given a purpose in life, because life outside crime is ultimately much more comfortable and allows a person to truly set themselves free. In my view, this is what we need to do.

● (1600)

We can still look at what the Conservatives are proposing to change. They are saying that when a person has committed three serious offences, they will be imprisoned for a minimum of 10 years. As a former legal aid lawyer, I can say that what I really appreciated in a court of law was that no shortcuts were taken and that every case was analyzed individually because every case is different. When the government imposes minimum sentences, it takes away the justice system's ability to impose a sentence that truly fits the crime. Minimum sentences may appeal to a certain electorate who may legitimately feel unsafe, but by taking such shortcuts, we risk committing injustices in the fight against crime. It is far from certain that the Conservatives' proposal will have any impact whatsoever.

I would still like to explain that there are many provisions in the Criminal Code. What the Conservatives are proposing is to tinker with a Criminal Code that already sets out many principles that are perfectly adequate. The Conservatives are calling for 10-year minimum sentences for three serious offences. Let us look at the main principles for determining sentencing in section 718 of the Criminal Code. We will see that the Criminal Code already has everything a judge needs to impose harsher sentences when needed.

Section 718 of the Criminal Code states the following:

The fundamental purpose of sentencing is to protect society and to contribute, along with crime prevention initiatives, to respect for the law and the maintenance of a just, peaceful and safe society by imposing just sanctions that have one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) to denounce unlawful conduct and the harm done to victims or to the community that is caused by unlawful conduct;
- (b) to deter the offender

This objective is already well established in the Criminal Code.

- (c) to separate offenders from society, where necessary;

That is entirely possible.

- (d) to assist in rehabilitating offenders;

I do not think this goal should be overlooked, given that the offender will eventually regain their freedom.

- (e) to provide reparations for harm done to victims or to the community; and
- (f) to promote a sense of responsibility in offenders

Another fundamental principle that is already in our body of legislation, specifically in Criminal Code section 718.1, states:

A sentence must be proportionate to the gravity of the offence and the degree of responsibility of the offender.

The judge already has the flexibility needed to impose a more serious sentence when the crime is more serious.

Paragraph 718.2(a) sets out the sentencing principles. It says that “a sentence should be increased or reduced to account for any relevant aggravating or mitigating circumstances”, so criminal history is already taken into account. During sentencing, after an offender has been found guilty, the judge looks at their record. If they have already committed serious offences, the Crown prosecutor will certainly argue that, and the judge will take it into account. I think that mandating a given sentence whenever someone commits a third offence is not the way to go. I do not think this kind of automatic sentencing serves the justice system.

A number of factors can already be considered to be aggravating circumstances, for example:

evidence that the offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion [or] sex

All of this is already taken into consideration by our justice system. There are also the following circumstances:

evidence that the offender, in committing the offence, abused [among others] the offender's intimate partner

There was already a question on that earlier.

evidence that the offender, in committing the offence, abused a person under the age of eighteen years,

Then there is the following situation:

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evidence that the offence had a significant impact on the victim

There is also the circumstance where the offender is already a member of a criminal organization.

We can see that the Criminal Code already sets limits and allows judges to make informed decisions. The Bloc Québécois will be voting against the Conservatives' motion. Not only are we far from certain it will achieve anything, we believe it undermines a system that, all things considered, is well balanced.

● (1605)

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank my colleague from the Bloc Québécois. It seems like we wrote our comments at the same time, at the same place, in the same way.

I agree with my colleague on several points, including oversimplification, which is what this motion does. The term “common sense” is being used, but people have to be very careful. There is common sense, and there is oversimplification. It was very oversimplified. Let us look at some more specific examples.

In studying the motion, I came to the same conclusion as my colleague on the rules that they want to remove. They want to take away judges' discretion with respect to repeat offenders.

My question is as follows. Is this not something that we really should not be taking away from our judges? I think someone else already said it, but do we—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to give the member enough time to respond.

The member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj.

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, I agree that giving judges some discretion and allowing the justice system to identify the most appropriate solution on a case-by-case basis, according to the criteria set out in the Criminal Code and therefore based on the legislator's intent, is the right way to ensure that our justice system works properly. I will give an example. I once represented a woman who had a child to raise and who was charged with fraud for a significant amount of money. We were able to negotiate a stay. Instead of going to jail, my client was able to continue working while complying with a curfew. She could contribute to society while being there for her son. I think that is the way to get her back on the right track.

● (1610)

[English]

William Stevenson (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not a lawyer, but I am the member for Yellowhead, and I do have a jail in my riding. I have met with the guards a couple of times, and I have been told a lot of the problems they have. Specifically, because my area is relatively remote, they have a problem getting the people to help the prisoners improve in their lifestyles and that sort of thing. The prison does not have the resources to get the people back into society.

Now, one of the things the member said is that automatic penalties are bad. What about automatically being released after one-third of their sentence? Part of the problem is their getting back into society too quickly.

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[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, once a person has served part of their sentence, a decision is made by the Parole Board of Canada. As far as I know, it is not automatic. It depends on how the person behaves.

We could potentially discuss improvements we could make, because it is true that we see articles in the media and do not understand why the person was released.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his excellent speech.

The Conservative motion copies a model imported from the United States, which has proven that it does not work. My colleague started explaining the findings of a major study by the U.S. attorney general, but he did not have time to tell us exactly what those findings were.

Alexis Deschênes: Mr. Speaker, that study, which was conducted by the U.S. attorney general in 1999, came to two conclusions. First, after looking into the history of 300,000 prisoners, some of whom came from places where there was a “three strikes and you go to jail for a long time” rule, and others from places where there was no such rule, they realized that there was no effect on the recidivism rate.

However, what they observed was that, in some places, the longer the sentence, the higher the risk of reoffending. They found a correlation. Once we accept the fact that people who commit crimes are still people, that we cannot get rid of them and that we have to work on them, rehabilitation becomes the obvious option.

[English]

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for King—Vaughan.

It is a privilege to rise, as always, on behalf of the resilient residents of Oshawa.

I am not exaggerating, despite what the members across the way think, when I say that residents in my community are scared. They are worried about walking down their own streets, sending their children to school or living in their own homes. They tell me every day that they feel less safe in our community than they did just a few years ago.

Unfortunately, the data backs them up. Since this fourth-term Liberal government was elected to office in 2015, violent crime has skyrocketed in this country. Total violent crime is up nearly 50%. Homicides are up 28%, and gang-related homicides alone are up a staggering 78%. Sexual assaults, one of the most devastating crimes for victims, are up 75%, and we know that 90% of those victims are women. Violent firearms offences, the crimes involving the use, pointing or discharge of a gun, are up 116%, and they have increased nine years in a row. Extortion is up a whopping 357%, and theft has surged by almost 46%. Trafficking in persons is up by more than 83% and sexual violations against children, perhaps the most heartbreaking statistic of all, have more than doubled, up 119%. Even crimes like kidnapping, harassment and forcible confinement are up.

This does not sound like exaggeration. Canadians are seeing the evidence with their own eyes, and it is no wonder they feel unsafe. Behind every single one of these numbers is a victim, a family and often an entire community that has been shattered. The statistics confirm what Canadians already know.

Since 2015, female victimization by intimate partner violence has risen nearly 19%. Since 2019, when the Liberals passed Bill C-75, the number of female victims of intimate partner violence has risen by another 13.5%. That means there are tens of thousands more women who have suffered abuse, even as the government claims its legislation was supposed to protect them.

Advocates are sounding the alarm as well. Last week, I met Cait Alexander, who was left to die by her ex-partner. He was out on \$500 bail, by the way. Out he went, but he then left someone for dead. Cait Alexander, the founder of End Violence Everywhere, put it powerfully when she said that Canada has become a graveyard of preventable deaths, with innocent women and children paying the price while begging for reform, begging for safety. She said that we point fingers at the U.S. while our own citizens bleed or are forced to leave simply to stay alive. Cait has even asked the Minister of Justice to call her personally and tell her to her face that Canada is not the Wild West.

The crisis is not just out there somewhere in Canada, it is here. It is in my community, in Oshawa and in the Durham region. Krista MacNeil, the executive director of Victim Services of Durham Region, recently shared devastating numbers with me. In 2024, her team provided direct support for nearly 3,000 victims of intimate partner violence in Durham region, a 33% increase from the year prior. This year, they are already on track to reach 3,700 cases, another 26% increase.

Due to how cases are recorded, the true number of incidents last year would have been closer to 4,029, 80% of those survivors are women and girls. Still, femicide is not even recognized as a distinct crime in our criminal code. The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability reminds us that two out of every three women in Canada will experience violence in their lifetime, and that a woman is killed every 48 hours in this country, usually by a man close to her.

Krista told me that the violence is getting worse, not better. She reports a rise in intimate partner violence and femicides, an increase in the brutality and the severity of attacks, and more cases involving younger individuals, including teens in dating relationships.

● (1615)

She also warns that our justice system is failing survivors, that femicide is ignored in the Criminal Code, that survivors are left in the dark about offender release and that bail notifications, when they do happen, are not always trauma-informed; in fact they rarely are, which leaves women and families in even greater danger.

These are not just statistics; they are my neighbours. They are families in Oshawa. They are real people falling through the cracks of a broken system, a system that has been broken by the Liberal government, which claims we now can trust it to fix it someday, maybe, when it gets around to it.

How did we get here? We got here because of deliberate choices made by the Liberal government. We all know that in 2019, the Liberals passed Bill C-75, which introduced what they call the “principle of restraint” for bail, requiring judges to give primary consideration to releasing offenders at the earliest reasonable opportunity and under the least onerous conditions. In other words, regardless of their criminal record and regardless of their history, the starting point is to let someone out and to let them out quickly.

In 2022, the government doubled down and passed Bill C-5. This law repealed mandatory prison sentences for a long list of serious offences: using firearms in commission of an offence, possessing a prohibited weapon with ammunition, weapons trafficking, importing or exporting guns illegally, robbery with a firearm, extortion with a firearm, and even discharging a firearm with intent. The Liberals reduced mandatory prison sentences for these.

The Liberals claim to care about gun crime, but their actions expose the truth. Instead of going after violent criminals, they come after people like me, a proud RPAL holder, and other law-abiding firearm owners who follow every rule and every regulation. Meanwhile, the thugs pulling the triggers on our streets are being handed free passes. The government ripped out mandatory prison sentences for the worst gun offenders, the ones who use weapons to threaten, to maim or to kill. They sided with criminals over victims again. The Liberal government has put politics ahead of public safety.

The Liberals also opened the door to house arrest for criminals convicted of crimes like sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, arson and motor vehicle theft. Yes, under the Liberal government, someone convicted of a sexual assault can serve their sentence at home, perhaps even next door to their victim. The consequences are clear: Violent crime has surged 50%, women and children are more at risk than ever, police officers are stretched beyond capacity and repeat offenders are emboldened because they know there are no real consequences.

Canadians are asking themselves a very simple question: Whom does the government really stand with, the victims of crime or the criminals who repeatedly terrorize them? That is why Conservatives have put forth the common-sense motion today. It is based on a simple principle: three strikes and they are out. If someone is convicted of three serious offences, they would no longer be eligible for bail, probation, parole or house arrest. They would need to go to jail, and they would stay there for 10 years. There would be no bail, no probation, no parole and no house arrest. It would be three strikes and they are out.

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The motion has three major benefits. First, it would keep violent repeat offenders off the streets, protecting law-abiding families and communities, women and children. Second, it would deter crime. Criminals will know that if they commit serious crimes again and again, they would face real consequences. Third, it would restore confidence in our justice system, confidence that has been badly shaken under the current government. I have heard some police officers in my community in my hometown of Oshawa call it the “injustice system”.

Canadians across the country deserve better than the system that puts repeat offenders back on the street within hours of their arrest. They deserve a government that prioritizes the safety of women, seniors, children and families over the rights of violent criminals. They deserve a government that takes crime seriously. The motion is a chance to correct course. It is a chance to put victims before criminals, to put public safety before politics and to put common sense back into our justice system.

I urge every member of the House to stand with victims, to stand with families and to stand with the residents of Oshawa and communities right across this country. Three strikes and they are out; that is what Canadians are asking for, and that is what Conservatives will deliver.

● (1620)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that every member of the House can agree with the member opposite that we stand with victims, and no member of the House wants the continuation of victimization of women and other people in our country. There was a situation in my riding where a young woman was murdered by her partner. I stand with her family, and I just want to send another shout-out to them right now.

However, the policy that the opposition leader put forward today has been shown, in every single city in which it has been implemented, to be a failed policy. Not only did it increase crimes, but it did not even address the issue of crimes. The Conservatives have been talking for the last two days about crimes. They listed so many members of their communities who have been victims of crimes, yet they are bringing forward a policy that would not bring—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I apologize, but I do have to give time for the member to respond.

The hon. member for Oshawa has the floor.

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• (1625)

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, it sort of makes me ponder why we are where we are now. We are in the position where we have to have motions like the one before us because repeat violent offenders keep hurting folks in our community. The truth is that we have had six months of the current government, and it could have ended thousands of deaths, rapes and abuses of children if it had repealed Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. That would instantly have made a difference.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague demonstrated, the Conservative proposal we are debating is literally in direct opposition to what we are promoting, particularly in Quebec, by focusing on rehabilitation. What is being proposed does not involve restorative justice; quite the contrary.

I would like to know what my hon. colleague thinks about the importance of rehabilitation and restorative justice, when it comes to youth criminal justice, for example.

[English]

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, I am a pretty reasonable person. I believe that folks have an opportunity for redemption. I believe in rehabilitation. I think and believe it can happen, but we are not talking about folks who commit a crime for the first time, who have done something and can get help. We are talking about folks who have repeatedly, which means over and over again, in case the other side is not aware, committed violent crimes. How are they going to learn if they do not understand that there are consequences and that it is cause and effect?

Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will bring forward a question and a comment.

My comment is that, in 2024, I was part of the status of women committee, and Cait Alexander, a very vibrant and strong woman, came forward to tell her story. Unfortunately the Liberals decided to shut her down. She did not have the opportunity to explain why she felt the law that we want to bring forward would help protect women from violence.

I would like to ask this: What can we do to ensure that the Liberal government does not shut us down again?

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question, and honestly I do not know whether I have the exactly right answer, because the government has proven, since its beginning, that women will always be shut down. We have seen it over and over again. The Liberals do not care about women. They claim to care about women, but they are not doing the things they need to do to protect women or to listen to them, and Cait Alexander is a good example of that. She was shut down in committee. How horrifying that was for a woman who was left for dead by her ex-partner and wanted to speak about it. What do Liberals do? They say, “No, thank you, we don't want to hear your voice.” It is shameful.

Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see you in the chair again; welcome back.

Communities across York Region are facing a surge in violent crime, leaving my constituents terrified for their safety. The crime statistics in York Region are staggering and are an example of the

trend that has occurred throughout all of Canada. Here are the stats from a York Region police report. From 2020 to 2024, failures to appear in court were up 182%. Bail violations and breaches were up 30%. Home invasions increased 82%. Residential break-and-enters were up 50%. Carjackings soared a staggering 305%. Theft of motor vehicles rose 127%. Overall, crime in York Region is up 58%.

These numbers are more than statistics. I rise on today's “three strikes and you're out” law after my community has recently been devastated by the Liberals' soft-on-crime policy. In the past three weeks, the residents of Vaughan have experienced seven shootings. I met with my constituents in King—Vaughan who presented a letter signed by hundreds of their neighbours concerned by the devastating increase in violence happening within the riding.

They expressed their outrage after the senseless murder of Abdul Aleem Farooqi. He was a husband and a father of four, described by his family as a hero after he was murdered in front of his children during a violent home invasion. No family should ever endure this kind of tragedy, yet in Canada today, these stories have become far too common.

I will share with the House the words of my constituents directly, as their pleading deserves to be heard in the chamber. The note states, “We write to you not only as your constituents, but as terrified families, parents and neighbours. Our community is reeling from the tragic and senseless murder of a father of four, an unthinkable loss that has left a family destroyed and a neighbourhood traumatized. But this was not a one-off event. It is the devastating peak of a violent wave overtaking everyone in King—Vaughan. Our homes are being broken into repeatedly, shamelessly, without fear of consequence. Our seniors are being robbed in broad daylight. Our streets are no longer safe for our children. This is not a blip. This is a crisis. And this is not the Canada we knew.”

They go on to outline what they need. Number one was real protection, to start at home. Number two was to support law enforcement and coordinate, fund and prioritize Canadian safety. What Conservatives are putting forward today would address exactly what my constituents stated as the greatest need.

Number three was that there needs to be no more second chances for criminals. A person who invades someone's home should never walk the streets again. There is no such thing as a non-violent break-in, and the very act of entering someone's sanctuary uninvited is an act of psychological and physical warfare. We require victim-first policies; the rights of criminals must never come before the rights of law-abiding Canadians. We need real laws with real consequences.

We need to stop putting Canadians last in our country and start protecting the people who live here, work here and pay taxes here.

● (1630)

This is not about politics; this is about the basic human right to safety in our own homes, on our streets and in our daily lives. We are grieving. We are angry. We are done waiting. On behalf of my community, I rise on this motion to demand action from the government because if we are not safe in our own homes, then nothing else matters.

The violence spans across the many communities in my riding. Yesterday, police arrested two of three men charged in two armed home invasions who were already out on bail. I met with Chief Jim MacSween of York Regional Police just last week, when he reported that over 1,300 individuals in our region are out on bail. I will repeat that. York region has a population of 1.2 million individuals, and 1,300 are out on bail. As he stated plainly in our meeting, “Bail needs to be reformed”.

These repeat offenders are free on our streets while families in our communities continue to live in fear, and this is not unique to King—Vaughan. Across Canada, various other communities are seeing the same patterns of violence while being told that their safety is secondary to the so-called rights of these ruthless criminals. We hear about stabbings, shootings and extortion on a daily basis in the House and in our communities.

If the government took meaningful action on bail reform, as the Prime Minister has promised, and if repeat violent offenders faced real consequences like the ones we are suggesting with this “three strikes and you’re out” law instead of the Liberal revolving-door system on bail, Abdul Aleem Farooqi might still be alive today. Kleinburg families might not have to endure these home invasions. This motion is not only one of necessity but one of urgency.

After 10 years of the Liberal government, Canadians have never been so at risk. The government had the chance to act. The Prime Minister himself promised bail reform, but instead of delivering reform that Canadians so desperately needed, he walked away for the summer and returned to the House with nothing. Canadians were promised safety; instead, they received another Liberal Prime Minister who is more concerned with criminals than the victims they terrorize, empty words with no actions and a justice system that continues to let violent offenders run rampant on our streets.

The Liberal government has weakened our justice system at every turn. With Bill C-5, it repealed mandatory jail time for serious gun crime. With Bill C-75, it let repeat violent offenders right back onto our streets with devastating consequences for families. Families in King—Vaughan and across the country have already paid the ultimate price for the government’s inaction. Canadians are living in fear while repeat violent offenders roam free. This is a question of basic safety, justice and common sense.

Canadians deserve a government that keeps its promise and protects its citizens. They deserve laws, like this, that will hold repeat violent offenders accountable, not a revolving-door system that allows them back on our streets. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their own homes, and constituents in King—Vaughan and countless Canadians across this country are demanding action. We have all

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been elected to represent Canadians and provide them with the safety they deserve. The time for action is now. No more empty promises from the same Liberal government.

● (1635)

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, but I heard her say several times that, sadly, gun violence and the rise in crime are really a result of Bill C-75.

Is her assessment based on any studies, or is it as simplistic as what we heard from her colleague earlier? Is she aware of any analyses that might show that these types of issues could also be related to other social or health-related determinants, mental health or access to housing?

[English]

Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, I have proof right here from citizens of my community who are tired of failed Liberal government policy. What is it that the government does not understand? Thirteen hundred people in my community are out on bail and ready to commit another crime.

We need to stop this to protect everyone.

[Translation]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague’s speech, and I feel her community’s pain. It has gone through very difficult times. However, I cannot help but think that the solution before us today is seen or interpreted as a silver bullet. It is as though agreeing to the “three strikes” law will solve everything. We also have to think about the fact that, after serving their sentence, the individual comes home, comes back to the neighbourhood, comes back to the community. They do not just go away, and that worries us.

I want to talk to my colleague about a very specific issue. I am very concerned about femicide, about women who are murdered by their spouse or a loved one. The Bloc Québécois has proposed that the Jordan ruling not apply in cases involving sex offences, kidnappings or sexually motivated murders. Does my colleague agree that we need better guidelines for the Jordan ruling?

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● (1640)

[English]

Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, that was one of Cait Alexander's concerns when she came to committee. She made that exact point about the Jordan law. Her partner, who brutally left her for dead, got off because of the Jordan law, and it was not the first time.

We need to make sure that these cases are swiftly brought to the attention of the judges and that these criminals and these scumbuckets are left to stay and rot in jail.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that a lot of the time we think of these issues as big-city problems. In fact, even in the very small communities that I represent, I often get reports about this. Burnout is one thing I often hear about from the police officers who are dealing with this on a regular basis. Resources are getting eaten up on a regular basis. They are frustrated, they want to make a difference in their communities, and these policies are making them feel like they are on a hamster wheel.

I wonder if my colleague might be also hearing about these frustrations in the areas she represents.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, I recently did a ride-along with a police officer, and these are comments that police officers have shared with me: Criminals are laughing at us. They are not even resisting arrest. Why? It is because they know that weak laws created by a weak Liberal government are going to allow them to get out. Why would they care?

We need to ensure that police officers have the tools and the laws to protect the citizens of this country. That is not going to happen if they do not vote with us on this bail reform.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Oxford, this member's seatmate, said, "We are now living in a war zone in Canada." That is the kind of extreme statement we are hearing from Conservatives.

Does the member agree with her colleague?

Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, my constituents are saying to me that they are going to go to bed with a loaded gun, in case someone comes in to hurt their family, like that criminal who pointed a gun at a four-year-old whose father paid the most courageous price by defending her with his life. I would like the member to look at this family and explain to them why he did not do the right thing.

The people in my community are ready to defend their families, and they will do it at any cost.

[Translation]

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by stating that I am will be sharing my time with the member for Châteauguay—Les Jardins-de-Napierville

I am pleased to rise in the House today to discuss the motion moved by the member for Battle River—Crowfoot about bail. This is an important opportunity to reaffirm our government's commitment to public safety and the integrity of our criminal justice system while ensuring that our bail laws strike the right balance be-

tween protecting our communities and respecting the rights guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Bail is the legal mechanism by which individuals charged with a criminal offence can be released pending trial. It is a fundamental part of our justice system that reflects the importance of the presumption of innocence and the right not to be denied reasonable bail without valid grounds, as provided for in section 11(e) of the Charter.

Canadian bail laws aim to ensure that accused persons appear in court when required, that public safety is protected, and that confidence in the administration of justice is upheld. These principles, known as primary, secondary, and tertiary grounds, guide judicial decisions relating to the detention or release of an accused person.

Bail is therefore not just a legal concept. It reflects our democratic values here in Canada. It ensures that people are not unnecessarily detained before their trial, while providing courts with the tools they need to manage any risks to the public. When there are concerns that an accused person may reoffend or pose a threat to victims or the public, courts can impose strict conditions or deny bail.

At the same time, our bail system must take into account the reality of marginalized communities, such as indigenous peoples and vulnerable and under-represented populations, in pre-trial detention. That is why our laws require police and the courts to consider the unique circumstances of these individuals when making bail decisions.

The government has taken practical measures to modernize and improve the bail system. In 2019, Parliament passed former Bill C-75, which introduced the most significant bail reforms in decades. Thanks to these reforms, the circumstances of indigenous accused and accused from vulnerable populations are taken into account by the courts when assessing risk. These reforms also strengthened protection for victims of domestic violence by adding additional reverse onus provisions in such situations.

Recent reforms introduced by former Bill C-48, which received royal assent in December 2023, strengthened Canada's bail system by expanding the use of reverse onus provisions and requiring the accused to demonstrate why they should be free. These changes mainly target violent repeat offenders, particularly those who have been charged with offences involving firearms, knives, bear spray or other weapons.

Bill C-48 also expanded the reverse onus provisions to cases of domestic violence and required the courts to specifically consider the accused's history of violence and the safety of the community when making decisions regarding bail.

Our government developed these reforms in close collaboration with the provinces, territories and law enforcement agencies. More recently, in response to concerns regarding violent recidivism, the government worked closely with the provinces and territories to look at other possible improvements. Our government is committed to ensuring that our bail laws work as intended across Canada and that they effectively respond to new challenges. Public safety remains our government's top priority.

• (1645)

We have just spent a couple of days talking about safety. This fall, we will be introducing a bill that will continue to address these issues. The Criminal Code already contains robust provisions for certain serious offences, including those involving firearms or organized crime. Reverse onus provisions apply, requiring each accused to show why they should be free.

Courts can also impose conditions to protect victims and the public. The government also recognizes that detention cannot guarantee public safety. That is why our government is investing in community justice centres, drug treatment courts and other initiatives that tackle the root causes of crime, such as mental health and substance use. These integrated approaches promote rehabilitation, reduce recidivism and improve community well-being.

People in Canada want a fair, effective and reliable justice system. They want to know that dangerous individuals will be properly dealt with and that our laws reflect the crime happening in our communities. Canadians also want a system that respects the Charter. That is exactly what the government is doing by strengthening legal tools, supporting law enforcement and investing in prevention as well as bail system reforms that will protect everyone in Canada while upholding our democratic values.

• (1650)

[English]

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the member for London West gave a speech entirely focused on abstracts. On this side of the House, we are concerned with concrete occurrences. My wife and I have been totally under siege with terrible emotions concerning what happened in Welland, with the rape of a toddler. I tear up to think about it. Let us make things concrete.

Would the member agree with me that the fact that the accused in that case got out early and reoffended so swiftly brings the administration of justice in this country under disrepute? I honestly want to know how long she thinks such a person should have spent in jail.

[Translation]

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's question.

As I mentioned earlier, I sympathize with all victims across Canada. I would like to finish the thought I started earlier. Anytime a government has implemented a bill like the one proposed by the

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opposition today, the law was ineffective. Instead, there was a 10% to 12% increase in crime. I do not understand why the Conservatives want to propose legislation that does not benefit our communities. There are victims in every one of our communities, and we are here to represent them.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the Bloc Québécois is against the Conservative motion, because these are rather populist positions imported directly from the United States that have already been shown to be ineffective. My colleague talked about that. Personally, I have not seen any studies proving that the Conservatives' proposal would have any positive effect on the fight against crime.

I would like to know if my colleague has any information or scientific studies that might show that the Conservatives' proposal would have a positive impact, because for now, we are seeing absolutely nothing.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question from my colleague. It is very thoughtful.

That is what I have been trying to say: This policy did not work in the United States. The research shows that instead of bringing about the desired change, this policy increased the crime rate. Instead of proposing such legislation, the Conservatives should support the bills the government is already proposing in the House. We have already introduced Bill C-2, and we are getting ready to introduce a bill that will fight crime in our country.

As I already said, there are victims of crime in all of our communities. We were elected and have the mandate to solve this problem. However, the type of legislation being proposed today does not work. In several U.S. cites, it was actually associated with an increase in crime. This U.S. policy will not work in Canada.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend and congratulate the member on her speech and her excellent French. Speaking of policies that do not work, these people have been governing Canada for 10 years now.

In 10 years, what have they done about crime in Canada? Violent crime is up 55%, gun crime is up 130% and extortion is up 330%. Is Canada really doing so well?

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, U.S. policies will never work in Canada. Also, if I may, I would like to remind him that I am a francophone. There is no need to thank me for speaking French, because I am a francophone.

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The point I was trying to make is that importing U.S. policies to Canada has never worked and will never work. The proof is that my colleague's leader was not elected as the head of the Government of Canada.

Canadians have asked us to make sure that we address these issues. We have bills that we are in the process of implementing, and it would be great if my colleague could support them.

• (1655)

[English]

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents have indicated to me, time and time again, at the doorstep and this summer, that they really want political parties to work together.

We know that the federal government plays a role in this important question. We also know that parole boards and provincial courts are important. Our Prime Minister has committed to bringing important legislation forward this fall.

Will the Conservatives work with us—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I have to give the last 10 to 15 seconds to the member for London West, very briefly.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's question, and I welcome her to the House as a new member.

Our Prime Minister has been very serious in addressing this issue. We have a public safety minister, we have a justice minister and we have a secretary of state who is in charge of combatting crime. This government is serious about crime, and we are going to do it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the ordinary time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, Finance; the hon. member for Newmarket—Aurora, Finance; the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Housing.

[Translation]

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot for moving this motion. Public safety is definitely an issue that all people in Canada care deeply about, and it is something that I personally have cared deeply about for many, many years. I have been advocating for better gun control in Canada for over 15 years now. The main objective of my personal commitment is keeping all Canadians safe. Having the opportunity to rise in the House today for the first time to debate a motion on this subject is truly an extraordinary opportunity for me.

I know that everyone deserves to feel safe in their home and in their community. There is nothing more difficult than going through every day with a constant feeling of anxiety. I personally felt that way for many years after what I experienced at École Polytechnique. I am aware that people are feeling increasingly unsafe in some places in Canada and that we need to take action.

It is this shared concern about public safety that makes Canadians particularly alert to the threats posed by gangs, gun violence

and organized crime. Recent headlines and certain high-profile incidents remind us of the challenges posed by organized crime. Criminal groups continue to adapt, exploit new technologies and increase their influence. We are very concerned, particularly for young people who get carried away by advertisements on Facebook or Instagram and get pulled into the criminal world almost without realizing it. Illegal firearms are also being smuggled across our borders and networks of extortionists are targeting families and small businesses. These are very serious threats that demand serious answers.

Although the federal government enacts the laws governing bail, it is important to remember that the provinces and territories are responsible for administering the system on the ground. This includes conducting bail hearings, enforcing bail conditions, and managing remand centres. These responsibilities put provinces and territories on the front lines of our collective effort to protect communities from violent repeat offenders, gang-related activity, and gun crime. The provinces and territories are not playing a supporting role. Rather, their role is essential to ensuring that the bail system effectively responds to the threats posed by organized crime and serious violence.

Any suggestion that only the federal government or only one level of government is responsible for this issue shows contempt for the entire justice system—ours, at the federal level, but also that of the provinces and municipalities. It is therefore important that we resume our dialogue with a view to achieving our common goal of public safety. The government must work closely with the provinces and territories, as we are currently doing, to strengthen our collective response to violent crime and organized crime networks. The federal government is also working to provide law enforcement with new and more effective tools to disrupt gang activity, stop illegal firearms trafficking, and hold violent offenders accountable for their actions.

Over the last few years, the federal government has taken significant steps to reform bail laws. In 2023, the former Bill C-48 expanded provisions related to the reverse onus for violent repeat offenders and required courts to explicitly consider public safety when making bail decisions. This former bill also added new firearms offences to the list of offences covered by the reverse onus provisions, including unlawful possession of a loaded prohibited or restricted firearm, breaking and entering for the purpose of stealing a firearm, robbery with the intent to steal a firearm and the manufacturing of an automatic firearm.

The federal government also plans to make it more difficult for individuals to get bail if they have been charged with violent car theft, break-ins and certain offences related to human trafficking and smuggling. I would like to emphasize that while reforming the law is important, it is not enough on its own to address public safety concerns.

• (1700)

The federal government has invested over \$920 million to combat gun smuggling at the border, build law enforcement capacity and work with the provinces, territories, municipalities and indigenous communities to develop gun and gang violence prevention and intervention initiatives.

I will pause here for a moment to remind all my colleagues that I represent the riding of Châteauguay—Les Jardins-de-Napierville. Everyone in the region is very aware of the major problem we have with firearms trafficking, unfortunately. It is therefore very important to me, as the member for this riding, that we think about strengthening border measures related to this issue.

With that in mind, we have not only strengthened measures at the border, but also provided over \$214 million to the gun and gang violence action fund. We have also invested \$250 million in the building safer communities fund to support local and indigenous initiatives, and we have provided \$312 million to enhance Canada's firearm control framework. I am very pleased about that, and we will continue to move in that direction to support gun control.

These investments are paying off. Thanks to new tools and technologies, as well as the hard work of the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency, the CBSA, we are seeing an increase in firearms seizures and arrests at our borders. The federal government is also planning to recruit 1,000 more RCMP officers to combat drug trafficking, human trafficking, foreign interference, cyber-crime, and organized crime gangs that steal cars. The federal government also plans to train 1,000 new CBSA officers to combat drug trafficking, particularly fentanyl and its precursors, as well as illegal firearms, and to prevent gangs from stealing cars and smuggling them out of the country. Lastly, the federal government is working to add scanners, drones and detector dog teams to better target suspicious shipments.

As we know, crime is not just a matter of statistics. It also has a profound impact on people. Communities affected by gun violence and organized crime deal with trauma that can take generations to heal. Individuals also suffer in the same way. I could go on at length about that. That is why prevention must be the core of any long-term strategy. Prevention means investing in youth and supporting programs that keep young people out of gangs while offering them meaningful alternatives through education, employment or mental health supports. It means empowering local leaders, faith groups, community organizations and families to be part of the solution.

That is why we are going to continue to work with the provinces and municipalities to put in place wraparound services that are focused on providing solutions to reduce crime and reoffending. We also recognize that a modern, effective system needs to be data-driven and transparent.

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People in Canada deserve to see every level of government working together, not only on bail reform laws, but also with respect to monitoring, law enforcement and effective prevention. I hope that my colleagues will support us and reflect on the legislative measures we have proposed for adjusting our system. Unfortunately, the system being proposed by my colleague from Battle River—Crowfoot does not work. Let us work together. We will get there.

• (1705)

[English]

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the Liberals, for 10 years, have been obsessed with firearm-related violent crimes. I just looked up a Statistics Canada report from 2023. The minority of homicides in our country and the vast minority of violent crimes in our country are associated with firearms. We have seen the terrible events associated with vehicular homicide.

If the Liberals' approach to violent crime is so focused on firearms, why are we seeing continued increases in homicide and firearm homicide in our country? What is not working, and what is different about the approach the member is speaking about today?

[Translation]

Hon. Nathalie Provost: Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleague is okay with me responding in French.

The question today is not on gun control measures. The heart of today's discussion is the importance of effectively dealing with crime in our society and the rise in violence. The work we are doing on gun control is part of that work, work that should have a lasting impact. As a gun control advocate, I have always known that this was only one element among a host of measures that needed to be put in place.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague from Châteauguay—Les Jardins-de-Napierville, my riding neighbour, on her speech. We share a lot of common ground, based on what she said, and I know that she has been through some truly horrific experiences in her life, which have left their mark on her. When she talks to us today about fighting crime or the importance of tackling it, she is also drawing on her personal experience. I know that she is also a problem solver.

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I have already asked this question before, but this time I am asking her. The Bloc Québécois has proposed that better guidelines be issued regarding the Jordan decision and that offences related to sexual crimes, terrorism and firearms not be subject to the Jordan decision. Our courts are completely swamped, as we know, and, unfortunately, many cases in Quebec have escaped justice because—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I have to allow enough time for the answer.

The hon. secretary of state.

Hon. Nathalie Provost: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her very interesting question. I am convinced there would be value in discussing the context in which the Jordan decision applies to women who are victims of violence or of certain other types of crime, and who deserve special attention, and, in this context, the Jordan decision simply penalizes the victims.

I am certain that my government would agree to examine solutions along those lines. I invite my colleague to expand on those thoughts with the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

[English]

Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a Halton Region MP, I would like to raise one thing that was brought up in the debate by the member for Abbotsford—South Langley about the Halton Region motion that was tabled yesterday, which also called on the province to take action on crime. In 2017, the member for Ottawa Centre announced a courthouse in our region. It was fully funded on federal land, and after eight years, we do not have the courthouse.

I spoke to many experts during the summer. Maplehurst is over its limits, and according to experts, there is less JP training in Ontario than in the other provinces.

I would like to ask my colleague if she was aware of those facts.

• (1710)

[Translation]

Hon. Nathalie Provost: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I am not aware of the specific facts provided by my colleague. However, I understand the spirit of her intervention.

As I was saying to my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, I have no doubt that these concerns can be considered by the team at the Department of Justice and by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

[English]

Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join this debate on the opposition motion put forward today. However, before I do that, as it is one of the first times I have been on my feet after the last election, I would like to thank a few people for once again allowing me to be here as the voice of the good people of Regina—Lewvan.

It is my third term, so 2019, 2021 and 2025. It has been an honour to be here for almost six years. Obviously, none of us get to this place without a lot of help, and I had a great campaign manager,

Shelley, who did an awesome job. We had a team out every day knocking on doors: Khreshno, Brian and Anshumaan. We had a great group of people who helped, such as Ron. I could go on and on, but if I miss someone I will feel bad. There was a core group that came out a lot and helped us knock on 43,000 doors throughout the campaign to earn the vote of people from across Regina—Lewvan.

That being said, there is a core group of people I would not be here without, and they are my wife Larissa and our three kids, Jameson, Claire and Nickson, who started school last week. Dad got to be there for their first day of school, and it was fantastic. They are having a great time in school. I hope they are almost out of school by now. If I am not mistaken, they are heading to the hockey rink right away. From the bottom of my heart, I thank Larissa very much for being the glue that holds our family together.

The motion before us today was put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. I think we have gone back and forth on a few things, so I will read it to make sure we know what we are debating on the floor of the House today. It says:

That, given that the Liberal government has changed the law to allow for house arrest for serious offenders and lets repeat criminals go free within hours of their arrest, which has resulted in a 50% increase in violent crime, the House call on the Liberal government to replace these changes with a "Three-Strikes-And-You're-Out" law that will stop criminals convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, probation, parole or house arrest and keep violent criminals in jail for at least 10 years.

How did we get here? Why is a law like this being brought forward by the opposition? We have a solution, and I will go through three or four things that this motion and our proposed law would change. However, we have to know what the problem is. Over the last 10 years, the problem has been a couple of bills that have been put forward, Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, and we can see the results.

This is not a new government. The Liberals have been in government for 10 years, as everyone knows, and I think they should be judged by the lack of progress they are making on certain files.

These numbers are from StatsCan; I am not making them up. Since 2015, gun crime has skyrocketed 130%. Instead of targeting the criminals responsible, the government doubled down on law-abiding firearm owners. The number of homicides has increased by 29%, and sexual assault has increased by almost 76% in this country. Despite the rapid rise, we have seen a refusal of the government to commit to making it tougher for people to get out on bail. We hear this from police associations across the country. There are people who get arrested hundreds of times. We have heard the numbers. People may say that our proposed law may not be the solution for everything, but it is going to help. If the people who continuously commit crimes are in jail, there is going to be less crime.

For example, in Kelowna, 15 people committed 1,300 crimes. If those people were in jail, there would be 1,300 fewer crimes committed in that city. In Vancouver, as we have heard time and again, 40 people committed 6,000 crimes. I think everyone in this room could agree that if those 40 people were in jail, there would be less crime in Vancouver. I do not think it is a big leap to think that if criminals are in jail, they are not able to commit crimes.

Here are some of the solutions that we have brought forward and some of the things that this proposed law would do. The Conservative bill would repeal and replace the Liberal principle of restraint with a directive for primary considerations to be the protection and safety of the public. It would introduce a new major offence category with reverse onus bail conditions for charges relating to firearms, sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, home invasion, robbery, extortion, arson and assault. It would strengthen bail laws by mandating judges to consider the full criminal history of an accused, would prevent anyone convicted of a major offence in the last 10 years while also on bail and charged with a major offence from getting bail, and would toughen the risk assessment standards from “substantial likelihood” to “reasonably foreseeable”. It would also prohibit anyone with an indictable conviction from acting as the guarantor who ensures bail conditions are followed, would require judges to enforce bail conditions on guarantors and would require non-residents to surrender their passports upon request.

● (1715)

Before I go on, I want to inform you, Mr. Speaker, that I will be splitting my time.

These are four things that the “three strikes and you’re out” law would help with, which I would think most people would see as reasonable improvements to the bail system.

I do want to talk about a few of the comments that some of my colleagues made in the House today. If people across Canada have been watching, they would see a distinct difference between what Conservatives have been talking about and what the Liberals, and especially the New Democrats, have been talking about. We have been talking about the victims and the rights that victims should have, and ensuring that victims are taken care of. A lot of focus, especially from the NDP member, was on criminals. Forgive me, but I will always make sure victims’ rights are ahead of criminals’ rights.

Can members imagine someone getting out on bail again and committing crimes? Especially when these people is out on bail, can the Liberals not feel for the victims, who have to see them in their neighbourhoods, in their community? This is from experience. When someone we love has been hurt, and the offender is within our community, every time we see a car like theirs, the hair on the back of our neck stands up. Every time we see them in a grocery store, our pulse quickens and our palms get sweaty. We just feel at a loss because this person is walking free, and the person we love who was hurt will never again feel the same.

This is what we are doing to Canadians across the country with the soft-on-bail policy brought in by the Liberal government. The fact that they will not vote for a motion and will be obstructing our ideas to ensure Canadians are safer, quite frankly, confuses me. We are trying to work together. Everyone is talking about Parliament

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now coming together and working. I heard one of my Liberal colleagues say, “It increased crime by 11% in the States. It did not work in the States, so it will not work here.” An increase in crime in Canada by 11% is a lot better than the 130% increase over the last 10 years under the government.

It really is the definition of insanity to do the same thing over and over again, as the Liberal government does, and expect different results. Members of the police force even get tired of arresting the same person. They do not even know why they charge them because they get out the very next day or that night. I could not even imagine being on the front lines as a police officer and seeing the same person go into jail, get out of jail, go into jail and get out of jail. It must be tough for the police officers to go to work, knowing that the person from whom they are trying to protect the community will laugh at them when they arrest them because they know they are going to get out because bail is so easy to get in this country. It is time to make the right decisions.

I will just end with another story from the small town I am from. This summer, there was a bust and a sting, and a person was found having a lot of child pornography in our small community. He went to court, and he was out that afternoon. This person lives two blocks from my kids’ school. They picked the rental house because it has a little library full of kids’ books, just to make sure the kids would stop by and take books out. He was released that day from court. He had child pornography, and my kids had to walk past that guy’s house to go to school. It was unbelievable for the town. Parents were outraged, as they should be. How can that happen in Canada, that someone like that is allowed to be released the same day and be within two blocks of our kids’ school?

That is something that needs to be fixed in our country. I hope some of my colleagues listen to the words I am saying, look at this motion, look at the “three strikes and you’re out” bill to try to protect Canadians and put victims first by putting criminals in jail.

● (1720)

[Translation]

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I was deeply moved as I listened to what my colleague went through. These situations scare all Canadians, but unfortunately, they do exist.

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However, I would like to truly understand to what extent today's motion would improve victims' rights or respond to this issue. I do not understand this at all. Unfortunately, we know that this measure has not worked in the past. I would really like to hear my colleague speak about victims' rights and the link with today's motion.

[English]

Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, this proposal would help victims through their knowing that the people who commit crimes against them will be in jail and not in the community with them and their family members. If we are going to put victims first, the people committing these crimes against Canadians should serve the time and not be out on parole. If someone commits serious offences three times, and victims know that those people are in jail for 10 years, the victims might sleep a little better at night.

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about the difference of ideology and priorities that seem to appear very evident across this floor. In 2015, before the Liberal government was in force, Conservatives brought in the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, which was to be reviewed in 2020. I remember trying to get the government to do that, but I do not know that it ever did. It would be really good if a few of the members over there focused on that.

However, the ombudsman did speak up, and I want to ask the member to respond to what she said:

However, based on our analysis..., it appears that the objectives set out in the Act have not been met. The Act falls far short of delivering the real rights it promised.... Thus, the situation of victims of crime has not fundamentally changed since it was passed. I believe the Act needs to be strengthened to require officials to uphold victims' rights in the criminal justice system and require institutions to measure and report on their compliance with the Act.

Is this something—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Regina—Lewvan.

Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the commitment of my colleague from Yorkton—Melville to victims' rights.

Yes, I think that act should be strengthened. As the member said, the review did not happen. It would once again be another arrow in the quiver of making sure victims do get justice and have their rights heard. If it was reviewed, we would strengthen it to make sure we are listening to the people who have had these crimes committed against them to make sure we do the right things going forward.

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we had an election in April, and this motion was a main component of the electoral platform of the Conservative Party. The people spoke, and the Conservatives were not elected.

“Three strikes and you're out” was first tried in the United States, in California, some years ago, which has now come to the conclusion that it does not work. Therefore, why would it work in Canada?

Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, yes, we did have an election on April 28, but eight million Canadians voted for our platform, and they should have a voice in the House. If you assume that you do

not have to listen to anyone who did not vote for you, I think you are in the wrong job. That is not right.

The member talked about trying things that have not worked in other countries. The Liberals tried safe supply, and it had not worked in Oregon. They tried drug legalization, and it had not worked in Venezuela. They have tried a lot of policies that have been tried around the world that failed miserably. I said earlier that, if crime increases by only 11%, like it did in California, instead of 130%, that is a lot better than what has happened in the last 10 years under the Liberal government.

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

[Translation]

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Bourassa.

• (1725)

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard quite a few speeches today. Many people have spoken on the subject. I would like to reiterate that we all agree on the fact that Canadians always have the right and obviously deserve to feel safe and secure when they are out and about regardless of their gender. That is very important.

We obviously agree with the opposition members that serious action must urgently be taken to address violent crime, whether or not it involves firearms. However, unfortunately, they are proposing a very rigid American-, cowboy-style “three strikes” law. That is not a solution, and I will explain why.

I will explain why because, when our colleague moved the motion, he did not provide any sort of explanation involving facts or evidence. There is nothing in his proposal about prevention. Mainly, what we are seeing are coercive measures. Where are the preventive measures that the Conservatives talked about in their platform? They are nowhere to be seen.

This type of law has been used by our neighbours to the south and found to be ineffective, obsolete. What are the Conservatives doing now? They are importing legislation that unfortunately did not work for our neighbours to the south. They are copying and pasting that legislation as is, without taking into consideration the data and the socio-economic context of our country, without taking into consideration any input that may come from stakeholders, including our police chiefs, organizations, lawyers, court services and so on.

Also, I hear my colleagues talking about rules that would take away judges' discretion, rules that have also proven ineffective. These measures are legally tenuous and more likely to produce unjust results. Rather than import these failed American policies that would increase the prison population without achieving the stated objective of making communities safer, we should instead opt for evidence-based reforms that target violent repeat offenders while respecting the values of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and ensuring swift access to justice.

Instead of adopting overly simplistic ideas, what has our government done? There is a difference between common sense and oversimplification. The ideas we have heard today from the other side of the House have been very oversimplified. Instead, what we did as a government was to get all stakeholders involved in our decision-making and analysis in order to better understand the context.

We met with provincial and territorial officials, police chiefs, police associations, lawyers, defence attorneys and Crown prosecutors. All these stakeholders have their own experience, which is not necessarily consistent across Canada. On the contrary, the contexts vary from one place to another, from one province to another and from one region to another.

For this reason, our government will introduce legislation this fall to strengthen Canada's bail system by making it harder for repeat offenders to get bail, to increase sentences for the most serious and violent repeat offences, and to reduce court delays, which will be very helpful at ensuring that serious cases, including femicide cases, are dealt with more quickly and victims are not retraumatized by court delays and procedural delays.

These commitments are part of the Liberal public safety platform, which promised to combat gun violence and organized crime by strengthening the fight against smuggling at the border by equipping the police with investigative tools. We hope that the members opposite will agree with us on the more thoroughly analyzed and studied aspects. We need to make bail laws stricter to keep violent repeat offenders off the streets while upholding the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We need to support victims of crime by improving services and ensuring that their voices are heard in the justice system. Finally, we need to invest in prevention and community safety while protecting Canadians from emerging threats, including human trafficking, cybercrime and criminal networks, which may or may not be organized, but which are growing increasingly sophisticated.

● (1730)

It should be noted that, although the federal government sets the rules for bail and sentencing, it is the provinces that oversee the prison system and pre-trial detention. That is why real solutions require close collaboration between the two levels of government. The provinces and territories also have tools at their disposal to toughen and enforce bail laws, and we encourage them to use them. Canadians deserve to be safe, not to be fed slogans. Today, we heard a whole slew of very simplistic slogans from the other side of the House. Community safety is not about slogans. It cannot be addressed with simplistic statements like the ones we unfortunately heard today. We must provide the sense of peace and security on the streets that Canadians deserve. Women deserve to walk safely at

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night. Our young people have the right to play safely in the streets. We are working closely with the provinces and territories on bail reform, and that is very important.

I also want to talk about community safety. We all deserve to feel safe in Canada. Unlike the members on the other side of the House, we are not playing this political game. We do not want to scare Canadians. Our country is not the wild west, so let us stop scaring Canadians. We need to work closely together. Yes, there is a problem, but trampling on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not the way to solve this kind of problem.

We oppose this motion because it is based on a false premise, a misrepresentation of Liberal reforms, and because it proposes a failed U.S.-style solution. The "three strikes and you're out" law is a rigid law that would undermine judicial independence, potentially result in unconstitutional outcomes and lead to costly over-incarceration without deterring people from committing crimes. Rather than adopting failed American policies, let us work together with all stakeholders, with the provinces, with the territories, with people who have experience, with evidence. That is what we need to do.

Our government was elected by Canadians on a platform aimed at improving public safety, building trust in the justice system and ensuring that violent offenders face real consequences. As I said earlier, we are working in partnership with the territories, provinces, law enforcement and communities across the country to achieve that. The Conservative motion may make a good bumper sticker, but Canadians deserve policies that make their streets safer.

G rard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague from Bourassa on his speech and on his election. I am not going to congratulate him again on the quality of his French, because we know that he is francophone. I also want to acknowledge his predecessor.

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The riding of Bourassa is one of the most vulnerable areas in Canada when it comes to safety, particularly in Quebec and in Montreal. The member is well aware of that. I am very disappointed to hear him say that the Conservatives are just spouting slogans, that we are fearmongering, that our premise is wrong and that we are cutting corners. What I am about to say is not a false premise, nor is it meant to scare people. It is not a slogan. It is a fact. Over the past 10 years, under the Liberal Party's watch, violent crime in Canada has increased by 55%. Gun crime is up 130% and extortion has skyrocketed by 330%.

Is the member proud of Canada's record after 10 years of Liberal governance?

• (1735)

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, that is not a record to be proud of. Once again, and this is very important, let us not focus on lagging indicators. We agree on these points.

However, when it comes to contributing factors, at no point did I hear anyone on the other side of the House talk about determinants of health, determinants of housing or social determinants. These are the determinants that create vulnerability. We cannot forget that, over the past 10 years, we have faced challenges related to COVID-19. We have faced challenges that really weakened our social fabric and led to rising crime.

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it has been mentioned several times that our justice system wantonly releases people who commit crime. I just want to come back to subsection 515(10) of the Criminal Code.

A person accused of murder is held in custody, naturally. The Criminal Code states that a person can continue to be detained “where the detention is necessary for the protection or safety of the public” and if there is any “substantial likelihood that the accused will, if released from custody, commit a criminal offence”. That is when the defendant has not yet been found guilty.

However, people have also criticized conditional sentences, namely house arrest, that are handed down after someone has been found guilty. Again, a conditional sentence is only possible when the court is convinced that the measure does not jeopardize community safety.

I would like my colleague's thoughts on these sections of the Criminal Code.

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, quite simply, I disagree with the Conservatives' comments and their proposal, which would remove judicial discretion. I agree with my Bloc Québécois colleague on this point because it is very important.

He expressed it quite well earlier today. Removing this discretionary power from judges really infringes on their power. When the Crown and Crown attorneys look at the history of the criminal or the person who committed the assault, they are obviously going to share that information so that the judge has real insight into the situation.

I fully agree with having this discretionary power in our judicial system.

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear from my colleague about the measures he would take to address the factors that lead to situations of violence.

What does he suggest the government do about that?

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, I really like that question.

We really need to do more work on prevention. There are more indicators and warning signs that we need to work on as a government and as a society. Here are two examples.

Consider youth crime. Young people need more sports infrastructure, more community centres and more access to arts and culture, which is not the case across the country. That is very important.

Another very important thing to consider is femicide. I heard someone mention that earlier and I really want to talk about that today. It is very important to give the victim of violence in a couple or intimate relationship the opportunity to leave the home quickly, to have taxi cabs, to have access to a storage facility for their belongings and to have access to a shelter. These are very important things that we need to work on to improve prevention. When two people are in an intimate relationship where there is violence, unfortunately, it can only end in femicide. On that point, I completely agree that we need to do much more in terms of prevention—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

[English]

Resuming debate, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure.

Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Today, I am here to rise in the House and speak to the motion introduced by the member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

We all know that protecting the safety and security of Canadians in our communities and upholding the rights of victims remain top priorities for our government. The Correctional Service of Canada works to keep Canadians safe and support and assist federal offenders in their journey to becoming law-abiding citizens by promoting rehabilitation and safe reintegration. Research has found that their programs and services work to reduce the rates of recidivism. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of correctional staff, who assist offenders by identifying problematic behaviours and attitudes and by targeting risk factors related to their criminal behaviour.

One way CSC works to reduce recidivism is through the provision of correctional programs for offenders under its care. CSC's correctional programs are empirically based interventions grounded in structured behavioural, social learning and cognitive approaches. Offenders are referred to correctional programs at an intensity matched to their level of risk. Research demonstrates that this enhances program effectiveness.

CSC offers a broad range of correctional programs to offenders in institutions and in the community, addressing multiple types of criminal offending in a comprehensive and integrated manner. All correctional programs are delivered by qualified, trained and certified correctional program officers and indigenous correctional program officers, and the service applies ongoing measures of quality control to ensure that correctional programs are delivered as designed.

To be fully effective, CSC provides correctional follow-up services to offenders who complete institutional correctional programs as part of a consistent continuum of care throughout the correctional process. This aftercare often includes participation in institutional and/or community maintenance programs. When looking at all correctional program streams combined, men who completed the programming had lower rates of any revocation during their first release than eligible non-participants, at 23% versus 41%.

Further to correctional programs, I would also like to discuss another one of CSC's notable programs that effectively supports offender reintegration, which is CORCAN. This program works to successfully contribute to a safe environment, both in our federal institutions and in the community. One way that our government is working to enhance public safety is by providing offenders with employment and employability interventions and services, including on-the-job and vocational training. This allows them to gain experience and the skills they need to become productive, law-abiding citizens and skilled workers when they return to community.

We have seen several research documents, dating back to 2014, that have noted a connection between employment and positive reintegration results. Offenders who are employed in the community were almost three times less likely to have their release revoked for a new offence than those who were not employed. To further these successes, vocational certifications, essential skills training and employability-related training are all available at all federal institutions, in addition to CORCAN-operated on-the-job training sites, which are at 36 federal correctional institutions across the country and seven community-based operations.

Furthermore, the service provides apprenticeship opportunities to offenders through on-the-job training assignments in all institutions, as well as during transitional employment in community industries. Such training results in both technical and transferable skills that are needed in the Canadian labour market; the goal of training is to provide offenders with knowledge and skills that are transferable to many community workplaces.

It is really important to remember that when it comes to criminal justice policies, we will continue to be guided by evidence. Research shows that our communities are best protected when, rather than being released at the end of their sentence with no controls or supports, an offender is gradually reintegrated into society through

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supervised release. I will highlight some statistics to demonstrate this success.

● (1740)

In terms of parole, since 2015 and 2016, 99% of day parole supervision periods for violent offenders have not ended in a return to custody for new offending. The rate for violent offenders returning to federal custody for new violent offending has not surpassed 0.5% over this time frame.

To promote safer communities, CSC strives to gradually release and safely reintegrate federal offenders through structured community supervision, and it works with criminal justice partners to ensure that this goal is met. CSC has improved safety and security by enhancing its intelligence capabilities and capacity through dedicated officers who participate in release planning and consult with staff on supervision strategies for offenders in relation to risk assessments.

To ensure better protection of the public, parole officers work with and share information with police agencies to assist in enhancing each offender's ability to reintegrate into the community as a law-abiding citizen, while ensuring public safety. If the risk an offender poses is assessed to be too high, necessary actions will be taken in a timely manner to address problems that could lead to potential harm to community members. This approach includes intervening and supervising offenders effectively so they are less likely to violently reoffend, as well as exploring options to enhance supervision and community partnerships.

One last area of the criminal justice system I would like to reflect on is victims and the government's commitment to upholding their rights to information, protection, participation and restitution. CSC, as well as the Parole Board of Canada, is committed to ensuring that victims of federal offenders have an effective voice in Canada's criminal justice system. CSC has a national victim services program to provide services to victims and survivors of crime, which centres on an exchange of information intended to assist victims in two important ways.

First, it gives victims a voice at a time when their well-being and dignity may have been undermined. This can help them regain a sense of control over their life and restore their confidence in the justice system and in society as a whole.

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Second, the information victims receive may assist them in pursuing their life in the aftermath of the tragic circumstances they have experienced. The program has adopted a victim-centred, trauma-informed approach as the basis for its interactions with victims and survivors of crime. This demonstrates CSC's commitment to acknowledging the harm done to victims of crime, validating their concerns and providing them with the information they need to uphold their right to protection.

CSC encourages victims to provide a victim statement related to the continued impact the crime, incarceration and release of the offender have had on their life. These statements can include relevant information about the offender, along with any safety concerns the victim may have, requests for conditions and the location of the offender. This is the principal way victims exercise their right to participation within the corrections and conditional release process. It is important that we support them.

CSC presently has over 9,000 victims who are registered to receive information about the offender who harmed them, as well as tens of thousands of contacts with victims. To ensure that all victims have access to the information they are entitled to receive, CSC continues to raise awareness about its program.

To further reach additional victims who may want to receive information from CSC, Bill S-12, which was passed into law, will require courts to inquire whether a victim wishes to receive information about an offender and their progression throughout the course of the sentence. Courts will also forward the name and contact information to CSC for any victim who wishes to receive such information. Once the provision comes into force, CSC will begin proactively contacting these additional victims to explain their rights and offer services that may be helpful to them. To prepare for this change, CSC is currently working with all provinces and territories to establish information-sharing arrangements.

I am thankful for the opportunity to share the great work of CSC with everyone here today.

• (1745)

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciated hearing about the corrections programs.

Actually, our colleague from New Brunswick brought forward the Reduction of Recidivism Framework Act, Bill C-228, which was passed in the House. This is an important concept, and we of course value these individuals and the opportunities they need to change their life.

However, what we are dealing with and hearing about in the House, something that has been going on and on and growing and growing, are the issues around individuals who are being released back into society and who do not have those things. It is on an almost daily or weekly basis that they are returning, so there does need to be some form of ability to keep them off the streets.

Does the member know and understand that minimum sentences were actually legislated in the House by Pierre Elliott Trudeau and complemented by Stephen Harper, and the number of—

• (1750)

The Deputy Speaker: I have to give the parliamentary secretary a chance to respond.

The parliamentary secretary for housing and infrastructure.

Jennifer McKelvie: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for caring about community safety. I think everyone in this House stands united in caring about safety and ensuring the communities we serve are safe.

Our government does take this issue very seriously. I signed up to run because it was a commitment of this government to address bail reform and strengthen our borders. Right now before us, we have Bill C-2, which is giving law enforcement the tools it has been asking for.

Our government has already made an initial investment of 1,000 additional RCMP officers and 1,000 additional border services agents. In addition, we will be bringing forward comprehensive legislation on bail reform that I am very much looking forward to and that I am sure Canadians are very much looking forward to. Importantly, it has been—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member to go back to questions and comments.

[Translation]

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

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is talking about changing conditional sentences or house arrest. Section 742.1 of the Criminal Code states:

If a person is convicted of an offence and the court imposes a sentence of imprisonment of less than two years, the court may, for the purpose of supervising the offender's behaviour in the community, order that the offender serve the sentence in the community...if

(a) the court is satisfied that the service of the sentence in the community would not endanger the safety of the community and would be consistent [with the principles of sentencing];

(b) [there is no] minimum term of imprisonment;

(c) the offence is not an offence under any of the following provisions: [for example, attempt to commit murder, torture, advocating genocide or a terrorism offence].

What does my colleague want to change in this clause?

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the hon. member and give the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure a chance to answer the question.

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[English]

Jennifer McKelvie: Mr. Speaker, importantly, our public safety minister has been consulting from coast to coast to coast over the summer, talking to police chiefs, talking to victims, talking to everybody who is involved in the justice system. He will be bringing forward comprehensive legislation this fall to strengthen Canada's bail system, increase sentences for the most serious repeat violent crimes and address court delays so that serious cases can proceed quickly and victims will not be retraumatized by procedural backlogs. We will be introducing this bill based on evidence, consultation and important reforms that will keep our community safe. Additionally, there is an option for people in the House to support public safety right now. That is Bill C-2, which is before us.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative member for Oxford stated, "We are now living in a war zone in Canada." That sort of rhetoric, which we hear from members of the Conservative Party, is, I believe, very damaging. We have a Prime Minister who has recognized the need for bail reform and has made a commitment to delivering bail reform this fall. I am wondering if the member can provide her thoughts on the importance of that commitment.

Jennifer McKelvie: Mr. Speaker, I think it is very dangerous to use words like that. This is a country to which we want to attract people as tourists. We want our communities to know that they have amazing correctional service officers and amazing police officers who are out there keeping them safe.

When we say things like that, it really negates the great work being done by all those great people, the public servants who keep us safe.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I often rise in this House to speak about crime in my community: street disorder, property theft and the ever-present threat of fires from discarded drug pipes. However, today I rise to address something very different: the crimes of repeat violent offenders. These are not the petty offences of someone down on their luck or struggling with addiction. These are acts of violence committed again and again by people with no moral compass, the predators who prey on the vulnerable, who exploit women and girls and who torment and kill to satisfy their own dark impulses.

We know some of the more famous names and the more famous crimes. These are people like Paul Bernardo, Robert Pickton and Clifford Olson, predators who sexually assault children, who traffic and exploit women and who murder indigenous girls simply because they believe they can. These are the offenders who revel in cruelty. They exploit every stage of the justice system to amplify their notoriety.

Perhaps most disturbingly, they exploit the parole process itself. Every few years, when their eligibility comes up, the families of victims are forced to relive the worst moments in their lives. They prepare impact statements. They gather letters of support. They steel themselves to face the person who shattered their world. They travel long distances at their own expense, often missing work or school. They sit in rooms where the memories are almost unbearable, listening to gruesome details that reopen wounds they have struggled for years to heal.

These families describe the weeks leading up to a parole hearing as a living nightmare. They do not sleep. They worry constantly about what the offender might say. They brace themselves for the possibility of release, however remote, or for the performance of false remorse that so many violent offenders are skilled at delivering. When the hearing is over, they know the clock immediately starts up again for the next application. The cycle of trauma and re-traumatization is relentless and cruel.

Let us consider Daniel Senecal. He sexually assaulted a 12-year-old boy, was sentenced to just two and a half years in jail and was released after 18 months. He is now alleged to have broken into a home and sexually assaulted a three-year-old girl named Eve while her parents slept. She was asleep in her own bed, where she should have been safe. Cases like this demand action because they show the devastating consequences of a system that gives chance after chance to people who have already demonstrated violent intent.

That is why I speak today in support of our Conservative motion calling on the Liberal government to institute a "three strikes and you're out" law for serious violent crimes. The proposal is clear and direct. If someone commits three serious violent crimes, crimes like murder, aggravated assault, armed robbery or sexual assault, they should forfeit the privilege of bail, probation, parole and house arrest and serve a minimum sentence of 10 years.

Why three strikes? It is because Canadians believe in redemption. Everyone deserves a chance to turn their life around, and that is why rehabilitation and diversion programs exist. Some people want to change, and our justice system rightly tries to leave space for that no matter how difficult it can be, but when someone repeatedly chooses violence despite every opportunity to change, the calculation should shift.

After a first, second and third conviction for serious violent offences, the government's primary duty should no longer be to offer another chance. It should be to protect the public. This is not about vengeance or filling prisons. It is about balance and the gravity of these crimes. Our democratic principles rightly demand restraint before we take away liberty, but when a pattern of serious violence is established, when the record shows a person is unwilling to stop, society must act.

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● (1755)

A balanced Conservative approach rests on three truths. First, compassion matters. We must continue to invest in rehabilitation and social services that address the roots of crime. No one is suggesting that prevention and rehabilitation be abandoned with this motion. However, we must also have compassion for victims and their families. We cannot eliminate the trauma of having to provide victim impact statements and prepare for parole hearings entirely, but we can space them out in circumstances like these, to take steps to mitigate it.

Second, consequences matter. When individuals repeatedly choose violence, society has a right to extrapolate and take action to protect our society. The victims of violent crimes and their families have rights too, rights to safety, dignity and freedom from repeated trauma.

Third, community matters. Public safety is the foundation on which opportunity and prosperity are built. When people are afraid to walk to work, when parents are anxious every time their children leave the house and when seniors feel unsafe in their own homes, the very fabric of our community starts to unravel.

People in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith know this instinctively. Whether a young renter in downtown Nanaimo, a parent in Ladysmith or a senior in the south end, we all want a justice system that offers hope to those who can be helped and firm boundaries for those who will not change.

Protecting citizens from repeat violent offenders should not be a partisan issue. It is a core responsibility of the federal government to keep us safe. However, this government has weakened bail conditions, expanded house arrest and ignored warnings from police chiefs, premiers and mayors across the country.

We can respect the charter while protecting the public. We can uphold fairness and mercy while ensuring that repeat violent offenders face real consequences. These goals need not be in conflict. As a Conservative and as a Canadian, I believe in fairness, in the rule of law and in the possibility of rehabilitation, but I also believe in responsibility and in the right of every parent to feel safe with their children sleeping in a room downstairs and letting them walk to school.

Police officers and first responders, people who dedicate their lives to keeping us safe, tell me they are demoralized by our current system. The revolving door of justice does not distinguish adequately between minor offences and the kinds of violent, predatory crimes I speak of today. The current situation is not merely frustrating; it puts the public at risk and erodes faith in the rule of law.

We act not out of contempt for criminals but out of compassion for victims. The measure we propose through this motion is a carefully targeted tool for the most serious cases. It is a balanced proposal that seeks to spare families some of the pain of repeated parole hearings and the constant fear of an offender's next application, by lessening the frequency of those events without eliminating the offender's right to have them. It supports law enforcement and reaffirms the fundamental principle that the safety of Canadians must come first.

This motion calls for those convicted of three serious violent offences to be denied bail, probation, parole and house arrest and to remain in prison for at least 10 years. It will help restore public confidence in our justice system, give families of victims a genuine respite and chance to heal, and deny repeat violent offenders parts of the platform they crave to sensationalize their crimes.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the House to support this motion. Let us act together to protect Canadians, to stand with victims and their families and to ensure that those who repeatedly choose violence can no longer terrorize our communities.

● (1800)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we get closer to the conclusion of the debate, let us be very clear that whether it is the Prime Minister of Canada or the Liberal members of Parliament, Canadians can be assured that we have been listening to what they have said. It comes out of the last federal election.

There has been a solid commitment from our Prime Minister to ensure that we have bail reform legislation well before the end of the year. That is important to Canadians. It is important to the many different stakeholders. We hope only that the Conservative Party of Canada will respond positively by allowing us to take it to the next step. That is going to be critically important for the safety of Canadians.

I wonder if the member can comment on that aspect and condemn her colleague, the member for Oxford, who stated, "We are now living in a war zone in Canada." That is absolutely ridiculous, and I am sure she would agree.

● (1805)

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that the hon. member across is enthusiastic about the legislation that will be coming forward later this fall. I would love to see it, and if the legislation contains the kinds of provisions that we are calling for and would make Canadians safer, then I would be delighted to support it. In the meantime, I would ask him, as a show of good faith, to support our motion so that we can move forward together.

Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently in Barrie, there was a Barrie police officer, Constable Jim Peters, who was stabbed while on duty. He was stabbed by an accused individual who had been arrested and released 17 times two years prior to that incident and had had over 100 interactions with Barrie Police Service. This type of rampant crime and chaos must end.

What would this motion today do to help officers like this?

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Tamara Kronis: Mr. Speaker, I am always so sad and distressed when I hear of a police officer being harmed while on duty.

What is really important about this motion is that when violent repeat offenders are released on bail and are present in the community, it provides an additional form of retraumatization for our officers and our first responders, who know who these people are, and who end up being retraumatized by their presence in the community. It is a situation that hurts us all, and I hope that the members opposite are listening and will support the motion.

[Translation]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lestiguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, obviously, everyone here is against crime. I have personally known a number of victims of crime and I am well aware of the unfortunate consequences that can arise, which can be tragic, sometimes even fatal.

However, when my colleague mentions that community-based sentences need to be changed, I would like her to tell us what she thinks is wrong with section 742, since community-based sentences are only available to people sentenced to less than two years and when community safety would not be endangered.

What is wrong with section 742.1 of the Criminal Code, as written?

[English]

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Speaker, I think what is important to remember is that we are talking here about serious, violent, repeat offenders. The motion is not targeted toward people who are serving short sentences in the community.

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a fellow member from Vancouver Island, I share the concerns about the crime that is affecting many of our communities, but under the previous Conservative government, many of the criminal justice reforms that were passed have since been struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada, so I wonder if the member could share with the House what measures or due diligence she and her colleagues have taken to ensure that these Conservative reforms are constitutional.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Speaker, as Pierre Elliott Trudeau said, “The past is to be respected and acknowledged, but not worshipped; it is our future in which we will find greatness.” Our constitution is a living tree, and I have confidence that this motion, which has been carefully considered, would pass muster at the Supreme Court of Canada.

Colin Reynolds (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour that I rise today in this House to speak in support of the “three strikes and you’re out” bill, our plan to hold repeat violent offenders accountable and to combat rising crime in our streets. I am a proud Winnipegger and even prouder to represent my neighbours in the riding of Elmwood—Transcona.

Although I am proud of my home, the crime wave crippling our city has truly gone out of control. My office has been inundated with calls from folks from all different walks of life, all concerned that they no longer feel safe on the streets and even in their homes. At this point, it is hard to see anything any other way.

Over the last 10 years, we have become accustomed to a criminal justice system that puts criminals first and does not deliver justice. Our current system takes power away from law enforcement, puts perpetrators of crime back on the street and victimizes hard-working, law-abiding Canadians in our society. Jody, one of my constituents, has had her home broken into 14 times by the same group of thugs. While Jody lives in fear, her tormentors are getting released on no-cash bail within 24 hours of their crime, ready to reoffend and put Jody and her neighbours back into a state of shock, panic and fear.

It is not just Jody either. In my first month of office, I sent out a community survey asking folks in Elmwood—Transcona what they thought were the most pressing issues facing our community. While I got many good, thoughtful responses, one issue that is top of mind for a majority of people in my community is that crime is totally out of control. Parents no longer feel safe having their kids walk to school or take the bus. Our three-strikes plan would put repeat violent offenders behind bars and keep communities safe. We need to put our foot down and take crime seriously. We all believe in second chances, but we do not believe in 20 chances.

This would be hard enough on families that are struggling to make ends meet without also facing the rising rates of car theft. It has gotten so bad that some police are even suggesting that people leave their keys on the porch to avoid break-ins. This is crazy. This harmful mentality will only lead to more theft, more crime and more innocent victims.

Things were not always this way. Folks in our communities used to leave their doors unlocked and did not worry about their cars getting broken into. Today, my neighbours live in fear, and it breaks my heart that for the last 10 years, the Liberals could have done something to fix the out-of-control crime but decided to sit on their hands and pretend that nothing was wrong while their failed experiment continued to put Canadians at risk.

The law we are proposing would stop criminals convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, probation, parole or house arrest. It would keep violent criminals behind bars, away from their victims and off our streets. The law would also keep dangerous offenders away from society until they have proven that they no longer are a threat to those around them.

Police also feel the effects of poor criminal justice policies firsthand. Imagine how demoralizing it is to arrest the same person they arrested last week for robbing the same 7-Eleven they robbed the week before. We are not giving those in law enforcement the tools they need to get the job done.

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Just last week, we met with Mayor Scott Gillingham, who shared his thoughts on the out-of-control crime that is plaguing Winnipeg streets. He mentioned that the same individual had been arrested twice by the Winnipeg Police Service's violent crimes unit. A person has to be pretty violent to be arrested by that unit. He was subsequently convicted of failing to comply with bail restrictions 12 times and was released enough times to be convicted of 24 more violent offences. These offences were not stealing a pack of gum from a convenience store. The offender in question was convicted of shooting and carjacking while already out on bail.

Last month alone, 178 offenders were wanted on warrants for violating bail and were arrested on new charges. Seven of them assaulted the very same people they victimized despite a court prohibiting them to do so. This is not just a threat to the victims, who often have multiple run-ins with repeat offenders; it is also a threat to first responders, social workers, health care workers and public transit operators.

• (1810)

The unfortunate truth is that this is not just a Winnipeg problem; this is a Canada-wide problem. Police associations across Canada have been speaking out on the lack of support that the federal government has given them in putting repeat violent offenders behind bars. We need to do our job here so that they can do their job out there—

• (1815)

The Deputy Speaker: It being 6:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

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.

William Stevenson: Mr. Speaker, I ask for a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Monday, September 22, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you might find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:30 p.m. so we can begin the late show.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

FINANCE

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to elaborate on a question I posed to the government before the summer recess. In my question, I referenced

half a trillion dollars in new inflationary spending that the government had ushered in. I spoke of Canadians' stress and frustration with the rampant inflation, causing the price of essentials to continue to climb month after month at the grocery store. I directly asked when Canadians could expect a federal budget to be introduced, one that reduced inflation and cut taxes.

It has now been over 12 weeks since my intervention. Has anything changed for the better? Well, we now have a date for the budget, November 4, nearly two-thirds of the way through the fiscal year. Trust is so low in the Prime Minister's predictions as Canadians are expecting yet another bait and switch.

This country has had no proof from the Liberal Party that it is governing differently than the last administration. The Liberals claim they are different, and in one respect they actually are: Their record is worse than Justin Trudeau's.

The Prime Minister has already warned Canadians to brace for a painful deficit, double that of Trudeau and what he left behind. This is a dangerously directionless experiment that the Liberals are undertaking. The Prime Minister promised the fastest-growing economy in the G7; he delivered the fastest-shrinking economy in the G7, with the second-highest unemployment, the worst household debt, and the worst housing prices. That is not what Canadians voted for.

The Prime Minister promised to build Canada up; instead he has wasted billions on bureaucracy and high-priced consultants, and he has driven inflation through the roof. The Parliamentary Budget Officer told committee that the government seems to have no fiscal anchors and that, "bet your boots", Canadians will soon be paying much more to service the debt.

Canadians deserve better. We know they deserve better because of the real-life ripple effects we have seen becoming all too familiar. Between record-high taxes and reckless spending, the purchasing power of Canadians is being eroded at an alarming rate.

The Prime Minister said that he wants to be judged by prices at the grocery store. What a great sound bite that is to mislead Canadians in an election when they are desperate for hope. Canadians have now delivered their verdict; it is a failing grade. Statistics Canada confirms that food inflation is running 70% higher than the Bank of Canada's target. Meat is up 7%, beef is up 13%, coffee rose by 28% and even infant formula is climbing. Watching the Prime Minister in the House, I see a total indifference to these statistics. They do not matter; he got what he wanted.

A shocking 25% of families are struggling to afford food while the Liberal government spends billions on more bureaucrats, high-priced consultants and government-controlled projects that only fuel higher taxes, higher debt and higher inflation. Canadians know that the government is not investing their hard-earned tax dollars; it is bleeding them dry. Today, Canadians spend more of their income on taxes than they do on food, housing and clothing combined.

After 10 years of Liberal waste, Canadians are choosing between paying their bills and putting food on the table. The Prime Minister is generating a greater and greater chasm between, as the leader of the official opposition rightly says, the have-nots and the “have yachts”.

Conservatives demand that the Liberals stop the destructive mismanagement, rein in spending, and finally deliver a plan to bring down both the deficit and the cost of living for Canadians.

● (1820)

[Translation]

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the comments the hon. member made earlier. We recognize that affordable groceries continues to be an important issue and that many Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. Food inflation at the grocery store fell from a peak of 11.4% in January 2023 to 3.4% in August 2025. It is not hard. Anyone can go to the Statistics Canada website and see the report on the consumer price index, or CPI. It clearly states that the price of food increased by 3.5% in August 2025. It is not a 70% increase.

The government will continue to take concrete action to ensure that Canadians pay fair prices for groceries. In the Speech from the Throne delivered by His Majesty King Charles III, we laid out our bold and ambitious plan for the future. Our tax cut for the middle class will ease the tax burden for roughly 22 million Canadians, saving families up to \$840 a year. This measure is expected to generate tax savings of more than \$27 billion over five years.

Greater consumer choice and competition in the grocery sector are also essential to improving food affordability. That is why, over the past few years, the Government of Canada has made amendments to the Competition Act to bring it up to date. These amendments have impacted how the Competition Bureau can investigate anti-competitive behaviour and deceptive marketing practices. For example, these amendments now require suppliers to be more honest in their advertising. Posting prices without including all mandatory fees is now considered a form of dishonesty.

Several measures are required to stabilize food prices. We also need to work on improving all components of the supply chain. In July 2024, major grocery retailers committed to a grocery code of conduct. Canadians depend on a resilient food supply chain to access good-quality, affordable food. However, everyone has to contribute and everyone has to follow the rules.

The government also continues to support consumer advocacy through the Canadian consumer protection initiative. This initiative makes it possible to produce independent research to support consumer organizations. The most recent call for proposals under this initiative focused on priority issues such as affordability, barriers to

competition in the grocery industry and protecting consumers against hidden fees and price gouging.

As part of a previous proposal, a financial project that took these priorities into account supported a national consumer movement that helped Canadians across the country by providing practical tools for decoding pricing strategies and empowering them to make informed decisions.

We are working with the industry and our partners to continue to support stable food prices. Our commitment is unwavering, and no option is—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the hon. parliamentary secretary to give the floor to the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

However, I would first like to say the following. In the House, the rules apply even during adjournment proceedings. Members cannot refer directly to a document or object in their hand, nor to something on their desk or person. That would be a prop, and the rules say that props are not allowed.

● (1825)

[English]

Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, this colleague of the Prime Minister is forgetting that the same Prime Minister told Canadians to judge his government by the price at the checkout counter; they do not like the verdict. Families are falling behind, with millions resorting to food banks, while Liberals are lining the pockets of consultants, bureaucrats and certain investment portfolios with their tax dollars.

Many of these families voted based on the hopeful rhetoric of the Prime Minister that he would do things differently. Now, after 10 years of waste, what do Canadians get? There is not a plan or a budget, just more delays, more excuses and more empty promises. The shelves are bare, the cupboards are empty and the government is missing in action when we need decisive servant leadership.

The truth is simple: Every day the government spends recklessly and selfishly, life gets harder for the people who work hard and are playing by the rules. Canadians deserve a government that will end the abuse and the waste, balance the books and end the attack on Canadian prosperity. Canadians deserve leadership that puts them and their country—

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The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry.

[*Translation*]

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada strengthened the Competition Bureau's ability to prevent anti-competitive mergers and to address the anti-competitive practices of dominant firms in all sectors, including the grocery sector. We will take action to improve competition, and we will hold companies accountable throughout this process.

We will also continue to ensure that Canadians have enough information to make informed choices. At the same time, we recognize that global and external pressures, such as the U.S. tariffs, also impact Canadian consumers, workers and businesses. These pressures underscore the importance of having a coordinated, long-term approach to affordability and stable prices.

[*English*]

FINANCE

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' inflation is the slow undoing of a family's dignity, yet the government keeps driving the deficit higher with reckless inflationary spending that is even worse than Trudeau's. We already know, based on last year's economic statement, that the deficit was \$62 billion. Now, unfortunately, Canadians are bracing for something even larger. What do the Liberals tell us? They tell us not to worry; they are investments.

As a banking professional, I find that insulting. They can dress it up as operating versus capital, but that does not change the reality of the bank statement of a single mother. Groceries have doubled and rent has doubled, and she has to decide whether she feeds her children or pays her rent.

We know the statistics. Food inflation is now running 70% above target. Coffee is up 28%. Fresh and frozen beef is up 12%. Even infant formula is up 7%.

However, the statistics do not tell the full story. This summer, I sent a survey to my constituents in Newmarket—Aurora. I received hundreds of answers, and the answers broke my heart. Here are some of them. A young family told me they were a household with a combined income of six figures working long hours and were still struggling with affordability. Another family said the cost of living had gone too high and that their mortgage was three times higher. A senior wrote that they have to keep working because their pension and old age security are not enough to cover bills.

There was another senior who shared an anecdote with me. He said when he was little, his father taught him to work very hard and to give it his all so he could achieve what he wanted. The fact is, he gave it his all and is still unable to afford his house and his food.

These are not isolated cases. They are the everyday reality of Canadians across this country, yet after years of warning, the Liberal government shrugs. It puts forward a 1% tax cut and calls it relief, while families sink deeper and deeper into debt and despair.

Canadians are not asking for much. They are not asking for handouts. They are asking for a government that will hear their plea, restore affordability and give them back the hope of a future

where work pays, where savings count and where they can stand on their own two feet. The Liberals spend, they smile and they strip families of their basic necessities with no fiscal anchor in sight.

In the spring, I asked the Minister of Jobs and Families whether the Liberals will finally table a budget and reduce spending. The answer was clear: no budget, no discipline and more broken promises. Canadians deserve the truth about the cost of the government's recklessness, because it is not the Prime Minister paying for broken promises; it is Canadian families.

What is the deficit going to be this year? Will it be \$70 billion, \$80 billion or \$100 billion? I will ask this again: Will the Liberals keep asking parents to pay for their broken promises?

• (1830)

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the rate of inflation in the month of August was 1.9%. However, I agree with the member opposite. Statistics do not tell the whole story.

Our government is focused on building a stronger economy and delivering for Canadians. We are continuing to move forward with a plan to bring down costs so Canadians can keep more of their paycheques to spend where it matters most. We know that the cost of living is top of mind for Canadians.

That is why, earlier this year, we delivered landmark legislation designed to help make life more affordable for Canadians. We introduced a middle-class tax cut that will provide relief for nearly 22 million Canadians and will cost the public treasury \$27 billion over five years. It is not insignificant. We also removed the GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes valued at up to \$1 million, saving them up to \$50,000, and lowered the GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes, valued between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

These measures build upon other legislative achievements that we have passed, despite Conservative opposition, such as child care agreements, which will, by 2026, bring down the cost of child care in this country to \$10 a day, on average. This is one of the most important issues for young families, and it is helping more women enter and remain in the labour force. Pharmacare agreements will lower the costs of prescription drugs for Canadians, and the Canadian dental care plan, which has also helped over 1.7 million Canadians.

With these measures, we are delivering lower taxes, bringing down costs and putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians. Conservatives had a chance to support these measures to make life more affordable for Canadians. As always, they decided not to do that.

That is one of the reasons Canadians trusted us to release the next federal budget, which, as my colleague has announced, will be released on November 4. Budget 2025 will seize upon the generational opportunity to transform our economy through ambitious investments and rigorous discipline, ensuring every dollar goes further to build the strongest economy in the G7. It will invest in housing and infrastructure, catalyze private investment and strengthen partnerships with trusted allies. This will be a budget to truly meet the moment and build the strongest economy in the G7.

Truly, Canada is the north, strong and free. This is how we will create high-paying careers, grow our industries, protect our jobs, tap into new markets and build more resilient supply chains. The government will provide additional details on November 4, budget day.

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, I received no answer to my question. How much will the deficit be?

Let me remind the member that the Liberal government has been in power for the last 10 years. It is the reason why we have the statistics that we do.

I also want to point out that the government, the Liberal government, likes to wrap itself in its social programs as if these slogans were solutions, as if these programs were actually solutions. The fact is that its reckless economic policies have left Canadians poorer. Families cannot afford a home. They cannot afford groceries. They cannot see a future for their children.

Our economy is dead last in the G7, and what is the Liberals' answer? Their answer is to celebrate more dependence, more reliance on the state, as if the highest aspiration of a Canadian is to beg for government help. Conservatives reject that. We want a Canada where people stand tall, earn their success and can feel the pride in putting food on their—

• (1835)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry.

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, our economy is under attack from what we thought was a trusted neighbour. It is that fact that has led to the economic difficulties we have had this year. It is not government spending that is leading to inflation. It is the reckless politics and the reckless actions of our neighbours to the south.

The deficit will be known on November 4.

I will end with this, and I think many Canadians will agree. Social programs are not slogans. Social programs are important and are a main feature of what makes Canada Canada.

HOUSING

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all the municipalities in my riding have affordable housing as their top priority, and the housing minister is tasked with ad-

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ressing the housing crisis that has been caused by 10 years of failed Liberal policies.

The former minister of housing indicated that 550,000 units would need to be built every year for four years to catch up with the massive increase in immigration he caused. That is what is needed, but the current minister has just announced \$13 billion to build only 4,000 units. That is \$3.25 million per unit. That is not affordable housing, and it certainly does not bridge the gap.

I am not surprised; when the minister was the mayor of Vancouver, he helped create the most expensive housing bubble on the planet. To run the new government bureaucracy, he has now hired Ana Bailão, a former Toronto city councillor who was supposed to create affordable housing and instead created the second-highest-priced housing bubble on the planet.

I am always willing to help out the government, especially when it helps my riding, and so I made the minister aware of the list of affordable housing projects we have on the books in my riding that are shovel-ready.

The five projects in five years initiative will add 314 spaces for the low price of \$27 million. That is just \$86,000 per space, not \$3.25 million per space.

The County of Lambton has promised \$38 million for affordable housing and multiple municipality initiatives that could use the federal money to accelerate its projects of 450 units at \$84,000 per space.

Plympton-Wyoming is building 400 units for \$15 million, which are middle houses. That is \$37,500 a unit, not \$3.25 million.

There is also a plan to create 200 all-year-round trailers that will cost people between \$100,000 and \$150,000 to purchase. This is affordable.

For the low, low price of \$80 million, we could build 1,400 spaces at an average cost of \$57,000 per space, versus the Liberal plan to spend \$13 billion to get only 4,000 spaces. This \$13-billion boondoggle follows the \$4-billion housing accelerator fund that built exactly zero houses. The municipalities that received money from that fund actually increased the permitting fees for builders instead of creating affordable housing.

My question is for the minister: Will he give us \$80,000 in Sarnia—Lambton to build all the affordable houses that are shovel-ready, and when is he going to introduce a plan to build 550,000 units a year to address the continued mass migration? What specifically will he build that people can afford?

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Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our new government understands that housing affordability is important and that it is important for us to make life more affordable for Canadians. That is why we implemented tax cuts for middle-class, dual-income families, effective as of this past Canada Day. This will allow 22 million hard-working Canadians to save up to \$840 per couple per year, totalling \$27 billion for Canadians over five years. That is why we are eliminating the goods and services tax on first-time home purchases at or under \$1 million, saving buyers up to \$50,000 on their first home, and reducing the GST for homes priced between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

These measures are on top of changes to mortgage rules, like allowing 30-year mortgage amortizations for first-time homebuyers. Together, these measures will lower housing costs for Canadians and help young families buy their first home, a dream that was attainable for their parents' generation that we are working hard to help them realize.

We are committed to building a housing system that works for everyone. The Government of Canada has already signed over 240 agreements under the \$4.4-billion housing accelerator fund to incentivize municipalities to cut red tape, increase housing densification and speed up building. These actions are expected to support the permitting of more than 800,000 new homes over the next decade.

While there is more work to do, the Government of Canada is putting affordability front and centre because every Canadian should have access to a home they can afford.

The Government of Canada understands the urgency of the housing crisis and that it will take a collaborative effort to boost supply and restore affordability. That is why we launched “build Canada homes”, a new federal agency that will finance and build affordable housing at scale across our country. It will leverage public lands, offer flexible financial incentives, attract private capital, facilitate large portfolio projects and support manufacturers to build the homes that Canadians need.

“Build Canada homes” will build affordable housing by partnering with builders and housing providers focused on long-term affordability. It will focus on using Canadian-made materials and modern construction methods, such as factory-built housing, to catalyze an entire industry, one that builds faster and more sustainably.

This is a real plan, one that Canadians elected us to act on. On day one, we announced the acceleration of 4,000 units on six sites, with a potential for 45,000 more on those sites. It is just the beginning. Our plan builds on the successes of existing initiatives such as

the national housing strategy, which has reduced or eliminated housing issues for so many Canadians. The federal government is making historic investments in new housing with a new team Canada approach.

• (1840)

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I did not really hear the answers I was looking for. The Liberals are saying the \$13-billion bureaucracy is going to start with 4,000 homes, but the fact remains that nothing has been built and housing starts are down 13% in the country. Young people are losing hope of ever being able to afford a home.

We need to see the detailed plan. The minister has had six months. What is going to be built? How many apartments? How many modular homes, which Brookfield, and the Prime Minister as a direct result, will profit from, are going to be built? Where are they going to be built? What are the lists of the Crown lands that were promised were going to be turned over and turned into affordable housing?

With no plan and no details, it is clear there will not be any shovels in the ground any time soon.

Why does the government not get out of the way and give the money to communities like Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong that could build 1,400 units for the low, low price of \$80 million?

Jennifer McKelvie: Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect action, and that is exactly what the Government of Canada is delivering. I am so happy that our program will have a strong focus on affordable and supportive housing, something that is so very needed in our country.

The new federal agency “build Canada homes” will finance and build affordable homes at scale and will supercharge homebuilding across the country by leveraging modern methods of construction such as factory-built housing. It will support more affordable housing for low- and middle-income households so that Canadians can have access to a home within their means.

We have a real plan to build up our country. We want everybody to participate. We look forward to more information being shared about “build Canada homes” in the weeks ahead. It is time to build.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:44 p.m.)

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