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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, January 31, 2022

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

• (1100)

[*English*]

ORDER PAPER

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that, in accordance with the representation made by the government, pursuant to Standing Order 55(1), I have caused to be published a special Order Paper giving notice to a government bill.

[*Translation*]

I therefore lay the relevant document upon the table.

* * *

[*English*]

SITUATION IN UKRAINE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

There have been some discussions among the parties, and if you seek it I think you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion. I move:

That a take-note debate on the situation in Ukraine be held later today, pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, and that, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House: (a) members rising to speak during the debate may indicate to the Chair that they will be dividing their time with another member; (b) the time provided for the debate be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each; and (c) no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair.

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

Hearing no dissent, it is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

• (1105)

[*English*]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from December 13, 2021, consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to address the House today from my hometown of Halifax. I will be splitting my time today with the member for Vancouver Granville.

As this is the first opportunity I have had to offer extended remarks in the 44th Parliament, I wish to extend my most sincere thanks to the many who supported me in returning to this place.

All members in this chamber know that, while it is our names on the lawn signs, brochures and ballots, it is in fact a team of dedicated volunteers who share in and are behind our victories. This extraordinary honour is in thanks to them. I certainly would not be here were it not for the hundreds of volunteers who poured countless hours into my campaign, knocking on doors, making phone calls, putting up lawn signs, stuffing envelopes, making a contribution in support of a better Canada.

I believe political progress is made not behind a keyboard or through an avatar but on the doorstep through meaningful conversations between neighbours. It is an act of courage to climb the steps of a stranger's home, as my many volunteers did, and to engage them in our democracy at a time when, frankly, the heat of our national discourse has risen steadily. These millions of person-to-person interactions across the country are a welcome reminder that our disagreements do not need to divide us. Rather these connections reveal just how much we have in common: first and foremost, an earnest desire to make life better for ourselves, our loved ones and our communities.

I also want to thank my family and, most importantly, my daughter Daisy. Our loved ones make tremendous sacrifices so that we can serve our communities, and it is never easy to share one's parent or spouse with some 100,000 constituents. The best we can hope to do is to make them proud.

The Address

Of course, I must thank the people of Halifax who have now placed their trust in me for a third consecutive term. In my first campaign, I ran on a promise of being a champion for Halifax, to stand up for my city and help us reach the potential we always knew was possible. That is as true today as it was when I began. It is a promise kept.

It is an astonishing privilege to represent this riding, and I know that privilege was also felt by my predecessors. I want to recognize one member in particular, the late Alexa McDonough who held this seat from 1997 to 2008. News of her passing earlier this month brought forward thousands of moving tributes from across the nation and across the political spectrum, a testament to her remarkable life and career. Alexa broke through barriers and led a generation of women into politics. She will be remembered forever for her fearless and compassionate leadership. I invite all members to join me in extending our sincere condolences to her family, her loved ones and the millions that she inspired.

When I sat down to write my remarks for today, I took a moment to review my January 2016 maiden speech in this place in reply to the Speech from the Throne at the outset of the 42nd Parliament. I was pleased to see that, for many of the priorities I listed at that time, we have since made remarkable progress.

I came to the House as the first city planner elected to Parliament, following a decades-long career in the public, private and academic sectors. I made the jump into politics because I believed the federal government had left our cities behind. Years of chronic underinvestment eroded our municipal infrastructure. On housing, transit and climate, our cities were in desperate need of investment. My on-the-ground experience in community showed me the opportunity before us, the potential of our cities to power Canada's growth and prosperity, if only we could find the confidence to invest in our own future. That is exactly what we have done.

Our infrastructure plan, the banner policy of our 2015 platform, has invested \$100 billion into 75,000 projects in communities across Canada. Personally, I am very proud of the recent launch of Canada's first-ever national active transportation strategy and fund, the creation of which I had the honour of leading during my time as parliamentary secretary to the minister of infrastructure. This \$400 million fund launched on Friday will provide support for planning and capital for bike lanes, pathways and other active transportation infrastructure. This is the latest indication that our national urban agenda, the focus on my maiden speech and indeed my life in politics, is well under way. I am pleased to see it continue with the Speech from the Throne at the outset of this 44th Parliament.

This is an urban agenda to build a connected Canada with world-class local and regional public transit systems and bikeways that get us not just to work and back on time but dependably across the province. It offers an inclusive Canada with secure and affordable housing options for middle- and low-income Canadians, with quick and direct access to the places where we live, work and play; a resilient and sustainable Canada that is well prepared for the challenges that come with a changing climate and rising sea levels; cities that are cleaner and less reliant on sources of energy that pollute our air and water and harm our health; and cities that are less resource- and energy-intensive, doing more with less. It offers a vibrant and inclusive Canada strengthened by cities and communities

that feel like home to everyone, supporting our happiness and prosperity with community centres, libraries, museums, theatres and parks.

• (1110)

The Speech from the Throne underscores the government's priorities in these areas, reflecting the plan our party put forward in the 2021 election. The plan includes bold action on housing, providing 1.4 million new homes and introducing a suite of new measures, including a rent-to-own program, a new tax-free first home savings account, a more flexible first-time homebuyer incentive and a homebuyers' bill of rights, among many others. This builds on our national housing strategy, our 10-year, \$70-billion plan to build affordable housing across Canada. That plan is rolling out right now.

Homelessness is an urgent issue in Canada. In 2017, we pledged to reduce chronic homelessness by 50%. We launched over 12,000 projects and helped a million people find a place to call home. In 2020, we increased our commitment: to end and entirely eliminate homelessness in our country. It is a bold promise, backed by the necessary investment to get the job done. Here in Halifax, the rapid housing initiative is supporting hundreds of new units in partnership with our partners, including the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Adsum house, Souls Harbour Rescue Mission, the North End Community Health Centre and others.

Our government will continue our work to provide smart, urgent and lasting solutions for Canadians in housing need.

As the moment requires, the Speech from the Throne also focuses heavily on the climate crisis. There is no question that our time is running short. We must go further and faster in the fight against climate change. Included in the throne speech are measures to cap and cut oil and gas sector emissions, increase the price on pollution, mandate the sale of zero-emission vehicles, develop and implement Canada's first-ever national adaptation strategy, and continue to protect our lands and oceans in greater quantity.

Here in Halifax, I am working to protect the Northwest Arm from infilling that would have a dire environmental and ecological impact. Climate floods in B.C. and Atlantic Canada show us this is no time to be taking risks with key waterways like the Northwest Arm.

The Address

Of course, the throne speech also commits to finishing the fight against COVID-19, which continues to disrupt our way of life and challenge our economy. The government made a simple promise at the outset of the pandemic: to be there for Canadians as long as necessary. We have kept that promise, providing income support to workers, financial aid to small businesses and transfers to provinces to ensure our public health response is robust. We have shown ourselves to be flexible to the needs of Canadians and the small businesses they work at and rely upon.

As I speak to the House today, I know there are groups just outside its walls who protest the necessary public health measures we have enacted to keep Canadians safe. They have come to Ottawa with demands that the government lift all pandemic restrictions or resign. As members of Parliament, we must all condemn the hate groups that have attached themselves to the convoy and whose actions over the weekend have been deeply disturbing. Their contemptible behaviour and symbols of hate will not deter the government from protecting Canadians.

We know Canadians are exhausted by this pandemic, and no one more than our essential workers such as health care workers, grocery store clerks and, yes, truckers. However, I believe there is a light at the end of this tunnel. Science and compassion will lead the way. When we come out the other side, I choose to believe we will be stronger and more united, knowing that our freedom comes from our commitment to democracy and from our commitment to each other.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question.

Health transfers are needed to meet critical needs. Given that inflation has risen to an unprecedented rate of 4.8% and that supply problems will continue to grow, should we not hold the debate on health transfers now so that we can take action to deal with the pandemic?

• (1115)

[*English*]

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, as our government has stated from the outset of the pandemic, we will be there for Canadians for whatever they need, for as long as they need. Included in that is the necessity of transfers to the provinces. Health care transfers have increased to provide PPE and other services. That is just the tip of the iceberg. The transfers go into other things like supporting municipalities. The list is long, and we will be at it until we do not need to be anymore.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noted in the member's speech that he spoke about an action plan for housing. I am wondering if he can tell me what makes him think that what is in this throne speech is going to be an actual action plan.

There have been a lot of promises, but the housing crisis in Parry Sound—Muskoka is worse than it was when Liberals took office, so what is different this time around? Could he elaborate on that, please?

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka for his passion around the issue. I share that passion with him. Unfortunately, the strain that he is feeling in his riding is shared in my riding and across the country.

This national housing strategy that we began some years ago is building momentum monthly. As I mentioned in my speech, we are hundreds of units ahead just in the past year in my riding of Halifax alone, but the additional supports that the minister and cabinet are providing will be rolling out new homes at a very quick pace to support Canadians in need.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I first want to acknowledge my former leader, Alexa McDonough, who I ran with in 2002. On behalf of New Democratic staff, myself and our families, we reach out to extend condolences to all and are thankful for the gift to our country that we had in Alexa. It is important for us to recognize her work.

My question for the member is with regard to temporary foreign workers. We are waiting in Windsor-Essex County for the renewal of funding for a centre for temporary foreign workers who get sick with COVID. Over the break, there was the death of another migrant worker.

Will the member's government immediately fund the City of Windsor to continue that centre? There have been discussions, but there has not been a decision.

How does he feel about the fact that we are still waiting? People are still getting sick. Coming to Canada and dying is really not acceptable, especially when we know people can be safe when they arrive in our country.

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his kind words and remembrance of Alexa McDonough. She truly was a pioneer and remarkable leader in Canada.

It is tragedy whenever anybody gets sick, temporary foreign workers included. Temporary foreign workers are an important part of our seasonal economy and although I do not know the specifics of the case that the member is talking about, I do know that the ministers involved with this file are working hard to make sure that temporary foreign workers continue to be a healthy and important part of our economy.

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member is a big proponent of an urban national park in Halifax. I wonder if he could speak to the government's commitment and its plan to protect Canada's lands.

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, I always love an opportunity to talk about building communities and making them stronger, including parks. Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes is the future national urban park in Halifax. We look forward to working with the government and the community to get it right. This is an urban lung that is going to make sure our city remains healthy as the population grows and our remarkable urban renaissance continues.

The Address

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating the government on November's Speech from the Throne. Given what we have seen this weekend, and of course with the challenges posed by omicron, this may be a world away but it is in fact very real. The Speech from the Throne is all about moving forward from this pandemic and building a stronger economy and a better country for all.

The Speech from the Throne is about a few things. It is about making sure Canadians can get vaccinated, stay healthy and keep people safe. It is about building an inclusive society and a strong economy. The Speech from the Throne references a Canada where people do not fear living their full lives because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It notes Canadians understand that equity, justice and diversity are the means and the ends to living together.

That is why it is so important, in light of the events of this weekend, to reflect on that statement perhaps more than ever and the context of the hate-filled symbols, rhetoric and vitriol many of us saw being spewed by the crowds gathered outside the House of Commons.

I want to congratulate and thank many members of the government side, but also from the NDP and others, who spoke out against the hate they saw being spewed, particularly my friend the member for Timmins—James Bay, who stood up to those who threatened him online for trying to come to the House to do his job.

Many of us have seen the rise of this type of hate online and now in person. This hate is something many racialized Canadians experience online every day, as well as in person. This is why, through the commitments in the throne speech, we will continue to fight systemic racism, sexism, discrimination and misconduct and abuse, including in our core institutions. This will be a priority.

This is an important moment to rebuild for everyone. We are going to continue to invest in the empowerment of Black and racialized Canadians and indigenous peoples. We are going to continue to fight harmful content online and stand up for those who may not have voices for themselves.

The Speech from the Throne makes sure the business of taking care of Canadians will not stop. It cannot stop despite those who seek to obstruct it. Canadians want us to build an economy that truly works for everyone, from making historic investments in child care and climate action to tackling the rising cost of living. The Speech from the Throne lays out a bold plan that keeps Canada moving forward.

I would like to talk for a minute about what I have seen in my riding of Vancouver Granville. Our community is diverse, but we have a lot in common. On the doorsteps and in meetings, I hear the same concerns and see first-hand how investing in Canadians is making an immediate and positive impact.

Let us look first at housing. Since we introduced Canada's first national housing strategy, over \$6 billion has been invested in British Columbia alone. For families in B.C., this has meant building over 26,000 new housing units, repairing 9,300 homes and providing direct housing support to 92,000 B.C. families.

Home is where we continue the traditions of our past and plan our futures, and everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. That is why the housing accelerator fund, innovative programs such as rent-to-own, and a more flexible first-time home-buyer incentive will put home ownership in reach and make life more affordable for Canadian families.

Affordability is about more than just housing. It is also about making sure everyone can participate fully in the economy.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

The next step is \$10-a-day early learning and child care services.

Parents in British Columbia will see a 50% reduction in average fees for children under the age of six who are in regulated child care. Imagine what it will mean to families to know that their children are safe and cared for in an affordable early learning and care program.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has clearly shown that parents, and especially women, cannot fully participate in the economy without access to child care. By creating a Canada-wide early learning and child care system, the Government of Canada will make life more affordable for Canadian families and increase women's participation in the workforce, while creating new jobs and stimulating strong economic growth.

[*English*]

We entered this crisis in a strong fiscal position that allowed us to provide unprecedented support to Canadians during the pandemic. As noted by the OECD, Canada's recovery is expected to be the second fastest among the G7, and our net debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to decline and remain the lowest in the G7.

As of October, Canada had recovered more than one million jobs. In other words, there are more jobs for Canadians now than when the pandemic started, and the trend line continues up. November's job numbers show a gain of 154,000 jobs, which is almost five times higher than originally forecast.

However, while Canadians are back to work and we continue to see recovery well beyond our target of one million jobs, there is still more work to do.

We know that climate change is real and is a real threat. I have heard from many people in my riding that they are deeply concerned about climate change and protecting the environment, and I am too. That is why I am so proud that our Canadian climate action plan is ambitious and bold. It is not just a plan; it is action. Our plan moves forward to cap and cut oil and gas sector emissions, invest in public transit and mandate the sale of zero-emission vehicles.

However, we will not leave anyone behind. Our government will continue to invest in our workers and industry to help bring us into the economy of the future, while also taking action to clean the air that we breathe and protect Canadians from extreme weather events, like those that B.C. and many other provinces have experienced in recent months.

Part of the economy of the future means that every Canadian should feel safe and have a fair shot at getting ahead no matter what. As I said earlier, we will continue to stand up against systemic racism, sexism and discrimination in all its forms. We must acknowledge our responsibility to undo the colonial systems that have wronged and continue to affect first nation, Inuit and Métis communities in Canada. Every resident of Vancouver Granville has the honour to live, work and play on the traditional, unceded ancestral territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations, who have called this land home since time immemorial. We need to confront the legacy of residential schools, continue our work to eliminate all long-term drinking water advisories and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action. We must take action to confront systemic racism against indigenous people, especially in the justice system and in health care.

Finally, I want to speak about health care. My riding, as I have said many times, is the heart of B.C.'s health care infrastructure. It has a diverse, talented and proud group of health care workers who keep us healthy and safe every day. This is why we have invested \$5 billion in mental health care, which has been a major concern during the pandemic and beyond it. We need to ensure that mental health care is treated as a full and equal part of Canada's universal health care system.

I am excited to roll up my sleeves and work with all members of the House to ensure that we build back better and move Canada forward for everyone.

• (1125)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Vancouver Granville for raising the issue of affordability. We know that it is absolutely critical, especially in my riding of Windsor—Tecumseh.

I want to ask my colleague about child care and the fact that we signed agreements with 12 provinces and territories regarding affordable child care, save for Ontario at the moment. How will the affordable child care plan help supercharge our economy and boost our COVID recovery?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, from many constituents in my riding of Vancouver Granville, I have heard firsthand the impact that \$10-a-day child care will have on families

The Address

who have had to decide whether one parent was going to stay home or both parents were going to return to work. This is the type of situation we see across the country, save for in Ontario. People are now seeing the real impact of having two parents in the workforce, where there is that option. They do not have to decide between taking care of their children at home and putting their kids into a healthy learning environment. This helps reward the economy because it gives everybody the opportunity to get back to normal and live to their full potential.

I am super excited about what this means, and it makes a tremendous difference in ensuring that we are able to access the workforce we need and that people are able to work in the professions they have chosen.

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the new member to the House and thank him for his politeness.

I have a question with respect to inflation. Unfortunately, the Speech from the Throne did not address it, and the people in my riding are in very difficult positions. Some of them cannot afford housing. Some of them cannot afford food. With the cost of everything going up by multiple digits, and in some cases 10%, 15% and 20%, they are in an even more difficult position.

The member's leader was saying that monetary policy does not matter. Does the member feel the same way or does he care for his constituents like I do?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, like the hon. member, I care very much about the constituents in my riding, many of whom are feeling some of the same issues. The reality is that Canada has done much better vis-à-vis inflation than most other countries, the United States being the perfect example.

We continue to do the right things. We continue to invest in the right infrastructure and supports to bring goods to Canadians in a more affordable way than perhaps some of our allies and other friendly nations, including the United States. We are going to continue to work hard, and this Speech from the Throne makes sure that those steps are taken and that we do our best for Canadians.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his intervention.

As we know, the Speech from the Throne is meant to express a general intention and is one of the most significant moments in a new mandate and at the beginning of a new Parliament.

The Address

Here we have my colleague talking about child care centres and the importance of encouraging women to work. I am glad to see that Quebec has been a source of inspiration. They are welcome to do that, ideas are free for the taking. If Quebec can inspire other people, including our Canadian neighbours, we are thrilled. However, Ottawa's decisions must also be made with the utmost respect for Quebeckers.

Why, then, will the government not increase health transfers, with no strings attached?

[*English*]

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, there are historic commitments being made by this government to support health care in partnership with the provinces. We have seen investments in mental health, which is a big concern. We know that some provinces, like the Province of Quebec, have expressed their concerns and a desire for increased investments in mental health.

We will continue to work with the provinces. We will continue to have active conversations and make the right investments in partnership to make sure that Canadians are kept healthy and safe.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I note that the member talked about fairness and equity for indigenous people living in Canada. My colleague has put forward something that was called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: a guaranteed livable basic income. Would the member, in support of ensuring there is equality and fairness, support the member for Winnipeg Centre's bill, Bill C-223?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, on a personal level it is very important for us to examine and explore all options that increase affordability. I think it is incumbent upon any reasonable-minded person to do that. We have seen that when we support and take care of Canadians and take care of one another, everyone gets ahead, so I would be open, as I have been and I think as many of my colleagues are, to examining and thinking about all proposals that increase affordability and improve the quality of life of all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to let you know that I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Laurentides—Labelle.

I have not yet thanked my constituents for the last election, so I would like to do that now. I thank them with all my heart. This is the third time they have given me their support and renewed their trust in me. I am honoured. It is always a privilege to work for the people of the North Shore and the people of Manicouagan. I really do put all my energy into working tirelessly for them 24-7. From the bottom of my heart, I am immensely grateful to them.

We do not work alone. We have a team and a party, but there are also the people who work very closely with us. My North Shore team members are Jeff, John-James, Antoni, Marjorie, Jessie and Rita, as well as Josh, who sometimes joins the team as a North Shore man. I thank them from the bottom of my heart because I would be nowhere without them. It is important to be humble.

Obviously, an MP's job is to represent their constituents, all of their constituents. We each have a unique riding, but, as I like to

point out, my riding is roughly 350,000 square kilometres in area, with 1,300 kilometres of coastline. It is truly a coastal region bordering the sea, the river, the estuary, and the gulf. My riding even has two different time zones. I am here to represent all the files and priorities that are important to my constituents. I would like to name a few of the priorities to show how diverse they are.

I teach at the post-secondary level, and I have to say that my own students would not dare hand in any papers with such wide margins and large font to hide their lack of ideas. To me, that is what we find in the Speech from the Throne. I would like to talk about things that could have been addressed. Even though some issues are very specific, there are still broader guidelines and ideas that can inspire the government. In my opinion, this document is short in length and short on substance.

Rural and remote areas have needs, but often we are not heard and in fact we are forgotten. There should be some practical instruction about how things work in the regions, how people live and what needs they have.

I mentioned that my riding covers approximately 350,000 square kilometres, but we have a 400-kilometre area that does not even have any roads. In the summer, people get around by boat. In the winter, it is a little more complicated. People travel by snowmobile on what is known as the White Trail. However, this is no longer viable as a result of climate change. It is almost as if these people were living on islands. They need medications and Canada Post services. We are talking about food security and physical safety and security. They need certain goods every day. Canada Post has a monopoly, but it does not provide door-to-door delivery for parcels. I want to point out that people back home are currently very worried about the medications issue.

Wanda Beaudoin, a proud Coaster and mayor from the Lower North Shore, in my riding, passed away last year. She was not getting her cancer medications, which were coming in late. We made all kinds of suggestions to Canada Post. Anything is possible. I always say that if we can land on the moon then we can get medications delivered to the Lower North Shore. This is one of the major issues for the entire North Shore. We rely on these postal services, which are gradually eroding.

I have so much to say about my riding that I could talk for days, but I do want to say that the remoteness of the North Shore—that is not quite true: the big cities are far from the North Shore but we are not far from the big cities—causes a lot of concerns with respect to maintaining seasonal access. I drive at least 2,000 kilometres every week, and sometimes more when I travel throughout my riding, because air transportation, in particular, can be difficult.

• (1135)

It is very difficult for us to travel to visit family or attend doctors' appointments. We just cannot do it.

Some of my colleagues from the Maritimes are here today. It is much cheaper, almost half the cost, to travel from Moncton to Montreal than to travel from my home to Montreal. People simply cannot manage it, but everyone has the right to choose where they want to live and use the land.

I am talking about air transportation, but the same goes for roads, bridges and tunnels. In fact, there should be a tunnel connecting Quebec and Newfoundland. These issues are very important to me and they must be taken into account. Climate change is of course an issue, but it is just as important to think about those who still do not have road access.

I would also like to talk about other places in my riding, because it is very diverse. Let us talk about Anticosti, that massive island of ours that is bigger than Montreal and Prince Edward Island. People live on the island, and prices are outrageous on the North Shore. Municipalities in the region are remote and do not have year-round access to the mainland, to the continent, as we say back home. They need money, a tax credit so they can buy high-quality, affordable food. Michel Charlebois, a resident I spoke to in my office a while back, said that they are not even entitled to that tax credit.

On the island, no boats can dock for five months of the year. The residents are forced to stock up on food and it is extremely expensive. In fact, if my colleagues come to my riding, they will notice that a can of Maxwell House costs \$55 in the north. It is not necessarily what one would call premium coffee. We have huge problems with food, and we need to think about these folks who live in the area and contribute to economic development in our regions. They provide a presence and we must support them. In the Throne Speech, there is nothing for the remote areas. The intent is not even there, so what is going to happen when we get to the actual spending?

I would also like to talk about employment insurance because I think what is happening now is unacceptable. I am not talking about workers in the seasonal industry, but rather about workers suspected of EI fraud. They have not had any money since November. They are being told that they will have to wait for their file to be reviewed, yet there is already a backlog of nearly 93,000 files and not enough staff to process them. Last week, the minister announced a staffing increase, but they are only investigating fraud.

These people have had no money since November. They are being told to go to food banks and to prove that they are not fraudsters. They are being asked to call the Quebec government to apply for social assistance, which is unacceptable. We really need to support them. There is talk of reform, but there is already something that could be done. We do not always need reform before we can take action. The minister could have simply listened to the Bloc Québécois' proposal, which is to first provide benefits to people and then deal with the issue of fraud. These two elements must be separated. We were able to do that with CERB, and we can do it now with EI.

The Address

We also need to talk about first nations. The Innu and Naskapi make up 15% of the North Shore's population. That is very important to me as the indigenous affairs critic. We need to take action on the ground. The big issues are economic development and ending violence. The pandemic has hit first nations harder than most. What they need is housing. That is what all the chiefs are asking for. Ghislain Picard, whom I congratulate on his recent re-election as chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, has been asking for housing for years. People need housing.

Demographically, things are booming. We are seeing more and more kids and big families. People need homes to keep first nations children and families safe and whole. Then they can look at development opportunities. Actually, we can tackle both at the same time.

I know I do not have much more time. Anyone can see what I am passionate about. I swear to my constituents, from Tadoussac to Blanc-Sablon and Kawawachikamach to Anticosti Island, that I will continue to stand up for what matters to them.

• (1140)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member made reference to the issue of health care. I truly believe that Canadians as a whole, no matter what region of the country they are from, appreciate and value our health care system. One of the things we have learned from the coronavirus is that there is a high level of interest in the federal government playing a role in looking at long-term health care standards.

I wonder if the member would recognize that, no matter where in Canada, there seems to be a need for long-term health care standards for our seniors. I wonder if she would support that idea.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. If we were to ask the Government of Quebec or the Quebec National Assembly whether Quebec needs Canada to tell us how to run our health care system, an area that does not fall under federal jurisdiction at all, we would be told that Quebec is happy with its own standards. Quebec is able to work with what it currently has. All we need is for the money to come back to Quebec and to the provinces because all of the premiers have been calling for health transfers. This is not magic.

The federal government is, of course, free to look after its own affairs. For example, it can manage the pandemic within its own areas of responsibility while simply transferring money to the provinces and Quebec, who know very well what to do with that money, which has been lacking for a long time.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, since this is the first time that we are speaking in the House since this weekend's events, I, too, would like to condemn the hateful protests that are still ongoing in our capital.

The Address

I stand in solidarity with all those in Ottawa and across the country who are taking action against hate in our communities and across Canada. I also join those, including our leader, who are calling on these protesters to leave Ottawa and free up the streets so we can get around again and get back to our lives.

I would like to ask my colleague a question. She has spoken before about the housing crisis in indigenous communities in her region. That crisis exists in my region too.

Does she agree that the current housing crisis is no accident, but rather the result of a lack of funding—

• (1145)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Manicouagan.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Mr. Speaker, I will answer my colleague's question, which she did not get to finish, but yes, it is due to a lack of funding, a lack of foresight, and a failure to listen to first nations, who have been talking about it for the past 20 years.

Quebec alone is short more than 10,000 homes. Those 10,000 homes represent the shortfall that needs to be made up in just the next five years, and that number does not even include additional needs.

It is quite obvious that nothing was planned or invested, and the government now has a problem it does not seem to know how to solve.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member could further expand on this from the Bloc's perspective. Canadians from coast to coast to coast, even people in Quebec, understand and appreciate that the federal government can and should play a role in ensuring that the health care system supports things such as the Canada Health Act.

Why is the Bloc going against what, I would suggest, many citizens of Quebec want to see?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Mr. Speaker, at the risk of repeating myself, the National Assembly unanimously supports health transfers. Granted, it is somewhat of a shared jurisdiction, but Quebec is the one with all the expertise.

I believe the member talked about playing a role in the health care system, which I always find interesting. The money is in Ottawa, but the needs are in the provinces. There is a fiscal imbalance, and we do not talk about it often enough.

The needs are there. The Quebec and provincial governments are asking for this. I will say it again: The federal government needs to transfer the money and stay within its own jurisdiction.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is my opportunity to talk about the throne speech.

As my colleague mentioned earlier, a throne speech should reflect the broad strokes of the government's plans for the mandate it received in the last election.

I understand that this government is disappointed to be in a minority situation. However, since its only objective was to win a majority at taxpayers' expense, it could have made more of an effort.

The mandate it has been given clearly includes more than this road map, and its ideas and intentions remain unclear. There is nothing about health transfers, which my colleague called for earlier, as did the Premier of Quebec and Canada as a whole. There is nothing on the energy transition or a green finance plan. There is nothing on the employment insurance reform that is needed and has been requested for decades to provide 50 weeks of benefits for serious illnesses, which we could have voted on this fall. There is nothing about seniors' purchasing power, nothing to support our agriculture. What are people supposed to do for the next four years?

I repeat, the Bloc Québécois defends and will continue to defend health transfers because there is a consensus on this issue, not just in Quebec, but in all the provinces of Canada. An increase from 22% to 35% is not too much to ask when we consider that it was 50% a few decades ago. Therefore, the Bloc Québécois will continue to talk about it. I would also like to commend my colleague from Montcalm for his efforts on the issues of health and pandemic management.

In my question earlier, I mentioned that inflation is also causing supply problems throughout our health care system. I think there is a need to act, and to act now.

I would like to remind the House that on December 2, 2020, the Parliament of Canada adopted a Bloc Québécois motion calling on the government to significantly and sustainably increase Canada health transfers before the end of 2020 in order to support the efforts of Quebec and the provinces, health care workers and the public. Members will recall that all parties were in favour of this motion, with the exception of the Liberal Party, which voted against it.

On March 1, 2021, the leaders of the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, the Confédération des syndicats nationaux, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec and the Centrale des syndicats démocratiques stressed the importance of increasing these transfers to address the crisis in public services stemming from the pandemic.

Let us talk about climate change, a topic of major concern when I talk to my constituents in Laurentides—Labelle. Unfortunately, the government is content to repeatedly say that we have to put our words into action. This has been an urgent issue since 2015, but as we know, they do not walk the talk. That needs to stop.

We have invited the government to implement a real energy transition and to stop subsidizing the Canadian oil and gas industry. We have to change Canada's energy trajectory to help keep the increase in temperature below 1.5 degrees. The situation is critical.

The other thing we keep saying and will continue saying is that we must stop increasing oil sands production and gradually reduce crude oil production entirely by 2030, which is fast approaching. Even though the government now claims to want to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies, the Minister of Finance has refused to define, I fear these subsidies might end up being disguised as assistance in helping to reduce the carbon intensity of oil and gas.

The Address

People need to know. Let us be clear. We are calling for the immediate end of any type of subsidy for fossil fuels.

• (1150)

On behalf of future generations, our children, our constituents, our regions and our resources, we are calling for an ambitious green recovery. We must shift to a green economy. The Bloc Québécois has come up with a road map for realizing the potential of Quebec's forestry sector, which is a major segment of the economy in my riding.

As I mentioned earlier, Quebecers are rightfully very worried about the cost of living. Food, clothing and housing prices are major concerns. The increase in the cost of gas, rent and groceries has caused inflation to rise to 4.8%. The consumer price index, or CPI, has had its largest spike since 2003. One way to protect the public from the effects of inflation and to stabilize the economy is to ensure that people have decent buying power.

Another major challenge is the labour shortage, which is also leading workers to try to find better jobs or to renegotiate their wages. I myself am an entrepreneur, and I can assure my colleagues that things are extremely tough right now.

What should we do? Here are a few Bloc Québécois suggestions.

Wages obviously do need to increase, but it will take money and a concrete plan to address the labour shortage. We also need to increase health transfers.

We suggested seven measures, including assistance to help businesses with automation and tax incentives for our seniors. Seniors have a great deal of experience, and they want to give back to society and share their knowledge. However, when the government keeps making changes that change nothing, it is not hard to see why they do not want to enter the job market.

I have met with many organizations and businesses in Laurentides—Labelle in recent weeks to talk about foreign workers in agriculture. These issues are key parts of the economy back home. I want to acknowledge my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé and my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean, who have been raising the issue of the unwarranted processing delays for applications to bring in temporary workers. I am sure members recall hearing the famous August 13 last year.

I now want to talk about our municipalities, which are telling us that housing will be the main issue in 2022. As my hon. colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert would say, we cannot talk about housing without talking about access to housing. Prices are rising everywhere and, as my colleague from Manicouagan pointed out just now, there is a significant shortfall. I want to share something that a mayor had to say on this, as follows:

The pandemic turned the long-standing housing shortage into an actual crisis. The shortage no longer affects only urban areas; it has expanded into all regions of Quebec. This has far-reaching consequences for even the smallest municipalities. We must take decisive and practical action now based on the three fundamental principles of affordability, accessibility and equity.

In conclusion, my constituents are disappointed, and I truly hope that the government will do something meaningful soon.

• (1155)

[*English*]

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech the member just presented; however, there is one aspect that all Canadians should be thinking about, and that is how best to help the entire globe, and that is certainly not to take a run at Alberta's oil sands, because if we look at the way our oil sands are developed and the ecological aspect of them, they are world class.

The key component I would ask the hon. member about is this: Where else in the world would her constituents want to have their oil and gas come from, if not from our great Canadian sources?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

I am hearing a heartfelt plea regarding the fragility of the economy in connection with fossil fuels. I understand that. When we talk about a move toward green energy, we know that we need to support businesses in that transition so that it is not disastrous for them. However, for now, there is nothing to indicate that the use of oil is good for the health of the planet.

Obviously, all of the suggestions that we are making, such as the electrification of transportation, seek to reduce emissions in order to meet the 2030 target, while helping businesses. We need to meet that target because 1.5 degrees of warming is already too much.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the announcements that we have gone over with a number of provinces now is the child care plan. It is a true national child care plan that would help so many people from coast to coast to coast. It is somewhat modelled after the Quebec child care plan, and I am wondering if the member can provide her thoughts in terms of the positive impact that \$10 child care had in the province of Quebec and the potential benefits all Canadians are going to be able to see with programs such as the one that has been brought in by this government.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Once again, I am pleased to explain that there are examples to follow, such as the child care centres that have had a major impact on Quebec's economy over the past 25 years. We have already shown that our approach works, and I hope that it will be adopted as quickly as possible by the other provinces in order to help their economies.

When we make suggestions, we are not trying to get our own way or gain power. We are here to represent the interests of our constituents, so the more our colleagues listen to our suggestions, the better off we will be during this never-ending pandemic.

The Address

• (1200)

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the throne speech is ultimately a reflection of the last election, which was useless. Maybe the Liberal government could have taken this opportunity to connect with the people of Quebec, especially seniors.

Why does my colleague think the Liberal government insists on creating two classes of seniors, even as inflation surges?

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I salute my colleague from Montcalm.

What a good question. Why do that when all this is going on? The provinces, Quebec, the institutions and the economists studying inflation tell us that enough is enough. It is time to take action on health transfers.

I do not know the answer to my colleague's question, but we are going to keep asking, because the government is the only one that does not realize that time is of the essence. It is not just because of the pandemic, but that should be reason enough to transfer the money now.

[English]

Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me say up front that I will be splitting my time with my colleague, neighbour and friend, the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

It is an incredible honour to rise today to deliver my first full speech in this House. I would like to congratulate all members on their successful elections. I look forward to working together collaboratively in this Parliament to make the lives of all Canadians more affordable, more prosperous and more free.

Before I begin, I would like to give my sincere thanks to all those who helped to get me to where I am today. I would like to thank the people of Flamborough—Glanbrook for placing their trust in me and bestowing on me the privilege and duty to be their voice. It is an honour that I will never forget.

There are many people to thank, and of course it is impossible to name them all in a short period of time.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my amazing wife, Tracy. She is here in the gallery with us today. Her unwavering love and support has meant so much to me for so many years. I am nothing without her.

I would also like to thank everybody who played a large or small role on my campaign. Without their hard work, dedication and belief in me, I would not be here today.

I would also like to recognize my predecessor, David Sweet, for his 15 years of service in this House and to our communities. I am grateful for his friendship of 18 years and I wish him and Almut all the best in their new adventures in New Brunswick.

Each and every member in this House has a unique path that brought them here today. As a Canadian of Dutch heritage, mine began with my grandparents. It was from them, my parents and the adversities that they had to overcome that I draw inspiration and purpose.

My *omas* and *opas* chose Canada to build a better life for their children and grandchildren. They lived through wartime Holland and the brutal *Hongerwinter* of 1944 and 1945 when the Dutch were almost starved to death. In fact, my Opa Muys played a role in the Dutch resistance and, in his quiet way, did what he could to fight against the atrocities being inflicted on Holland by Nazi Germany.

I am mindful of them today as I wear this lapel pin in honour of the liberation of Holland by Canadian troops. The Kingdom of the Netherlands produced this pin in 2020 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation. It is an artful combination of the torch of freedom and the dove of peace. I think those are lessons we can draw from and learn here today.

Like so many from every corner of the world throughout the history of our nation, my grandparents came to Canada because it was the land of opportunity and hope. I am ever so grateful that Canada welcomed them with open arms. It is this Canada, the beacon of opportunity, freedom, democracy and hope that is the greatest country on earth, and we should never be ashamed to say so.

My own story begins in a small hamlet outside Hamilton, Ontario, called Copetown. It is where I grew up, went to school, attended church and worked my first student job, and it has made me who I am today. Years ago, the local Lions Club dubbed Copetown “the hub of the universe”. While I think that slogan was first conceived in jest, it is fitting in many ways, because it is the kind of place where you can dream big. While I had no idea that my journey would take me here, I am proud to represent Copetown in Parliament and bring with me its values of hard work, honesty, respect and helping your neighbour. That is why I am here. It is because a middle-class kid from Copetown can be here.

My brothers and I were very fortunate to have that middle-class upbringing. My mom was a nurse, my dad a bricklayer, and together they had a small farm with chickens and hogs and some beef cattle. It was an idyllic setting and a great place for kids to grow up, but like all parents, they had to make sacrifices from time to time to ensure their kids could get all they needed. Sometimes those choices were tough, but we always got by.

I worry today that the middle-class dream, that opportunity, is slipping away because of the direction of the government. That is why I am here to help change it.

• (1205)

Tracy and I do not live far from Copetown today. We are truly blessed to live in some of the most beautiful countryside of God's creation. Flamborough—Glanbrook is surrounded by the Niagara Escarpment, the northern reaches of the Carolinian forest and Cootes Paradise, all designated a world biosphere reserve.

I have also had the privilege to live and work in Alberta and Quebec. What an amazing country. Whether driving the Icefields Parkway through the majesty of the Rocky Mountains, hiking to the top of Cap Trinité in the Saguenays for the breathtaking view at the top, or whale watching in Tadoussac, it is spectacular. All of these experiences beat in my heart.

Canadians are amazing people. They are kind and generous. They have integrity, and they work hard. It is why people come to and are drawn to Canada, just as my *omas and opas* from war-torn Europe did.

In a country as divided as ours today, I choose to stand for hope. I choose to seek the things that unite us and not divide us. I choose to bring people together and build up Canada because the division in this country hurts my soul.

That is why I am disappointed in the government's throne speech. In the interests of time, I will focus on three things that impact the people of Flamborough—Glanbrook very personally and directly: the cost of living crisis; the lack of a comprehensive plan for the recovery; and ensuring all Canadians have access to reliable Internet.

Because of the cost of living crisis, I worry greatly that the middle-class life in Canada is increasingly unattainable. Sixty per cent of Canadians are worried about paying for their groceries. In the past week alone, we saw the highest gas prices ever in Hamilton and the GTA. Seniors in my riding living on fixed incomes are squeezed, and they are worried. That is why my colleagues and I were so disappointed to hear the word "inflation" mentioned just once in the government's throne speech.

Moreover, housing prices are out of reach for an entire generation of Canadians. For the first time in history, young people in Canada today do not believe that their lives will be better than their parents' lives were. This is sad to me.

Where is the plan for the recovery to help small businesses get back on their feet, fix disrupted supply chains and drive innovation? This recovery includes rural Canadians and the need for them to have access to reliable Internet because, if the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that access to reliable high-speed Internet is no longer a privilege for some, but a necessity for all. Unfortunately, this is an issue for many people in the rural parts of my riding and across Canada, and they know it too well.

Our words and actions in the House matter. They matter to the families struggling to put food on their tables. They matter to the farmer who gets up before the crack of dawn to ensure that food gets to market. Canada is a country made up of wonderful people, from every walk of life, race, religion, creed and sexual orientation. It is that tremendous strength that makes me hopeful for the future of this country, despite the encumbrances we currently face.

Yes, there are many issues facing Canada, and I talked about only a few today. Canadians want hope and Canadians want light. Canadians want to be heard, so let us listen to them. We can disagree yet still respect each other's point of view.

The Address

Let us put more emphasis on what unites us than on what divides us. Let us build Canada to be the land of hope and opportunity once again. We are Canadians. This is a fight worth fighting.

• (1210)

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I speak today with a very heavy heart as the member for Ottawa Centre. Many of us are here on Parliament Hill. Within a block in all three directions of this beautiful Parliament there are residents. They are the people who reside here and who have built their lives here.

My community is under siege right now. For three days in a row, residents have been unable to sleep. They feel they have been harassed and intimidated, and they have been yelled at. The front of their homes have been defecated on and urinated on.

We all believe in peaceful protest, which is the hallmark of our democracy, but there is also the right to live peacefully. I, as the member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre, ask all members, including the member who just spoke about listening to the other side, to please ask the protesters to leave the residential areas of my community alone. They can make their point on Parliament Hill, but let us make sure the residents who live here can live peacefully and not have to accept any hate.

The Jewish members of my community are rattled. They are really rattled by the symbols of hate they have seen. We ask the protesters to please stop and to respect the community I represent.

Mr. Dan Muys: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Ottawa Centre for his question and offer him best wishes for the new year. It is a very serious question with respect to what we have seen this past weekend and what we are seeing very much today outside of this chamber.

I stand in support of the farmers and the vegetable producers in Flamborough and Glanbrook I have talked to who need trucks to get their product to market. I respect the right of the thousands of people out there on Parliament Hill, and I agree with the member that they should leave the residential neighbourhoods alone, to express their frustration with the government, because that is what they are feeling. They feel that they are not being heard or listened to, as I spoke to earlier.

I put a statement on Facebook yesterday, as well as mentioned in my speech, that the hate symbols, the swastikas and the desecration of the National War Memorial, which is where Corporal Nathan Cirillo from my hometown of Hamilton gave his life in service to the country, are unacceptable. My grandfather worked as part of the resistance to fight the Nazis in Europe. We wholeheartedly condemn those acts of violence, but we do respect the right of peaceful protest within—

The Deputy Speaker: Continuing with questions and comments, the hon. member for Nunavut has the floor.

The Address

• (1215)

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.* I was glad to hear the member talk about the middle class. Unfortunately, within many first nation, Métis and Inuit communities, there are too many who are still living in poverty. I would like to give a brief example of my home community of Igloolik, where the temperature right now is -34°C. Its population is 1,700 people. Out of the 472 cases in Nunavut, 108 are in Igloolik.

The overcrowded housing situation in Igloolik is deplorable. I was recently informed that Buffy lives in a unit with nine people and three families. Dorcas lives with 11 people and three families. Elisapi lives with nine people in a three-bedroom unit. Shannon lives with eight people in a two-bedroom unit. Paniapik lives with 17 people in a four-bedroom unit with four families. Brenda lives in a three-bedroom unit with two families and five people in one bedroom. Joyce lives with 14 people in a three-bedroom unit.

Will the member support the need to increase housing commitments toward northern and indigenous communities?

Mr. Dan Muys: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Nunavut for the question and offer best wishes for the new year.

I certainly support the need for housing in all parts of this country. We know there is a housing crisis and that it is unaffordable for the many young and new Canadians who are seeking housing. The hon. member for Nunavut gave many examples in her community as well.

It is something that every party in this House should be concerned about, and we certainly await the long-promised strategy from the government, which has yet to be delivered.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a representative of the riding of Haldimand—Norfolk. Before I begin my thoughts on the Speech from the Throne, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Haldimand—Norfolk for electing me. I am here today, and every day of Parliament, to speak on their behalf and look out for their interests. It is my sincerest hope that they will see and hear in me a strong voice that represents their interests.

I want to thank my staff, volunteers and supporters who helped me to get here. Specifically, I would like to thank my mentor, Diane Finley, for the time she invested in me over the past year. I would also like to thank my family and friends for the love and support they have shown me.

My thoughts in response to the Speech from the Throne begin with the need for unity in the House and in the country.

It may seem rather cliché to talk about unity, especially from the benches of the opposition, but I remind those in the House that we are in fact referred to as “Her Majesty’s loyal opposition”. We may act in opposition to the government, but only out of loyalty to our country. We oppose only because we are attempting to provide a check upon government when it drifts from the mandate of working on behalf of all Canadians. I believe that in the House we should be united in our zeal to work for the betterment of all Canadians.

I am deeply concerned that we Canadians are in peril of a house divided, not just in this House, but across our entire nation. This is

a vast country with many regional differences that make us unique. Those differences can make us stronger when we are united. However, when we are divided, those differences will tear us apart. Sadly, the actions of the government over the past several years have only furthered the divisions in this country.

We have paid Canadians to stay home while local restaurants and businesses close due to shortages of staff. Canadian family businesses are dying. Many small business owners are living off of their credit cards. So many Canadians cannot afford food or a decent place to live.

We, to this day, push legal refugees to the back of the line while opening the gates to illegal border crossers at Roxham Road. We are letting people who are safe in a country such as the United States jump the line ahead of those facing real persecution and death in their homelands. People who could be killed just for being a member of the LGBTQ+ community in their country, for their faith, or for simply criticizing government or media are now pushed to the back of the line.

We make grand speeches condemning atrocities like slavery and racism against indigenous people, and we then tell thousands of indigenous women sold into sex trafficking that it is called “sex work” and that it is empowering.

We say we honour veterans, but force veterans who were injured while serving our country to requalify for disability once they return home. Instead of providing decent housing and pensions for our veterans, we have the nerve to tell them that they are asking for too much.

We praise our seniors for building this country, but leave them with less money than we are paying a 20-year-old student to not go to work. We also condemn Canadian oil and gas and fossil fuels, but import endless crude oil from nations with poor human rights and disastrous environmental records.

• (1220)

We say we are for women’s choice, but then threaten to defund centres that care for pregnant women in crisis if those women do not make a choice that we agree with.

We recognize the need to prevent protesters from interrupting and blocking critical care facilities like hospitals, but not railroads. We show up at protests and take a knee, but hide from 100,000 truckers and citizens who are rallying for democracy.

The Address

We call for reconciliation with indigenous communities and an end to protesting, but fail to realize that we too can extend the simple olive branch of providing clean water on reserves. Perhaps this good-faith gesture may be the first step toward resolving some of the discontent and inequality felt by people living on reserves. In the end, everybody suffers when we fail to take steps to resolve critical disputes, like the blockades on the Six Nations reserve in Caledonia.

Our House in Canada is not just divided; it is becoming fractured. Wedge political issues have resulted in pitting Canadians against each other. Environmental protection is pitted against economic sustainability. Vaccinated Canadians are pitted against unvaccinated Canadians. Urban Canadians are pitted against rural Canadians, including farmers and law-abiding firearms owners. These are some of the divisions that serve to further divide our national House.

This divided House of Commons is in danger of losing the confidence and support of the Canadian people, one-third of whom chose not to vote in the last federal election. I am very concerned that one of the biggest challenges facing our future will be the restoration of public confidence in institutions such as the media and government. A divided Canada, divided among racial, regional and generational lines, is in danger of losing its purpose. It is in danger of losing its capacity to deal with national issues, from economic growth to environmental protection to health care and the protection of basic human rights.

This may all sound bleak, but I did not get into politics because I lacked faith in Canadians. In fact, I have a great deal of hope in the future of our nation. I believe that we can make great strides to regain national unity if we put Canadians first.

The past few years have seen our regions being torn apart, set against each other, with the end result being regional discontent. This is what happens when politicians see distinct regions of our country as political opportunities. Only by recognizing what makes each region of Canada unique and special will we begin to unite this country once again. Outside of Parliament today, we see hundreds of thousands and perhaps millions of people across this nation united to rally for democracy and end discriminatory mandates.

A House divided cannot stand, so today I call upon our friends in the House from all parties to unite in fighting issues that go beyond partisanship, because together and united we can truly be a nation strong and free.

● (1225)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I disagree wholeheartedly with the member's comments, given programs such as the CPP, the health care accords and the more recent child care plan. This is not to mention the pandemic itself, during which we have seen Canadians of all political stripes from all regions of the country, stakeholders and non-profit groups working together as one team to take on the pandemic. In comparison with the rest of the world, Canada is doing exceptionally well. The division that the member makes reference to is a division within her Conservative caucus. Her speech might have been more appropriate at a Conservative caucus meeting, I would suggest.

Does the member recognize that the greatest division within Canada regarding COVID, from a political point of view, is within her own caucus? Will she deliver her speech to her caucus colleagues?

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Speaker, division does not only exist within our nation. We aspire for unity of all regions. Division does not only exist within my party. It exists within the Liberal Party too. I remind the member opposite of what happened to the Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould and the Hon. Dr. Philpott, and how the Liberals treated those members of Parliament.

Division is not something that happens within just one party. We could also highlight the last leadership race and the last election for the Green Party's leader, and the way the Green Party leader was treated. This is not based in just one party or one aspect of the country. The antidote of unity is something we must all aspire to.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke at length about issues dividing Canadians.

The best example of that is health transfers. In the 1970s, health transfers covered 50% of health spending in Quebec and the Canadian provinces. Now they cover just 22% of health care costs. The pressure on our health care systems is intense, but the Liberal government is using that money to interfere in areas under provincial jurisdiction and impose national standards.

What are my colleague's thoughts on that?

● (1230)

[*English*]

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Speaker, with respect to transfer payments in provincial-federal jurisdiction, the health care system is something every Canadian deserves equal access to. It is very important that the federal government maintains basic standards and maintains the standards that all provinces must adhere to.

Just last year, we witnessed the deplorable standards in long-term health care facilities and the conditions that our most precious seniors had to endure. We need national standards to make sure that every province has a minimum level to adhere to and that all Canadians are treated with equal dignity within a health care system that meets their health care needs.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am trying to sort through a great deal of rhetoric that I heard in the member's speech, as I am sure many of my colleagues are trying to do as well.

The Address

The member spoke about equality and about people being torn apart. I can agree with that, absolutely. However, one of the roles of Her Majesty's loyal opposition is proposition. There are things the New Democrats have been fighting for to ensure equality, and one of those pieces is income inequality. We put forward ideas such as pharmacare, tax fairness, the elimination of tax loopholes and a guaranteed livable income.

Would the hon. member support fighting income inequality so we can be more united and stop fighting each other because we are desperate for equality?

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Speaker, income inequality is something we should all aspire to eliminate, but the best way to eliminate income inequality is to cut red tape and get businesses back to work. There are so many businesses that have been devastated by this pandemic. If we had policies that would incentivize and assist these small businesses, which employ over 80% of Canadians, we would get people back to work. That would assist in reducing income inequality.

Mr. Han Dong (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time today with the hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

It is with great pleasure that I rise today to speak in support of the throne speech. I would like to begin by thanking the people of Don Valley North for placing their renewed trust in me to be their voice in Ottawa. I am incredibly humbled by this great responsibility. As I said in my first speech in 2019, I will strive every day to ensure that the perspectives, concerns and diverse opinions and beliefs of my community are thoughtfully and comprehensively represented in the House. I would also like to thank my family, friends, staff and incredible volunteers, without whom I would not be here. I am thankful for their generosity and support every day.

In preparing for today's speech, I took some time to reflect on 2019, when I first rose in the House to give a speech. I remember my feeling of excitement and eagerness as we stared down the tremendous opportunities we faced. Little could I have imagined that within six months the world would change so drastically. Reflecting back, it was not the way I imagined I would serve my first term in Parliament. We replaced handshakes with elbow bumps, I learned a lot about Zoom, and Facebook Live took the place of in-person events.

However, after nearly two years of battling a worldwide pandemic and the devastation it brought, I can say that I am proud of the way Canadians have come together and persevered.

After enduring the long, lonely days of the pandemic last winter, none of us would have imagined we would be up against the same this winter. Canadians have made great strides in the fight against COVID-19, but the emergence of the omicron variant is a stark reminder that the battle is not over.

While the fight is not finished, Canadians have a lot to be proud of. Nearly 90% of Ontario residents 12 years and older are fully vaccinated and more than 40% have received their booster dose, and over 50% of children aged five to 11 have received their first dose, including my son.

We also know that to finish the fight against COVID-19 here at home, we need to fight it around the world. No one is safe until everyone is safe. That is why Canada is doing its part to end the pandemic by donating vaccines through the COVAX facility. Canada has already made almost 100 million doses available through donations and monetary contributions, and by the end of this year, we will donate at least 200 million doses, making Canada one of the most generous donors to COVAX.

Our country is doing its part to end the pandemic, and that is exactly what our Liberal government will continue to do. However, the job is not done yet. We need to encourage Canadians who have not yet done so to get their shots. We need to support and strengthen long-term care and improve access to mental health and addictions treatment, which many consider to be the pandemic within the pandemic.

The environment was also on the minds of many this past year. My heart goes out to those in B.C. who have been devastated by flooding and wildfires. There is no denying the impacts of climate change anymore. People in Don Valley North want to see big emitters pay the price for pollution, and I am glad to see the government is increasing the price on pollution while putting more money back into the pockets of Canadians.

I am also happy to see we are protecting our lands, waters, green spaces and ravines. We know that to create a strong economy and jobs, Canada must take bold climate action. Canada has the raw materials and skilled workforce to produce the clean products the world will need to cut pollution and transition to a green economy. It is more obvious today than ever that this is not the time to debate whether climate change is real. It is time to act. I am glad to see our Liberal government doing exactly that.

It is no surprise to residents of Toronto and Don Valley North that life has been getting more expensive over the past couple of decades, especially for anyone who is trying to buy a home. Time and again people have told me that the cost of living and housing affordability are top-of-mind issues for them. That is why I am glad to see the government will help put home ownership back in reach by introducing a series of supports for homebuyers, including a new rent-to-own program, reducing closing costs for first-time buyers and banning blind bidding. These measures will make a big difference in the lives of residents in my riding.

The Address

• (1235)

Citizens' fears about violence are some of the most heartbreaking conversations to have in my neighbourhood. All Canadians deserve to feel safe in their community, but gun violence is on the rise in Toronto. The residents I talked to during the election were shocked that there was even a debate or conversation in other parties about repealing or reviewing the assault weapons ban and making our communities less safe.

However, it is not just guns that had residents concerned. Don Valley North is home to a large and proud Chinese Canadian community. These past two years have been tough as we have seen a rise in anti-Asian racism as a result of the pandemic.

As I mentioned earlier, in preparing this speech, I reviewed my remarks from 2019. In that speech, I told a story of a young mother I met while campaigning who was concerned about access to high-quality, affordable child care. It is with mixed emotions that I reflect on that encounter.

On one hand, I am so proud of what our government has accomplished to address her concerns. In just the past six months, we have signed 12 child care agreements with provinces and territories that will cut fees in half in the next year and build hundreds of thousands of new child care spaces. However, I am disappointed to see the Government of Ontario is still denying Ontario families that same opportunity. In fact, Ontario is the only jurisdiction that has not yet signed on to our plan. Families in Don Valley North, in Toronto and in all of Ontario deserve the same opportunities as families in the rest of the country.

Investing in early learning and child care is not just good for kids and for parents. It is also essential to our economic recovery. We all know that, yet with each passing day Ontario families are paying the price for Doug Ford's inaction.

As I near the end of my allotted time, I would be remiss if I did not highlight some of the outstanding organizations in my riding that work tirelessly to support residents and contribute so much to building a strong, inclusive, supportive Canada. That could not be truer of their efforts these past two years.

In my riding of Don Valley North, organizations like the Afghan Women's Organization, Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario, Armenian Community Centre, the Centre for Immigrant and Community Services, Working Women Community Centre, Toronto North Local Immigration Partnership and Flemingdon Health Centre are offering crucial services to new Canadians.

ACCES Employment, the Centre for Education and Training, and Springboard employment services are providing help to Canadians in search of employment and new skills.

Willowdale Community Legal Services, Adventure Place, Community Information Fairview, North York Harvest Food Bank, and religious and cultural organizations like Abu Huraira Center, Don Valley Bible Chapel and so many more are providing a space for everyone in our community to know they belong and are supported.

I am so proud of the work these organizations and so many more in Don Valley North are doing. It has been an honour to work alongside these groups these past two years, and I look forward to

building on that relationship to ensure that all members of the community can succeed.

Here in Parliament, we know that Canadians are expecting us to work together and achieve results. It is a privilege to be in this place and it is something that I never take for granted. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues from all parties, in whatever form that may take, in this 44th Parliament. I am proud to support the Speech from the Throne, and I look forward to questions and comments.

• (1240)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for his work at committee. My question is about our current policies regarding migrant farm workers asked to come and assist with the supply chain issues we have. In Windsor-Essex county, we have some of the largest in the world. We actually have had migrant workers come here, contract COVID and die alone in a hotel room.

Bonifacio Eugenio-Romero was 31 years old. He died alone in a hotel room. Rogelio Munoz Santos was 24 years old. He died alone in a hotel room. Juan Lopez Chaparro in the Hamilton area also passed away. Most recently, we have had a Jamaican worker, who has not been identified yet, die alone in a hotel room.

We are waiting, despite ministers' meetings and others, for renewal funding for a migrant farm worker and isolation centre. Until we actually get that funding, the City of Windsor and this region has vulnerable populations. We see bunkhouses with outbreaks.

Where is the status of this situation? If we are asking and inviting people to come fill the holes in our economy and work alongside fellow Canadians, they should not die alone and thousands of kilometres away from their families.

Mr. Han Dong: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to wholeheartedly thank the NDP member for bringing up this issue. Due to the pandemic, the federal government was responsible for 80% of the funding going toward fighting the pandemic, including support for temporary foreign workers. There is more to do. I said in my speech that we have to make vaccines available to everyone in this country, as well as beyond our borders.

Like the hon. member, I work closely with the organizations in my riding and recognize the challenges for both newcomers and temporary foreign workers. I want to commit myself to working with him, not just on the committee but in Parliament, to bring this issue to the surface and flag this for ministers and government to better provide supports for these workers.

The Address

• (1245)

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noted in my colleague's presentation today that he was talking about the inflationary value of housing over the last two decades, when Canadians are most concerned about it happening in the last three years. I just read a report this morning that it has even gone up 26.6% in the last year in many areas of Canada. There were references to these sorts of things in the throne speech last fall, but I am wondering if the government can give us a more specific explanation as to how it is going to deal with this, given that the Bank of Canada and others are considering holding the interest rates where they are.

Mr. Han Dong: Mr. Speaker, as a former member of the Ontario legislature, I have seen the trend of the increasing cost of housing affordability, not just within Canada and Toronto but within the entire country over the last two decades. That is why different provincial governments, including the B.C. government, and the federal government over the last several years have introduced multiple policies and regulations to try to help make owning a first home easier for many first-time homebuyers.

I am actually quite hopeful to see the regulations and policies proposed in the most recent Liberal platform enforced, including the blind bidding—

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my comment is along the same lines as my Conservative colleague's question.

Canada and Quebec are in the midst of a severe housing crisis. I do not think that comes as news to anyone. Last week, a study revealed that Canada has fewer housing units per 1,000 inhabitants than any other G7 country. We have around 424; the G7 average is 471. Canada is 1.8 million housing units short of the average number. This study was not done by some left-wing housing advocacy group; it was done by Scotiabank.

I think that means it is time to take action. Housing affordability is an issue, but so is accessibility, because we are 1.8 million units short. It is time to take the bull by the horns and deal with this crisis, just like the government is dealing with the pandemic. That means taking decisive, impactful action.

[English]

Mr. Han Dong: Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind my colleagues that, since 2015, the government has provided affordable and safe homes for over a million Canadians. In the throne speech, we see various programs planned for this session. I look forward to working with all members to see those through.

I also want to point out the most recent announcement to work with the not-for-profit sector. It is very hopeful, including the rent-to-own program. I think we have to try something new and something different, rather than just throwing money at it. We have to—

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to note that this past Saturday, January 29, was the fifth anniversary of the Quebec City mosque shooting. It was also the national day of remembrance of the Quebec City mosque attack and action against Islamophobia. Unfortunately, it was not safe for the in-person vigil that was planned here in Ottawa to go ahead, so here today, in the centre of Canada's democracy, I want the names of the victims of this senseless act of hate and Islamophobia to be heard and to be remembered: Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Aboubaker Thabti, Abdelkrim Hassane, Azzedine Soufiane.

May Allah give them the highest place in Jannah. May they rest in peace.

The people of Scarborough Centre sent me to Ottawa with a strengthened mandate and clear expectations, including affordable early learning and child care, housing affordability and good middle-class jobs as part of an inclusive recovery. I am pleased to see these priorities reflected in the Speech from the Throne. However, before we can look to the recovery, we need to finish the fight against COVID-19.

Thanks to the hard work of Canadians and governments, amazing strides have been made on vaccination. We are nearly a decade ahead of the estimates made by some colleagues across the way. With vaccinations now open to those aged five and up, vaccination rates are rising ever higher.

I have heard clearly from my constituents that they support vaccine mandates to end this pandemic. They want this pandemic to be over, and that means getting the job done on vaccines. Therefore, I say to Canadians to please, if they have not yet gotten their vaccines, when they are eligible, get the vaccine and get the booster. This is not just for themselves but for their neighbours and families, because in Canada we look out for one another.

We have heard a lot of talk lately about inflation. While economists agree this is a global and, hopefully, temporary phenomenon largely attributable to pandemic and climate-related supply chain issues, we have to acknowledge this is a real phenomenon that is impacting Canadians' wallets. I have noticed this in my weekly shopping trip with staples like milk, fruit and meat getting more expensive. While families like mine can absorb the temporary increases, for many in my riding this will mean difficult choices at the grocery store. Often it is the healthier choices that become more expensive, so we need to look at ways to allow families to be able to make healthier choices, and we need to find ways to put more money into their pockets.

The Address

The Canada child benefit put more money into the pockets of nine out of 10 Canadian families, and it is time to build on that with a national system of early learning and child care. This would be so impactful for the families in my riding of Scarborough Centre. Under the Liberal plan, an average Toronto family would save \$11,197. That is a 50% reduction in fees, with even more savings coming by 2026 as we work toward \$10-a-day child care. Over \$11,000 staying in the pockets of families would be a real and immediate savings of almost \$1,000 every month. For families in my riding, this would be life changing.

Every province and territory in Canada has now signed on except Ontario, and families in some jurisdictions are already seeing significant savings. Unfortunately for families in Ontario, Premier Doug Ford and his Conservative government continue to stall and play political games. If my colleagues from Ontario across the aisle are serious about helping families deal with the cost of living, I would encourage them to urge their provincial cousins to get on board. They should be on board, because this is not just a social issue; it is an economic issue.

• (1250)

Women have been slower to return to the workforce as the economy has opened back up because so often they need to stay home to take care of their children. There can be no recovery without a "she" recovery. Affordable early learning and child care is how we address the labour shortage and get the economy firing again.

If there is one issue that vies with affordable child care in importance with my constituents, it is housing affordability. Prices are out of control, and people who are renting are afraid to move as they cannot afford the increased prices. It is harder than ever for renters to become buyers, with prices for new homes out of reach. This is an issue with no easy answers and it is not an issue that any one level of government can solve alone. From the federal government bringing people together, to provincial governments making smart regulations and laws to protect tenants and buyers, to municipalities making smart zoning decisions, to the provision of funding from all governments, it will take a collaborative team Canada effort.

There will be no single silver bullet program, but the throne speech does put a number of federal initiatives forward. They include a more flexible first-time home buyer incentive, a new rent-to-own program and measures to reduce closing costs for first-time homebuyers. I am also optimistic because we now have a minister dedicated to the housing file. I wish him well in this important task.

We need strong federal leadership to bring all these stakeholders together to deliver real results for Canadians. Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home and everyone deserves to feel safe and at home in Canada. Incidents of hate based on race and faith have made too many feel uncomfortable and unsafe in their communities. We cannot shy away from this painful reality. We need to work hard to ensure that everyone in Canada is safe and has the opportunity to get ahead, regardless of their gender, whom they love, where they come from, what language they speak, who they pray to or the colour of their skin. Incidents of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism leave real and lasting scars in our communities, and the systemic anti-Black racism in many of our institutions must

be grappled with. We must ensure that Canada's anti-racism strategy is aligned with the lived experiences of racialized Canadians.

As well, we cannot ignore the rising gun violence experienced in many communities. I have heard strong support in Scarborough for a ban against assault weapons and for mandatory buyback. My constituents want us to follow through on these commitments and go further. We need to look at why youth turn to guns and gangs and provide more opportunities for our youth.

Finally, my constituents want to see stronger action on the environment and climate change. We have seen first-hand the impact of a changing climate. We must ensure there is a just transition so that Canadians can find good, well-paying jobs in the new green economy. We must also vote to ensure zero-emission and electric vehicles are affordable and available to the average Canadian family, while also making significant investments in public transit.

The people of my community sent me here to work for these issues that impact their daily lives. They do not want political cheap shots and partisan games. They want members from all sides to cooperate, get things done and deliver results to make their lives better. I am ready to support good ideas wherever they come from.

Let us get to work.

• (1255)

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has also been recognized by economists throughout the world and throughout time that monetary policy has a huge impact on inflation.

Could the member please describe to me what quantitative easing is and why it will not impact inflation in Canada, as it has for every other country at every other time in the world?

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Mr. Speaker, I agree that inflation is on the rise. Inflation is a global phenomenon, and we are seeing the impacts of inflation not just here in Canada but across the world. That is why it is really very important that we implement \$10-a-day child care. That will put \$1,000 per month into the hands of families, helping them to make life more affordable.

I hope the member will encourage members of the provincial government in Ontario to sign the child care agreement with the federal government. Every other province and territory has already signed it. I encourage Ontario to be on board so that Ontario families do not have to miss this opportunity.

The Address

• (1300)

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by condemning the hateful protests we saw this week. We saw disturbing images of swastikas and Confederate flags and we heard of abuse hurled at people across Ottawa. This hate is unacceptable. I stand in solidarity with those calling on these people to leave and for us as parliamentarians to show leadership in calling out this hate and putting a stop to aiding and abetting it, as some have, and work to build healthier and safer communities all across our country.

Speaking of inequality and the challenges we are facing, nowhere is that inequality more evident than in first nations across our country, yet this Liberal throne speech makes no mention of the crisis when it comes to indigenous housing.

When is the Liberal government going to put its commitment to reconciliation into action by ending the third world housing conditions that exist in first nations across Canada, housing conditions that have led to numerous breakouts of COVID-19 and have rendered so many communities across our country unsafe for people? First nations need housing action now and need federal leadership now.

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Mr. Speaker, we have committed over \$1.7 billion in funding in budgets 2017 and 2018 for distinctions-based housing strategies, including \$600 million over three years for first nations housing, \$500 million over 10 years for Métis nation housing and \$400 million over 10 years for Inuit-led housing.

We have committed more than one billion dollars in the national first nations housing strategy, resulting in 1,429 homes being built, renovated or retrofitted and benefiting approximately 467,000 people in over 600 communities. I know more work has to be done, so I look forward to working with all the members of this House to make sure that every indigenous person has a place to call home.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, people from organizations that fight homelessness, that care for the elderly or that deal with mental health problems tell us that the social fallout from the pandemic will last five to 10 years.

One of the things I hear about most is mental health. Last week, we celebrated Bell Let's Talk Day. We posted on social media and were flooded with comments. Mental health is a major problem.

How do we address this mental health issue? We do it by investing in health. The federal government has once again refused to increase health transfers. Despite the fact that Quebec and all the provinces have collectively been calling for this for years, the federal government continues to avoid investing in health. However, if we want to solve this problem as quickly as possible and enable adults, children and teenagers across the country who have mental health issues to have access to a psychologist, the federal government must contribute. The money is in Ottawa.

Does my colleague agree that it is time to invest in putting an end to mental health issues and issues associated with the pandemic?

[*English*]

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Mr. Speaker, health care is very important, and I want to emphasize that from day one of the pandemic we have made significant investments to make sure that Canadians have the best health care system.

Of all the money spent, \$8 out of every \$10 has been spent by the federal government to make sure that we have access to vaccines and to make sure that our front-line workers have appropriate PPE.

We will continue working with the provinces and territories to ensure that health care systems are properly funded and that we can quickly get through the backlog of surgeries and procedures that has built up during this pandemic.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, has the government forgotten who we work for? Let me remind everyone: We work for the people.

No one can deny that Canadians are frustrated. The events that have transpired over the last week prove this. Unfortunately, what started out as a respectful and peaceful protest turned into acts that do not reflect true Canadians. I agree with all members in the House and those watching that the use of symbols of hate and defacing a public monument are criminal offences, and these individuals should be charged. There is no room for hate.

This is a quote taken directly from the Speech from the Throne:

Canada's prosperity – and middle class jobs – depend on preserving and expanding open, rules-based trade and ensuring our supply chains are strong and resilient.

Canadians can take no comfort from empty promises. It has been two years now since the start of the pandemic, and Canadians want things to open up for our jobs, for the supply chain, for our mental health and for honest dialogue between government and the people. This we can see from this week's events, when thousands of Canadians have come to the nation's capital to be heard, but our Prime Minister has still not addressed their concerns.

Listen to the diverse voices who speak a multitude of languages and who shape this country.

These are the words of our Governor General, which are beautiful words. However, Canadians are sick of words that our government has failed to act on. They want honesty and transparency and they want leadership.

The Address

Since the throne speech, I have heard the same stories throughout my riding, with the main one being that over 29 million Canadians have done what they were asked in order to live their lives, myself included, but every time Canadians do what is asked of them, the promise of what they will get in return is changed. The goalposts constantly move.

Olivia is a 19-year-old hard-working student who struggles with the division that has ballooned in the past couple of years. The pent-up feelings of isolation have had a profound effect on her.

This pandemic has magnified many lingering issues in our country, the biggest one being our mental health crisis. We need each other to move forward. We need a leader to acknowledge that each voice is important.

Health care workers have exhausted their resources and mental health during this pandemic, because the root cause of this issue still has not been addressed. Where in the Speech from the Throne does it acknowledge our lack of resources for our health care system? The reality is that it all comes from the top, and until our government recognizes that we need to increase health transfers to our provinces and territories to give them the resources necessary to protect Canadians, we will keep having Groundhog Day.

I have voice mails and emails from exhausted health care workers who feel like they have not been heard or acknowledged. The fact that they still do not have adequate forms of PPE and testing two years in is a disgraceful treatment of the people we call heroes. The reality is that until we have a health care system that can manage the patient load from the variants and still provide life-saving surgeries and tests, we will never get out of this.

I want to address this quote from the throne speech: “As we move forward on the economy of the future, no worker or region will be left behind.”

Since being named shadow minister for tourism, I have been meeting with key stakeholders in the industry, who have all said the same thing: “Lift the travel restrictions and open up Canada for business.” Why has the government left the tourism industry behind when it contributes a significant portion of our economy?

First-time homebuyers are also being left behind by this government. Peter and Julie are a young couple from my riding. They are 26 and 24. They both have well-paying jobs, one in engineering and one in the trades. Peter and Julie want to buy a home. They have been searching for months. One house came on the market listed at \$499,000, but within eight days, there were 53 offers and the house sold for \$802,000.

If our next generation cannot afford housing, that is a serious issue, and it certainly does not feel like no worker will be left behind. Our government is leaving a whole generation behind.

• (1305)

From the time we are born, we are taught to listen to the people in charge. We are taught to follow rules. What happens when the person in charge does not listen to the people? One thing many constituents have said to me is, “Do not just criticize. Offer solutions.” I am imploring our Prime Minister to acknowledge all Canadians, and I am imploring Canadians to listen, even if they disagree, and

to be respectful and tolerant of each other. That is the solution to build trust. A reputation is not built on saying what one will do, it is built on what one actually does.

Here is another quote from the Speech from the Throne: “We will always stand up for a brighter future for all.” Who is “all”? The government has left too many behind. We need a new government. We need to act on our words. I have been a voter for a lot longer than I have been a politician, and I know how people feel. I hear the words, and I believe our members all feel the same way. We all want out of this, but we have to address what is going on.

We have to have honest dialogue. We have to acknowledge a question, and we have to look at this question. How did we get to a point where thousands of people drove thousands of miles to have their voices heard? We need to ask how we got here.

The conclusion of the Speech from the Throne states:

This decade is still young. With compassion, courage, and determination, we have the power to make it better than how it started.

But that can only happen by standing together.

What is “standing together”? Standing together should be truly having the backs of Canadians. It should be working together and listening to each other. It should be opening up our economy so we can get back to work. This economic crisis is a mental health crisis. The government has failed Canadians throughout the pandemic because it has forgotten that we work for the people.

• (1310)

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has indicated it is a feminist government. However, it made no mention in the throne speech, for example, of sexual health.

We know that reproductive justice is critical for gender equality. This includes the right for individuals to freely make choices about their reproductive health and to have access to reproductive services, yet in Nova Scotia sexual health centres are having to close their doors between April and September due to limited funding. Nine provinces have in fact declared outbreaks of sexually transmitted diseases. The Halifax Sexual Health Centre has been unable to access STI testing due to being stretched thin to meet the needs during COVID testing.

Does my hon. colleague agree that we need the federal government to immediately invest in sexual health services?

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Mr. Speaker, gender equality and investing in proper education are always critical. Our party will continue to stand up for these rights. I welcome that dialogue with the member.

*The Address**[Translation]*

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, further to my earlier question to the member's colleague, I would like to know if a Conservative government will impose federal standards in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

[English]

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to look at all of the protesters who have driven across the country when so many of the issues they are protesting are in fact under provincial jurisdiction. Why? It is because it comes from the top down.

I will go back to my point and what I was saying. Until we address health care transfers, we are not going to move forward. The Liberal government had promised 7,500 health care workers. Where are they?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back after spending time in our constituencies. The member spoke at length about the problems being faced in the country right now and then said something very interesting. She said that part of leadership is offering solutions, yet she did not seem to present a single solution in her 10-minute speech. As a matter of fact, she talked at length about one of the big problems we have in the country right now, and that is specifically as it relates to housing.

What is the Conservatives' solution to housing? If she does not know what that is, can she give us some idea of what her own personal suggestions would be toward offering solutions, considering that she is so interested in offering those solutions?

• (1315)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I do not think the member heard, so I am not sure if his earpiece is working. The solution proposed was to listen to the people. Unfortunately, because he works for the government, he was not able to listen to me as well.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I am listening now, Mr. Speaker. Can the member give us some actual suggested solutions to the housing crisis? I am all ears.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Mr. Speaker, what is interesting is that I sent the member an email asking him to help me and my riding get affordable housing and he has yet—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I responded to you.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: I have not received that email, but I look forward to working with him because we need to get inflation under control to help people pay for housing. I look forward to working with the member because I think he does have solutions, but most importantly what we want to do on this side is get inflation and the cost of living down and let people like Peter and Julie be able to afford a house that should be \$499,000, not \$802,000.

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be here representing the constituents of King—Vaughan in the House of Commons. I thank my constituents for putting their trust in me and allowing me the privilege of standing here today.

I would like to thank my family, my husband Peter, children Elizabeth, John and Michael, daughter-in-law Christina, daughter Mindy and son-in-law Danny, grandchildren Abigail, Isabelle, Caleb and Noah, and my incredible team for their encouragement, dedication and support throughout this journey. Our success was made possible by their contributions.

I would also like to personally recognize and thank my executive campaign team, starting with my amazing campaign manager Joe, followed by Michael, Julius, Elmer, Dasha, Giffin, Alessia, Alex, Elizabeth, Elvira, Theresa, Linda and Dona, and my team captains Rose, Andrew, Nakita, Arion, Valerie, Richard, Andy and Denille.

I would also like to thank my current staff for all their hard work.

Public service is a privilege, and it is an honour for me to take my seat in the House of Commons alongside my fellow parliamentarians who have chosen to dedicate themselves to the service of our country.

It is also important to recognize the many hard-working Canadians who work in the mental health sector and put their well-being above their personal safety.

On behalf of my constituents, I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to those who lost their loved ones during this pandemic. If the pandemic has taught us anything, let it be that it has demonstrated the importance of mental health and the spirit of civic duty that allows us to support one another when in need and to provide a helping hand to those who are struggling.

*[Member spoke in Italian]**[English]*

For over 20 years, I have been honoured and privileged to work, volunteer and live in the community of King—Vaughan, just north of Toronto. It is a diverse community and home to many immigrants from Italy, China, Pakistan and many other countries. The many personal collaborations with members of my community have provided me with a deep understanding of the concerns and issues facing the constituents I now represent. Seniors in King—Vaughan, like many in Canada, are still struggling with the rising cost of living, and parents with special needs children cannot afford to pay for long-term care.

Mental health problems are escalating, and small businesses continue to struggle to find employees as “help wanted” signs are popping up across my riding. In many cases, businesses have reduced their hours due to staffing shortages. Inflationary pressures are mounting and food prices are soaring. Families are not only psychologically stressed due to the pandemic and concerns for public safety, but they are additionally burdened by the increasing cost of living and the psychological stress that comes from worrying about how to put healthy food on the table, which we know offers physical and mental health benefits.

The Address

Rising house prices are placing a burden on our young people and additional stress on families. Across our land, many young people are forced to stay at home longer, living in their parents' basements as rents and housing costs are out of control. My riding has seen the most significant increases in housing prices, and there is no sign of that slowing down.

I join my colleagues on this side of the House to express my concerns about the lack of focus on inflation in the throne speech. It is the main problem facing people today. Also, both alarming and telling is the lack of focus on small business and tourism, which have both been absolutely decimated by the government's response to the pandemic. As a new member of the House of Commons, I say we need to stop perpetuating fear. Rather, we need to demonstrate strength and competency to our citizens and be the solution, not part of the problem.

• (1320)

This starts with showing up here in the House of Commons, demonstrating that we are not afraid and that we are willing to tackle the serious business of Parliament, and restoring trust in our institutions by respecting those institutions, especially Parliament and the parliamentary procedures of one of the scariest cornerstones of democracy. We must not fearmonger and hide. We must be authentic and inspiring. We need to come together and help Canadians dream of a better tomorrow, a better future for children and grandchildren, and a better future for our country.

We must attract immigrants to this country who are hard-working and want to provide a better life for themselves and their families, just as the millions of immigrants before them have done. I am a proud person of immigrant parents. I was raised by my grandparents, my *nonno* and *nonna*. My grandfather always told me the story of his experience coming to Canada, the way he was able to use his trade skills to land employment in Toronto. His skills allowed him to work hard and earn the funds to sponsor his family, so that they too could participate in the promise of a great country. This process took him over five years.

Many families who immigrated to Canada were provided this opportunity to flourish. Supported by their expertise and work ethic, they were directed to areas of Canada where they could take their skills and, depending on Canada's opportunities, create a life. We want to support immigrants who want to be independent and contribute to our vibrant social fabric. We need to inspire and help create a resilient and healthy population, ready for the many challenges of tomorrow.

We face many crises that need to be tackled head on: an economic crisis, a public health crisis, a social crisis, a national unity crisis, an education crisis, an international crisis and an institutional crisis. These problems are not trivial, but I am confident members of this House can come together and meet these challenges head on. We must show leadership, strength and competency, so that we can improve the lives of our citizens.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative caucus actually voted against supports going to small businesses, but the member says that we should be

supporting them. I would suggest that the Conservative Party needs to be more supportive of small businesses during this difficult time.

When we talk about leadership, we had the Progressive Conservative leader Brian Mulroney, the former prime minister, talk about the importance of public health issues like masks and suggest that members of Parliament in his caucus would be given an option to leave or to get on board with the issue.

Would the member contrast the leadership of Brian Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives to today's reformed, far-right Conservative element within the Conservative Party under the current leadership? Does she believe her leader would be better off following some of the instructions coming from former prime minister Brian Mulroney?

• (1325)

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, I think what the member has to understand is that our leader is working for the people of Canada, all of Canada, and not just specific sectors of Canada. We need to work together to ensure that we get over this pandemic and provide the health services that our colleagues and constituents need. We need to do it now. We cannot wait any longer. Fearmongering is no way to get things going.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for my colleague.

I have been hearing a lot about the lack of funding for the various crises, including the housing, health and inflation crises. My question for my colleague is this.

With everything that is happening right now, what more does the government need when everyone knows that health transfers are crucial? What does my colleague think? Why does the government refuse to act?

[*English*]

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question correctly, I think what we need to understand is that the sooner we get inflation under control, the sooner people will be able to live their lives. We need affordable housing. We need to ensure that people waiting for surgeries are dealt with. There are people in my riding who cannot get those services.

When is the government going to step up and ensure that our constituents are healthy and well taken care of? Until we do that, they cannot get back to work.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.* I appreciate the member's advocacy to provide relief for Canadians struggling amidst the rising cost of living.

The Address

Nunavummiut experience this crisis disproportionately. In 2016, Nunavut food costs were three times the national average. In 2018, 62% of Nunavut's households with children were food insecure. High cost of living affects Nunavummiut's access to their most basic human rights, including food, water, housing, health and mental health. We have felt these challenges for far too long, despite government programs and subsidies aimed at providing relief.

Does the member agree that the government's current response is insufficient for northern communities and that they deserve more equitable cost-of-living supports? Will the member push for the 44th Parliament to achieve this equitable outcome for northern communities and indigenous communities?

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to support all Canadians, including our indigenous. We need to ensure that there are rules and opportunities, regardless of where we live in this country. We need to ensure all Canadians are treated equally, especially our indigenous population as well as the rest of the country.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I commend the member for King—Vaughan on her maiden speech.

I know she is very well aware of the government's disregard for the skyrocketing cost of living. I am interested to hear the member's thoughts on the issue of the huge costs that are happening to our seniors, in particular on the CPP escalation that is happening and the fact that none of this money is actually going out to these seniors.

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting the member asked that question.

During the snowstorm a few weeks ago, one of my seniors called me. Unfortunately his driveway was plowed over, and he could not get his car out to take his wife for medical treatment. We went over, out of the goodness of my team's hearts, and shovelled his driveway. One might say that is kind of a waste of our time. However, it is not a waste of our time, and I am going to tell members why. This senior had to get a line of credit on his property to ensure he can provide medication for his wife. How despicable is that?

• (1330)

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to congratulate the hon. member on her maiden speech.

I would just like to remind the member, who was using terms like “our indigenous”, that indigenous people are not owned. I give a friendly reminder not to use possessive terms when referring to indigenous people.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Speech from the Throne.

[*English*]

In response to the throne speech, many of the key elements shared reflect the vision of my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook in Nova Scotia. Let us get through COVID and let us

build back better. Let us ensure our health care system is in the 21st century. Let us ensure we continue to improve our health care system and ensure our economy is building back better. Of course, climate change and veterans are also key issues.

I would like to start off by saying that Canadians elected a minority government and as such it is the responsibility of each one of us in the House, all parliamentarians, to work together closely to ensure we make life better for all Canadians.

When we talk about COVID, there is no question that this is the number one priority. It has now been almost two years that we have been fighting through COVID, and we have been working closely with Canadians right across Canada to ensure we are going to be in a much better position very soon.

Let us not forget that Canadians want to be vaccinated. Over 86% of all Canadians have been double vaccinated. The booster shots are now available, and we are moving forward. Many people have their booster shots. I do. It is age-related in Nova Scotia, but I did make the cut so I was happy about that. Now we are moving to the next generation, with the vaccine for younger Canadians who are five to 11 years old.

Through this extremely difficult challenge, the government has been there for Canadians. The Prime Minister has stated on a number of occasions that we will be there for as long as it takes and that is exactly what we have done.

Through COVID we have noticed some of the gaps out there and some of the things we could do better in the future to ensure we are in a much better place as we move forward to new challenges. With that, I would like to share a project I was able to announce a few weeks ago in my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, which is a wonderful project I believe many here would be interested in. It is hydroponic gardens.

In Nova Scotia, with these hydroponic gardens, farmers will be able to plant vegetables and different spices, even edible flowers, year-round, which does not usually happen in Nova Scotia. This is one way to achieve food security. This is a way of ensuring we will be prepared for any challenges as we move forward. This is what I call innovation.

I want to thank our government for investing \$76,000 toward the project. I also want to welcome and thank the local Akoma Family Centre properties for following through on that project. Now we are going to build on that. Maybe it will be a great pilot for the rest of the nation.

The Address

I talked about health care. Of course, in Atlantic Canada we know we have the oldest Canadians. On average, they are much older than in Alberta, for example. We also have the most rural communities. That is a double barrier in the sense of the needs for health care. That is why we need to do more pilots in Nova Scotia and invest right across the country in health care.

Some of the key areas we talked about in the throne speech were strengthening the health care system and public health supports for all Canadians. What does that actually mean? It means more accessibility; rural care; transportation, making sure seniors can get to their health care supports, hospitals, doctors, etc.; mental health; long-term care; and data collection for improvement. These are all very important investments as we move forward. In our platform, we also talked about 7,500 more doctors and nurses to help limit wait times, and the new Canada mental health transfers to the provinces.

● (1335)

The economy was very strong before we entered the pandemic and is showing clear signs of strength as we move out of this COVID challenge. Let us keep in mind that, as the Prime Minister said, we will have Canadians' backs as long as we need to.

Let us not forget that eight out of 10 dollars spent to support Canadians through COVID has come from the federal government. We are in much better shape, because of the economy prior to COVID, to be able to support Canadians. Let us also remind ourselves that 108% of the pre-COVID jobs have returned today. That is outstanding.

We have seen fewer bankruptcies in the last two years than we have seen in the past, because our government has been there to support Canadians. We have seen an increase of 13% in international trade, again showing our economy can handle challenges.

The opposition talks about inflation. Inflation is a global challenge. Let us look at inflation in the G7. We have inflation of 4.5%, while other countries have inflation of 5.3% and 5.4% and the United States has inflation of 7%. Because of our government's good investments, we have seen our debt interest payments drop last year by \$4 billion.

I will finish off by saying that we still have our AAA credit rating, which is pretty impressive.

On the investment front, how do we ensure we continue to prosper as we move forward? There are two main areas: child care and housing. When it comes to child care, we have committed to a Canada-wide early learning and child care plan, and that is exactly what we are delivering.

We are being asked for promises and about what we are actually doing. Nine provinces and three territories have signed on, which is very impressive. The main objective of this program is to lower the cost for families, ensure a high-quality program, ensure educators are receiving a salary that is acceptable and, which is extremely important, get more Canadians working. More women will be able to join the workforce, and that is a key economic driver. Let us not forget about that.

On the housing front, we talked in the throne speech about more flexibility for first-time homebuyers and about the rent-to-own program. Some of these strategies, such as co-op housing, existed in the past. These are key programs that can be successful in lowering costs for first-time homebuyers.

Let me talk about our national housing strategy and our rapid housing funding. I made two announcements lately in my riding. One was in the Eastern Shore region, where we are investing over \$3 million for 12 units in women's shelters. We also announced eight units in the Preston region of my riding for African Nova Scotians, with another \$3-million investment from the federal government. Those are important investments.

This is not just happening in my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook; it is happening right across the country. As MPs, it is our job to articulate to our constituents the areas where we can support them and then of course advocate on their behalf.

On the climate file, during the election it was clear our government had the strongest environmental plan to deliver for Canadians. It is not just about protecting our environment, it is also about growing our economy with renewable energy, green energy, investing in retrofits and a net-zero electricity future. Those are key components.

I want to finish off by talking about veterans. We made some announcements for veterans. We continue to support veterans, as we have done since 2015. One announcement made in my riding was about the well-being fund receiving \$1 million through the Strongest Family Institute to help veterans with mental health e-services in order to help those living with anxiety and depression, etc. There is also investment in housing for rent supplements and wraparound services for veterans, as well as rapid housing.

Our government is focused on Canadians.

● (1340)

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague is absolutely right that COVID is the most important issue that Canadians are facing right now. We have been in this pandemic for nearly two years. Canada does have among the highest vaccination rates in the world, which is excellent to see. However, as we are seeing, Canadians are growing more and more tired and they do not see any hope of a pathway out of this.

The Address

I am asking that the hon. member illuminate for Canadians the metrics and the timeline that the government will use to begin relaxing federal restrictions in Canada.

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, there is no question that all Canadians are tired and feeling the challenge through COVID, but we have to stay with the science and our data.

I know that we are close to moving to the next step, which is very important, but let us keep one thing in mind. People are saying, “the Liberal government”, but 90% of the restrictions are under provincial jurisdiction. It is the premiers of each province who are actually placing the restrictions and let me remind the House that most of those are Conservative premiers.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, the latest Speech from the Throne continues to commit to the equality of both official languages, French and English. However, since the coming into force of the Official Languages Act, we know the opposite has been achieved, namely, there has been a growing assimilation of francophone and Acadian communities. In Quebec, there is a decline in French.

The action the federal government is taking in Quebec under the Official Languages Act primarily seeks to strengthen English, but this cannot go on, as we have seen in recent examples involving CN and Air Canada. The Official Languages Act does not ensure that French is respected in Quebec and does not ensure that it is the common language. What is more, we see that the official languages modernization legislation will prevent Quebec from applying Bill 101 to all federally regulated businesses.

Does my colleague not think it is time to overhaul the Official Languages Act and allow Quebec to apply Bill 101 to federally regulated businesses?

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, I am very happy that my colleague asked that question because it is very important. I thank him.

I agree with him that the Official Languages Act assented to in 1988 has improved the situation but that it did not really go as far as it should have.

I can assure the member that the new legislation we will be introducing in the coming weeks will respond to the expectations of Canadians, whether they are Quebecers, Acadian francophones or francophiles across the country. I can assure the member that this legislation will bring about major improvement, that it will have teeth and that we will be able to advance the cause of both official languages in Canada by ensuring their equality, as it should.

[*English*]

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, in his role as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, I would like to ask the member about a piece of legislation that my predecessor in London—Fanshawe, but also my colleague the hon. member for North Island—Powell River, introduced as Bill C-221, which would ultimately eliminate the archaic and sexist gold-digger clause for spouses of veterans who marry after the age of 60. This is something that we have been working on for a very long time.

I would like to know the member's position on that and whether his government and he as parliamentary secretary would be in support of that bill.

• (1345)

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, I know it has been mentioned on several occasions by the NDP, and I agree that we need to do some research around that. We have done quite a bit of work. We have invested over \$100 million to try to identify how many survivors of veterans there are. Also, we have to keep in mind that it does not just include veterans, but the public service and others that also have that same clause, so the conversation is a little bigger than that. We are on task and working toward finding a solution to support our veterans.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging that I am rising on the traditional unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin people.

I would also like to thank the voters of Lac-Saint-Louis for sending me back to the nation's capital to be their voice and represent them once again and also help them in their dealings with the federal government. I would like to acknowledge that my staff play a very important role in that regard. They do a magnificent job that reflects well on my office and me as a parliamentarian and a candidate in the election.

I am particularly pleased to be standing here today, January 31, on the Hill in person.

I remember that around 2002 or 2003 I was on the Hill not as an elected representative, but in another capacity. One of the central debates at the time was whether we should ratify the Kyoto protocol. At the time, there was concern about global warming, but there was an even greater debate on whether climate change existed. Fortunately, more and more voices acknowledged that climate change is real, but at the time we were focusing a lot on global warming and not so much on climate change and unstable climate. We were not focusing so much on the impacts of unstable climate, flood and drought. Dr. Jim Bruce, an expert in water policy in this country, who was already honing in on one of the truths about climate change, which has become a self-evident truth: the link between climate change and water, between climate change and drought and flooding.

To quote Dr. Jim Bruce, “If climate change is a shark, water is its teeth. Like a fish that doesn't notice the shark until it feels its sharp bite, humans will first feel the effects of climate change through water.” In other words, a climate crisis is a water crisis. Dr. Jim Bruce was the first director of Environment Canada's Centre for Inland Waters and he, along with a handful of other renowned Canadian water experts at Environment Canada at the time, were very much pioneers in this area. I speak of people like Frank Quinn and Ralph Pentland. Ralph Pentland was a director in water planning and management at Environment Canada for 13 years and helped negotiate many of the Canada-U.S. agreements and federal-provincial agreements around water. He was the primary author of the 1987 federal water policy.

The Address

If ever we need proof of a causal link between climate change and water security, recent history has obliged. In the last decade, Alberta has seen massive flooding in places like Calgary, while the Fort McMurray wildfires were themselves a manifestation of drought. In B.C. this past summer, a heat dome killed more than 600 people and caused mass evacuations. Excess heat melted mountain snow and ice, causing record flooding, the melting of permafrost and the collapsing of roads in the north. In the south, water evaporated too quickly as mountain glaciers melted, leading to insufficient water supplies and rising food prices as livestock herds were culled due to lack of water and feed, an example of non-money supply-related inflation.

Of course, we saw the disastrous results of excessive rain in British Columbia, which brings me to the topic of atmospheric rivers. An atmospheric river is a large narrow stream of water vapour that travels through the sky, can stretch 1,600 kilometres long and more than 640 kilometres wide and, on average, carries an amount of water equivalent to 25 Mississippi rivers. According to a 2013 report co-produced by B.C.'s environment ministry, atmospheric rivers typically form in eight oceanic regions around the world, some closer to continental coasts than others. One of those regions is just off North America's western coast and can produce between one dozen to two dozen such rivers in the sky per year. As the rivers cross from ocean to land, particularly into mountainous regions like the B.C. coast, the water vapour condenses into precipitation, sometimes dumping a month's worth of rain or snow in a matter of days.

● (1350)

This brings me to Dr. John Pomeroy from the University of Saskatchewan, a hydrologist, Canada research chair in water resources and climate change, and associate director of the Global Water Futures program, the largest university-led water research program in the world. It is right here in Canada, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Dr. Pomeroy has been dedicated to developing better flood forecasting computer models and bringing these models into disaster warning systems. He is convinced that we need to "build state-of-the art water prediction and management systems" and that doing so requires federal leadership. More specifically, we need a national system of flood prediction inspired by, but not necessarily identical to, what exists in the U.S. I say not identical to because we are a different kind of federation with different jurisdictional realities and considerations.

I agree with Dr. Pomeroy. We need to develop federally managed models in collaboration with the provinces and universities that focus on river basins for use by the provinces, cities, first nations and industrial users like hydroelectric utilities.

In 2013, according to Dr. Pomeroy, there were already test models in Europe able to suggest a large flood would hit Calgary on the precise day it did. This prediction was made two weeks before the flood happened. Much like in Alberta, B.C. was unable to correctly forecast that this year's floods would be major ones until roads were already washed out and casualties had occurred. The Americans apparently did much better with their system. Global Water Futures will be working on improving the U.S. system in a major collaboration now being developed. Global Water Futures has the science and technical capability to build a national flood forecast-

ing system here in Canada, with the help of the provinces, municipalities and indigenous communities.

This brings me to the throne speech. As I said at the very beginning, the climate crisis is a water crisis. We will need infrastructure to adapt to the impacts of climate change on water, infrastructure like dams and reservoirs that can hold water when it arrives too early in the spring until the agricultural season starts, when the water is actually needed for irrigation. The throne speech commits the government to creating Canada's first-ever national climate adaptation strategy and to establishing the Canada water agency as a locus of freshwater expertise and policy coordination.

The throne speech needs to be seen in juxtaposition with water-related Liberal platform commitments. The platform committed that a re-elected Liberal government would "complete our work with provinces and territories to develop flood maps for higher-risk areas in the next three years." It is vital that this work be done by governments rather than by private sector insurance companies, which obviously have a different interest. The platform also committed our re-elected Liberal government to create a "nation-wide flood ready portal so that Canadians have the information they need to make decisions on where and how to build their homes and communities, and how they can protect their homes and communities from flood risk."

In the U.S., the Federal Emergency Management Agency and private companies like ClimateCheck have flood-risk maps, where a user plugs in an address and gets a flood-risk assessment. We will need flood and drought protection infrastructure, but also insurance. CBC's *Marketplace* says, "six to 10 per cent of Canadian homes are currently uninsurable due to flooding and that estimate could go up as more insurance companies update their risk assessments to account for the rising threat of climate change." That is why the Liberal platform committed a re-elected Liberal government to creating a "low-cost national flood insurance program to protect homeowners who are at high risk of flooding and don't have adequate insurance protection."

In conclusion, our government is committed not only to combating climate change, but also to preparing for and protecting against the impacts of climate change, which, as Dr. Bruce said, are manifested in the water cycle.

Statements by Members

• (1355)

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Madam Speaker, in my riding of Northumberland—Peterborough South, we are, of course, on Lake Ontario. In 2019 and 2017 we had severe flooding issues.

What investment has the government made to protect those people? Spoiler alert: It is none.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, that is precisely why we needed a national climate adaptation strategy. However, I will mention that billions of dollars have been invested in infrastructure, and that work obviously has to occur with the provinces to identify where the work needs to be done.

Our government is there to invest in infrastructure. We have been there to invest in infrastructure for a number of years, and we will continue to do so as per the throne speech.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising such an important topic. Along the Detroit River is a piece of property owned by the port of Windsor called Ojibway Shores. It has 130 endangered species and is part of the ecosystem that is crucial for fighting climate change. It also has water, and the clean water aspect along the Great Lakes is significant.

The government's policy over the last six years has been for the city of Windsor taxpayers and residents to pay for this property, which costs up to \$4 million to \$6 million. We had to fight to stop it from being bulldozed, and the Liberals have put in place a CEO with friendly Liberal connections and a board of directors with friendly Liberal connections. Still to this day, we cannot get that transferred to Environment Canada to be protected. Part of the shoreline is eroding and going away. It is very important for flood mitigation, and the member has noted the importance of a water strategy, as the intake systems for the Great Lakes and many cities are along this tributary system.

Why do the city of Windsor residents have to pay millions of dollars for land they already own, and why, at the same time, are we preventing a national urban park from coming to fruition? Why is it the Liberal policy to pay for land the city residents already own?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the granular nature of the question, which is focused on the member's riding. My riding is also on a water body, on the St. Lawrence River. Actually, it is located where the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa River and the Rivière des Prairies converge. Of course, I know about projects in my area.

I believe that in Windsor, work is being done with Transport Canada and Environment Canada. However, I would also draw attention to the fact that in the last budget, we committed to invest not only in physical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and so on, but also in natural infrastructure. I am hoping that this money will help communities like the member's to withstand the effects of flooding caused by climate change.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

In the spring, in response to the Quebec government's Bill 96, the Bloc Québécois moved a motion calling on the House to recognize that French is the only official language of the Quebec nation.

My hon. colleague abstained from the vote that day. I imagine he had something else to do. Today, I would like to give him the opportunity to tell all of Canada whether he believes that Quebec is a nation.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for his question.

I would like to point out that I was in the House in 2006 or 2007 when we voted on the motion that Quebec is a nation. I voted in favour of that motion because it stated that Quebec is a nation within Canada.

Unfortunately, that is not how the motion moved by the Bloc Québécois was worded. I do not know why, but that wording was not used.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

FRED ARSENAULT

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Madam Speaker, last week my friend and World War II veteran Mr. Fred Arsenault passed away in Toronto at the age of 101. A member of the Cape Breton Highlanders, Fred fought in campaigns across Europe, including in the battles of Ortona and Monte Cassino in Italy and in the liberation of the Netherlands. In one battle, Fred was buried alive by a shell blast but soldiered on with his comrades. For Fred's 100th birthday, his son took to social media to ask for 100 birthday cards for his dad. Fred received over 120,000 from across the globe, and the family continues to receive more. Fred would make the annual pilgrimage to Ottawa for the national Remembrance Day ceremony for as long as he could.

Fred's family asked me to pass on a message that we, as a nation, never forget the sacrifice of their father and of Canada's greatest generation, that we cherish the time we have left with those who wore the uniform of our nation with pride and honour, and that we visit them and listen to their stories, lest we ever forget what they endured for Canada and all Canadians.

I thank Fred. He can stand easy; his watch has ended.

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, tomorrow, Canadians of East Asian descent will gather with family and friends to celebrate the lunar new year and welcome the year of the tiger. Symbolizing energy, enthusiasm, passion and positivity, the tiger will bring important virtues to support Canada's pandemic recovery. Over the past year, Canadians of East Asian descent have worked on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19. In Scarborough North, organizations like the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto have hosted vaccine clinics, held forums to combat anti-Asian hate and handed out PPE and meals to those in need.

Allow me this opportunity to recognize the CCC's founding chairman, Dr. Ming-Tat Cheung, who was recently awarded the Chinese Peace Prize for his humanitarian service. As Canadians, let us all continue to show care and compassion for one another in the months ahead.

[Translation]

I wish everyone a very happy lunar new year.

[Member spoke in Cantonese and Mandarin]

* * *

[English]

CANADIAN OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, \$500 billion is the amount the oil and gas industry has contributed to Canadian governments in tax revenue over the past 20 years. Canadians have spent the same amount of money, half a trillion dollars, importing oil at world prices from foreign suppliers over the past 30 years without any meaningful contribution to Canadian tax revenues.

When I hear the word “subsidized” being applied to Canada's oil and gas industry, it makes me wonder. “Subsidized” and half a trillion dollars in contributions do not reconcile. Surely, no informed Canadian would repeat such a nonsensical narrative. When false narratives marginalize this contribution, we need to ask, “How do we replace \$500 billion?”

Canadians enjoy a great standard of living. Our environmental protection and our social programs are the envy of the world. What makes that possible? It is \$500 billion from our responsible Canadian oil and gas sector.

* * *

DESMOND TUTU

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour the extraordinary life of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Archbishop Tutu was a shining light for hope and justice around the world. He risked his life to champion human rights and advocate for peace and racial equality in his beloved South Africa, and was instrumental in the fight to end apartheid. As chair of the truth and reconciliation commission in a post-apartheid South Africa, he compassionately led the healing process after the traumatic set of events that tore his country apart. He laughed, cried, loved and led

Statements by Members

his people to a better place. He taught us to forgive but never to forget. Among his many awards was the Nobel Prize for peace in 1984.

On a personal note, as we mark the end of Tamil Heritage Month in Canada, I want to recognize and thank Archbishop Tutu for his unwavering support of Tamils' right to self-determination and his solidarity toward all oppressed peoples around the world. I thank Archbishop Tutu.

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[Translation]

QUEBEC'S NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is Suicide Prevention Week, and it is more important than ever to talk about suicide.

We are going through a difficult time together, and talking about suicide saves lives. We are all at our wits' end: isolated seniors, people living alone, our children who are making so many sacrifices, our caregivers. However, we must remember that we are in this together, that we are not alone. Lockdown measures will begin to ease this week. We will get through yet another winter.

However, if people do not know how they are going to make it, if they see no end to this, then they need to speak up, talk to their loved ones and ask for help. They will be surprised at how much of a difference it makes, how much they are loved and just how much support is available to those who need it. If they talk about it, they will be heard.

* * *

● (1405)

WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is our first day of the year in the House of Commons.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of my colleagues in the House and all Canadians a happy 2022, in which we are able to work together and make progress. I hope that this year will mark the end of the pandemic.

I also want to welcome all the newcomers for whom settling in Canada is a dream come true. I want to thank them for bringing their talents here and for participating in the development of our society.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not announce that a very special little Acadian girl was born in this new year. She is already making her first-time grandparents, my wife and me, very proud.

I want to congratulate her parents, Marie-Claude and Dominik, on the birth of their first child. I hope that little Maëve Savoie-Arseneault, and all the children in Canada, will have a bright future in this great country. They, too, will one day have the opportunity to create the Canada of their dreams.

Statements by Members

[English]

KIDS ON TRACK

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the outstanding community service of my friend, Linda Roussel. In 1992, Linda founded Kids on Track, a community organization in Edmonton West that provides hope, direction and ongoing support for children and their parents.

Starting with just three families and 17 children at their first meeting, the program has grown to serve over 25,000 children over the years. They mentor at-risk children, host summer camps for the less privileged, serve gala holiday dinners for their families and host Mother's Day teas for single moms.

Linda recently retired from being the executive director after three decades of service to families. Thanks to her service, thousands and thousands of stronger children and stronger families, who were once at risk, are now thriving.

I send my thanks to Linda for her service to so many thousands of families. I hope she enjoys her retirement.

* * *

MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly two years since we entered a global pandemic, and COVID has affected Canadians in countless ways. It has affected our economy, and it has completely changed the way that we socialize. It has affected our well-being, our health and, of course, our mental health.

[Translation]

Now, more than ever, Canadians feel as if they are overwhelmed and can barely cope. That is completely normal given the circumstances.

I want Canadians to know that they are not alone. Sometimes it is hard to admit that we need help, but it is important to realize that everyone goes through tough times.

[English]

If someone is currently experiencing a low and is struggling with their mental health, they need to keep in mind that these feelings are temporary. Better days are coming. Warmer, more enjoyable days are coming. I ask them to please reach out to a trusted person and ask for help.

If they do not feel ready to open up to someone they know, I ask them to please make use of the new PocketWell app, which was launched just a couple of weeks ago. Through this app, people can regularly check in with themselves to see how they are doing and gain access to free counselling.

Together we will get through this.

[Translation]

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *xin nian kuai le. Sun nien fai lok.* Happy New Year.

On February 1, Canadians of Chinese and Asian origin will celebrate the lunar new year.

[English]

In Asian tradition, we are now entering the Year of the Tiger. The tiger is known for its raw power and impressive bravery. This is meant to inspire energy and positivity, qualities we can all embrace as we enter this new year.

● (1410)

Since the beginning of Canada's history, Canadians of Asian origin have been instrumental in building the Canada we know and love today. These contributions continue today in so many ways in Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, Edmonton, Quebec and Moose Jaw. Let us highlight the important legacy of over a dozen Chinatowns across Canada. Let us do everything we can to make sure these vibrant neighbourhoods and symbols of multiculturalism are preserved and strongly supported.

On the eve of the year of the tiger, as families gather together, I wish everyone positivity and prosperity.

* * *

HEROISM

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was January 19. The sun was shining, but the temperature was a chilly -18°C in the community of Springhill in my great riding of Cumberland—Colchester. Someone saw a little black cat outside in their backyard and went out to greet their furry little friend.

What started as an innocent encounter turned into a heroic event when 13-year-old Nolan Smith and his 19-year-old brother Nicholas acted quickly to save an elderly neighbour who had fallen outside in her backyard. Nolan was the first to notice the distressed woman lying next door.

He alerted his brother, and they both went to her aid. They helped her into her home and proceeded to warm her up. They called 911, and she was taken to the hospital, where it was determined that she had broken her pelvis. She is currently recovering in the hospital, and we wish her a speedy recovery.

If it were not for the efforts of these brave young men, who knows what may have transpired. Their decisive actions saved her life. Please join me in thanking these heroes. They represent the spirit of Cumberland—Colchester.

*Statements by Members***SENIORS**

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all MP constituent staff across the country, including my team in Nickel Belt, for helping older adults. There are many benefits in support of the financial well-being of people who are aging. That is why the MP for Sudbury and I hosted an online information session last week for local older adults. I want to thank Barb, Sherri and Bob, as well as the entire Greater Sudbury advisory panel, representing over 110 organizations, and the hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank the many community volunteers who help the elderly, including the senior citizen clubs of Azilda, Chelmsford, Hanmer, Onaping Falls, Kearney, Gogama, St. Charles and West Nipissing, the Lions and Richelieu clubs, and the Legion branches that support veterans. I would also like to thank the three Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Wahnapiatae and Mattagami first nations.

It is important to reach out to isolated seniors. I ask all Canadians to seek out and support a senior, and I say thank you, *merci, meegwetch*.

* * *

[*English*]

FIRST NATIONS HOUSING

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week a report by the Canadian Medical Association Journal linked substandard housing in remote first nation to health problems in children. Overcrowding, poor ventilation, structural damage and mould are far too common in housing on first nations in northwestern Ontario. Children living in these homes were found to have high rates of respiratory illnesses and hospitalizations.

This is something indigenous leaders and community residents have been saying for years. It is why Canada's Conservatives have been advocating for immediate action to end this housing crisis. Today, I want to echo the reports and calls to increase the housing stock and improve existing homes in first nations, as well as the calls for action on food insecurity, unsafe drinking water and the need to create economic opportunities on reserve.

Indigenous communities have been neglected and underfunded for far too long. The government must take action now.

* * *

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I watched with horror on Saturday when a very few protesters disrespected and desecrated the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I condemn these actions unequivocally. The people who did this missed a clear point, which is that the unknown soldier, and all of those who served this country, served so we could have the very freedoms we enjoy today, such as the right to peaceful assembly and the right to free speech.

That is why the use of Nazi and other racialized symbolism is so repugnant. Our soldiers fought against those things, both literally

and metaphorically, so we as Canadians could be free, and that freedom was abused by the actions of a few.

I visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier this morning, not just to remember, and not just to give thanks, but also to beg for forgiveness for any time that we as Canadians have forgotten that freedom was not free. I thank those who laid flowers at the tomb and at the Terry Fox statue, and I say shame on those who desecrated sacred places this weekend.

* * *

● (1415)

UKRAINE

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the situation on Ukraine's eastern border is simply unacceptable. Let us be clear. Russia, under Vladimir Putin, is the aggressor here. It is Russia that invaded Crimea and illegally annexed it in 2014. It is Russia that invaded the Donbass and has been waging war against Ukraine for the past eight years. It is Russia that is engaging in cyberwarfare and has unilaterally amassed over 100,000 troops on Ukraine's border. This Russian troop buildup must stop.

Canada will remain steadfast in its support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This means protecting Ukraine's unfettered right to seek access to NATO, defend its own borders and build its economy. This is why two of our cabinet ministers have been to Kyiv in the past 14 days. This is why we have delivered over \$120 million in sovereign loans to Ukraine, and why we have not only renewed but also expanded Operation Unifier. Any further Russian invasion into Ukrainian territory will be met with economic sanctions. We will not waver in our defence of Ukraine.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

JAMIE BURGESS

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an extraordinary individual who left us suddenly on January 10th while working from home. Jamie Burgess was my legislative assistant and the first employee I hired when I was elected to the House in 2008.

Jamie was a mainstay on Parliament Hill for over 20 years, having worked for the likes of former NDP MPs Iain Angus, Rod Murphy and Bill Blaikie. His aptitude and experience always left us in awe. Jamie was opinionated, generous and eager to share his knowledge and talent. His colleagues, friends and family appreciated his openness, dedication, quirky sense of humour and his passion for life.

Oral Questions

We are all devastated by his passing, and our hearts go out to his family, whom he cherished so much. On behalf of my team and NDP colleagues, I extend our deepest condolences to the love of his life, Kim, and his sons Owen and Darcy, whom he was so proud of.

Being the political junkie he was, there is no doubt he is watching from above while sitting in a boat fishing and playing his guitar.

Rest in peace, my friend. We sure do miss you. Tight lines.

* * *

[Translation]

MICHEL ALLARD

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honour a great historian and educator who has made it his lifelong mission to teach us the history of the Laurentians.

Michel Allard was born in Montreal, just across from La Fontaine Park. Today he is 80 years old and still very active. He has lived in my riding, Laurentides—Labelle, for 44 years. He has written more than 30 books on history, and he also taught for 37 years.

Since his retirement, he has continued to tell our history through numerous television programs broadcast on NousTV, Cogeco's community television station. In his most recent series, *La mémoire du passé*, he told the history of 32 municipalities, including Val-David, La Minerve, Saint-Sauveur, Saint-Adèle and Mont-Tremblant. These programs are great at bringing history to life for today's audiences.

Mr. Allard, I thank you for your work and wish you a long life.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under this Liberal Prime Minister, the price of everything has gone up. The cost of basic necessities for life in Canada, such as home heating, groceries and gas, have all skyrocketed at rates we have not seen in 30 years.

While the Liberals have been blaming everything under the sun for soaring prices, they only have to look in the mirror to find the culprit. When the Liberals formed government, the average price of a home was \$434,500. Now it is \$811,700, which is over 85% inflation in just six years under this Liberal Prime Minister. Now we have the second-most inflated housing bubble in the world.

People in my community are feeling the pinch. Young people, working-class Canadians and the poor have all had their dreams of home ownership stripped away by a silver-spoon-fed and out-of-touch Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has made life unaffordable, so when one empties their bank account buying groceries or gas, remember that it is just inflation.

• (1420)

NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, five years ago, an act of hate took the lives of Ibrahim, Mamadou, Khaled, Aboubaker, Abdelkrim and Azzeddine in Quebec City. Seven months ago, another act of hate took the lives of the Afzaal family in London, Ontario.

On Saturday, the first National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Islamophobia, we recognize that prejudice is the link between these attacks and more. When everyday Islamophobia is normalized, it builds and eventually spills over into violence. Our government continues to take action in combatting discrimination, including by bringing governments and communities together for a national summit on Islamophobia and committing to the important work ahead.

Hate and prejudice are poisons that threaten the fabric of our society. Every one of us must stand against hate wherever and however it may appear without hesitation, because we know the consequences if we do not.

[Translation]

I remember.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

COVID-19 PROTESTS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by sending best wishes to the Prime Minister and his children, who are dealing with COVID-19. As someone with a family that had COVID in the home, I wish them a speedy recovery.

Canadian manufacturers, the Federation of Independent Business, the Chamber of Commerce, the Conservative opposition and thousands of truckers for over a month have proposed solutions to the trucking shortage in Canada and the supply chain crisis. The Prime Minister has ignored this crisis, and, even worse, he calls people names who are raising these very issues.

My question is simple: Will the Prime Minister move past the division and agree to meet with some of the truckers impacted by his federal regulations?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the science is very clear: The best way through this pandemic is to get people vaccinated. That is how we end the disruptions to our supply chains that are caused by this global pandemic. That is how we get back to the things we love to do. That is why we have been unequivocal on the need to get vaccinated and, great news, Canadians across the country stepped up. Almost 90% of Canadians are vaccinated, including almost 90% of truckers, because we know that the biggest disruption to our supply chains happens when people catch COVID. That is why vaccinations are the way through it, and we are going to continue to be unequivocal about that.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when they ignore and divide a country when it needs to be united, that is not leadership.

The Prime Minister knows that the voices of a few do not represent the millions of Canadians who are worried. Millions of Canadians, over two years, have seen their lives upended, their children's mental health impacted, businesses fail and the nation stretched in our social fabric. Vaccines are critically important, but as the Prime Minister's own COVID diagnosis demonstrates after three vaccinations, we have to use all tools to get our life back to normal. When is life getting back to normal?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know and all Canadians know how frustrating it is to have to deal with this pandemic for two years now and ongoing. However, Canadians also have never been so united in stepping up. Almost 90% of Canadians have been vaccinated, and that means they are protecting our front-line health workers and they are making sure that we are getting through this the best we possibly can. It is that unity of Canadians, that nature that we have of being there for each other, that has been on such display through this pandemic.

Yes, there are people who are still hesitant, and yes, there are people—

• (1425)

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for over a month now, Canadian manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Conservative opposition and thousands of Canadians have been calling for fairer policies to address the trucker shortage and supply chain issues. The pandemic has changed after two years with the vaccines, rapid tests and other tools.

When will the Prime Minister finally use every available tool to ensure we can return to a normal life?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone agrees that we want to be done with COVID-19. We are all tired of COVID-19.

That is why we are using the best tool we have, which is vaccination. That is why we have been absolutely clear that people need to get vaccinated to protect themselves, to protect health care workers, and to get the economy and supply chains back where they need to be.

Oral Questions

We are also using other tools, but the best tool is vaccination. That is what we are focusing on, unlike the Conservative Party.

* * *

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Ukraine is an important friend and ally to Canada. Our friends in Ukraine are facing the risk of a Russian invasion as Russian troops gather at their border. Ukrainians have seen this story before in Crimea. Other NATO allies are delivering the military aid that Ukraine is requesting to help defend themselves. Why will the Liberal government not answer the call from our friends in Ukraine?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we have done in standing up for Ukraine unequivocally, and not just right now. We have been doing so for the past many years. In my numerous conversations with President Zelenskyy and in the engagements that our ministers have had in the region, we have been listening to Ukraine in terms of what it most needs. Obviously, we need to continue the extraordinary trading mission that Canadians have been part of for many years, and even increase it. Also, we continue to deliver the aid, whether it is monetary or military, that Ukrainians need.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Ukraine is an important friend and ally to Canada. Our friends in Ukraine are facing the risk of a Russian invasion at their border. Other NATO allies are delivering the military aid that Ukraine is requesting. We must help Ukraine to avoid a repeat of what happened in Crimea.

Why will the Liberal government not answer the call from Ukraine?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we are answering the call of our Ukrainian friends. We will always stand with them against Russian aggression.

That is why we have extended and expanded the united mission to train Ukrainian troops. That is why we sent \$120 million in aid and economic support. That is why we are helping in many different ways, as per the requests of President Zelenskyy and others in our frequent exchanges.

* * *

COVID-19 PROTESTS

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, you would have to be wilfully blind to not see that the situation is deteriorating. Ottawa's downtown is paralyzed, bridges are closed, members who have been elected by millions of people are having trouble getting to Parliament.

Oral Questions

Thousands of people, mainly truckers, but also others with other concerns, are protesting against these measures. There is one problem: They are protesting against the measures that will end this pandemic.

This is an impasse, and we cannot afford this kind of impasse in these times. What will the government do to deal with this crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course we will always support the freedom to protest and to disagree with government policies, but we will also take a very firm stand against violence, hatred and intolerance, which, unfortunately, we also saw in this protest.

The police are there to protect people to the extent possible. However, what we need is for the protesters to go home. Their message has been heard. We will continue to use vaccines to help people.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, protesters are not the only ones who are fed up. People, in general, have had it. Health care workers are exhausted. People who spent yet another holiday season alone are fed up. The economic sectors that see no end in sight are fed up.

People are at the end of their rope, and the anger and frustration we are seeing is understandable. Everyone acknowledges that hate is not the solution, but none of this is getting us anywhere. How, exactly, is the government going to get us out of this crisis?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will continue to do what we have been doing all along. We will do whatever it takes to support Canadians for as long as we need to. We will secure vaccines, provide rapid tests, send billions of dollars to the provinces for their health care systems, and support the workers, seniors and families who need it.

Our government has been there and has provided \$8 out of every \$10 of pandemic spending. We will continue to offer solutions, primarily in the form of vaccines, to get us through the pandemic.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we saw some really hateful and disturbing images coming out of the convoy in Ottawa this past weekend.

We saw the Nazi flag being flown, the Confederate flag being flown, and instead of denouncing and making it clear that this type of hate has no place in Canada, the Leader of the Opposition and his Conservative MPs left the door open to this type of hate in Canada.

What is the Prime Minister going to do to tackle the rise of on-line hate so we can build a better future for our kids?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the NDP for bringing up this important is-

sue. Obviously, like him, we vigorously condemn the hatred and the intolerance that we have seen in the streets of Ottawa over the past number of days.

We know all Canadians are frustrated, all Canadians are tired of this pandemic, but the vast majority of Canadians know that listening to science, getting vaccinated and continuing to be there for each other with respect and openness is the best and really only way through this pandemic. That is what we will stay focused on.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we saw some hateful images from the convoy this weekend. Instead of denouncing them, the leader of the official opposition and his Conservative MPs left the door open for this kind of hate.

What would the Prime Minister do to address the rise of hate on social media and build a better future for our children?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is going to stand in solidarity with the vast majority of Canadians who have made sacrifices and are fed up with COVID-19, but who continue to respect and be there for each other, for health care workers and for those who provide essential services. These individuals are showing us the way through this pandemic, and they are the ones we will focus on.

The Conservative Party has some thinking to do about the irresponsible leadership it is showing these days.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Ukraine has requested lethal defensive weapons from the government. Many of our allies, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland and the Czech Republic, have granted this request and have supplied lethal defensive weapons.

The Prime Minister has refused this request. Why?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I was in Ukraine a week ago, President Zelenskyy had one ask. It was to make sure that we would help by offering a sovereign loan to the Ukraine government to deal with economic instability. Three days later, we provided \$120 million in sovereign loans.

What I heard from the national guard on site in Ukraine was that they needed more support in terms of military training. A week later, we extended and expanded Operation Unifier.

Oral Questions

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, diplomacy not backed by credible threats of the use of military force is nothing more than empty talk and rhetoric. Canada should be joining our other democratic allies and working in a multilateral fashion with our NATO partners to grant Ukraine's request and provide lethal defensive weapons.

When will the government quit being so naive about its foreign policy and ensure that it counters the threats coming from authoritarian regimes such as Russia?

• (1435)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are steadfast in supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Let me quote NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg. He said, "Canada is one of the lead countries in NATO when it comes to providing support for Ukraine." He also said, "There are not many other countries at the equal level of efforts, doing as much as Canada."

We will continue to work with our NATO allies and make sure the situation de-escalates.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the events taking place right now at the Russia-Ukraine border are disturbing to all Canadians who care about world peace.

Unfortunately, Canada's reputation has been tarnished. In today's edition of *La Presse*, a diplomat posted abroad was extremely critical of the Canadian government's actions. She described its approach as amateurish, bordering on complacent, and said it is not taking this seriously.

When will the Canadian government and the Prime Minister take the current tragic situation in Ukraine seriously?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives. On the contrary, we hope to have the support of all members of the House regarding what is happening right now in Ukraine.

We need to send Russia a strong message. Russia is currently the aggressor, and we stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

That is why we are putting an enormous amount of energy into the various diplomatic channels, whether through the United States, NATO or the Normandy format, which also includes Germany and France.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is just more talk. What Ukrainians want is real, concrete action.

According to *La Presse*, the diplomat who is currently working abroad for Canada said that the government is relying more on its illusory soft power, an approach based almost exclusively on image and communications rather than real action. The diplomat said that Canada continues to lecture everyone by boasting about our Canadian values ad nauseam and falling back on diplomacy by press release.

Ukrainians want more than press releases. Ukrainians want real, concrete, effective action from Canada.

When will the Prime Minister take the crisis seriously?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservative Party, especially since it made massive cuts to all missions abroad when it was in power.

In the circumstances, we are showing leadership on this issue. I went to Ukraine just this week, my colleague, the Minister of National Defence, is there now, and we are working with the Ukrainian government. We are also there to tell the Russian government that if it invades Ukraine again, there will be severe consequences.

[*English*]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Russians are ready for war with Ukraine. They have moved over 100,000 troops surrounding Ukraine's borders. The Russians have moved blood supplies to their field hospitals. The Liberals have pulled back our Operation Unifier trainers west of the Dnipro River.

Could the minister tell Parliament if that means the government considers a diplomatic solution unlikely, and a Russian invasion of Ukraine is now imminent?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously we take the threat of a further Russian invasion very seriously. That is why there are two tacks to stop Russia from further invading Ukraine. The first is the diplomatic one. That is why we are working with NATO and the U.S., and with France and Germany in the Normandy format. Also, we are working on deterrence. That is why we extended and expanded Operation Unifier. We have also prepared an array of economic sanctions against Russia should it further invade.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Ukraine will likely be the scene of a large conventional ground war. We have watched the Russian military buildup in Belarus, Russia, the Donbass and Crimea since the Russian Zapad exercises last September. The government had months to prepare a robust military aid package to Ukraine.

When will the Minister of National Defence provide the lethal weapons that Ukraine needs now?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as mentioned before, we have already answered the call on the part of the Ukrainian government by expanding and extending Operation Unifier. I was there a week ago and met with the Canadian Armed Forces members on site, who right now come from Valcartier, in Quebec City. I saw on the ground how thankful the national guard is to Canadians for making sure that we are providing the right supports to the military and the national guard. We have trained more than 30,000 national guard members and armed forces in Ukraine since 2014.

Oral Questions

● (1440)

*[Translation]***HEALTH**

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, people are worn out by COVID-19. We are all fed up with omicron, but we cannot give up yet. What we need now is one big push to end the pandemic once and for all. What omicron showed us is that the pandemic will not be over and done with until the whole world is vaccinated. Global vaccination is the only way out of this crisis.

What is the government doing to speed up vaccination in other countries so that we never have to spend another winter in lockdown?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising that important question.

He is absolutely right. COVID-19 will not be over anywhere until it is over everywhere. That is why, from day one of the COVID-19 crisis, Canada was one of the leading instigators behind COVAX, which enabled us early on to make rapid investments not only in vaccine development, but also in delivering and supporting the delivery of tens of millions of vaccine doses. That was the right thing to do.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, people are going out and getting their third doses. They are doing their part.

What people want to hear is not that there are enough vaccines for a possible fourth dose. What they want to hear is that the pandemic is over. For that to happen, everyone around the world needs to be vaccinated. Two weeks ago, I heard the government celebrate the fact that there were one billion doses in the COVAX program, but there are more than three billion people in the world who still have not had their first dose.

Does the government understand that half measures no longer cut it?

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague mentioned, the COVID-19 pandemic does not recognize borders and will only be overcome through coordinated global action. This is why Canada stepped up. We are committed to donating the equivalent of at least 200 million COVID-19 vaccines. We are committed to supporting equitable global access to COVID-19 vaccines. This includes therapeutics and diagnostics as well.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty clear that time is running out.

If 70% of the world's population is not vaccinated within the next six months, there could be a new wave. We could end up in another crisis. Time is of the essence. Last month, the vice president of human development at the World Bank said: "At this stage, it is not obvious that this objective will be achieved".

Global vaccination is headed for failure. What is Canada doing right now to right the ship and ensure that we end this pandemic for good?

I would like the answer to that, please.

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we stated, Canada is stepping up to provide vaccines for the global community. That is why our government committed \$2.6 billion to the COVID-19 response, which includes \$1.3 billion for the ACT-Accelerator, of which \$545 million is for COVAX. Over \$740 million is for humanitarian and development assistance. I could not agree more with the member that all of us in the world need to be vaccinated for all of us to be safe.

* * *

COVID-19 PROTESTS

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians want to see a leader who will work to heal rifts, not further divide. They want to see a leader who will listen, even to those voices he might not agree with. They want to see a leader who will work to understand, not dismiss, name-call and gaslight. Contrary to some, there are thousands of passionate, patriotic and peaceful Canadians on the Hill right now who just want to be heard.

Will the Prime Minister extend an olive branch and will he listen?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we all support free speech in the House, but there's a big difference between free speech and inciting hatred, inciting violence and desecrating war memorials, and I would hope my hon. colleague would denounce that in the clearest terms. Those radical leaders are not really interested in free speech because they want to pretend as though vaccines do not work. On this side of the House, we know vaccines work. That is the gateway to freedom, and this government will do everything that we can to get there.

● (1445)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course we all condemn hateful and destructive acts by a few at any protest. Whether it is beheading the statue of Queen Victoria in Manitoba, tearing down the statue of Sir John A. in Montreal or putting flags on Terry Fox, whether it is burning churches or wearing blackface, whether it is Hezbollah flags or Nazi flags, we all condemn it, but I am not talking about that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

Oral Questions

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be abundantly clear that those individuals who have called for the incitement of violence to overthrow this government, who have caused significant disruption by flagrantly ignoring public health care measures that have forced shops and businesses to close, and who have desecrated war memorials are not interested in free speech. They are not interested in discourse, and they are certainly not interested in advancing our way out of this pandemic.

This government will always listen to those who want to have a robust debate about public health care measures, but we have to draw a bright line between those who are interested in that debate and those who are not.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is not telling the truth and it is shameful to see what he is doing, accusing Canadians of being—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. I think both sides are very truthful in saying what they say. Whether they agree with it or not is another story, but calling someone a name or accusing them of something is not permitted in the House.

I will let the hon. member for Portage—Lisgar start from the top, and I am sure she will ask the question correctly.

Hon. Candice Bergen: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. The minister is misleading Canadians. I do get very defensive of Canadians who are outside today: patriotic, peace-loving Canadians who are called misogynists and racists by the Prime Minister.

Again I will ask the Prime Minister, who, may I remind the House, wore blackface more times than he can remember, to apologize to the peace-loving, patriotic Canadians who are outside right now just asking to be heard. Will he speak to them?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think this is a moment when we have to acknowledge that the protests that have occurred have made their point. I would ask the member opposite to encourage the people who are outside to continue in a way that is peaceful, that moves beyond what we have seen. Ottawa is being paralyzed right now. We are seeing imagery that is not appropriate—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to ask the hon. government House leader to hold on for a second. I am sure the hon. member for Portage—Lisgar wants to hear an answer to the question she asked.

I will let the hon. government House leader continue from where he left off.

Hon. Mark Holland: I will just say this, Mr. Speaker. I was in opposition for about seven years and there were times when I was overheated in my rhetoric. There were moments when I got too carried away with what I believed passionately at the time. There is a moment where we need to de-escalate. There is a moment where we need to bring it down and I am asking the members opposite, instead of going outside with these protests, to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are struggling. The cost of groceries is going up. Gas and heating are getting more and more expensive, and the price of housing is soaring. In a recent poll, 60% of Canadians said they were having difficulty feeding their families. Liberals are not making it better for Canadians, especially vulnerable seniors, who are being told they must wait months longer for their GIS payment.

When will the government help hard-working Canadians who are struggling every day just to get by?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we absolutely appreciate that there are many Canadians, particularly vulnerable seniors, facing affordability challenges. In the fall economic update, we presented our government's plan to support those seniors with a one-time payment. We will be there for those seniors who need our support.

I want to thank and congratulate all the Canadians who are behind Canada's very robust economic recovery from the COVID recession.

* * *

● (1450)

SENIORS

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the problem with that answer, just like the problem with the minister's announcement in the fall economic statement, is that it does not in any way do justice to the urgency of those seniors. They have lost their home now because the government decided to claw back their guaranteed income supplement, and they are not getting any relief.

They are out on the street and they are freezing in the cold. We have heard reports of people who have already lost their lives. The fact of the matter is that waiting until May is not good enough. It is why we joined with Campaign 2000 to call for an emergency payment for those people, and also to make sure there is a fund to get them housed right away, not in May, so when—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree how challenging this pandemic has been for seniors, particularly the most vulnerable.

Oral Questions

That is why we are working extremely hard to strengthen income security for seniors, including through the increases to the GIS, which have helped over 900,000 low-income seniors. We also know that seniors who access income supports did so because they needed it during this crisis. They should not be penalized for it now, and that is why we are making a major investment through a one-time payment for those seniors affected. We have always been there for seniors, and we will always continue to have their backs.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Iqwinder Gaheer (Mississauga—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Mississauga—Malton are worried about the rising cost of housing. They want to see federal leadership to create more affordable housing. Unfortunately, while our government delivers that leadership through the national housing strategy, Conservative Party members continued to repeat disinformation about a non-existent home equity tax in right-wing media last week.

Can the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion please set the record straight again in the House on the Conservative disinformation about a home equity tax?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Mississauga—Malton for his advocacy on affordable housing. I want to welcome the opportunity to remind those spreading misinformation that our government is not considering charging capital gains or surtaxes on primary residences. Any suggestion otherwise, including from the Conservative Party, is absolutely false.

While they continue to make up claims, we will focus on making sure each and every Canadian has access to a safe and affordable place to call home.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just because the Prime Minister dressed up in racist costumes so many times he cannot remember them all does not mean every single Liberal is a racist. Just because the Prime Minister tried to help a corporation avoid prosecution after it stole from some of Africa's poorest people does not mean all Liberals are racist. Just because about a half-dozen Liberal MPs who are racial minorities have complained about his treatment of them does not mean all Liberals are racist. That is guilt by association.

Why does the Prime Minister not opt instead for personal responsibility?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope I have been clear in all of my comments that I respect the hon. colleagues on the other side, just as I believe they respect the colleagues that are on this side, the work we do and the people we are. There are times in our political discourse where we see things that are abhorrent, and all I would ask is that we call it out equally.

When I saw swastikas on the street and when I saw what had happened, I felt it was time to move on. What I would ask is this:

Instead of trying to inflame the situation, let us de-escalate the situation and work together to find a way to stop the lockdown of this city, so that citizens can move forward with their lives and any legitimate grievances can be fairly heard.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I agree. We should always call out evil symbols and the individuals who are individually responsible for putting them up. I remember a January 2018 event at which the Prime Minister stared straight at a swastika and, instead of condemning it, said, "Thank you for coming, sir." We on this side condemn evil symbols whenever they are used.

I respect the member. I just wish his government would respect the thousands of people who are fighting for their livelihoods right now and trying to do their best to get this country back on track.

● (1455)

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in a time of global crisis, a time when so many are being adversely affected by this pandemic, and our hearts go out to every one of them. The way in which we have discourse for each other will define this moment for all of us.

Those who are peacefully protesting have made their point. It is time to go home and do it a different way than continuing to lock down this city and continuing to do what is happening. It is deeply disturbing for Canadians to see the way this city and our symbols are being treated.

I would ask the Conservatives to also join with us to ask that they go home. Let us do this responsibly. Let us have responsible dialogue. I respect the member opposite. Let us do this the right way.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Liberals have shown no respect for the people. This country right now is like a raw nerve, and the Prime Minister is jumping up and down on it again and again with his inflammatory rhetoric. We are talking about people who have 14-year-old kids who are suicidal after two years of lockdowns.

I just spoke to a waitress whose business was wiped out by lockdowns. I am talking to truckers, who have been delivering foods to our plates throughout this. These are the very people, honest, hard-working and shirt-off-their-backs types of people, that the Prime Minister keeps attacking.

Oral Questions

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I encourage the member to just think, as he is talking about de-escalating and having civil discourse, about his tone and how he is approaching this issue.

This is a time that is incredibly delicate. We are in a moment in which a raw nerve is being touched. How we talk to each other and how we deal with one another—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please.

I am going to interrupt the hon. government House leader and just wait until everything calms down.

I will let him start from the top, because I did not have a chance to hear it all. I am sure the hon. member for Carleton, who asked a question, wants to hear the answer. We are just not hearing anything because of the noise.

The hon. government House leader, please proceed.

Hon. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, I have an instinct, and that instinct is that Canadians expect us today, when they are seeing what has happened over this weekend, to watch the dialogue in this chamber. They expect us to be as respectful as possible, to dial down our rhetoric and our language, to engage with one another and to find an off-ramp from the escalation that has occurred. This is not healthy.

In a healthy democracy, we have respectful debates that do not involve some of the things we have seen. All I am asking for is for us to engage in a constructive way. If we could attempt in this place and at this hour to be equal to that, I hope we can move forward on that basis.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more. I was at an overpass as the truckers went by, and what I saw were cheerful, patriotic and optimistic Canadians who want their freedom back and want their livelihoods back. They are standing up for their fellow Canadians: the 60% of families who fear they cannot feed themselves, the 28-year-old kid living in mom's basement because he cannot afford a home and the small businessman wiped out by endless lockdowns by incompetent politicians.

These are the people who are standing up and fighting for their livelihoods and their freedom. Why will the government not finally stand with them?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a fundamental difference, and that is that I do not believe my enemy is across the aisle. I believe that our enemy is this pandemic and that we need to end this pandemic, get everybody vaccinated, and move forward in such a way that the concerns he is talking about, being affected by a global crisis, mean that they are supported.

This is a time of collective trauma. It requires us to be compassionate, to work with one another and to understand that our common enemy is the virus and not one another.

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the opening ceremony for the Olympic Games in Beijing is this Friday. The entire world will be celebrating the glory of China, even as the country commits genocide against Uighurs, its own people.

We cannot blame the athletes. It was this government, not them, that decided the games could go ahead in China.

Will this government at least muster the courage to finally acknowledge that what is happening in China is real and that the Uighur people are being subjected to genocide?

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. This is my first time rising in the House, and I appreciate the opportunity to greet my constituents in Brome—Misisquoi.

The Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee are responsible for deciding whether we will participate in the Olympic Games. Our athletes, the two committees and other countries decided to send athletes to the Olympics in China.

Our government has been clear and consistent. We have always maintained that we support democracy and human rights. That is why, in co-operation with our allies, we will not be sending an official delegation—

• (1500)

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

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is strange that Canada is participating in a diplomatic boycott of the Olympics, yet this government is unable to tell us why. It does not have the courage to tell us that it is because China is committing genocide against the Uighur people. It does not want any investigations into it. It did not want the games to be delayed or moved. It has agreed to a diplomatic boycott, but it refuses to tell us why.

Is this Canada's diplomatic role?

Is this what the Prime Minister had in mind when he told the world that "Canada is back"?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the allegations of genocide against the Uighur people in China very seriously. That is why we have always expressed these concerns, that is why we are not sending political representatives to the Beijing Olympics, which begin on Friday, and that is also why we have asked the UN human rights committee to investigate the matter.

I would therefore like to correct my colleague, who says that we are not showing leadership and are not investigating the issue. On the contrary, we want to get to the bottom of this extremely concerning issue.

*Oral Questions**[English]***TAXATION**

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last month the Associate Minister of Finance said, when it came to payroll tax hikes, that businesses “can afford this”.

How completely out of touch is this comment with small businesses? Considering the government went ahead with these tax hikes despite 30-year, record-high inflation rates, we have to assume the government believes that businesses can afford these as well.

Could the minister tell us how historically high inflation rates have to be before the government stops increasing taxes on small businesses?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to supporting small businesses, it is a bit rich of the Conservatives to presume to offer our government any advice at all. After all, before Christmas, when the omicron wave was rising, it was the Conservatives who opposed Bill C-2, a bill that included a lockdown insurance policy for small businesses and Canadians.

The Conservatives voted against it. Thank goodness they failed. Otherwise, our small businesses would have no support today.

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PENSIONS

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, record inflation, coupled with the government's brutal GIS clawback, has financially crippled many of Canada's hard-working seniors, forced to spend their golden years in the labour market just to make ends meet.

Our vulnerable seniors need to know that Ottawa is listening. That is why the Conservative opposition called on the government to reverse the CPP tax hike.

When will the government stand up, rise up, lean in to Canada's hard-working seniors and help them meet their basic—

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, seniors have worked all their lives, and they deserve to feel safe and financially secure later in their life.

That is why the government is delivering on its promise to increase the OAS by 10% for those 75 and older, strengthening the support for all Canadians later in life. Since 2015, we have restored the age of eligibility for OAS to 65. We have increased the GIS for single seniors and strengthened the CPP. During the pandemic we provided direct and immediate support for seniors. As always, we will be there for them.

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with inflation reaching a 30-year high, the government continues to hurt Canadians with its poor economic policies.

Nearly 60% of people are finding it difficult to feed their families. If that is not bad enough, the government raised its CPP tax on Canadians, an extra \$700 coming out of families' paycheques. This

may mean nothing to this Prime Minister, but it matters to everybody else.

When will the government reverse its CPP tax and stop penalizing hard-working families?

● (1505)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives continue to irresponsibly perpetuate a false economic narrative and talk down the Canadian economy. The reality is that Canada is resilient and our economy is robustly recovering from the COVID recession. In Q3 our GDP grew by 5.4%. That was beating the U.S., Japan, the U.K. and Australia. We have recovered 108% of jobs lost to the pandemic, compared to just 84% in the U.S., and we had in November a trade surplus at a 13-year high.

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*[Translation]***CLIMATE CHANGE**

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in December, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change announced a consultation process on our new climate commitments. The minister also confirmed that he would table Canada's 2030 emissions reduction plan by the end of March 2022.

Can the minister tell the House how our government will build a strong foundation for achieving net-zero emissions by 2050?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague from Kings—Hants on his continuing efforts to speak French in the House.

I would like to remind him that over the past few years, our government has implemented more than 100 measures and invested \$100 billion in the fight against climate change.

As he mentioned, I will be tabling a plan in the House that will include many new commitments in the fight against climate change, including a net-zero emitting electricity grid by 2035, a zero-emissions act also by 2035, and a cap on greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector.

[English]

PENSIONS

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many in Canada's labour force are senior citizens struggling to get by. Many seniors are forced to work beyond the retirement age through no fault of their own. The CPP tax hike has added insult to injury to our seniors who have worked hard their whole lives. The out-of-control inflation has many working seniors feeling like retirement is a dream they will never have the ability to experience.

When will the government reverse the CPP hikes for our seniors?

Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since 2015 our government has been strengthening retirement support for seniors today and for future retirees. We have built a strong social net and pension system that all Canadians can be proud of. We have enhanced the CPP and the OAS and raised GIS for single seniors. That has helped 900,000 low-income single seniors. We are helping by investing in services, such as \$70 million for the New Horizons for Seniors program and billions for home care.

We are going to make sure that seniors, now and into the future, have all the supports they need.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, CMHC is a federal agency funded by the housing minister using taxpayer dollars. Recently, CMHC funded a study that determined the best course of action was to tax Canadian homeowners more. Why should Canadians be concerned about this? It is because the government continues to float the idea of adding more taxes on Canadian homeowners. On this side of the House, we are 100% against this tax.

Why does the minister continue to support the idea of adding more taxes on Canadian homeowners?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this gives me another opportunity to once again state categorically that our government is not considering charging capital gains or surtaxes on primary residences. We have said this time and time again in the House of Commons and in the public sphere. While the party opposite continues to engage in misinformation, we are busy being focused on the work of ensuring that each and every Canadian has a safe and affordable place to call home.

* * *

[Translation]

COVID-19 ECONOMIC MEASURES

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want our businesses to believe in the future of our country. We want entrepreneurs to invest and keep running their businesses.

Programs were created to help them during the crisis, but some entrepreneurs do not have access to that financial assistance because they started their businesses in 2020. They are part of the economic recovery, but there is no help for them.

Oral Questions

What will the Minister of Finance do to support entrepreneurs and save their businesses?

• (1510)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I must once again point out that the Conservative Party has been very hypocritical about Canada's small and medium-sized businesses.

Before Christmas, as the omicron wave was ramping up, our government implemented measures to help and support small and medium-sized businesses should new lockdowns become necessary. The Conservatives were against that.

I am very pleased to be able to tell small and medium-sized businesses that our government succeeded. We supported them despite—

The Speaker: Order. The member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the vaccine is the best way to put an end to the pandemic and keep our communities safe.

[English]

Can the Minister of Transport please share with the House the steps our government is taking to safeguard the health of Canadians and Canada's air transportation system?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to the public health of our citizens. Leadership requires belief in science. Leadership also requires resolve, and we are resolute to do everything we can to protect the health and safety of Canadians. That is why we have implemented measures, including requiring travellers to be fully vaccinated. Any allegations of violations of our public health measures will be investigated fully by Transport Canada.

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COVID-19 ECONOMIC MEASURES

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, like many other frontline workers, grocery store workers have put their health at risk to make sure Canadians have been able to get the essentials they need. With COVID-19 cases high, it is absolutely essential that they are treated and compensated fairly for the work that they do.

Tributes

Big grocery store chains will not do the right thing on their own and restore the hero pay they had promised. They even take government handouts to pay their rich CEOs. If the Liberals will not stand up for these workers, will they at least guarantee that these fat cats will not continue to get taxpayer-subsidized money, especially when they promised to make this happen? What will the minister do?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for reminding us yet again that COVID has really shown us who the truly essential workers in our economy are, and that very much includes frontline workers in places like grocery stores. Our government is very pleased to have been able to put measures in place throughout COVID to support these workers, including measures like paid sick leave, including government support for people who need to take time off if a loved one is sick and, of course, including the increase to the Canada workers benefit.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, over 400 climate scientists and scholars co-signed a letter calling on the federal government to step back from its plan to introduce another fossil fuel subsidy, a new tax credit for carbon capture and storage. As stated in their letter, despite decades of research, carbon capture is neither economically sound nor proven at scale. This proposal would only divert resources away from proven and cost-effective solutions like renewable energy and electrification.

Can the minister confirm the government will listen to scientists and scrap this proposed new subsidy?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have to look at every possible technology that will help us reduce greenhouse gases. In fact, when it comes to carbon capture and storage, the IPCC itself produced a report a few years ago looking at this very technology, saying that we might have to do it because we will not be able to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to prevent 1.5°C of global warming.

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● (1515)

[*Translation*]**HEALTH CARE WORKERS**

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, there have been consultations among the parties, and I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That this House salute the dedication of the health care workers who have been tirelessly on the front lines for 22 months administering vaccines and caring for the patients of COVID-19.

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

I hear none. The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS[*Translation*]**CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER OF CANADA**

The Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to section 536 of the Canada Elections Act to table the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada's "Report on the 44th General Election of September 20, 2021".

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 115 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

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[*Translation*]**ACT RESPECTING CERTAIN MEASURES RELATED TO COVID-19**

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-10, An Act respecting certain measures related to COVID-19.

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

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[*English*]**ALEXA MCDONOUGH**

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I join today from the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit as we gather in the House of Commons of Canada to celebrate the life of our trail-blazing, courageous and compassionate former colleague, Alexa McDonough. Our hearts are with her family and friends and a grateful country.

[*Translation*]

Alexa was a true pioneer for women, and held leadership positions in politics by leading the New Democratic Party at the provincial and federal levels for decades. She showed that it was possible to do things differently and still succeed in politics.

Tributes

[English]

Yesterday, I talked to my friend Robin Sears, who was the national director of the NDP from 1974 to 1981. He suggested, “It is perhaps important to recall how different was the world that Alexa grew up in than the one we live in today. Alexa's achievements began in community work in the 1970s. They were times of open misogyny in Canada. Women who sought to offer political opinions publicly were subject to broad public disapproval and often attack. There were very few women in any roles in politics.”

Robin described Alexa as having a personal magic that was based upon empathy and patience. She always had time to reach out and spend time with someone who was hurting. She sensed when someone needed an uplift and a call.

Halifax Senator Stan Kutcher remembered Alexa as “a whirlwind with a purpose”. He said, “At one overly navel-gazing, endless-debating gathering at the university where I work, on the issues of if and if so, how much and how should the university interact with the community in which it was sited, she crashed the discussion, took the floor and demanded that the institution be active, welcoming and even more reflective in race, sexual orientation and other dimensions of the population of Canada and our province. I was delighted; others, much less so.”

Alexa and I were both elected to the House of Commons in 1997. I remember fondly how we tried to reconstitute the all-party women's caucus, Alexa gamely trying to work with Deb Grey, in spite of great policy differences, to find issues that we could work on together, including supporting women parliamentarians around the world.

Last year, Stephen Kimber released his powerful and beautifully written biography, called *Alexa!: Changing the Face of Canadian Politics*. The book should be compulsory reading for young women across Canada as they could come to know this truly remarkable and inspiring woman.

I particularly loved the description of Rosemary Brown's advice to Alexa when she had been asked to run for office. Two words: “You should.” I think “you should” would be Alexa's advice to all young women in Canada, whether it is to run or to get involved in politics and making change for the better.

Alexa McDonough believed and exemplified that if you add women, politics changes for the better. Today we honour the legacy of this tremendous politician, who demonstrated how important it is to our democracy that good and great people run for public office. Alexa will continue to inspire us all.

• (1520)

Mr. Chris d'Entremont (West Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour and admiration that I rise in this chamber today to highlight the memory, the commitment and the brilliant political career of the late Alexa McDonough, who passed away on January 15.

First, on behalf of my colleagues and the Conservative Party of Canada, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to her two sons, Justin and Travis, and to Alexa's family and loved ones, as

well as to all federal NDP members and those from Nova Scotia's provincial NDP.

She was known simply as “Alexa” across Canada. I unfortunately never had the opportunity to sit with her in the Nova Scotia legislature while I was an MLA, but I certainly had the great pleasure of getting to know her better through meetings and of course through former colleagues and her great legacy in Nova Scotia. Although we were not of the same political party and possibly would have disagreed on many issues, we would have definitely agreed on important matters for the benefit of all Nova Scotians, as we both cared deeply about the well-being of our fellow citizens, our communities and the needs of our beautiful province.

When I reflect on Alexa's career, I always remember her deep commitment towards her constituents and her determination, and I will always value an important point that we have in common: the respect for all our fellow MLAs and MPs from all parties while valuing collaborative work for the common good.

Alexa was very close to people and a visionary all at the same time. Elected leader of the Nova Scotia NDP in 1980, she became the first woman elected to lead a political party in the provincial legislature, which was at a time when there were no washrooms for female MLAs. She became the first woman to lead a major, recognized political party in Canada. After leading Nova Scotia's NDP for 14 years, she led the federal NDP from 1995 to 2003 and then continued to serve in this House of Commons until her retirement in 2008.

To this day, Alexa remains the only woman in Canadian history to have led both a provincial and a federal party. She has been a pioneer, a distinguished leader and a great source of admiration for women who want to make the great leap into provincial or federal politics. In fact, her strong leadership, dedication and efforts over the years have helped Nova Scotia and all other Atlantic regions shine from coast to coast to coast.

With the magnitude of Alexa's many accomplishments during her career, it is impossible to summarize her legacy in just one short statement, but here are a couple.

Although many of us know her through her political work, she has been a force for change since her teens, when she led a youth group to fight the deplorable conditions in Africville, a small urban Black community that was located on the south coast of the Bedford Basin near Halifax. She was a social worker, reporter, teacher and brilliant politician. She fought for health care workers and safety improvements, human rights protections and pay equity. She was also a champion for international development and peace advocacy.

Tributes

It is still difficult for many women to enter politics. Alexa's strong advocacy for women's contributions in politics over her entire career, her personal involvement in the social community and her determination in all of her commitments will certainly be remembered and recognized forever as an important gift and a source of inspiration to many women for generations to come.

In addition to her career as a politician, Alexa also contributed much to the field of social work, her other profession. She worked in community development in Nova Scotia in social services; in social planning with the City of Halifax; as a policy researcher with the Institute of Public Affairs; and as a teacher at the Maritime School of Social Work, now the School of Social Work at Dalhousie University. She will always be remembered as a politician with a tremendous work ethic and as someone who deeply cared about our social workers.

When I left the Nova Scotia legislature in 2019, there were only 19 women on all sides of the floor, compared to the six that were there when I was first elected back in 2003. Consider that when Alexa was elected, she was the only one.

Again, regardless of one's political stripe, Alexa's contribution to the political landscape is immeasurable and provided a solid foundation for the involvement of women in politics and for recognition of their contribution.

I thank Alexa for her contribution and her public service. They have greatly improved the lives of many. She will be deeply missed.

● (1525)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the passing of Alexa McDonough at the age of 77 on January 15 is a great loss for Nova Scotia and Canada. It is an especially great loss for all women who go into politics to improve the conditions of the most vulnerable in our communities.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to offer my condolences to Alexa McDonough's family, friends and community. I also send my regards to her political family, the NDP. She was the NDP House leader from 1995 to 2003.

A social worker by trade and at heart, Alexa McDonough led some major battles, notably to improve access to employment insurance and to fight the temptation to balance public finances on the backs of the most vulnerable workers. This battle is still ongoing today, especially for people making their living from the sea in both our regions and in eastern Quebec.

She fought against federal cuts to health care under Jean Chrétien's Liberals. This is yet another fierce battle that is still ongoing for all Quebecers and Canadians.

She will be best remembered for fighting for women in politics. Ms. McDonough became the second woman, after Thérèse Casgrain, to be elected leader of a party when she took the reins of the Nova Scotia NDP in 1980. The following year, she became the very first female party leader to win an election and sit in the Parliament of Canada. She stood as the only woman and the only member of her party against a political culture hostile to female leadership.

That, I will repeat, was in a legislature that did not, I repeat, did not, have women's washrooms. That says a lot. We have come a long way.

In 1995, Alexa McDonough entered federal politics, took the reins of a weakened NDP and breathed new life into it, particularly in the Maritimes. In the House of Commons, as in the Nova Scotia legislature, she once again had to stand with determination in a world of men. She had to put up with the usual taunts from her political opponents, the classic ones. They accused her of being too emotional or too soft, and told her to go back to her knitting. As women in politics, we still hear the same idiotic nonsense. However, we hear them less often precisely because of pioneers like Alexa McDonough, who proved not only that we are welcome in politics and that we have a place here in the House, but also that we can speak with a strong and proud voice, the voice of a leader, when defending the interests of the people in our communities.

Therefore, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to thank Alexa McDonough for her political commitment on behalf of her constituents in the House of Commons. This is how it should be, not the other way round. Also, on behalf of the 103 women elected to the House, I thank her for her caring tenacity in the fight against prejudice.

● (1530)

[*English*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all New Democrats, we express our condolences to the family and loved ones of Alexa McDonough. This is a loss not just for the New Democrats and her family but for all Canadians.

As we have heard from so many people, Alexa, as she was known across Canada, was someone who fought her whole life for social justice. She championed women in politics and never backed down from a challenge. She was not afraid to make people uncomfortable. She was not afraid to make clear that for women to have a place in politics they had to fight, and she fought hard. She became the leader of the Nova Scotia NDP 41 years ago today, and in doing so she became the first woman to lead a major political party in Canada. To really understand the impact of that, we need to know that she not only broke barriers for people in a profound way; she broke barriers so that other people could dream big and do the same.

I think about all the people who have been touched by her leadership and pioneering. I think about the fact that I would not be here today if it were not for people like Alexa McDonough and the fact that she broke barriers. I think not only of the impact she has had on me, but also that which she has had on the lives of so many women.

I had the honour of meeting Alexa a number of times, particularly when I visited Nova Scotia. The last time was in 2019, when she walked into the room during a campaign event. Although she had already given so much of her life to politics and social justice, she was not done; she still showed up to provide her support, and I saw the people in the room light up when she walked in. The cheer for her was deafening. All of the women who looked up to Alexa saw someone who made them feel like they belonged. That is what Alexa did. She made so many people realize they belonged.

She was a trailblazer in so many ways. She was ahead of her time in fighting for the inclusion of all people, regardless of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. She was someone who believed fundamentally in the principle that everyone belongs.

[Translation]

Alexa McDonough dedicated her life to social justice, championed women in politics and never shied away from a challenge. She became the first woman to lead a major political party in Canada. She overcame obstacles so that others could do the same.

[English]

I want to acknowledge the specific ways and some of the contributions. There are so many and people have laid out some of those contributions already, but I want to talk about some of the specific things that Alexa contributed to Canadians and Nova Scotians. She brought specific awareness to the challenges faced by the Black community in Africville, a community in Nova Scotia, she fought hard to overhaul Halifax's welfare system, she negotiated the first maternity leave in the history of Halifax and she played a pivotal role in advancing women's rightful place in Canadian politics.

Alexa had the growing determination to build a better Canada and make it more fair for all Canadians. Her story is truly one of dedication, determination and decency. She was a remarkable trailblazer, an activist, a social worker, an educator, a feminist, a politician and, perhaps most significantly, a leader fighting to make life better for people.

[Translation]

Rest in peace, Alexa. We will miss you.

• (1535)

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of being Alexa's friend for four decades. I request unanimous consent to allow me to speak and pay tribute to her legacy.

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

An hon. member: Nay.

The Speaker: I understand there is agreement to observe a moment of silence in memory of our former colleague, Alexa McDonough. I now invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

Routine Proceedings

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Jim Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

The first report is in relation to the motion adopted on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, regarding the request for government response to the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada", which was presented to the House of Commons on Thursday, June 17, 2021, during the second session of the 43rd Parliament. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

The second report is in relation to the motion adopted on Thursday, December 16, 2021, regarding the proposed regulations amending certain regulations made under the Firearms Act. This is the latest version of the second report.

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the second report later this day.

* * *

• (1540)

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON CANCERS LINKED TO FIREFIGHTING ACT

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): moved for leave to introduce Bill C-224, an act to establish a national framework for the prevention and treatment of cancers linked to firefighting.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to introduce my bill to Parliament, and thank the member for Kingston and the Islands for seconding it. This legislation would establish a national framework for the prevention and treatment of cancers linked to firefighting and would designate the month of January each year as firefighter cancer awareness month throughout Canada.

Every day, firefighters put their lives on the line to keep Canadians and our communities safe, but did members know that over 85% of all line-of-duty deaths among firefighters in Canada are caused by occupational cancers or that a firefighter's cancer may or may not be recognized as job-related, depending on where he or she lives?

[Translation]

Awareness, education and information sharing are critical to the prevention and early detection of cancers linked to firefighting.

[English]

This bill is about saving lives, and I hope all members of the House will support it.

Routine Proceedings

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

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

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

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

* * *

[*English*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a bit lengthy today, but I will get through it.

The following questions will be answered today: Nos. 3, 5 to 7, 10, 15, 19, 23, 28, 30, 33, 39, 41, 42, 57, 60 to 62, 64 to 67, 74, 77, 78, 82, 85, 88 to 90, 93, 94, 96, 102, 114, 116, 117, 119, 135, 138, 141, 150, 155, 157 to 159, 163, 166, 168, 171, 177 to 179, 183, 185, 194, 197, 210, 212, 214, 220, 225, 232, 239, 240, 250, 255, and 261 to 263.

[*Text*]

Question No. 3—**Mr. Mario Beaulieu:**

With regard to the Department of Canadian Heritage's official languages funding programs over the past 10 years, broken down by year: (a) what amounts were allocated, broken down by province, by program and by component; and (b) what is the breakdown of the amounts allocated in (a) to the various institutions across the country, broken down by province, by level of education (primary, secondary, post-secondary) and by the institution's main language of operation (anglophone institutions and francophone institutions)?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), the information can be found using the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/official-languages-bilingualism/publications.html>.

In response to (b), the requested information is not tracked in Canadian Heritage's financial systems.

Question No. 5—**Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the government payments made to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB): has the government done a value-for-money analysis on its payments to the AIIB, and, if so, what are the details of the analysis, including (i) the date the analysis was completed, (ii) who conducted the analysis, (iii) the findings?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, officials from the Department of Finance actively analyze AIIB activities and represent Canada's interests through their participation in the institution's board of directors. This includes reviewing proposals and operations going to the board for approval to ensure that they align with Canadian priorities, such as promoting strong, inclusive economic growth, ensuring environmental protection, tackling climate change, prevent-

ing forced labor, supporting gender equality and promoting transparent information disclosure.

Question No. 6—**Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the government's investments in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB): does the government know how many Canadians are employed on projects funded by the AIIB, and, if so, what is the breakdown by project?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as of November 26, 2021, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, AIIB, has funded 153 sovereign and non-sovereign projects since its creation. The nationality of the individuals employed by its clients in these projects is not a metric that is tracked by the AIIB.

The Government of Canada is aware of five Canadian firms having signed contracts as part of the AIIB's corporate procurement since Canada officially joined the AIIB in March 2018: In 2018, the LEA Consulting Group provided consulting services on an AIIB-financed project; in 2018, the Hatch consultancy firm provided services on an AIIB-financed project; in 2019, the Edmonton-based Insignia Software Corporation provided library management system services to the AIIB; in 2020, EQ Consulting Inc. was awarded two separate contracts by the AIIB for the implementation of market risk tools and order management systems support; in 2021, a joint venture company involving the Canadian company ISW Consulting Limited provided consultancy services on an AIIB-financed project.

The AIIB's treasury department has also procured the services of Canadian financial institutions, such as TD, BMO, RBC and Scotiabank, as part of its funding program.

Question No. 7—**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:**

With regard to the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines by the government: what is the amount per dose that the government paid for the vaccines, broken down by manufacturer (Pfizer, Moderna, etc.)?

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has committed over \$9 billion to procure vaccines and therapeutics and to provide international support.

As part of our commitment to transparency, Public Services and Procurement Canada has worked with its vaccine suppliers to secure their agreement on publicly releasable versions of Canada's vaccine contracts. These documents, which were provided to the Standing Committee on Health, fully respect the Access to Information Act, so information that is commercially confidential, such as details on price, or that could impact Canada's ability to negotiate future contracts, has been protected. This approach allows us to release as much information as possible without compromising our existing agreements or our ability to keep Canadians safe.

For more information on the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines, please visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/services/procuring-vaccines-covid19.html>.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 10—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:**

With regard to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and proposed projects in the riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London that have been received by the government from the Province of Ontario, but have not been announced: (a) what are the details of all such projects, including the (i) name of the project, (ii) date the application was received, (iii) funding stream the project qualifies for, (iv) current status (approved, rejected, awaiting decision, etc.); (b) for each application that has been approved but not announced, what are the plans related to the announcement, if an announcement is planned; (c) for each application that was rejected, why was it rejected; and (d) for each application where a decision is still pending, what is the anticipated timeframe for when a decision will be made?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the investing in Canada infrastructure program and proposed projects in the riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London, Infrastructure Canada's program information management system does not contain information by federal riding. Therefore, information is provided based on the localities within the federal electoral district as defined by Elections Canada.

Infrastructure Canada does not have any pending applications for infrastructure projects in localities within the electoral district of Elgin—Middlesex—London from the government of the Province of Ontario with regard to the investing in Canada infrastructure program.

Under the investing in Canada infrastructure program, provinces and territories are responsible for the planning, prioritization, design, financing and administration of infrastructure projects that are cost-shared with Infrastructure Canada, which is a funding partner. Municipalities submit their proposed projects to a province or territory, which prioritizes and forwards eligible projects to Infrastructure Canada for federal due diligence and funding consideration.

For more information on projects funded under Infrastructure Canada's contribution programs, please visit <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/map-carte/index-eng.html>.

Question No. 15—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to the Clean Fuel Standard and Clean Fuel Regulations: (a) has the government identified the expected sources of renewable fuel expected to be used in transportation fuels under the Clean Fuel Standard; (b) what is the expected carbon intensity of the renewable fuels to be used in transportation fuels; (c) what is the expected net impact on carbon intensity of transportation fuels; and (d) what is the expected net impact on total greenhouse gas emissions?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to (a), the proposed clean fuel regulations, referred hereafter as the proposed regulations, will result in an increased demand for lower carbon intensity, CI, fuels in Canada, which could be met by increased imports and/or increased domestic production. The government has established a \$1.5 billion clean fuels fund to support the domestic production of lower CI fuels to help regulated parties come into compliance under the proposed regulations at lower cost and to incent domestic investment. The regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the final regulations will include quantitative estimates of the volumes of renewable fuels that will be used to comply with the regulations. These estimates will be based on the final design of the regulations, which are expected to be published in spring 2022.

With respect to ethanol in gasoline, current levels of domestically produced ethanol are insufficient to meet E15, where gasoline is blended with 15% ethanol at a national level, in Canada in 2030. It is expected that domestic production will increase. It is also possible that Canada could import the additional volumes of ethanol needed.

With respect to biodiesel and hydrogenation derived renewable diesel, HDRD, in diesel, it is possible that domestic production of biodiesel could meet the additional volumes of lower CI diesel needed. Canada currently produces enough biodiesel domestically to meet domestic demand; however, Canadian producers export a significant portion of domestically produced biodiesel to the United States.

With respect to (b), the regulatory impact analysis statement that accompanied the proposed regulations used interim national average life-cycle assessment carbon intensity values in the calculation of credits. These life-cycle assessment carbon intensity values were determined based on Canadian data and other life-cycle assessment tools, and were compared to fuel pathways submitted to the regulators in British Columbia and California. The regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the final regulations will include quantitative estimates based on the final design of the regulations. The final regulations are expected to be published in spring 2022.

With respect to (c), the proposed regulations would require liquid fossil fuel primary suppliers, i.e., producers and importers, to reduce the carbon intensity of the liquid fossil fuels they produce and import for use in Canada from 2016 CI levels by 2.4 grams of carbon dioxide equivalent per megajoule of energy, gCO₂e/MJ, in 2022, increasing to 12 gCO₂e/MJ in 2030.

With respect to (d), the clean fuel standard is expected to have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the final regulations will include quantitative estimates of GHG emission impacts based on the final design of the regulations. The final regulations are expected to be published in spring 2022.

Question No. 19—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Program in the riding of Calgary Shepard: (a) how many applications were received in the riding of Calgary Shepard; (b) of the applications in (a), how many were (i) successful, (ii) denied or rejected; (c) what is the breakdown of the number of successful applicants by type of business (hotel, restaurant, tour operator, etc.); and (d) what is the breakdown of the number of denied or rejected applicants by type of business?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the above noted question, what follows is the response from the CRA. As of the date of the inquiry, that is November 23, 2021, the tourism and hospitality recovery program being referred to in the question had not yet opened for applications. As such, the CRA cannot answer in the manner requested as there are no data available at this time.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 23—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:**

With regard to information collected from the former long-gun registry that was abolished in 2012: does the government, including the RCMP, currently have access to any of the information collected from the former registry, and, if so, what specific information and how is it being used?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Bill C-19, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act, all registration records for non-restricted firearms were destroyed in the Canadian firearms information system, CFIS, in 2012, with the exception of Quebec records deleted in 2015.

However, prior to the destruction of the Quebec records, pursuant to a court order, the RCMP was ordered by the Federal Court to retain a copy of the Quebec non-restricted firearm registration records outside of the Canadian firearms information system, CFIS, in an independent unconnected repository due to litigation with the Office of the Information Commissioner.

In accordance with the provisions in Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms, a copy was provided to the Quebec Ministry of Public Security. The records need to be retained until no longer required for access to information and privacy, ATIP, purposes. These records are not accessible for any other purpose, and remain offline.

The Office of the Information Commissioner is currently confirming that there are no outstanding provisions that require the copy to be retained. Once confirmation is received, the copy of the Quebec non-restricted firearm registration records can be destroyed.

Question No. 28—Ms. Melissa Lantsman:

With regard to considerations or analysis made by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) to move the Embassy of Canada to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, since January 1, 2016: (a) what specific actions were taken by GAC in relation to any considerations or analysis made related to the location of the embassy; (b) what was the specific timeline for each action in (a); (c) what was the final decision regarding whether to move the embassy or not; (d) how many officials were assigned to analyze or give consideration to options related to a possible relocation of the embassy; and (e) have GAC officials conducted any site visits to potential locations in Jerusalem which may be used in the future by GAC, and, if so, what are the details including, the (i) location, (ii) date of the visit, (iii) potential future uses by GAC?

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. Global Affairs Canada has not taken any actions related to moving the Embassy of Canada to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. On December 6, 2017, the United States announced it would formally recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and would begin the process of moving the U.S. embassy there from Tel Aviv. On December 7, 2017, the Prime Minister stated publicly that Canada would not be moving its embassy from Tel Aviv.

Question No. 30—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): (a) how many individuals who received CERB had a mailing address outside of Canada; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by the number of individuals in each country; and (c) what is the total value of CERB payments made to individuals with a mailing address outside of Canada?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Canada emergen-

cy response benefit, CERB, in response to (a), a total of 1,610 individuals who received CERB had a mailing address outside of Canada.

In response to (b), the breakdown of individuals who received CERB is 60 in Australia, 20 in China, 80 in France, 20 in Germany, 80 in India, 50 in Ireland, 20 in Japan, 20 in New Zealand, 20 in the Philippines, 90 in the United Kingdom, 720 in the United States, and 420 in all other countries.

Countries with fewer than 20 beneficiaries have been grouped into a single category to ensure confidentiality. All counts are rounded to the nearest 10.

In response to (c), the total value of CERB payments is \$11,906,000. Dollar amounts are rounded to the nearest 1000.

While CERB required individuals to reside inside Canada to qualify, some individuals may have been out of the country on a temporary basis, or working in Canada on a temporary basis: for example, a student who is temporarily abroad, someone temporarily working abroad, someone who could not make it back into the country due to the pandemic, or a temporary worker who has fallen ill but their home address is in another country.

This response is derived using data as of late November 2021. These data are updated daily to reflect new beneficiaries, additional or completed benefits, changes in rules, etc. While daily changes typically have a small impact on global counts and payment amounts, it should be noted that this table may not match previously published information. There are a few reasons to explain these differences: For example, cases now have a more recent address in our data holding; cases cover a situation where the CERB benefit was changed to another benefit type; cases where the CERB benefits were reclaimed.

Question No. 33—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to executives at the Canadian Infrastructure Bank receiving bonuses during the COVID-19 pandemic: for the 2020-21 fiscal year, how many executives received bonuses in excess of (i) \$100,000, (ii) \$250,000?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the 2020-21 fiscal year, the members of the executive committee of the Canada Infrastructure Bank, CIB, consisted of the following individuals: chief executive officer, who is responsible for strategic business leadership and overall performance of the organization; chief investment officer, who is responsible for advisory and investment strategy and activities, capital deployment and asset management; chief financial officer and chief administrative officer, who is responsible for corporate finance, ERM, legal and compliance, human resources, information technology and administration; group head, corporate affairs, policy and communications, who is responsible for federal government relations, corporate planning, communications, media and stakeholder relations, knowledge and policy research.

Routine Proceedings

Details of the CIB's compensation to executives, including the principles and the criteria used in reaching executive compensation decisions for the 2020-21 fiscal year, are disclosed in the CIB's 2020-21 annual report submitted to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and the President of the Treasury Board, pursuant to the Financial Administration Act. Compensation paid for each fiscal year to key management personnel, which includes executives and members of the board of directors, is disclosed in the notes to the annual audited financial statements in the CIB's annual report. Page 86 of the 2020-21 annual report describes key management personnel compensation for the 2020-21 fiscal year. Salaries and short-term employee benefits were \$3,075 million.

With regard to bonuses received by executives as it pertains to the members of the executive committee listed above, the information constitutes "personal information" as defined in the Privacy Act, and the CIB applies the principles set out in the Access to Information Act to withhold information that constitutes personal information.

The CIB requires individuals with commercial experience and professional skills from the investment and finance industries to develop and execute complex infrastructure projects in partnership with proponents and private sector investors to deliver the best value for public resources. Consistent with these objectives, the CIB's compensation framework reflects best practices of Crown corporations and other comparable organizations in the financial services and insurance sectors to ensure the compensation rates are fair and appropriate. The CIB does not disclose individual compensation received by the chief executive officer and other executives, due to competitive and privacy considerations. This disclosure complies with the requirements for Crown corporations in the Financial Administration Act and is aligned with the policies, guidelines and directives established by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, including guidance with respect to the preparation of corporate plans and annual reports.

On June 30, 2021, the CIB provided a response to a motion passed at the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities requesting that the CIB file all documents detailing the bonus policies and payment of bonuses to executives and the board of directors since the CIB's inception.

Question No. 39—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With respect to the government's energy policy and its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions: (a) how does the government define the term "fossil fuel subsidy" in the context of its commitments in this respect; (b) what level of carbon tax does the government consider necessary for Canada to meet all of its greenhouse gas reduction commitments; and (c) what is the estimated cost to the Canadian economy associated with each of the measures announced by the government at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP26?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), while there is no commonly held definition, there has been a general understanding that fossil fuel subsidies encompass price controls, cash subsidies and tax preferences—i.e., concessions from a particular country's "normal" level of taxation—whether aimed at producers or consumers of fossil fuel. The term "inefficient" fossil fuel subsidies also lacks a commonly accepted definition and was not defined in any of the four pairs of G20 peer reviews completed to date. Environment and Climate Change Canada and Finance Canada are

working to finalize an assessment framework that will define these terms in the Canadian context.

In response to (b), there is a clear cost from a changing climate, so it cannot be free to pollute. That is why the Government of Canada introduced a price on carbon pollution across Canada in 2019. Putting a price on carbon pollution reduces emissions and encourages innovation, allowing Canada to meet its economic needs and its environmental goals at the same time. The price on carbon pollution is currently \$40 per tonne. It will increase annually until it reaches \$170 per tonne in 2030. The increasing price will make cleaner options more affordable and discourage pollution-intensive investments.

As the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed, the Government of Canada's carbon pricing system is not a tax.

Carbon pricing is a key part of the government's approach to reducing emissions while supporting the transition to a competitive, low-carbon economy. It is not the only measure being used, however, and the government has therefore not projected what carbon price would be needed in the absence of other measures to achieve either its 2030 national determined commitment of 40% to 45% reduction below 2005 levels or its goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

In response to (c), the actions taken by this government to address climate change, including through the strengthened climate plan and the important announcements made at COP26, are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the harmful effects of climate change while growing our economy. The environment and the economy go hand in hand.

Question No. 41—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With regard to the AUKUS trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States announced in September 2021: (a) on what date did the government become aware of conversations surrounding the creation of AUKUS; (b) was Canada invited to join AUKUS, and, if so, why did it decline the invitation; (c) is the government interested in having Canada join AUKUS; and (d) has the government conducted any assessments on whether the creation of AUKUS had a positive or negative impact on Canada's national interest, and, if so, what were the findings of the assessment?

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Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. With respect to parts (a) to (d), a changing world requires adapting and expanding diplomatic engagement. Canada will continue working with key allies and partners, while making deliberate efforts to deepen partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. AUKUS is a partnership that responds to the security needs of Australia, including that country's decision to acquire a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines to maximize the range and capabilities of Australia's submarines. Canada currently has no plans to acquire nuclear submarines, the centerpiece of the arrangement announced on September 15, 2021. As such, Canada has not and does not seek to be directly involved in the nuclear-powered submarine aspects of this trilateral arrangement, nor would the Government of Canada expect to have been consulted on such an arrangement.

Prior to the announcement of AUKUS, our Australian, United Kingdom and United States counterparts ensured that Canada was briefed on the announcement. Although the announcement occurred prior to the newly appointed ministers, both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of National Defence continue to remain in close contact, as always, with all three countries on matters of defence cooperation and with respect to our shared strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region.

Security in the Indo-Pacific is a priority that requires close collaboration with a wide range of partners and Canada remains committed to working with our partners and allies on security and stability in the region.

Canada has expanded its defence and security engagement in the Indo-Pacific region through an enhanced naval presence, growing multilateral contributions and increased bilateral engagement with key partners.

Question No. 42—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With regard to government meetings and representations since January 1, 2020, concerning the situation of Mr. Huseyin Celil: (a) which ministers, Liberal members of Parliament acting on behalf of a minister, political staff, or senior officials have met with Kamila Talendibaeva, and what are the details of each meeting, including (i) the date, (ii) the individuals in attendance, (iii) whether the meeting was virtual or in person; (b) which ministers, Liberal members of Parliament acting on behalf of a minister, political staff, or senior officials have met with any other representatives of Mr. Celil, and what are the details of each meeting, including (i) the date, (ii) the individuals in attendance, (iii) whether the meeting was virtual or in person; (c) has the government highlighted Mr. Celil's case in conversations or meetings with representatives of the US government or the government of any other allied country and, if so, what are the details of each such instance, including the (i) country, (ii) title of the Canadian representative; (iii) title of the foreign official, (iii) date; and (d) what are the details of all representations which have been made to the Chinese government regarding Mr. Celil's case by representatives of the Canadian government, including (i) who made these representations, (ii) who were they made to, (iii) the date?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. While privacy considerations prevent the sharing of details, the Government of Canada has been clear from the beginning that the case of Mr. Huseyin Celil is of utmost importance and has been actively engaged on his case. Canadian officials in Ottawa and Beijing are in regular contact with Mr. Celil's family in Canada, as well as their representatives, to provide support.

Canada has repeatedly raised Mr. Celil's case with Chinese counterparts at the highest levels. Since his initial detention, Canadian government representatives have made over 170 representations to Chinese officials on Mr. Celil's behalf and will continue to do so.

Question No. 57—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to the changes outlined in Transport Canada's Advisory Circular No. 301-001 issue no. 3 respecting the rules regarding Instrument Approach Procedures at non-certified aerodromes: (a) what is the policy objective for this change; (b) how many additional days a year on average, broken down by province, will non-certified aerodromes be inaccessible due to the new instrument approach procedures; (c) what exceptions are being made to ensure that medical evacuation flights will not be impacted by this change; and (d) when is the change expected to come into force?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to part (a), aviation safety is a key priority for Transport Canada. The objective of the amendments to Transport Canada's advisory circular No. 301-001, issue no. 3, respecting the rules regarding instrument approach procedures at non-certified aerodromes is to improve the level of safety offered by instrument approaches in Canada and bring it to par with that of the international community, the Federal Aviation Administration and what is currently offered at certified aerodromes, namely airports, in Canada.

With respect to part (b), Transport Canada does not track aerodrome accessibility. Rather, it is the responsibility of non-certified aerodrome operators to select the level of service that meets the needs of their communities and, subsequently, it is also their responsibility to meet the aviation safety regulatory requirements associated with the level of service they determine is the best for their community.

With respect to part (c), the department does not anticipate the need for deviation or exemption for the great majority of aerodromes with the introduction of the new specifications, which will be scalable to individual aerodromes. However, if there is a need for a deviation or exemption, the aerodrome operator, through the sponsor of the instrument approach procedure, may submit an exemption request, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. This includes the need for the requesting party to make the demonstration that the exemption is in the public interest and that the proposed mitigations provide an equivalent level of safety to the Canadian aviation regulations it seeks to be exempted from. In this instance, no exemptions are being considered, and this is not the issue at play for the reason noted below.

The vast majority of airports, namely certified aerodromes, are suitable for most medical evacuations or medevac operations. It is non-certified registered aerodromes, that we are discussing in the context of advisory circular No. 301-001, and not all aerodromes, registered or not, are suitable for every type of operation. In fact, some aerodromes, for example, short and/or obstacles rich runway environment, may not be suitable for fixed wing medevacs or most commercial operations. As mentioned above, it is ultimately the pilot's responsibility to ensure that the aerodrome they intend to operate at is suitable for the type of aircraft they intend to use and the type of operation they intend to conduct.

Routine Proceedings

With respect to part (d), Transport Canada's advisory circular No. 301-001, issue no. 3, was due to come into force on December 31, 2021. However, as noted above, a new version is being developed and is expected to be available before the end of the current fiscal year. Transport Canada will continue to work with key stakeholders, including Nav Canada, on the implementation of the revised advisory circular.

Question No. 60—Mr. Marty Morantz:

With regard to the Advisory Panel on Systemic racism, discrimination with a focus on anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, LGBTQ2+ prejudice, gender bias and white supremacy announced by the Minister of National Defence in December 2020: (a) why was focusing on antisemitism and Islamophobia not part of the panel's mandate; (b) was the decision to exclude antisemitism or Islamophobia intentional or was it a mistake; and (c) if these exclusions were a mistake, what specific action, if any, has the Minister of National Defence taken to correct these errors, and on what date was the action taken?

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no room in the Canadian Armed Forces or the Department of National Defence for sexism, misogyny, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, discrimination, harassment or any other conduct that prevents the institution from being a truly welcoming and inclusive organization.

National Defence understands that culture change within the Canadian Armed Forces and National Defence is required to remove toxic behaviours and to create an environment where everyone is respected, valued, and can feel safe to contribute to the best of their ability.

This is why on December 17, 2020, the Minister of National Defence created an advisory panel as part of National Defence's efforts to support Indigenous, Black and people of colour, along with the LGBTQ2+ community, and women.

With respect to parts (a), (b) and (c), the minister's advisory panel is mandated to identify and address systemic racism and discrimination within the Defence team. Additionally, the advisory panel is tasked with providing advice and recommendations on how to eliminate systemic racism and discrimination, which impacts the recruitment, retention and equality of opportunity for all marginalized and racialized members of the Defence team.

The panel's mandate was purposely made broad to ensure that the panel's scope could be as far-reaching as required. While the panel is designed to focus on anti-indigenous and anti-Black racism, LGBTQ2+ prejudice, gender bias and white supremacy, the panel is not restricted from exploring all forms of racism.

The exploration of white supremacy allows the panel to address anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, as Jewish and Muslim people are common targets of white supremacy and white supremacists. For example, as part of its engagements with internal and external defence stakeholders, panel members have explored the concept of anti-hate, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia within National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. This included holding separate meetings with members of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, and the Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism at the Ontario Tech University, to discuss issues related to anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

The advisory panel has regularly met with the minister's office to update and brief it on their progress. Due to challenges caused by

the global COVID-19 pandemic, the panel requested and received a short extension to provide its report. The panel delivered its final report and recommendations to address the policies, processes and practices that enable discriminatory behaviours within the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces to the minister on January 7, 2022.

The Minister of National Defence is currently reviewing the panel's report and recommendations and will meet with departmental officials to discuss potential next steps.

The panel's report and recommendations will contribute to eliminating harmful attitudes and beliefs that have enabled racism and discrimination, and will create an environment where all feel welcome in the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces.

Question No. 61—Mr. Marty Morantz:

With regard to the appointment of the Honourable Irwin Cotler as Canada's Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism: (a) what specific government resources have been allocated to the Envoy to ensure he can fulfill his mandate; (b) since his appointment on November 25, 2020, what specific measurable outcomes have been achieved; (c) will there be regular reports tabled by or on behalf of the Envoy outlining his progress and, if so, what are the details; and (d) has office space been allocated to the envoy and, if so, where are the offices located (i.e. city and address)?

Mr. Paul Chiang (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Diversity and Inclusion), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to (a), Global Affairs Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage have supported the special envoy during the first year through existing departmental resources. The Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion within Global Affairs has dedicated the equivalent of 1.5 full-time equivalents, FTEs, to support the special envoy as he fulfills his international mandate. The multiculturalism and anti-racism branch within the Department of Canadian Heritage has also dedicated the equivalent of 1.5 FTEs to support the special envoy as he fulfills his domestic mandate.

Routine Proceedings

With respect to (b), key international accomplishments include leading Canada's delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and supporting Canada's delegation to the Malmö International Forum. Key domestic accomplishments to date include co-convening the July 2021 federal summit on anti-Semitism; developing Canada's pledges on Holocaust remembrance and combatting anti-Semitism, announced by Prime Minister Trudeau at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Anti-Semitism, October 2021; the promotion of Holocaust Education Month, November 2021; and domestic outreach. The special envoy's extensive bilateral efforts included individual meetings with international counterparts and virtual events hosted by Canadian missions. Multilaterally, he worked with partners at the United Nations, European Union and Organization of American States to build awareness and support, including as a panelist at an event co-organized by Canada at the UN Human Rights Council on combatting anti-Semitism.

With respect to (c), a public report by the special envoy to the government is in the process of being prepared and will be made public once finalized.

With respect to (d), no office space has been assigned to the Honourable Irwin Cotler, as the government continues to work remotely due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Question No. 62—Mr. Dan Mazier:

With regard to government projections on the impact of inflation: (a) what is the projected impact that inflation will have on the (i) real, (ii) nominal value of income to seniors who receive payments from the Canadian Pension Plan, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Old Age Security; (b) has the government conducted any analysis on the impact that inflation will have on seniors living on fixed incomes and, if so, what are the details, including the findings of the analysis; (c) what are the government's projections related to the projected buying power of seniors with (i) current, (ii) projected levels of inflation annually over the duration of the next 10 years; and (d) what inflation levels did the government use in its projections related to (c)?

Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to government projections on the impact of inflation, in response to (a), old age security, OAS, and Canada pension plan, CPP, benefits are indexed to inflation. To retain their value over time and to protect the purchasing power of beneficiaries, OAS and CPP benefits are adjusted in accordance with changes in the consumer price index, CPI. The Old Age Security Act and the Canada pension plan also each contain a guarantee ensuring that benefits can never be reduced, even in the event of a decline in the CPI.

OAS rate increases apply to all benefits under the OAS program. This includes the OAS pension, as well as the income-tested guaranteed income supplement, GIS, and the allowances. Rate increases are calculated four times per year, in January, April, July and October, using the all-items index from the CPI. Quarterly indexation allows for faster adjustment of OAS benefit amounts following cost-of-living increases.

CPP rate increases are calculated once a year using the CPI all-items index and come into effect each January. Therefore, the value of benefits in pay is fully protected and takes into account year-over-year increases in prices as measured by Statistics Canada.

OAS and CPP benefit adjustments in accordance with changes in the CPI ensure that the value of benefits seniors receive is fully protected. As a result, seniors can rest assured that there will be no loss

in spending power as a result of the higher inflation experienced in late 2021.

In response to (b), the vast majority of seniors in Canada receive the OAS pension. Low-income OAS pensioners are eligible to receive the GIS. Both of these benefits are adjusted four times a year based on changes in the CPI. Indexation on a quarterly basis allows for faster adjustments to OAS benefits following increases in inflation.

The Office of the Chief Actuary, OCA, is responsible for providing appropriate checks and balances on the future costs of the different pension plans and social programs that fall under its responsibility, including for the OAS program and the CPP. Every three years, the OCA prepares actuarial reports for both the OAS program and the CPP, which includes analyses of OAS and CPP benefits.

In response to (c), the OCA provides short- and long-term projections of inflation levels. Their projections are based on Bank of Canada inflation targets, as well as other economic forecasts. In the OCA's most recent actuarial reports of the OAS program and the CPP, released in 2020 and 2019 respectively, inflation was projected at 2% per year.

A new actuarial report on the CPP will be tabled in Parliament in fall 2022, which will include new inflation projections.

Question No. 64—Mr. Tako Van Popta:

With regard to the Order in Council SOR/2020-96 published on May 1, 2020 whereas it states that "the newly prescribed firearms are primarily designed for military or paramilitary purposes" and as the former Minister of Public Safety has restated this in the House of Commons of the over 1,500 newly prohibited firearms on numerous occasions: (a) which specific models that were prohibited on May 1, 2020 or since have been or are still in use by the Canadian Armed Forces; and (b) which specific models prohibited on May 1, 2020 or since are in use by any national military in the world?

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, firearms are critical to allowing Canadian Armed Forces members to conduct its operations. All Canadian Armed Forces members operating firearms undergo rigorous training on the safe use of firearms and undergo routine assessments to ensure operational safety measures and protocol are always followed.

In response to (a), information on prohibited firearms with regard to the Order in Council SOR/2020-96, published on May 1, 2020, in use by the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Navy, and Royal Canadian Air Force can be found listed below.

Prohibited firearms in use by the Canadian Armed Forces broken down by model are as follows: C7A2, C20, C15.

For reasons of operational security, information on firearms used by the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command cannot be disclosed.

Routine Proceedings

In response to (b), National Defence does not keep a centralized record of firearms used by foreign militaries and cannot provide details on the specific firearms used by other militaries.

Question No. 65—**Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the rate of inflation in 2021 exceeding the Bank of Canada's annual target, according to the Department of Finance's projections, and Statistics Canada's census metropolitan areas: (a) how high must the benchmark interest rate rise to restore inflation to the Bank of Canada's target for each year between 2022 and 2027 inclusively; (b) by how much will the interest rate increase in (a) directly or indirectly increase the cost of servicing Canada's national debt; (c) for each of Statistics Canada's census metropolitan area, how many potential first time homebuyers will the increase in (a) exclude from Canada's real estate markets between 2022 and 2027 inclusively; and (d) for each of Statistics Canada's census metropolitan area, how much will the increase in (a) increase consumer debt?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maintaining a stable environment for the prices Canadians pay is the paramount objective in Canada's monetary policy. The Bank of Canada's renewed framework will keep it focused on delivering low, stable and predictable inflation in Canada.

To do so, the Bank raises or lowers its key policy rate to bring economic activity in line with the productive capacity of the economy and to achieve its inflation target. Upon reaching the inflation target and the balance between aggregate demand and the economy's productive capacity, the interest rate usually eventually settles around what central bankers call the "neutral rate of interest". This neutral rate is changing over time and has declined over the past two decades as a result of low inflation. For Canada, the Bank of Canada estimates currently that this neutral rate lies between 1.75 and 2.75 percent, with a midpoint of 2.25 per cent.

The Department of Finance surveys private sector economists for their views on the outlook for the Canadian economy when preparing its economic and fiscal projections. The average of private sector economic forecasts has been used as the basis for fiscal planning since budget 1994. This practice introduces an element of independence into the fiscal forecast, and has been supported by international organizations such as the IMF.

According to the latest average economic forecast presented in the December 2021 "Economic and Fiscal Update", inflation is expected to return within the 1 to 3 percent inflation control range of the Bank of Canada by 2023 and to have essentially returned to the 2 percent inflation target by 2024. The interest rate on 3-month treasury bills is also expected to return to 2 percent, a level consistent with the Bank of Canada's policy interest rate having returned to the neutral interest rate. As a result, our public debt charges are projected to increase from about 1 percent of GDP in fiscal year 2021-22 to 1.3 percent of GDP in fiscal year 2026-27. This remains a historically low level, and well below the pre-financial crisis level of 2.1 per cent in 2007-08, despite extraordinary spending due to the pandemic.

Question No. 66—**Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the rate of inflation in 2021 exceeding the Bank of Canada's annual target, according to the Department of Finance's projections, and to Statistics Canada's census metropolitan areas: (a) how high must the benchmark interest rate rise to bring annual inflation rates below the Bank of Canada's target to achieve an annual average rate of the Bank of Canada's target over the next five years; (b) by how much will the interest rate increase in (a) directly or indirectly increase the cost of servicing Canada's national debt; (c) for each of Statistics Canada's census metropolitan area, how many potential first time homebuyers will the increase in (a)

exclude from Canada's real estate markets over the next five years; and (d) for each of Statistics Canada's census metropolitan area, how much will the increase in (a) increase consumer debt?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maintaining a stable environment for the prices Canadians pay is the paramount objective in Canada's monetary policy. The Bank of Canada's renewed framework will keep it focused on delivering low, stable, and predictable inflation in Canada.

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*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 67—Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the hard cap on greenhouse gas emissions produced by operations in Canada's oil sands which the Prime Minister announced at the COP26 Summit in Glasgow: (a) how many jobs does the government forecast will be lost or not created for each year between 2021 and 2050, inclusively, due to (i) planned investments in the oil sands which will be cancelled as a result of the announcement, (ii) capital flight as existing producers in the oil sands relocate to other jurisdictions, (iii) reduction in production and investment by existing producers; (b) if the government doesn't have projections or forecasts for (a), why has it not studied these factors; (c) by how much will economic activity decline for each year between 2021 and 2050 in oil and gas producing provinces, as measured by dollar value and percentage of gross domestic product, further to the announcement; and (d) how high of a border adjustment levy must be imposed on imports of foreign-produced energy sources to match the standards to be imposed on Canadian producers further to the announcement?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada recognized that climate change is one of the great challenges of our times and that to thrive in a net-zero world, Canada must do its part to reduce emissions and ensure that the transition to clean growth is just and equitable.

As these are still early days, the government is seeking the input of the net-zero advisory body on key principles for implementing the emissions targets for oil and gas, and is engaging key stakeholders, including provinces and territories, representatives from the oil and gas industry, non-governmental organizations and our indigenous partners.

The recently published Alberta Energy Transition study, conducted for Calgary Economic Development and Global Edmonton, notes that the global energy transition could create 170,000 jobs in Alberta alone and contribute \$61 billion to the province's gross domestic product, GDP, by 2050.

The government is also aware of studies such as the one released by TD Economics, including their conclusion that the transition to net zero will create new job opportunities, and their recommended framework for transitioning to clean energy employment.

The Clean Resource Innovation Network commissioned the Global Advantage Consulting Group Inc. to conduct a study on the level of research and development expenditures in the industry. The study found that the domestic oil patch is the largest spender on clean technology in Canada, accounting for 75 per cent of the \$1.4 billion spent annually. The Government of Canada believes that there is enormous opportunity for the industry to help lead Canada's clean-tech transformation, and will be mindful of that as it works to develop the way forward.

The government has every expectation that its discussions with key partners such as provinces and territories and other stakeholders will allow it to forge a path to decarbonization in the oil and gas sector to meet Canada's net-zero-by-2050 target, and not only protect Canadian jobs but grow them in a new era of sustainable prosperity.

Question No. 74—Mr. Doug Shipley:

With regard to government analysis on the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the Ontario economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on Ontario's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on Ontario's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government re-iterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low-inflation regime would be detrimental to the economy of Ontario, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of all Canadian provinces and territories.

Partly as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than the roughly 2% average that has prevailed in recent decades. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world expect that the factors keeping inflation elevated will dissipate after a period of time. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The Bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and the 2% inflation target.

Question No. 77—Mr. Larry Maguire:

With regard to government analysis on the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the Manitoba economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on Manitoba's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on Manitoba's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government reiterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low inflation regime would be detrimental to the economy of Manitoba, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of any other Canadian province or territory.

Admittedly, as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and are taking actions to ensure that the temporary forces pushing up prices do not become embedded in ongoing inflation.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 78—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:**

With regard to government analysis on the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the Alberta economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on Alberta's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on Alberta's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government reiterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low-inflation regime would be detrimental to the Alberta economy, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of any other Canadian province or territory.

Admittedly, as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and are taking actions to ensure that the temporary forces pushing up prices do not become embedded in ongoing inflation.

Question No. 82—Mrs. Tracy Gray:

With regard to the government's commitments on the completion of the Okanagan Rail Trail project and the federal Addition to Reserve (ATR) process for the Duck Lake Indian Reserve No. 7 (IR#7): (a) what is the status of the ATR to Duck Lake IR#7 of former CN Rail land; (b) what are the exact areas of negotiation which have and have not been resolved to complete the ATR; (c) how many meetings or briefings has the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations or the Minister of Indigenous Services had regarding the Okanagan Rail Trail project or the ATR to Duck Lake IR#7 since November 20, 2019, and what are the details of each meeting or briefing, including dates; (d) when was the last communication by the government to Duck Lake IR#7 or the Okanagan Indian Band regarding the ATR; and (e) what is the estimated timeline for the completion of the ATR?

Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Indigenous Services Canada, ISC, and its Special Operating Agency of Indian Oil and Gas Canada are concerned, the response is as follows. With regard to part (a), ISC continues to support the Okanagan Indian Band with the addition to the reserve of the former CN Rail corridor lands bisecting Duck Lake Indian Reserve 7. CN Rail is currently the registered owner of the lands in fee simple, and Canada has provided CN with a draft agreement of purchase and sale to support the transfer of lands to Canada for the use and benefit of the band.

With regard to part (b), the Okanagan Indian Band continues to work to resolve third party interests, including property rights required by telecommunications providers, electrical transmission and distribution services, sewer utility interests and access agreements for on-reserve developments. Canada has offered to support the band with their negotiations; however, assistance has not been

requested. The band has the support of legal and technical experts working to satisfy addition-to-reserve, or ATR, requirements.

With regard to part (c), government officials engage with the Okanagan Indian Band on a biweekly basis in an effort to satisfy remaining ATR requirements for resolution of third-party interests. There have been no meetings or briefings on this project with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations or the Minister of ISC.

ISC does not attend meetings and does not receive briefings of the Okanagan Indian Band's participation on the Okanagan rail trail project. Once the ATR is completed, it will be up to the band to determine the intended use of the lands.

With regard to part (d), the last communication between ISC and the Okanagan Indian Band regarding the ATR was November 19, 2021.

With regard to part (e), it is difficult to estimate timelines for completion, as completion of the ATR is subject to the readiness and willingness of third party interest holders to negotiate federal replacement interests.

Question No. 85—Mr. Marc Dalton:

With regard to government analysis of the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the British Columbia economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on British Columbia's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on British Columbia's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government reiterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low inflation regime would be detrimental to the economy of British Columbia, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of any other Canadian province or territory.

Admittedly, as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and are taking actions to ensure that the temporary forces pushing up prices do not become embedded in ongoing inflation.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 88—Mr. Michael Kram:**

With regard to the “A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy” plan from Environment and Climate Change Canada, specifically where it states that “the government will also set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers”: how was the 30% target decided upon, and when did the department make its final decision?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the target was developed based on scientific literature and internal analysis that points to the potential for optimizing nitrogen fertilizer use with an accompanying reduction in greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining or increasing yield. The reduction percentage of 30% was the result of an iterative process weighing various factors and characteristics, such as whether it was ambitious in considering climate goals and international efforts, whether it was technically achievable because technologies and know-how largely exist, whether it was economically feasible as a result of potential cost savings and increased yield through efficiency gains and better management, and whether it was scientifically defensible as supported by research findings relevant to Canadian context.

The target was finalized in fall 2020 ahead of the release of the “A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy” plan.

Question No. 89—Mr. Michael Kram:

With regard to the “A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy” plan from Environment and Climate Change Canada, specifically where it states that “the government will also set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers”: has any government department, agency, Crown corporation or government entity conducted a study on how this policy will affect either (i) Canada’s agricultural production, (ii) the food supply in Canada, (iii) Canada’s contribution to the global food supply via exports, and, if so, what were the findings of the studies?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fertilizer target was developed based on scientific literature and internal analysis that points to the potential for optimizing nitrogen fertilizer use with an accompanying reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, while maintaining or increasing yield. The reduction percentage of 30% was the result of an iterative process weighing various factors and characteristics, such as whether it was ambitious in considering climate goals and international efforts, whether it was technically achievable because technologies and know-how largely exist, whether it was economically feasible as a result of potential cost savings and increased yield through efficiency gains and better management, and whether it was scientifically defensible as supported by research findings relevant to Canadian context.

Question No. 90—Mr. Michael Kram:

With regard to the “A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy” plan from Environment and Climate Change Canada, specifically where it states that “the government will also set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers”: has any government department, agency, Crown corporation or government entity conducted a study on how this policy will affect the Saskatchewan economy regarding (i) reduced crop yields, (ii) fewer jobs in agriculture, including agri-retail, canola crushing plants, farms, and, if so, what were the findings of the studies?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has not conducted a study regarding the impact of the target on Saskatchewan’s economy.

Question No. 93—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the Prime Minister’s pledge to lower oil and gas emissions: what is the projected loss of (i) jobs, (ii) federal tax revenue from the province of Alberta and the federal government for the year 2022 as a result of the pledge?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada and Natural Resources Canada have initiated engagements with provinces and territories, indigenous peoples, industry, and other Canadians. These discussions will take place over winter and spring 2022 and will help inform the design of the approach to implementing the Prime Minister’s commitment to cap and reduce total emissions from the oil and gas sector to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Until the measure has been designed, it is premature to estimate economic impacts.

Assuming that the measure will include regulations under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, a regulatory impact analysis statement will be prepared and published in the Canada Gazette. A regulatory impact analysis statement provides information regarding the costs and benefits of the regulations as well as other information, such as who will be affected, who was consulted in developing the regulations, and how the government will evaluate and measure the performance of the regulations against objectives.

Question No. 94—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the 4.7% rise in the Consumer Price Index over the last year and future inflation: (a) what are the government’s estimates on the added increase the rise has had on trucking costs; and (b) what are the government’s estimates and projections for the next 12 months on the increase in food prices as a result of the added trucking costs?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), in Canada, consumer price inflation is calculated using the consumer price index, or CPI, which measures the price level for a representative basket of goods and services purchased at the consumer level. This basket of goods and services includes consumer prices for items ranging from groceries to operating a vehicle and taking public transportation. Increases in total inflation means a higher cost of living for consumers. This, in turn, reduces the purchasing power of households, which can lead to reduced real consumer spending and ultimately lower economic activity more broadly.

The Government of Canada does not estimate the effects of CPI inflation on trucking costs, nor are there CPI data specifically on trucking costs. Moreover, trucking costs are more likely to be linked to commercial or producer prices, as opposed to retail or consumer prices, on which the CPI data are based.

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With regard to (b), the Government of Canada does not have estimates of the impact of trucking costs on projections of consumer prices. As noted above, CPI data on trucking costs are not available. Of note, many other costs influence food prices, including agriculture prices, manufacturing and processing costs, and distribution costs for modes of transportation beyond trucking.

According to the Economic and Fiscal Update 2021, which was released by the Department of Finance Canada on December 14, 2021, private sector economists expect total CPI inflation to be 3.3% in 2021 and 3.1% in 2022. By 2023, inflation is expected to return to within the 1% to 3% inflation control range of the Bank of Canada and to have essentially returned to the 2% inflation target by 2024.

Question No. 96—Mr. Jake Stewart:

With regard to government analysis on the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the New Brunswick economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on New Brunswick's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on New Brunswick's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government reiterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low inflation regime would be detrimental to the economy of New Brunswick, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of any other Canadian province or territory.

Admittedly, as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and are taking actions to ensure that the temporary forces pushing up prices do not become embedded in ongoing inflation.

Question No. 102—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:

With regard to government analysis on the impact of the Bank of Canada's low inflation target on the Saskatchewan economy: (a) has the government done any projections on the impact of maintaining the low inflation target on Saskatchewan's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator; and (b) has the government done any projections on the impact of abandoning the low inflation target on Saskatchewan's economy, and, if so, what are the results of such projections, broken down by economic indicator?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, policy-makers and the general public readily acknowledge that the best contribution of the Bank of Canada to the well-being of the country is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The government reiterated the importance of price stability in its recent renewal of the monetary policy framework with the Bank of Canada, as it is clear that abandoning the low-inflation regime would be detrimental to the economy of

Saskatchewan, just as it would be detrimental to the economy of any other Canadian province or territory.

Admittedly, as a result of COVID-related supply disruptions, inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022. The bank and the government remain committed to low and stable inflation and are taking actions to ensure that the temporary forces pushing up prices do not become embedded in ongoing inflation.

Question No. 114—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to government litigation related to non-compliance of contractual obligations, which has been commenced or has been ongoing since January 1, 2020, related to contracts signed by the government: (a) how many contracts are the subject of litigation; and (b) what are the details of each contract involved in the litigation, including the (i) date, (ii) description of the goods or services, including the volume, (iii) final amount, (iv) vendor, (v) country of the vendor, (vi) litigation court?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice undertook an extensive preliminary search in order to determine the number of litigation files and quantity of information that could fall within the scope of the question, as well as the amount of time that would be required to prepare a comprehensive response. It was concluded that producing and validating a comprehensive response to this question would require that hundreds of files be reviewed manually and that relevant information, if any, be extracted on a case-by-case basis, which is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

Question No. 116—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement: (a) have any environmental assessments been done on how this agreement has impacted BC salmon stocks since the agreement became effective in July 2019, and, if so, what are the details, including the date the assessments were conducted and the findings; (b) what negative impacts have been found by government studies or assessments related to the agreement and what specific actions has the government taken to reduce or reverse these negative impacts, if any; and (c) does the agreement usurp any Department of Fisheries and Oceans regulations related to the salmon stock and, if so, which regulations?

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Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement, the “agreement”, was signed in July 2019 by the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, DFO, and the president of the Fraser Salmon Management Council, FSMC, on behalf of 76 signatory first nations from the Fraser River watershed. The agreement was the result of over three years of negotiations and over a decade of foundational work by DFO and first nations, and provides a framework for the co-management of Fraser River salmon between DFO and the FSMC.

The agreement creates, promotes and supports government-to-government, nation-to-nation structures for collaboration, governance, management and conservation of Fraser River salmon. The agreement provides a framework for tier-2 decision-making by DFO and the FSMC via the Fraser Salmon Management Board, FSMB.

The FSMB has been meeting monthly since January 2020 to develop the FSMB’s annual work plan, which is the key document that guides the work of the parties and implementation of the agreement in an incremental manner. The FSMB’s inaugural annual work plan for the 2021-22 fiscal year was approved in March 2021, and the parties have been working to advance shared priorities identified in the annual work plan since then.

Since DFO and the FSMC entered into the agreement, there have been no environmental assessments on British Columbia, B.C., salmon stocks with the specific goal of assessing any impacts of the agreement on B.C. salmon stocks. While there have been no assessments specific to the potential impacts of the agreement, DFO does carry out a wide variety of scientific activities to monitor and assess B.C. salmon stocks on an ongoing basis. These activities include monitoring abundance, harvest rates, ocean survival and other aspects of these salmon populations.

The agreement is clear that existing authorities of the minister and first nations are not fettered. Sub-section 2.1(b) of the agreement states that the agreement is intended to “support the collaborative exercise by DFO and the Member Nations of their respective decision making authorities, responsibilities, laws and jurisdictions as they relate to Fraser Salmon.” Further, sub-section 2.2(a), item (v), states that the parties agree that the agreement “does not oblige the Parties, including the Minister, the FSMC and the Member Nations, to act in a manner inconsistent with their legislative or regulatory jurisdictions or authorities, or their laws, customs and traditions.” Therefore, no DFO regulations related to salmon stocks are usurped.

Question No. 117—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to the Enbridge Line 5 pipeline and the government’s invocation of the 1977 treaty: (a) what timeline has been conveyed by the United States to Canada regarding when (i) the federal case will be heard, (ii) a final decision is expected; and (b) what is the timeline for any parallel action that the government is taking with regards to negotiations with the United States to ensure that Michigan’s attempt to shut down the pipeline is unsuccessful?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. With respect to part (a), there are currently two

“federal cases” in the U.S. federal District Court for Western Michigan in relation to Line 5. The litigants in both cases are Enbridge and the State of Michigan, not the United States Government, nor the Government of Canada. Therefore, Canada is not in a position to comment on timelines regarding when these cases will be heard or when final decisions are expected to be handed down by the presiding judge.

With respect to part (b), on October 4, 2021, in response to the State of Michigan’s November 2020 order to shut down Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac, Canada invoked article IX(1), the negotiation clause of the dispute settlement mechanism of the 1977 Canada-U.S. Transit Pipelines treaty. Invoking dispute settlement triggers formal negotiations under the treaty with the U.S. We have consistently supported the continued, safe operation of Line 5, and raised it with the U.S. government at every level. Line 5 represents a critical part of Canada’s energy infrastructure and economy.

Question No. 119—Ms. Niki Ashton:

With regard to requests from First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities for the identification of undocumented and unmarked burial sites, mass graves, cemeteries, or individual remains at former Indian Residential Schools since November 1, 2015, broken down by year and category of request: (a) how many requests for funding have been made; (b) how many requests in (a) were provided for the funding requested; (c) how many requests in (a) were partially funded; (d) how many requests in (a) were denied funding; (e) what is the total amount of funds dedicated to these requests that have not yet been met; (f) what is the average number of days for processing applications in (a); and (g) broken down by date and attendees, with which Nations, communities, or their representatives, have the ministers of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Indigenous Services consulted?

Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is concerned, the response is as follows: Thousands of children were sent to residential schools and never returned home to their families and communities. The families were often provided with little to no information on the circumstances of their loved ones who had gone missing or had died, or the location of their burial. The loss of children who attended residential schools is unthinkable and we must ensure that all Canadians know how this terrible policy is affecting families and communities today.

Canada remains committed to supporting survivors, their families and communities through their healing journeys and is supporting communities by providing funding to create a historic record of children who died at residential schools, locate their final resting places, and commemorate and memorialize these lost loved ones.

On August 10, 2021, the Government of Canada announced additional funding to enhance support for indigenous peoples and communities as they continue to respond to and heal from the inter-generational trauma of residential schools. Approximately \$320 million in additional support was dedicated to indigenous-led, survivor-centric and culturally informed initiatives and investments to help indigenous communities respond to and heal from the ongoing impacts of residential schools.

Of this funding, \$83 million supplements existing investments for community-led processes to research and locate burial sites as well as to commemorate and memorialize the children who died at residential schools. These resources are in addition to the funding provided in budget 2019, bringing the Government of Canada's commitment to support this important work to \$116.8 million.

Within the time frame selected, 73 funding requests were received to conduct work at 99 Indian residential school locations. To date, 21 requests have been approved, valued at just over \$36 million, which cover work at 19 Indian residential school locations. Seven applications are close to final funding decisions, while 43 applications are still undergoing review or refinements in collaboration with indigenous communities and organizations.

In August 2021, the program initiated service standards for acknowledging new applications, at 24 hours; for application triage, at 24 hours; and for establishing an initial contact, at 48 hours after acknowledgement. These service standards are being consistently achieved. However, the average timeline to refine and finalize an application can vary greatly depending on the complexity of the proposal. Some projects cover a single site, while others target an entire province or territory. In addition, currently 25 applications have overlapping field investigation requests.

Indigenous communities wishing to accomplish work at an Indian residential school site or engagement within their community will be supported by Canada. Through their funding resource requests, communities outline their anticipated financial needs and priorities. Departmental officials review activities and expenses to ensure they are eligible under the existing authorities. Departmental officials, working with their colleagues from other departments, provide a whole-of-government approach to supporting communities in advancing this work and to leveraging the programs and funding authorities at our disposal. The applicants' identified readiness to undertake this important work also determines when funds are to be dispensed.

To avoid duplication in funding for any given site, communities are encouraged to take an inclusive approach with other communities impacted by the Indian residential school location. Requests may include funding to support these collaborative approaches, coordination and participation from multiple communities. Canada continues to work with indigenous communities and organizations to provide the necessary support as quickly as possible.

Both the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and the Minister of Indigenous Services as well as their offices work closely with indigenous communities or their representatives on this delicate matter. As events are unfolding at a rapid pace, any reporting of possible meetings or of the topics discussed risks providing incom-

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plete or misleading information. However, ministerial meeting notes are made publicly available on open.canada.ca.

Question No. 135—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to pharmaceutical drugs, treatments and therapies authorized by Health Canada since January 1, 2020: (a) how many pharmaceutical drugs (or new drug submissions) were granted authorization; (b) what are the details of each drug in (a), including the (i) name of the drug, (ii) date of the approval, (iii) purpose of the drug, including the disease or condition treated by drug; and (c) of the pharmaceutical drugs listed in (b), how many and which ones were for treatments or therapies for rare diseases, known as orphan drugs?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Health Canada is committed to openness and transparency. Information related to approved drugs, their date of approval, their approved indication, including how many and which ones were for rare diseases, is available both in annual highlights reports, available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/highlights-reports.html>, and in databases that are updated in real time: the notice of compliance database, <https://health-products.canada.ca/noc-ac/index-eng.jsp>, and the drug product database, <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/drug-products/drug-product-database.html>. These databases are an important part of Health Canada's open data assets, and are listed accordingly on the Government of Canada's open data portal, <https://open.canada.ca/en/open-data>.

Question No. 138—**Mr. Gary Vidal:**

With regard to payments made to individuals through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) or the Canada Recover Benefit (CRB), and broken down by each program: (a) how many individuals received their payments via (i) direct deposit, (ii) a paper cheque; (b) of the individuals who received their payments via a paper cheque, how many were mailed to an address outside of Canada; (c) how many of the paper cheques were counter-signed or cashed by a third party; (d) what specific action was taken by the government to ensure that money in the cheques cashed in (c) went to the intended individuals; (e) approximately how many cases of CERB or CRB fraud is the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) aware of involving paper cheques; (f) what specific action is CRA taking to investigate the cases in (e) and recover the money; and (g) how much money has been recovered to date, as a result of the efforts outlined in (f)?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), please note that this part of the response refers to applications processed and payments issued for the Canada emergency response benefit, CERB, and the Canada recovery benefit, CRB. These numbers represent CRA CERB and CRB information.

The CERB was open to application between March 15 and September 26, 2020, and applicants could retroactively apply until December 2, 2020. As of May 2, 2021, there were 22,653,848 applications processed.

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The CRB was open to application between September 27, 2020 and November 20, 2021, and applicants could retroactively apply until December 22, 2021. As of December 4, 2021, there were 29,824,974 applications processed.

With regard to part (a)(i), 84% of the CERB payments were issued by direct deposit i.e., 19,029,232, and 90% of the CRB payments were issued by direct deposit, i.e., 26,842,476.

With regard to part (a)(ii), 16% of the CERB payments were issued by cheque, i.e., 3,624,615, and 10% of the CRB payments were issued by cheque, i.e., 2,982,498.

Please note that the distribution by payment method is based upon the payments issued and not unique applicants.

With regard to parts (b), (c) and (d), the CRA is unable to respond in the manner requested.

With regard to part (e), the CRA is committed to ensuring that individuals receive only the benefits to which they are entitled, while protecting the integrity of the COVID-19 support program. In terms of the verification of suspicious activity, the analysis and review work is ongoing.

At this time, the CRA is continuing its work to determine the number of suspicious claims of CERB or CRB that have occurred, regardless of the method of payment used, cheques or direct deposit. Due to the sensitive and evolving nature of the work, the CRA cannot disclose the number of cases currently under investigation nor details about the different payment methods used for these benefits.

With regard to part (f), several measures have been put in place to prevent identity theft, and the CRA continues to closely monitor any activity that may be suspicious.

The CRA takes the protection of taxpayer information very seriously. In this regard, measures are in place to identify suspicious activities related to taxpayer accounts and to identify and prevent high-risk or potentially suspicious claims related to COVID-19 support programs. As soon as the CRA detects a suspicious transaction, or when it is notified of an alleged incident of identity theft, it conducts an in-depth review, and contacts the potential victims to inform them of the incident and to restore the information in their files. Where appropriate, the CRA works with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, financial institutions and local police to investigate the incident.

The CRA is committed to ensuring that individuals receive only the benefits to which they are entitled, while protecting the integrity of the CERB and CRB programs. As with other benefits administered by the CRA, it will take steps at a later time to verify that claimants were eligible to receive payments for any of the new COVID-related economic measures. The purpose of these reviews is to confirm that individuals are authenticated and eligible for the benefits they receive. However, the CRA does not release specific information related to its review strategies, as releasing this information could jeopardize its compliance activities and the integrity of Canada's tax system.

With regard to part (g), the CRA's analysis and review work in terms suspicious, eligible and ineligible benefit claims, and the amounts that must be returned to the CRA, is still ongoing.

Dealing with complex cases may require several months of review and verification. The CRA combines advanced data analytics and business intelligence gathered from many sources, including law enforcement agencies and financial institutions, to support these efforts. In some cases, the CRA asks taxpayers to provide documents and information that will need to be authenticated before they can continue with their applications. In other cases, the CRA will identify suspicious transactions and take other preventative measures before lifting account restrictions and releasing any payments.

Therefore, the CRA is unable at this time to provide the number of suspicious claims related to the COVID-19 support programs nor the amounts associated with them.

Question No. 141—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to the government's purchase of supplemental F-18 aircrafts from Australia: (a) what is the total number of such aircrafts that have been purchased to date; (b) of the aircrafts in (a), how many were (i) flyable, (ii) unflyable; (c) how many of the flyable aircrafts are still currently operational; and (d) what is the total amount that has been spent to date on purchasing the aircrafts?

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, National Defence is taking concrete steps to ensure that the Royal Canadian Air Force can protect North American airspace and continue to fulfill Canada's NORAD and NATO commitments.

That is why the Government of Canada launched the interim fighter capability project to procure 18 F-18 Hornet fighter aircraft from Australia with the option to acquire up to seven additional non-flyable aircraft that can be used for testing, training aids or spare parts.

This project will ensure Canadian fighter jet capability is maintained as National Defence moves toward acquiring 88 advanced fighter aircraft to replace its current fleet of CF-18 Hornet aircraft.

Transfer of the Australian F-18s to Canada began with the delivery of the first aircraft on February 21, 2019, and was completed by May 2021.

Once delivered to Canada, National Defence conducts a detailed inspection of each aircraft and proceeds with the modifications and upgrades necessary to integrate the aircraft to Canada's existing fleet of CF-18s. This work ensures that these aircraft will be available to supplement the current fleet of CF-18s until the advanced future fighter aircraft is procured.

With regard to parts (a) and (b) (i) and (ii), Canada has purchased a total of 20 F-18 Hornet aircraft. Eighteen aircraft are deemed flyable and will be integrated into service. Two aircraft are deemed non-flyable and were purchased for spare parts to ensure the long-term capability of the fleet until a permanent fleet is fully operational.

With regard to part (c), six aircraft are currently operational. The remaining 12 are undergoing inspections and modifications in preparation to be released into service.

National Defence will continue to integrate the Australian F-18 Hornet aircraft into Royal Canadian Air Force service at regular intervals, until the final aircraft is integrated by December 2022.

With regard to part (d), the total direct cost that has been spent to date on purchasing the 20 aircraft is \$127.4 million.

Question No. 150—**Mr. Dan Mazier:**

With regard to government statistics on labour shortages: how many unfilled jobs are there currently in each of the job sectors identified in the North American Industry Classification System, broken down by province or territory and by region?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the job vacancy and wage survey, JVWS, provides comprehensive data on job vacancies by industrial sector for Canada and the provinces, territories and economic regions.

Data for Canada, the provinces and territories are released quarterly in the following publicly available table: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey, Table 14-10-0326-01, job vacancies, payroll employees, job vacancy rate by industry sector, Canada, provinces and territories, quarterly, unadjusted for seasonality.

Note that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection for the job vacancy and wage survey was suspended for the second and third quarters of 2020.

Detailed information is available in The Daily, job vacancies, third quarter 2021, released on December 20, 2021. Data on job vacancies from the job vacancy and wage survey for the fourth quarter of 2021 will be released on March 22, 2022.

More information about the concepts and use of data from the job vacancy and wage survey is available online in the Guide to the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey, catalogue number 75-514-G.

Question No. 155—**Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to the carbon emissions related to the Canadian delegation's, led by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, travel to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow: (a) what is the government's estimate on the amount of carbon emissions or carbon footprint related to the delegation's (i) flights to and from the event, (ii) other emissions; (b) did the government purchase any carbon offsets related to the trip, and if so, what was the total amount spent on carbon offsets; and (c) what are the details of any carbon offset purchases related to the trip, including (i) date of purchase, (ii) amount spent, (iii) amount of carbon emissions the purchase was intended to offset, (iv) vendor?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, departments and agencies that generate greenhouse gas, GHG, emissions in excess of one kilotonne per year from air travel have been required since 2019-20 to contribute annually to the greening government fund, GGF, www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/innovation/greening-government/greening-gov-fund.html. They have been charged a TBS-set fee based on the average total annual air travel emissions of that organization over the previous three years.

Question No. 157—**Ms. Leah Gazan:**

With regard to individuals who received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and were later deemed ineligible and have been ordered by the govern-

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ment to repay the benefit: (a) how many individuals are at or below the low-income after tax threshold, and of those individuals, (i) how many live in deep poverty as defined as below 40% of adjusted median income, (ii) how many will have other income benefits reduced this year based on an increased 2020 income due to receipt of the CERB; (b) what are the demographics, including the (i) family type, (ii) province or territory of residence, (iii) gender, (iv) disability, if any, (v) any other available demographic data in relation to these individuals; and (c) which federal benefits will be reduced based on increased 2020 income due to receipt of the CERB?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the CRA has not required any individuals to repay any of the emergency or recovery benefits, and no repayment deadline has been established. Therefore, the CRA is unable to respond in the manner requested.

In cases where the CRA, through its review activities, has determined that an applicant is ineligible, the CRA contacts the applicant to advise of the decision and the eligibility criteria that were not met. The CRA also informs the applicant that if they have received a benefit payment to which they were not eligible, they will eventually need to repay the amount.

Question No. 158—**Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to the Veterans Bill of Rights: (a) is it covered in employee training at Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC); (b) are violations tracked by VAC and, if so, if there is a violation, are VAC employees required or authorized to (i) inform the client, (ii) direct the client to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman, (iii) conduct a follow-up with the client to ensure the issue has been resolved; and (c) if the response in (a) or (b) is negative, what is the rationale for leaving it out?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Veterans Bill of Rights is an expression of the rights veterans have long identified as important. It is a comprehensive declaration of rights for all war-service veterans, veterans and serving members of the Canadian Forces, both regular and reserve, members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spouses, common-law partners, survivors and primary caregivers, other eligible dependants and family members, and other eligible clients.

The Veterans Bill of Rights was developed in consultation with veterans' organizations to strengthen Veterans Affairs Canada's ability to respond quickly and fairly to the concerns of veterans. It sets out the rights of veterans and clients in accessing Veterans Affairs Canada's programs and services. It is a clear and concise statement that Veterans Affairs Canada will continue to make sure every one of its clients is treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

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The rights are as follows: be treated with respect, dignity, fairness and courtesy; take part in discussions that involve you and your family; have someone with you for support when you deal with Veterans Affairs; receive clear, easy-to-understand information about our programs and services, in English or French, as set out in the Official Languages Act; have your privacy protected as set out in the Privacy Act; and receive benefits and services as set out in Veterans Affairs Canada's published service standards and know your appeal rights.

Veterans Affairs Canada provides mandatory training for all its staff on the Values and Ethics of the Public Service, which addresses the Government of Canada's approach to respect for people and dignity.

The national orientation and training program for frontline field operations staff, while not specific to the Veterans Bill of Rights, provides core training elements for Veterans Affairs Canada employees who work directly with veterans, and promotes care, compassion and respect.

All employees complete a Canadian Forces for civilians course that addresses key components of serving veterans with integrity and respect.

All employees are required to take security training, which covers topics that include privacy protection set out in the Privacy Act. As part of Veterans Affairs Canada's onboarding process for new employees, employees receive "Privacy 101" training, which provides an overview of privacy principles required to work within privacy compliance. This includes the handling of personal information; the "need to know principle" of accessing only the personal information needed to fulfill the duties of an employee's role; and what constitutes a privacy breach, and how to avoid privacy breaches.

Question No. 159—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to the Minister of Seniors meetings related to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) since October 26, 2021: (a) broken down by date, what consultations and meetings has the Minister of Seniors attended or planned to attend to discuss GIS clawbacks; and (b) of the consultations in (a), which organizations, ministers, corporations, or individuals attended those meetings?

Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the Economic and Fiscal Update 2021, the Government of Canada announced that it proposes to provide up to \$742.4 million for one-time payments to alleviate the financial hardship of the guaranteed income supplement, GIS, and allowance recipients who received the Canada emergency response benefit, CERB, or the Canada recovery benefit, CRB, in 2020. The government will continue to investigate ways to limit potential benefit reductions for vulnerable seniors who received emergency and recovery benefits.

The Minister of Seniors was appointed on October 26, 2021. Between October 26, 2021 and December 17, 2021, there were no formal consultation processes launched regarding this matter.

The Minister of Seniors has met with stakeholders, constituents, ministers and members of Parliament on a range of topics of interest to seniors, gathering a broad range of feedback on the views and issues of importance to them.

Question No. 163—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to the impact of border closure and border restrictions related to COVID-19 on the hunting and outfitter tourism industry: (a) what are the government's estimates on the loss of revenue for the hunting and outfitter tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) what specific measures will Destination Canada take to promote hunting and outfitter tourism to an international audience as part of tourism recovery; (c) how much has been budgeted by Destination Canada to promote hunting and outfitter tourism as part of tourism recovery; and (d) what are the details related to how the promotional money in (c) will be spent, including a breakdown by type of advertising and which international markets the advertisement will target?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, estimates or projections as to the impact of a specific public health measure on this specific portion of the industry are not measured. While Destination Canada continues to promote Canada as a safe destination of choice for visitors with a variety of interests, it has not set aside funds solely for hunting and outfitter tourism promotion.

Question No. 166—Mr. Frank Caputo:

With regard to complaints from veterans that Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) area and regional offices have been closed to in person visits, assistance, and assessments since the COVID-19 pandemic began: (a) which VAC regional offices are currently open to in person visits from veterans; (b) what is the timeline for when each VAC regional office currently not open to in person visits will reopen to veterans for in person visits; (c) broken down by regional office, and as of December 6, 2021, what percentage of staff who work directly with veterans are working (i) remotely, (ii) from the regional office; and (d) what is the timeline for when the staff who normally work directly with veterans from the regional office, but have been working remotely during the pandemic, will return to work in the regional office, broken down by office?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), Veterans Affairs Canada continues to serve veterans and their families by phone, online and face to face using Microsoft Teams. In addition to regular services, Veterans Affairs Canada has reached out to 18,835 vulnerable clients since the beginning of the pandemic.

With regard to part (b), the health, safety and well-being of veterans and their families, as well as Veterans Affairs Canada employees, is the priority of Veterans Affairs Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Essentially, all Veterans Affairs Canada employees are equipped to work remotely, enabling Veterans Affairs Canada to continue to provide services to veterans and their families in the midst of this global pandemic.

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Veterans Affairs Canada will continue to take guidance from public health officials and work with its partners across government to support easing restrictions in a gradual, phased and controlled manner that prioritizes the health and safety of employees and those accessing services at departmental buildings. Veterans and their families are still accessing Veterans Affairs Canada programs and services. Veterans Affairs Canada staff are available, working remotely and prioritizing getting benefits to veterans in greatest need.

With regard to part (c), due to the ongoing pandemic situation across the country, all staff who work directly with veterans are working remotely.

With regard to part (d), Veterans Affairs Canada continuously monitors local health situations with a view to returning to offices when and where it is safe to do so. In the meantime, Veterans Affairs Canada continues to provide services virtually. Its priority remains the health, safety and well-being of clients and employees.

Question No. 168—Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman:

With regard to seniors having their Guaranteed Income Supplements (GIS) reduced or cut after receiving payments under the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) or the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB): (a) how many seniors have had their GIS payments cut or reduced, or received notice of a GIS cut or reduction, as a result of receiving income associated with CERB or CRB; (b) what is the average amount that the seniors in (a) had their GIS payments reduced by; and (c) does the government accept the assessment from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that 88,222 low-income seniors will see GIS reductions because of pandemic benefits, and, if not, what is the government's assessment of the number of low-income seniors?

Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the number of guaranteed income supplement, GIS, recipients who received payments from the Canada emergency response benefit, CERB and/or the Canada recovery benefit, CRB, in 2020, and who experienced a reduction or loss in GIS benefits in July 2021 when their entitlement to the GIS was reassessed, is 183,420.

Letters to all GIS recipients outlining their entitlement for the July 2021 to June 2022 payment period were sent starting on July 14, 2021.

With regard to part (b), the average reduction in GIS benefits experienced in July 2021, by the 183,420 GIS recipients in (a) above, is \$294.15 per month or \$3,529.85 per year.

With regard to part (c), Employment and Social Development Canada is not able to comment on the assessment undertaken by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

The number of GIS recipients who received payments from the CERB and/or the CRB in 2020, and who experienced a reduction in GIS benefits in July 2021 is estimated to be 100,710. This number does not include those GIS recipients who received payments from the CERB and/or the CRB in 2020, and who lost entitlement to the GIS in July 2021.

Question No. 171—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Department of Industry and the March 22, 2020, agreement to spend \$200,451,621 for the purchase of ventilators from Thornhill Medical: (a) did the ventilators meet the Public Health Agency of Canada's technical requirements, and, if not, who gave the authorization to proceed with the purchase and what was their reason; (b) how many ventilators were (i) ordered, (ii) delivered; (c) for each delivered ventilator in (b), (i) what day was it delivered, (ii) has the ventilator been used; and (d) for each time the ventilators in (c) have been used, (i) when were they

used, (ii) where were they used, (iii) was it used to treat a patient with COVID-19, (iv) are they still in use today?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the ventilator model MOVES SLC, produced by Thornhill Medical, met the Public Health Agency of Canada's technical and regulatory requirements.

With regard to part (b)(i), since March 22, 2020, 1,020 units were ordered. With regard to part (b)(ii), since March 22, 2020, 857 units were delivered.

With regard to part (c)(i), 731 units were delivered between April 27, 2020 and January 29, 2021, and an additional 126 units between August 19 and August 24, 2021. With regard to part (c)(ii), as of December 7, 2021, 59 units have been deployed to various jurisdictions across Canada.

With regard to part (d), Thornhill devices were sent across Canada to support COVID-19 response efforts. However, the Public Health Agency of Canada does not have specific details on the use of the deployed items following their allocation to jurisdictions.

Question No. 177—Mrs. Laila Goodridge:

With regard to the appointment of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate): (a) what are his mandate, roles and responsibilities; (b) to whom does he report; (c) what is his reporting relationship to the Leader of the Government in the Senate (styled the Government Representative in the Senate); (d) how does the parliamentary secretary's appointment support the government's commitment to support a more independent and non-partisan chamber; (e) in order to promote an independent and non-partisan chamber, is the parliamentary secretary expected to act in a non-partisan manner, including on his social media pages, such as Twitter, and, if not, why not; (f) was the Senate consulted on this appointment or the creation of this position, and, if so, what are the details, including the dates and person involved; (g) from what budget is his compensation as a parliamentary secretary paid; (h) has the parliamentary secretary received any support, financial or otherwise, from the Senate, such as office space, staff, expense allowances or other support, and, if so, what are the details; and (i) which ministerial or departmental budget is responsible for supporting the work of the parliamentary secretary?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, parliamentary secretaries are appointed under the Parliament of Canada Act to assist ministers. The act sets out the duties of parliamentary secretaries. They receive a salary in addition to their regular sessional and expense allowances as a member of Parliament, which is part of the total authorities provided to the House of Commons.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons supports the minister in relation to delivering on the various mandate letter commitments mandate letter commitments outlined by the Prime Minister. This includes facilitating the relationship with the Senate and the government's legislative priorities, and work to update the Parliament of Canada Act to reflect the Senate's non-partisan role.

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The parliamentary secretary serves as liaison for the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons with the government representative in the Senate, and does not receive support from the Senate.

The work of the parliamentary secretary is supported by the office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, which in turn receives support from the Privy Council Office.

Question No. 178—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to government estimates related to energy consumption in Canada: (a) what is the approximate number and percentage of homes currently heated by sources of energy originating outside of Canada; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a), by (i) type of energy source (gas, coal, wind, hydroelectric, etc.), (ii) country of the energy source's origin?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), in 2019, NRCan estimated that approximately 30.4% of the total energy for heating, consumed by Canadian households, originated from outside of Canada. NRCan does not have information past 2019, as the data is still being collected and processed.

In response to (b)(i), the following indicates the approximate breakdown by source of household heating energy that originated from outside of Canada in 2019: electricity, 0.7%; natural gas, 29.7%; less than 0.1% crude and light fuel oil, which can include heating oil. Propane also serves as a heating fuel in rural and remote areas where natural gas is unavailable. However, the total energy that propane contributes towards heating is not tracked to the level of detail required for a comprehensive response.

In response to (b)(ii), Canada imports minimal amounts of electricity from the United States due to variability in regional supply and demand, and propane from the United States for rural and remote communities. Most of Canada's natural gas imports is sourced from the United States and some from Trinidad and Tobago, and Angola. Canada imports negligible amounts of crude and light fuel oil, which can include heating oil, from various origins to meet Canadians' heating needs. A further breakdown is unavailable by source country of origin as this information is not tracked to the level of detail required to provide a comprehensive response.

Question No. 179—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to energy security: (a) how does the government define energy security; (b) by the definition in (a), is Canada currently energy secure; (c) how much energy did Canada store per year for the last 10 years; (d) what is Canada's frequency of reliance on our stored energy, broken down by year over the last 10 years; and (e) what is the profile of Canada's current energy storage, broken down by energy type (i.e. gas, coal, solar, etc.)?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), the Government of Canada considers leading international indices assessing energy security.

In response to (b), Canada is one of the most energy secure countries in the world. In 2019, Canada was the sixth largest producer of primary energy in the world.

This is demonstrated in the Global Energy Institute's annual publication, the International Energy Security Risk Index. Canada ranked third best in 2020 among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, countries for low energy risk. Canada also ranks first in the energy security metric rankings for fuel import metrics among the OECD.

In addition, the United Nations' World Energy Council Trilemma Index ranked Canada sixth in national energy system performance among 127 countries. Canada was ranked first in the energy security metric given its ability to meet current and future energy demand and withstand and respond to supply shocks.

In response to (c), data regarding Canadian crude oil, liquefied petroleum gases and products, monthly inventories, including over the last 10 years, are publicly available from Statistics Canada.

In response to (d) and (e), Statistics Canada is evaluating the possibility of incorporating an annual or biannual question on storage capacity to existing refinery and midstream surveys. All stockpiled oil and gas in Canada are held by industry for commercial/operational purposes.

Question No. 183—Mr. Adam Chambers:

With regard to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy: (a) which companies received payments through the subsidy; and (b) for each company in (a), what is the time period for which the subsidy was claimed?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the above-noted question, the response from the CRA is as follows: In response to parts (a) and (b), the Canada emergency wage subsidy, CEWS, registry can be used to search for employers who have received or will soon receive the CEWS: https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebsci/hacc/cews/srch/pub/dsplyBscSrch?request_locale=en. On that page there is a "View the full list of employers" function. The publication of this information is pursuant to an amendment to the privacy provisions of the Income Tax Act, ITA. The registry provides the business name and the operating name where applicable for corporations and registered charities in receipt of the CEWS. Please note that the information on the registry provides current data which might extend beyond the date of the question, i.e., December 8, 2021.

The CEWS registry was developed taking into account the additional requirements of the Privacy Act insofar as a taxpayer's personal information is concerned. As a result, the implementation of the registry, which displays only the legal and operating names of corporations and registered charities that are in receipt of the CEWS, balances providing transparency to Canadians while respecting the privacy of individuals. As such, sole proprietors, partnerships, or trusts that are not registered charities have been filtered out of the published population. Other information such as amounts received and period they applied is protected under the privacy provisions of the ITA.

Additional detailed CEWS statistics data can be found here at: CEWS claims — detailed data - Canada.ca (<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy/cews-statistics/stats-detailed.html>).

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 185—Mr. Todd Doherty:**

With regard to the government's timeline for establishing the 988 telephone line for emergency mental health services: (a) what is the government's target for when the 988 telephone line will become operational in Canada; and (b) what is the government's funding commitment towards the line for each of the next five years?

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada understands the urgency of implementing this crisis line and the Public Health Agency of Canada is working to ensure we get its implementation right, including that it is able to connect people to the most appropriate support in the most appropriate way at the most appropriate time. We remain committed to implementing, and fully funding, a three digit mental health crisis and suicide prevention number.

The implementation of a three digit number for suicide crisis will also build upon the government's current support of the pan-Canadian suicide prevention service. The Public Health Agency of Canada is investing \$21 million over five years, or \$4.2 million per year, for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, with their partners, to implement and sustain this service. Through this initiative, people across Canada have access to crisis support in English and French 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year, using the technology of their choice: voice, text or online chat.

Question No. 194—Mr. Stephen Ellis:

With regard to the study, commissioned in part by the government, related to the dikes on the Isthmus of Chignecto, which was scheduled to be completed earlier this year and awarded to Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions: (a) was the study completed in February 2021, as per the original plan, and, if not, when was the study completed; (b) what were the findings of the study; (c) where can the public access the study's report, including the web location, if applicable; and (d) will the study's report be tabled in the House of Commons, and, if so, when?

Hon. Omar Alhabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a), the study was originally planned to be completed by March 31, 2021, as per the contribution agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of New Brunswick. COVID-19 related restrictions impacted data collection work and stakeholder engagements, resulting in the study being completed in June 2021.

In response to parts (b) and (c), the study provided three viable solutions that could be considered for the protection of the national trade corridor located in the Chignecto Isthmus. Transport Canada's role is limited to making a financial contribution to the Province of New Brunswick. Transport Canada is neither a decision-maker nor an administrator to the study. Information related to the release of the study should be directed to the Province of New Brunswick's project manager, Michael Pauley, at (506) 612-1141 or at Mike.Pauley@gnb.ca.

In response to part (d), there is no plan to table the study in the House of Commons as Transport Canada is not the study proponent.

Question No. 197—Mr. Dane Lloyd:

With regard to requests made to the government under the Access to Information and Privacy Act (ATIP), and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: (a) what is the current average time between when an ATIP request is submitted and the document package is released to the individual or entity making the request; (b) how many requests made under ATIP are still being processed as of December 10, 2021; and (c) how many ATIPs still being pro-

cessed were asked more than (i) 30 days, (ii) 60 days, (iii) 180 days, (iv) one year (v) two years, (vi) three years, (vii) five years ago?

Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following is the response by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, TBS, on behalf of the Government of Canada. In response to (a), each fiscal year, TBS collects data on the number of requests received, completed, closed and responded to according to legislative timelines, 30 days; extensions taken, broken down by length of time taken, 30 days or less, 31 to 60 days, 61 to 120 days, 121 to 180 days, 181 to 365 days or more than 365 days; as well as the amount of time required to close requests, 0 to 30 days, 31 to 60 days, 61 to 120 days, or 121 days or more.

TBS publishes a summary of this information annually in the Access to Information and Privacy Statistical Report as well as datasets which contain all the statistical data reported by all institutions, broken down by institution at <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/access-information-privacy/statistics-atip.html>. The information requested can be calculated based on the published datasets.

Institutions also individually report this information to Parliament in their annual reports on the Access to Information Act and Privacy Acts, which institutions table in Parliament and publish online each fall.

In response to (b) and (c), the latest available data is for fiscal year 2020-2, April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Data for fiscal year 2021-22 is expected to be collected by the end of September 2022 and published by December 31, 2022.

Question No. 210—Mr. Frank Caputo:

With regard to caseworkers at Veterans Affairs Canada, since January 1, 2020: (a) how many caseworkers have (i) reported that their job has had a negative impact on their mental health, (ii) taken leave or days off related to stress or mental health concerns; (b) what has been the turnover rate for caseworkers, broken down by month; (c) what specific action has the ministry done to support the mental health of their caseworkers; (d) how many and what percentage of caseworkers are currently responsible for more than the standard of 30 veterans per caseworker; and (e) what are the minister's specific goals with regards to lowering the number of veterans per caseworker, including the specific targets as of (i) July 1, 2022, (ii) January 1, 2023?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Veterans Affairs Canada provides case management services to support veterans facing complex challenges. It is a collaborative process between the client and the case management team to identify needs, set goals, and create a plan to help clients achieve their highest level of independence, health and well-being.

In response to (a), regarding how many caseworkers have (i) reported that their job has had a negative impact on their mental health, (ii) taken leave or days off related to stress or mental health concerns, while taking sick leave, employees do not need to stipulate the reasons for their absence. This data is not captured at Veterans Affairs Canada in order to protect employees' privacy.

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In response to (b), regarding the turnover rate for caseworkers broken down by month, the turnover rates are available by year, not by month. In 2019-20, the turnover rate was 12.8%, and in 2020-21, the turnover rate was 9.1%. For field operations employees, the average yearly turnover rate is 10%. For all Veterans Affairs Canada indeterminate positions, the average yearly turnover rate is 7.1%.

In response to (c), regarding what specific action the ministry has done to support the mental health of their caseworkers, Veterans Affairs Canada has increased its focus on employee wellness through local and national wellness committees as well as providing mental health training. Veterans Affairs Canada is implementing the case management renewal initiative until March 2022, which will create a more balanced delivery model and improve its processes and work tools to reduce the administrative burden for front-line staff. Veterans Affairs Canada implemented a new screening tool and a new case management assessment form, which improves case managers' ability to identify veterans' levels of risk, needs and complexities. Veterans Affairs Canada has improved its staffing and onboarding processes to accelerate and facilitate the recruitment of case managers, hiring additional case managers to improve the capacity to serve veterans. Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to continue hiring additional case managers, and to improve case management services to the benefit of both the veterans and the case managers.

In response to (d), regarding how many and what percentage of caseworkers are currently responsible for more than the standard of 30 veterans per caseworker, as of December 13, 2021, 70% of case managers have a caseload of more than 30 veterans, with the average caseload per case manager being 32.

In response to (e), regarding what the minister's specific goals are with regard to lowering the number of veterans per caseworker, including the specific targets as of July 1, 2022, and January 1, 2023, Veterans Affairs Canada remains committed to delivering high-quality case management services for veterans. Case management is a unique service that is based on the needs of each veteran. This means improving the overall approach is more than the case manager-to-veteran ratio.

Veterans Affairs Canada continues to improve tools and processes for staff to reduce the administrative burden and increase the time that case managers can spend directly with veterans.

While in the recent evaluation of case management service survey conducted in 2019, 92% of case managers responded that they were able to handle a caseload of more than 25 cases, Veterans Affairs Canada remains committed to achieving the 25:1 case manager-to-veteran published standard. As case management is based on need, and given the significant increase in veterans who require case management, Veterans Affairs Canada continues to work to improve and evaluate case management ratios.

Question No. 212—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:

With regard to the Canada Greener Homes Grants program, as of December 13, 2021: (a) how many applications have been (i) received, (ii) approved by the government; (b) how many grants have been paid out; and (c) what is the total value of the grants paid?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on May 27, 2021, the Government of Canada launched the Canada greener homes grant program, a \$2.6-billion initiative to enable up to 700,000 Canadian homeowners to apply for government funding to make retrofits to their homes. The program will help Canadians make their homes more comfortable and affordable to maintain, support Canada's environmental objectives, and create good, local, middle-class jobs.

As of December 13, 2021, NRCan has approved 78,344 of the 126,316 applications submitted.

On a quarterly basis, NRCan will publish information related to the Canada greener homes grant program on Open Government: <https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/>.

Question No. 214—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the Minister of Natural Resources' response in Question Period on December 2, 2021, regarding the government's investment of \$100 billion towards climate action: (a) broken down by department and fiscal year since 2015-16, what initiatives, projects, and funding streams has the funding been directed towards; (b) of the funding in (a), how much of the budget funding has been spent; and (c) of the funding in (a), how much funding has lapsed?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has committed over \$100 billion with respect to climate action. The Government of Canada's "Budget 2021 - A Healthy Environment for a Healthy Economy", provides a breakdown of this commitment: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-healthy-environment-for-a-healthy-economy.html>.

Question No. 220—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the government's calls on the Catholic Church to publish residential school records since June 2021: (a) broken down by date and form of correspondence, what requests has the government made to release residential school records; (b) of the requests in (a), (i) who was signatory to each form of correspondence, (ii) was the correspondence responded to; (c) of the requests in (a), what processes were established to include the input and guidance from (i) survivors and their families, (ii) First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, (iii) the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; and (d) of the requests in (a), which documents were requested by the government?

Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is concerned, in response to part (a), the department pursued conversations about the sharing of documents through telephone calls and video conference with representatives of church organizations, as follows:

With respect to video conferences, on June 14, 2021, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Deputy Minister Quan-Watson and Assistant Deputy Minister Reiher met with the Most Reverend Richard Gagnon, Archbishop of Winnipeg and president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, CCCB, the Most Reverend Raymond Poisson, Bishop of St. Jerome and Mont Laurier and vice-president, CCCB, the Most Reverend Joseph Nguyen, Bishop of Kamloops, Monsignor Frank Leo, general secretary, CCCB, and Kúkpi7 Rosanne Casimir, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc.

On November 17, 2021, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Deputy Minister Quan-Watson met with Bishop McGratten, vice-president, CCCB, the Most Reverend Raymond Poisson, vice-president, CCCB, Father Jean Vézina, general secretary, CCCB, and Jonathan Lesarge, government and public relations adviser, CCCB.

On November 26, 2021, Deputy Minister Quan-Watson and Assistant Deputy Minister Reiher met with Bishop McGratten, vice-president, Father Jean Vézina, general secretary, and Jonathan Lesarge, government and public relations adviser, CCCB.

With respect to telephone calls, on December 10, 2021, Mary Allin, A/Director, Resolution called the office of the Sisters of St. Ann to request a meeting concerning their document collection.

On December 13, 2021, Mary Allin and Erin Smith, legal counsel from the Department of Justice, met with Sister Marie Zarowny, president of the Sisters of St. Ann. Also present at the meeting were Katherine Stewart from the Sisters of St. Ann and Jody Sydor-Jones, a consultant working with the Sisters of St. Ann.

On January 7, 2022, Mary Allin called the office of the Sisters of Providence of Charity of Western Canada to request a meeting concerning the sharing of documents with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation was also provided with general information on Canada's efforts to encourage the Catholic Church to share documents on various occasions.

In response to part (b)(i), participants in conversations are listed in part (a).

In response to part (b)(ii), verbal exchanges occurred in telephone conversations and video conferences.

In response to part (c)(i), N/A.

In response to part (c)(ii), N/A.

In response to part (c)(iii), over the course of various meetings and calls with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, including meetings on August 13 and December 21, 2021, the centre was provided with information on Canada's efforts to encourage the Catholic Church to share documents. The centre also provided information concerning documents that it had received, or would soon receive, directly from the Catholic Church.

Additionally, the Government of Canada signed a memorandum of agreement with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation regarding historical documents related to residential schools: <https://www.canada.ca/en/crown-indigenous-relations-northern-affairs/news/2022/01/canada-shares-residential-school-documents-with-national-centre-for-truth-and-reconciliation.html>.

In response to part (d), ministers and department officials encouraged the CCCB and church entities to share all their documents relating to residential schools. Further, the department requested waivers of implied undertaking for specific document collections obtained through litigation.

The purpose of the December 13, 2021, call was to discuss the possibility of the department obtaining a waiver of implied under-

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taking to allow it to share documents obtained from the Sisters of St. Ann with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Question No. 225—**Mr. Brian Masse:**

With regard to rising food prices: (a) has the government completed an analysis of the impact of increased food prices on recipients of the (i) Guaranteed Income Supplement, (ii) Canada Child Benefit, (iii) Canada Worker Benefit; (b) of the documents referred to in (a), what are their titles and dates; and (c) has the government developed projections of the impact of rising food prices on those living below the (i) low income cut-off, (ii) Market Basket Measure, (iii) Low Income Measure, and, if so, what are the results of those projections?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Employment and Social Development Canada, ESDC, has not conducted specific analyses on the impact of changing prices of basic necessities like food, shelter, clothing or transportation on recipients of specific benefit programs like the old age security and guaranteed income supplement, OAS and GIS, the Canada child benefit, CCB, and the Canada workers benefit, CWB. Moreover, ESDC has not developed projections of the impact of changing prices on the population that lives below the low-income cut-offs, LICO, below the official poverty line based on the market basket measure, MBM, or on low income according to the low income measure, LIM.

To account for inflation, government benefits that target the most vulnerable, including OAS and GIS, the CCB, the CWB and the goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax, GST/HST, credit are indexed to inflation annually to keep up with increases to the cost of living.

In particular, the Old Age Security Act and the Canada pension plan each contain a guarantee ensuring that benefits can never be reduced, even in the event of a decline in the consumer price index, CPI. OAS benefits, including the GIS, are adjusted four times per year, in January, April, July and October, while Canada pension plan, CPP, benefits are adjusted annually in January. These benefits will continue to be adjusted in accordance with changes in the cost of living.

Question No. 232—**Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to funds allocated through Canadian Heritage programs since 2010, broken down by program and year: (a) how much money is allocated to organizations in each province; (b) how much money is allocated to organizations located in western Canada; and (c) what percentage of funds go to Albertan organizations?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, government information on funds, grants, loans and loan guarantees issued by departments and agencies is based on parliamentary authorities for departmental or agency programs and activities. This information is listed on the following websites: https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/?_ga=2.177218029.930871220.1640011343-1034491344.1619371825 https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/public_accounts_can/pdf/index.html

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 239—Mr. Randall Garrison:**

With regard to federal investment in affordable housing: (a) what number of investments have been made in the riding of Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke since the 2019 election; (b) what is the total amount of this investment; (c) has any funding been invested in co-op housing programs; and (d) has any funding been allocated to assist in the revitalization of existing co-ops in order to meet the need for additional units and more units that reflect changing family structures in co-ops?

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a) and (b), since October 2019, we have committed over \$31 million supporting over 1,400 units in the riding of Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke.

In response to part (c), we have provided over \$298,000 under federal community housing initiative, FCHI, phase one and approximately \$226,000 under FCHI phase two in the riding of Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke.

In response to part (d), the federal government, through the national housing co-investment fund, offers funding for the new construction and revitalization of community and affordable housing. Co-operatives are eligible to apply for funding under this national, application-based program. CMHC does not, however, track whether units were added to reflect changing family structures.

Question No. 240—Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:

With regard to the Sustainable Fisheries Solutions and Retrieval Support Contribution Program, since its inception: (a) how many applications for funding were received in each of the four themes of the program; (b) how many of the applications in (a) were denied; (c) what is the total weight of ghost gear retrieved through projects that have been funded; and (d) which areas have been identified as gear loss hotspots and habitat for species at risk?

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the sustainable fisheries solutions and retrieval support contribution program, since its inception, in response to (a), regarding how many applications for funding were received in each of the four themes of the program, there were a total of 114 project proposal applications received. Many of the projects completed work in more than one pillar of activity. For example, many gear retrieval projects also worked closely with partners looking to recycle components of the gear. The following breakdown includes overlap in applicable pillars: ghost gear retrieval, 74; responsible disposal, 61; acquisition and piloting of available technology, 48; international leadership, 12.

In response to (b), regarding how many of the applications in (a) were denied, nine applications were rejected: failed initial triage. Nine applications were denied funding: did not meet program requirements. Forty-eight applications were pre-approved, not funded: these projects met program requirements, but did not rank as priority work based on program scoring and ranking. They are pre-approved for consideration if additional funding was to be made available.

In response to (c), regarding what the total weight is of ghost gear retrieved through projects that have been funded, the total weight of ghost gear removed through funded projects is 1,239 tonnes. Additionally, 118 kilometres of rope has been retrieved.

In response to (d), regarding which areas have been identified as gear loss hot spots and habitat for species at risk, areas prioritized

to date through the ghost gear program include the Gulf of St. Lawrence and areas of the North Atlantic right whale congregation in Atlantic Canada. This area sees significant crab and lobster fishing, and targeted retrievals of lost gear will reduce the risk of entanglement to marine mammals, as well as the risk of ghost fishing species, including Atlantic cod, herring and mackerel. Another area is the Fraser River in British Columbia. This area sees significant fisheries using gillnets, which is considered a high-impact gear type if abandoned, discarded or lost. This area is habitat for various at-risk species, including salmon and white sturgeon.

Question No. 250—Ms. Laurel Collins:

With regard to tree-planting initiatives led by the government since 2010, broken down by fiscal year: (a) what initiatives and programs have been created to increase tree-planting efforts; (b) what was the allocated budget for each initiative or program in (a); (c) how many jobs were created in each program or initiative that were (i) permanent full-time, (ii) permanent part-time, (iii) seasonal full-time, (iv) seasonal part-time, (v) offered through the Canada Summer Jobs program; (d) what was the total number of trees planted through the programs and initiatives in (a); and (e) what is the approximate greenhouse gas emission reduction achieved by each initiative or program in (a)?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the two billion trees program is a government-led program that was created with the specific goal of increasing tree-planting efforts.

The Minister of Natural Resources, with support from the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, was mandated to develop and implement a plan to plant two billion trees over the next 10 years as part of a broader commitment to natural climate solutions. This program was officially launched in February 2021, with federal funds secured in the 2020 fall economic statement.

The two billion trees program was launched under the broader natural climate solutions fund, NCSF, a horizontal initiative, which also includes programs run by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Under the NCSF, the two billion trees program received \$3.2 billion for funding over 10 years.

The two billion trees program is a proposal-based grants and contribution program. Interested and eligible organizations are required to submit project proposals. Expert evaluation panels assess projects to ensure they meet the primary program goal of carbon sequestration, with strong considerations for other co-benefits such as biodiversity and human well-being. Projects must also pass risk and due diligence requirements before they are retained for funding via contribution agreements. As a result, specific tree planting locations, any related employment and greenhouse gas, GHG, reduction benefits, will depend on the funding proposals put forward by provinces, territories, Indigenous communities, and organizations across Canada.

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Following a call for expressions of interest in February 2021, the program received 120 applications for early tree planting in 2021. NRCan has finalized most of its funding agreements to support the planting of over 30 million trees across the country, in both urban and rural areas. Many of the projects began planting in spring 2021 and planting continued through the 2021 planting season. NRCan proactively discloses these grants and contributions on Open Canada: <https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/>.

Similar to other government grants and contribution programs, contribution agreements with federal funding recipients outline “planned” projects or activities. In the case of the two billion trees program, the exact number of trees planted are reported by the funding recipients on a quarterly basis and after all of their planting activities have been completed. Program recipients will have 60 days after the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 2022, to provide their final reporting. At that stage, NRCan will consolidate and validate the data and is expected to publicly disclose the results on the 2021 tree planting season in spring 2022.

Funding recipients are required to report on their program activities, including details on the number and types of jobs created and approximate GHG emissions reductions. However, the two billion trees program will be reporting on aggregate direct, indirect or induced jobs, based on analysis of information provided by program recipients. Canada’s two billion trees program will create up to 4,300 jobs across the country and will reduce GHG emissions by up to 12 Mt per year by 2050.

The data collected from funding recipients will serve as the basis of performance reporting for the program. Employment information will be officially reported on in the departmental results report beginning in 2025. With the information provided by funding recipients, NRCan will calculate overall GHG emissions reductions from activities supported by the two billion trees program. Reporting on GHG reductions will begin in 2023.

More information on the two billion trees program’s performance indicators, including tree planting, jobs, and GHG reductions, can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/2-billion-trees/natural-climate-solutions-fund-performance-indicators.html>.

Question No. 255—Ms. Lori Idlout:

With regard to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations' statement on October 26, 2021, that “[...] it's time to give land back” to Indigenous people: (a) what land is the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations referring to; (b) for each response in (a), which First Nation, Inuit, or Metis group does the minister believe the land should be given back to; (c) if applicable, when will the land in (a) be given back; and (d) what consultation processes have been or will be established to determine compensation for stolen land?

Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is concerned, the response is as follows: In response to part (a), the Government of Canada recognizes that lands are central to Indigenous traditions, identity and prosperity.

Informed by the UN Declaration and Canadian jurisprudence, the Government of Canada is working with Indigenous and provincial and territorial partners at negotiation and discussion tables across the country to address outstanding land claims and other land-related issues. This includes a range of issues from where lands are

owed under treaties or other agreements, where land is added to reserves, and where aboriginal title is asserted.

Canada’s relationship with indigenous peoples started with land, and we remain committed to addressing long-standing and unresolved issues regarding land, to continue building trust with Indigenous peoples. Lands are a crucial asset for advancing self-determination, economic development and well-being. Additions to reserve play a significant role in returning land to indigenous communities, fulfilling legal obligations, improving relationships with indigenous communities, and fostering economic opportunities.

There are currently over nine million acres of reserve land in Canada, and an additional three to four million acres of land is owed to first nations through existing treaty land entitlement and specific claims agreements. This number is expected to rise given the more than 220 specific claims in active negotiation that could result in an addition to reserve provision as part of the settlement.

Budget 2021 committed \$43 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, to work with indigenous partners and other stakeholders to redesign the federal additions to reserve policy and to accelerate work on existing proposals from first nations across the country.

In response to part (b), in addition to the more than 220 specific claims in active negotiation with first nations across the country, the government currently has approximately 170 modern treaty and recognition of indigenous rights and self-determination discussion tables with first nations, Inuit and Métis rights-bearing communities aimed at implementing rights and developing innovative responses to indigenous interests, including those related to land.

Walking the path of reconciliation means working together and having these complex discussions as the government does the work of addressing long-standing issues about land and implementing indigenous rights in the true spirit of respect, co-operation and partnership.

In response to part (c), the work of returning land to indigenous peoples is already under way in a number of different contexts. Namely, existing modern treaties and ongoing negotiations are two primary means of returning indigenous lands. Modern treaties have provided for indigenous ownership over 600,000 square kilometres of land and capital transfers of over \$3.2 billion. They also include protection of traditional ways of life, access to resource development opportunities, participation in land and resources management decisions, and associated self-government rights and political recognition.

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Canada is also actively engaged in specific claims negotiations, modern treaty negotiations and recognition of indigenous rights and self-determination discussion tables with first nations, Inuit and Métis partners across the country as a means of finding innovative solutions, including those related to addressing land rights and interests.

Negotiations proceed at different rates depending on the priorities of communities and the different components of the agreement being negotiated, of which land may be one of several priority areas for discussion.

For Crown land that the Government of Canada is responsible for, there is a structured process in place for the disposition of federal Crown land and this process includes consultation with indigenous groups. This process is set out in the Treasury Board policy on the disposal of surplus real property: <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12043>.

In response to part (d), land claims involve complex issues. The government believes that the best way to address land-related disputes is through dialogue and negotiation with partners to find shared and balanced solutions.

Where land is being considered as part of a negotiated land claim settlement, consistent with Canadian jurisprudence and existing federal policy, consultations are undertaken by the federal and/or provincial government with affected third parties and indigenous groups.

Question No. 261—Ms. Niki Ashton:

With regard to the Pandora Papers case and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): (a) how many auditors are currently assigned to this case, broken down by auditor category; (b) how many audits were completed; (c) how many high risk cases of non-compliance were identified; (d) how many new files were opened; (e) how many files were closed; (f) of the files closed in (e), what was the average time taken to process the file before it was closed; (g) of the files closed in (e), what was the risk level of each file; (h) how much money was spent on suppliers and subcontractors; (i) of the suppliers and subcontractors in (h), what was the initial and final value of each contract; (j) of the suppliers and subcontractors in (h), what is the description of each service contract; (k) how many notices of reassessment were issued; (l) what is the total amount recovered to date; and (m) how many taxpayer files were referred to the CRA's Criminal Investigations Program?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the above noted question, what follows is the response from the CRA. In response to parts (a) through (l), on Sunday October 3, 2021, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, ICIJ, released findings in its investigation which it entitled "Pandora Papers". On Monday, December 6, 2021, the ICIJ shared the first release of the Pandora Papers data that contained structured data for two of 14 offshore service providers.

The CRA has begun reviewing the ICIJ data that has been released thus far, and is integrating the information in its systems with its existing data. The CRA is currently working to identify all Canadian taxpayers, and will conduct further risk assessments as needed. Following the completion of the risk assessments, the CRA will identify files for audit.

The CRA has organized teams responsible for identifying how to integrate the information leaked through the Pandora Papers with data the CRA already possesses.

As with past leaks, the CRA will need time to validate the reliability of the data as well as the degree of tax non-compliance from a Canadian perspective. It's important to keep in mind the initial information gathering and data analysis for the Panama Papers took the CRA over three years to complete as many of the initially purported links to Canada did not ultimately point to Canadian taxpayers.

While work has commenced, it would be premature to conduct audits into those with links to the Pandora Papers; therefore, the CRA, cannot answer in the manner requested.

Furthermore, the ICIJ states on its website, "ICIJ is not publishing raw documents or personal information en masse." For this reason, the CRA is unable to predict the contents or the timeline of future information releases.

In response to part (m), as noted above, the CRA is still in the process of assembling data for future possible audits, and as such it is too early to speculate on referrals to the CRA's criminal investigations program. Additionally, since the full list has not been made public, it is not possible at this point in time to confirm if a referral regarding an individual or entity on the list has been made.

In order to preserve the integrity of investigations, the CRA does not comment on investigations that it may or may not be undertaking.

Question No. 262—Mr. Marc Dalton:

With regard to health concerns related to the rail industry: (a) what is Health Canada's role regarding human health concerns in relation to the rail industry; (b) what specific powers does Health Canada have to ensure that noise and vibration levels in Pitt Meadows, British Columbia, do not continue to exceed Health Canada guidelines; (c) what emissions monitoring is currently in place in Pitt Meadows; and (d) what was the range of emission levels recorded in Pitt Meadows in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019, (iii) 2020, (iv) 2021 to date?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), Health Canada's role in relation to human health concerns of proposed major resource and infrastructure projects, including the rail industry, is fulfilled through the impact assessment process. In accordance with the Impact Assessment Act, Health Canada provides technical expertise, for example, regarding air quality, noise, drinking water quality, social determinants of health, to support the assessment of impacts on human health from projects, on the request of the decision-making authorities or impact assessment reviewing body or bodies, for example, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, review panels, and/or provinces and territories.

The act does not provide the Minister of Health the authority to designate projects or make a health assessment a requirement for federally funded projects. Furthermore, Health Canada does not have a regulatory function or a role in the approval or funding of projects. The decision-making authorities or impact assessment reviewing body or bodies determine how the expertise provided by Health Canada will be used in the impact assessment process.

(a) In response to (b), on November 4, 2021, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change determined that the Pitt Meadows road and rail improvement and the logistics park Vancouver projects do not warrant designation under the Impact Assessment Act. The details of these decisions can be found at: (1) <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/141737?culture=en-CA>; (2) <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/141661?culture=en-CA>.

In the absence of a designation under the Impact Assessment Act, Health Canada remains available to consider specific concerns within the department's areas of expertise, as described above, if requested by the responsible jurisdiction, for example, a province or territory.

Setting standards or guidelines for environmental noise or vibration levels, and regulating noise and vibration levels fall outside of Health Canada's purview. Noise may be managed by different levels of government. It may be regulated directly through federal, provincial and territorial legislation and guidelines, or through municipal bylaws, which may apply broadly or only to specific situations or sectors.

Health Canada's 2017 publication "Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Environmental Assessment: Noise" "provides general information on acceptable noise levels for resource and infrastructure projects including all project phases. This guidance describes Health Canada's preferred approach for assessing noise-related health effects.

In response to (c), Health Canada does not have information regarding air pollutant emissions monitoring for Pitt Meadows since Health Canada does not conduct air pollutant emissions monitoring. Air pollutant emissions monitoring is under the purview of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

In response to (d), Health Canada does not have information regarding the range of emission levels recorded since Health Canada does not conduct air pollutant emissions monitoring. Air pollutant emissions monitoring is under the purview of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Question No. 263—Mr. Marc Dalton:

With regard to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's response to the request for designation of the Road and Rail Project in Pitt Meadows (IAAC reference # 82818) where he indicates that adverse effects will be managed through existing legislative mechanisms: which specific mechanisms is he referring to relating to diesel emissions exposure for residents?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada provided advice to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change with respect to the potential for existing legislative mechanisms to address adverse effects from the Pitt Meadows Road and rail project. The agency understands that diesel emissions resulting from the project would be managed through the following provincial and federal legislation: the Province of British Columbia's Environmental Management Act, 2021, Part 6, Clean Air Provisions; the federal locomotive emissions regulations, 2017, under the Railway Safety Act; and the federal sulphur in diesel fuel regulations, 2002, under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

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[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, furthermore, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11 to 14, 16 to 18, 20 to 22, 24 to 27, 29, 31, 32, 34 to 38, 40, 43 to 56, 58, 59, 63, 68 to 73, 75, 76, 79 to 81, 83, 84, 86, 87, 91, 92, 95, 97 to 101, 103 to 113, 115, 118, 120 to 134, 136, 137, 139, 140, 142 to 149, 151 to 154, 156, 160 to 162, 164, 165, 167, 169, 170, 172 to 176, 180 to 182, 184, 186 to 193, 195, 196, 198 to 209, 211, 213, 215 to 219, 221 to 224, 226 to 231, 233 to 238, 241 to 249, 251 to 254, 256 to 260, and 264 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

• (1545)

[Translation]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed

[English]

[Text]

Question No. 1—Mr. Denis Trudel:

With regard to government investments in housing, for each fiscal year since the introduction of the National Housing Strategy in 2017, broken down by province and territory: (a) what was the total amount of funding allocated to housing; (b) how many applications were received for (i) the National Housing Strategy (NHS) overall, (ii) the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, (iii) the Rental Construction Financing Initiative, (iv) the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, (v) the Rapid Housing Initiative under the projects stream, (vi) the Rapid Housing Initiative under the major cities stream, (vii) the Federal Lands Initiative, (viii) the Federal Community Housing Initiative, (ix) A Place to Call Home, (x) the Shared Equity Mortgage Providers Fund, (xi) the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive, (xii) the NHS's Solutions Labs Initiative; (c) of the applications under (b), for each funding program and initiative, how many were accepted; (d) of the applications under (c), for each funding program and initiative, what was the amount of federal funding allocated or committed; (e) of the amounts in (d) allocated in the Province of Quebec, for each funding program and initiative, what is the breakdown per region; (f) of the amounts in (b)(v), what is the breakdown per project and per region; and (g) of the applications in (b)(v), what criteria were used for project selection?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2—Mr. Mario Beaulieu:**

With regard to the \$10-a-day national child care program that would provide universal access to all Canadian families as of 2026 and the bilateral agreements that the federal government has signed with the various provinces and territories regarding this program: (a) do the eight agreements already signed with British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec include language clauses to protect the rights of linguistic minorities in a minority situation; (b) how many spaces are reserved for francophone minorities and what percentage of the total number of spaces that the federal government plans to create are reserved for francophone minorities, broken down by province and territory; (c) of the \$30 billion over five years to fund this national program in the government's latest budget, how much of the budget, broken down by province and territory, is earmarked to meet the needs of francophone minorities; and (d) with regard to the agreement with Quebec specifically, is the agreement conditional on any kind of measure for English-language institutions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 4—Mr. Mario Beaulieu:

With regard to federal source revenue of post-secondary institutions in Quebec over the last 10 years, broken down by year: (a) what is the total revenue from federal sources, broken down by institution; (b) what share of the revenue in (a) came from (i) the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, (ii) Health Canada, (iii) the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, (iv) the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, (v) the Canada Foundation for Innovation, (vi) the Canada Research Chairs program, (vii) other federal sources; and (c) in detail, how does the funding system for research chairs operate and what variables determine the funding that each chair receives?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 8—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:

With regard to recruiting in the Canadian Armed Forces from January 2019 to the present, broken down by month: (a) how many individuals who showed an interest in joining the Regular Force or the Primary Reserve contacted the Canadian Forces Recruiting Centres or the Primary Reserve units, online or in person; (b) of the individuals in (a), how many were male and how many were female; (c) of the individuals in (a), how many began the enrollment process, broken down by sex; and (d) how many of the individuals in (c) completed the enrollment process, broken down by sex?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 9—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:

With regard to retention and attrition in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF): (a) what was the retention and attrition rate in the CAF, broken down by year since 2015; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by (i) regular and reserve forces, (ii) diversity representation (women, Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 11—Mr. Eric Melillo:

With regard to the Rapid Housing Initiative: (a) which organizations and communities in Northern Ontario applied for funding through the Initiative; (b) which organizations and communities in (a) received funding; (c) how much funding did each organization and community in (b) receive; and (d) what was the specific criteria or formula used to determine which applications were accepted and how much funding each successful applicant would receive?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 12—Mr. Alex Ruff:

With regard to long-term funding to the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) for providing accessible reading services for those with reading disabilities: (a) how will the government ensure a permanent funding solution is implemented to support services that ensure equitable access to reading and other published works for Canadians with print disabilities; (b) does the government continue to believe there should be a full transition to industry, or does it now believe in a collaborative solution between industry and non-profits such as CELA and NNELS; (c) what data does the government have to show the transition cost of industry to take over the role that CELA and NNELS currently play in the industry providing materials for Canadians with print disabilities; (d) does the government have a commitment from industry that they are willing to make the necessary investments to take over this role; (e)

knowing the cost of the transition, is the government committing to funding the transition to an industry led solution if industry is unwilling to commit to funding the transition; and (f) will the government commit to supporting smaller publishers unable to make this transition?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 13—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to Canada's National Housing Strategy: (a) how much money has been allocated to Calgary since 2017, broken down by year (i) through the Rapid Housing Initiative, (ii) through the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, (iii) through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, (iv) through the Rental Construction Financing Initiative, (v) in total through National Housing Strategy Funding Programs; (b) how much money is targeted to Calgary in total and through each of the National Housing Strategy Funding Programs in Budget 2021; (c) how many units have been supported in Calgary in total and through each of the funding programs since 2017; (d) how many units will be supported in Calgary in total and through each of the funding programs through Budget 2021; (e) how do the funding and units allocated to Calgary through the National Housing Strategy compare per capita to the funding and units allocated to other major Canadian cities, including Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, and Montreal; and (f) is any money being allocated towards adaptive reuse of Calgary's vacant office spaces through the National Housing Strategy, and, if so, (i) through which funding programs, (ii) how much money is allocated, (iii) how many units will be created, (iv) when will units be created?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 14—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to the Clean Fuel Standard and Clean Fuel Regulations: (a) what is the estimated cost of compliance for fossil fuel suppliers; (b) what is the difference between the cost of compliance per tonne of emissions reductions through the Clean Fuel Standard compared to the cost per tonne of emissions reductions through the government's market-based carbon pricing plan; and (c) what is the estimated increase in price borne by liquid fuel consumers (industry users and households) under (i) the Clean Fuel Standard, (ii) the carbon pricing plan between now and 2050, (iii) cumulatively?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 16—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to the government's price on carbon: (a) how much has been paid by the average household each year since its introduction in (i) each province and territory, (ii) urban, suburban, and rural locations; (b) how much has been returned to the average household in (i) each province and territory, (ii) urban, suburban, and rural locations; (c) what has been the average reduction in emissions for households as a result of the price on carbon introduction in (i) each province and territory, (ii) urban, suburban, and rural locations; and (d) what is the overall price for households per tonne of emissions reductions in (i) each province and territory, (ii) urban, suburban, and rural locations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 17—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:

With regard to the economic impact of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test requirement for fully vaccinated travellers on the tourism industry in the Niagara Region: (a) what was the number of foreign international travellers who arrived at the land border crossings in the Niagara Region, broken down by month since the border opened for non-essential arrivals on August 9, 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a), by point of entry; (c) what was the number of international travellers who arrived at each point of entry in the Niagara Region, broken down by month in the year prior to the border closure in March 2020; and (d) does the government have an estimate on the amount of lost tourism revenue in the Niagara Region as a result of the PCR requirement for vaccinated travellers and, if so, what is the estimate?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 18—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in Alberta: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in Alberta that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a), by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in Alberta for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c), by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 20—Mr. Chris Lewis:

With regard to the economic impact of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test requirement for fully vaccinated travellers on the tourism industry in Southwestern Ontario: (a) what was the number of foreign international travellers who arrived at the land border crossings in Southwestern Ontario, broken down by month since the border opened for non-essential arrivals on August 9, 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by point of entry; (c) what was the number of international travellers who arrived at each point of entry in Southwestern Ontario, broken down by month in the year prior to the border closure in March 2020; and (d) does the government have an estimate on the amount of lost tourism revenue in Southwestern Ontario as a result of the PCR requirement for vaccinated travellers and, if so, what is the estimate?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 21—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to programs which provided money or financing to businesses, sectors, or communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, the Tourism Relief Fund, and others, and broken down by program: (a) for each program, what is the total amount distributed to date in the riding of Calgary Shepard; (b) what was the total number of applications received from Calgary Shepard; and (c) of the applications in (b), how many were (i) accepted, (ii) denied?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 22—Mr. Rob Moore:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in New Brunswick: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in New Brunswick that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a), by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in New Brunswick for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c), by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 24—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to the Fish Harvesters Benefit and Grant Program, broken down by each phase of the program: (a) what was the total number of applications for benefits that were (i) accepted, (ii) denied; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by type of applicant, including (i) self-employed commercial fish harvesters, (ii) those who held limited entry commercial licence eligibility (Pacific), (iii) self-employed freshwater fish harvesters, (iv) Indigenous harvesters who were designated by their community under a communal commercial fishing licence, (v) share persons crew, (vi) Indigenous harvesters who are crew members, who earn a share of the revenue; (c) what was the total number of grants for benefits that were (i) accepted, (ii) denied; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by type of applicant, including (i) self-employed commercial fish harvesters, (ii) those who held limited entry commercial licence eligibility (Pacific), (iii) freshwater fish harvesters (subject to provincial agreement to provide licensing information), (iv) Indigenous harvesters who were designated as Vessel Masters by their community under a communal commercial fishing licence; (e) what is the total dollar amount provided through the program to date; (f) of the applications which were denied, how many and what percentage of applicants appealed the decision; (g) how many and what percentage of the appeals in (f) were (i) granted, (ii) denied; (h) how many recipients have received claw back notices, broken down by type of applicant; (i) how many appeals has the government received related to the claw back notices; and (j) how many of the appeals in (i) were (i) granted, (ii) denied?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 25—Mr. Colin Carrie:

With regard to gain-of-function virology research: (a) what is the government's position on (i) funding such research, (ii) such research taking place in Canada; (b) has the government conducted any such studies since January 1, 2016, and, if so,

what are the details of each study, including (i) who conducted the research, (ii) the location of the laboratory where research was conducted, (iii) the purpose or goal of the study, (iv) the findings; and (c) what are the details of any such studies or research funded by the government since January 1, 2016, including the (i) amount of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) date of the funding, (iv) description of the project, (v) project start and end dates?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 26—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in Ontario: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in Ontario that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in Ontario for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 27—Mr. Tako Van Popta:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in British Columbia: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in British Columbia that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in British Columbia for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 29—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in Saskatchewan: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in Saskatchewan that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in Saskatchewan for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 31—Mr. Ted Falk:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in Manitoba: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in Manitoba that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in Manitoba for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 32—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to privacy breaches that occurred since March 1, 2020, broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: (a) how many breaches have occurred; and (b) what are the details of each breach, including (i) the date, (ii) the number of individuals whose information was involved, (iii) the summary or description of the incident, (iv) the government program or service that was impacted by the breach, (v) whether or not the individuals whose information was involved were contacted, (vi) the date and method of how the individuals were contacted, (vii) whether or not the Privacy Commissioner was notified, (viii) the description of any measures provided to individuals impacted, such as free credit monitoring services?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 34—Mr. Eric Duncan:**

With regard to the VIA rail station in Cornwall, Ontario: (a) what are the details of all capital investments which have occurred at the station since 2010, including the (i) date of the investment, (ii) project completion date, (iii) project description, (iv) amount of the investment; (b) what was the daily train schedule, including the (i) numbers and times of all stops at the station, since January 1, 2010, (ii) dates and details of all changes to the schedule; and (c) how many individual departures and arrivals were made at the station, broken down by month, since January 1, 2010?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 35—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to federal government statistics on labour shortages in Quebec: (a) what are the government's estimates on the percentage and number of businesses in Quebec that encountered a labour shortage in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by sector and industry; (c) what is the projected labour shortage in Quebec for (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by sector and industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 36—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in British Columbia: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 37—Mr. Clifford Small:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Newfoundland and Labrador: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 38—Mr. Alex Ruff:

With regard to the government's Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) pandemic support program for businesses: (a) did the government consult with financial institutions to ensure they had the capacity to support the ongoing changes or expansion to the program before announcing these changes, and, if so, what are the details, including the dates of the consultation; (b) how many formal complaints were launched into the program and what system or process is in place to deal with complaints; (c) how many applicants were denied due to application issues, and what was the average success rate of applicants; (d) between December 4, 2020 and June 15, 2021, how many inquiries did the CEBA call centre receive, broken down by month and daily average; (e) what was the (i) shortest wait time, (ii) longest wait time, (iii) average wait time on the CEBA call centre inquiries line; (f) how many, and what percentage, of inquiries were considered resolved during the initial phone call to the CEBA call centre; and (g) what specific information is the CEBA call centre able to access from the processing department?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 40—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With regard to the constitutionality of the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination requirements for federal employees and travellers announced on October 6, 2021: (a) has the government sought and received legal advice as to whether the provisions contained in the government's announcement are compliant with its obligations under (i) the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, (ii) the Canadian Human Rights Act, (iii) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (iv) the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, (v) other laws or treaties prescribing human rights-related obligations on the government of Canada; (b) does the government intend to share any of the legal advice it has received as referenced in (a) pub-

licly, and, if so, what are the details regarding how it will be shared; (c) does the government intend to table a Charter Statement with respect to the announcement referred to in (a); and (d) are organizations challenging the government's policies respecting vaccination eligible for funding under the Court Challenges Program?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 43—Mr. Alex Ruff:

With regard to the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) culture change and dealing with sexual harassment and violence: (a) did the Department of National Defence (DND) provide a formal response to (i) the June 2019 Standing Committee on the Status of Women's report, "A Force for Change – Creating a Culture of Equality for the Women in the CAF", (ii) the May 2019 Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence's report on "Sexual Harassment and Violence in the CAF"; and (b) what were the formal responses and what specific actions did the DND take in response to these reports?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 44—Mr. Gérard Deltell:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Quebec: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 45—Mr. Richard Bragdon:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in New Brunswick: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 46—Mr. Scott Aitchison:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Northern Ontario: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 47—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Manitoba: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 48—Mr. Michael Cooper:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's itinerary, since January 1, 2016: (a) how many times and on what dates did the Prime Minister's published itinerary contain inaccurate information regarding meetings, travel, or locations, respecting information that was known at the time the itinerary was published; (b) in each case where the itinerary contained inaccurate information, (i) why did inaccurate information appear, (ii) was the inaccurate information corrected, and, if not, why not; (c) which staff, including exempt staff, in the (i) Office of the Prime Minister, (ii) Privy Council's Office are responsible for reviewing the Prime Minister's itinerary before it is published; and (d) what criteria is used for determining whether meetings are labeled "private" or specifically identified?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 49—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Alberta: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 50—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Saskatoon and Central Saskatchewan: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 51—Mr. Michael Barrett:

With regard to the economic impact of the COVID-19 negative molecular test requirement for fully vaccinated travelers on the tourism industry in Eastern Ontario: (a) what was the number of foreign international travelers who arrived at the land border crossings in Eastern Ontario, broken down by month since the border opened for non-essential arrivals on August 9, 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by point of entry; (c) what was the number of international travelers who arrived at each point of entry in Eastern Ontario, broken down by month in the year prior to the border closure in March 2020; and (d) does the government have an estimate on the amount of lost tourism revenue in Eastern Ontario as a result of the test requirement for vaccinated travelers and, if so, what is the estimate?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 52—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Northern Saskatchewan: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 53—Mr. Andrew Scheer:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Regina and Southern Saskatchewan: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or

not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 54—Mr. Stephen Ellis:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Nova Scotia: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 55—Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:

With regard to the "A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy" plan, and the government's 30% absolute emissions reduction target for on-farm fertilizer use by the year 2030: (a) what fertilizer and agriculture industry groups were consulted before the government announced this approach, and what are the details of when and how they were consulted; (b) did the government consider the implementation by 4R Nutrient Stewardship by the agricultural industry before they made this announcement, and, if not, why not; (c) what specific studies or findings, if any, did the Minister of Environment and Climate Change use to determine that a 30% absolute emissions reduction target for on-farm fertilizer use by the year 2030 would be achievable without causing hardship for farmers; (d) what are the government's, including Farm Credit Canada's, projections on the impact that a 30% reduction will have on Saskatchewan canola production, processing and export markets; (e) what specific metrics will be used to determine if the 30% emissions reduction target is achieved; (f) how will the government monitor the impact of the 30% absolute emissions reduction target for on-farm fertilizer use by the year 2030 on Canada's contribution to international food security; and (g) how will the government offset the loss of additional canola production required to increase biofuels in its Clean Fuel Standard?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 56—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to the October 6, 2021, announcement by the Prime Minister mandating vaccination for the federal work force and the federally-regulated transportation sectors: (a) what is the policy objective of the vaccine mandate; (b) did the government seek advice as to whether any of these policies infringe on the rights and freedoms of Canadians guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and, if so, what are the specific details, including (i) which individuals, groups, or organizations provided the advice, (ii) who was the advice provided to, (iii) on what dates was the advice received, (iv) what are the titles and internal tracking numbers for any documents containing the advice; (c) did any of the advice find that sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms were being infringed upon, and, if so, what are the details of such advice; (d) were the infringements in (c) (i) found to be justified under section 1 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, (ii) was the principal of minimal impairment adhered to?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 58—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to the costs associated with the Phoenix Pay System between February 2016 and October 2021, broken down by month: (a) what were the total costs incurred; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by type of expense and by Treasury Board Object Code?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 59—Mr. Blaine Calkins:**

With regard to federal contracts awarded to former public servants as defined in the Financial Administration Act, since January 1, 2020, and broken down by department or agency: (a) how many such contracts were awarded; (b) what is the total value of such contracts; and (c) what are the details of each contract, including (i) the date, (ii) the description of the goods or services, (iii) the amount, (iv) the vendor, (v) whether or not ministerial authorization was required for the contract to be awarded?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 63—Mr. Dan Mazier:

With regard to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), broken down by province and region: how many Canadians experienced a reduction in a GIS payment since January 2020, as a result of receiving income from a COVID-19 related financial relief program, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 68—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the relationship between prevailing wages and the rate of inflation in 2021 exceeding the Bank of Canada's annual target: for each of Employment and Social Development Canada's National Occupation Classification, how have prevailing wages (i) increased, (ii) decreased, (iii) remained stable between 2019 and 2021 inclusively?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 69—Mr. Chris d'Entremont:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in Nova Scotia; (b) what was the 2018-base MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 70—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Southwestern Ontario: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 71—Mr. Frank Caputo:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in British Columbia; (b) what was the 2018-base MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 72—Mr. Terry Dowdall:

With regard to the requirement that an area must not have an unemployment rate above 6% in order for certain businesses in that area, including those in the hospitality sector, to qualify for the Temporary Foreign Workers Program: (a) has the government, including Destination Canada, done any studies or analysis on the impact of this requirement on the ability for hotel or restaurant owners to hire enough staff; (b) if the government has done any studies or analysis related to (a), what are

the details, including the findings; and (c) what specific measures, if any, will the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance take in order to alleviate this burden on the hospitality sector?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 73—Mrs. Anna Roberts:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in the Greater Toronto Area: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 75—Mr. Brad Redekopp:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in Saskatchewan; (b) what was the 2018-base MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 76—Mr. Adam Chambers:

With regard to programs which provided money or financing to businesses, sectors, or communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, the Tourism Relief Fund, and others, and broken down by program: (a) what is the total amount distributed to date in the riding of Simcoe North; (b) what was the total number of applications received from Simcoe North; and (c) of the applications in (b), how many were (i) accepted, (ii) denied?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 79—Mr. John Williamson:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in New Brunswick; (b) what was the "2018-base MBM" for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 80—Mr. Philip Lawrence:

With regard to the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, their administration of the Community Futures (CF) Program and the delivery of the CF program through the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs): (a) what is the most recent investment fund balances for each of the 36 CFDCs in Southern Ontario; (b) what is the breakdown of the 1144 loans which were approved by CF between April 2020 and March 2021, broken down by category; and (c) between April 2019 and March 2021, how many of the 36 CFDCs in Southern Ontario were given permission to access their investment capital to cover operating expenses?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 81—Mrs. Tracy Gray:**

With regard to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB): (a) how many individuals received support from these programs in total, broken down by each electoral district; (b) of the individuals in (a), how many were (i) Canadian citizens, (ii) permanent residents, (iii) temporary foreign workers, (iv) foreign students, (v) foreign nationals eligible for employment in Canada, (vi) foreign nationals who are no longer eligible to work in Canada because of either delays by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada or because their International Experience Canada work permit has expired; (c) what is the breakdown of (i) CERB, (ii) CRB recipients by the amount of eligibility periods the recipients received benefits for; (d) how many CERB or CRB recipients (i) were investigated for potential ineligibility, (ii) were required to reimburse any payments, (iii) paid back any required reimbursements, (iv) have outstanding reimbursements owing; (e) what is the total dollar value of reimbursements (i) received, (ii) outstanding related to CERB and CRB; and (f) how many investigations are currently ongoing related to CERB or CRB fraud?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 83—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in Ontario; (b) what was the 2018-base MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 84—Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman:

With regard to delayed federally funded infrastructure projects in Central and Eastern Ontario: what are the details of all projects which have yet to be completed, and have had their original expected completion date delayed by more than six months, including, for each, (i) the project location, (ii) the project description, (iii) the original expected completion date, (iv) the revised expected completion date, (v) the original total projected budget of project, (vi) the most recent total projected budget of project, (vii) the original federal contribution, (viii) whether or not the federal contribution has been or will be increased, and, if so, to what amount, (ix) the specific reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 86—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to all contracts signed by the government for the Centre Block rehabilitation project: (a) how many contracts have been awarded; and (b) what are the details of each contract, including the (i) date, (ii) description of the goods or services, including the volume, (iii) final amount, (iv) vendor, (v) country of the vendor?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 87—Mr. Alex Ruff:

With regard to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) owned and managed small craft harbours: (a) how many exist in Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound; (b) what is the condition of each small craft harbour in the federal riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, including the (i) last inspection date, (ii) recommendations for repair or reconditioning from these inspections; (c) what are the estimated costs to repair the Warton, Ontario, small craft harbour; (d) are there open, closed, planned tenders, or decisions to defer the repairs to the Warton, Ontario, small craft harbour; and (e) what is the department's lifecycle management plan regarding all DFO owned and managed small craft harbours?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 91—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in Alberta; (b) what was the "2018-base MBM" for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; and (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest,

MBM; (e) what are the government's estimates or projections where the poverty lined in (b) will be by end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024; and (f) what are the government's projections on the number and percentage of Alberta seniors whose income levels will fall below the poverty line in each of the next three years?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 92—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the procurement of supplies related to the COVID-19 pandemic: (a) what is the number and percentage of contracts and the total amount and percentage of the total amount of all spending on supplies that went to organizations owned by (i) women, (ii) Indigenous people, (iii) people of colour, broken down by region; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by province or territory?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 95—Mr. Rob Morrison:

With regard to the economic impact of the COVID-19 negative molecular test requirement for fully vaccinated travellers on the tourism industry in British Columbia: (a) what was the number of foreign international travellers who arrived at the land border crossings in British Columbia, broken down by month since the border opened for non-essential arrivals on August 9, 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by point of entry; (c) what was the number of international travellers who arrived at each point of entry in British Columbia, broken down by month in the year prior to the border closure in March 2020; and (d) does the government have an estimate on the amount of lost tourism revenue in British Columbia as a result of the test requirement for vaccinated travellers and, if so, what is the estimate?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 97—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:

With regard to the processing of applications by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) how many applications has IRCC processed each year since January 2017, according to the most recent available data, broken down by visa category and type of application; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) in each province and territory where applicants intend or intended to settle; (c) what are the current processing times and application inventories, in addition to the service standard, for each visa category and type of application; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) in each province and territory where applicants intend or intended to settle; (e) what were the processing times and application inventories, in addition to the service standard, for each visa category and type of application as of October 1 for each year between 2016 and 2021; (f) what is the breakdown of (e) in each province and territory where applicants intend or intended to settle; and (g) how has the Afghanistan crisis in the summer of 2021 specifically affected IRCC's ability to process applications, and what percentage of staff were reallocated to process Afghan nationals' files on a priority basis?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 98—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:**

With regard to the processing of study permit applications by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in the last five years where the requested data are available: (a) for all of Canada, excluding applications for study permits for institutions located in Quebec, how many applications were (i) received, (ii) processed, (iii) approved, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (iv) denied, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (v) withdrawn, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent; (b) of the applications in (a), how many came from the following group of countries with a high percentage of French speakers, broken down by country: Algeria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Côte d'Ivoire, France, Guinea, Haiti, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Switzerland, Senegal, Tunisia; (c) of the applications in (a), how many came from the following group of countries with a high percentage of English speakers, broken down by country: South Africa, Australia, Botswana, China, South Korea, the United States, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Rwanda, the Republic of Ireland, Singapore, Sudan, Zimbabwe; (d) for all applications to come study at an institution located in Quebec, how many applications were (i) received, (ii) processed, (iii) approved, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (iv) denied, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (v) withdrawn, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent; (e) of the applications in (d), how many came from the following group of countries with a high percentage of French speakers, broken down by country: Algeria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon, the DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Guinea, Haiti, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Switzerland, Senegal, Tunisia; (f) of the applications in (d), how many came from the following group of countries with a high percentage of English speakers, broken down by country: South Africa, Australia, Botswana, China, South Korea, the United States, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Rwanda, the Republic of Ireland, Singapore, Sudan, Zimbabwe; (g) for all applications to come study in an anglophone post-secondary institution (McGill University, Bishop's University, Concordia University, Champlain College – St. Lawrence, Champlain College – Lennoxville, Champlain College – Saint-Lambert, Dawson College, John Abbott College, Vanier College, Heritage College) located in Quebec, how many applications were (i) received, (ii) processed, (iii) approved, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (iv) denied, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (v) withdrawn, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent; and (h) for all applications to come study in a francophone post-secondary institution (meaning any institution not listed in (g)) located in Quebec, how many applications were (i) received, (ii) processed, (iii) approved, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (iv) denied, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent, (v) withdrawn, and what percentage of the total number of applications processed does that represent?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 99—Mrs. Tracy Gray:

With regard to government procurement contracts signed since January 1, 2020, by the government, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: (a) how many contracts were cancelled, suspended, or disputed; and (b) what are the details of each such contract in (a), including the (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) original amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) date of cancellation, suspension or dispute, (vi) details of the reason for cancellation, suspension or dispute, (vii) current status of cancellation, suspension, or dispute, (viii) details of any amount recovered or lost by the government as a result of cancellation, suspension, or dispute?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 100—Mrs. Dominique Vien:

With regard to programs which provided money or financing to businesses, sectors, or communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, broken down by program: (a) for each program, what is the total amount distributed to date in the riding of Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis; (b) what was the total number of applications received from the riding of Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis; and (c) of the applications in (b), how many were (i) accepted, (ii) denied?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 101—Mr. Chris Warkentin:

With regard to pipeline safety and the government's reaction to David Suzuki's recent comments about pipelines blowing up: (a) does the Prime Minister denounce Mr. Suzuki's comments and, if not, why not; (b) does the Minister of Environment and Climate Change denounce Mr. Suzuki's comments and, if not, why not; (c) what is the government's policy regarding future meetings, events, or dealings with Mr. Suzuki; and (d) in light of the comments, is the government planning to add specific measures to ensure that pipelines are protected and, if so, what are they?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 103—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to the Canadian delegation at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow: (a) who were the members of the delegation, including, for each, what organization they represented, if applicable; (b) what are the total costs incurred to date by the government related to the delegation; and (c) what are the total costs incurred by the government to date related to the delegation for (i) air transportation, (ii) land transportation, (iii) hotels or other accommodations, (iv) meals, (v) hospitality, (vi) room rentals, (vii) other costs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 104—Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay:

With regard to projects funded in British Columbia through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund: what are the details of all projects projected to be completed in over the next five years, including the (i) location, (ii) project description, (iii) expected completion date, (iv) total project cost, (v) total federal funding commitment?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 105—Ms. Raquel Dancho:

With regard to the impact of inflation on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) and the poverty line: (a) what is the current, or latest, MBM for the reference family and various poverty lines in each of the MBM geographic areas in Manitoba; (b) what was the "2018-base MBM" for the reference family and various poverty lines in each geographic area in (a); (c) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) were below each poverty line in 2018; (d) what percentage of individuals living in each area in (a) fall below each poverty line based on the current, or latest, MBM; and (e) what are the government's estimates or projections for where the poverty lines mentioned in (b) will be by the end of (i) 2022, (ii) 2023, (iii) 2024?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 106—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to both funding streams of the Rapid Housing Initiative (the Projects Stream and the Major Cities Stream): (a) what was the (i) total number of approved projects, (ii) total number of approved housing units, (iii) total dollar value of each housing project, (iv) dollar value of the federal contribution of each housing project, (v) dollar value of any other contributor of each housing project; (b) what is the breakdown of each part of (a) by (i) municipality and province or territory, (ii) federal electoral constituency; (c) what is the breakdown of funds committed in (a) by (i) individual application, (ii) contributor source (i.e. federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, Indigenous government, non-profit, other agency or organization), (iii) province or territory; and (d) what are the details of all applications in (a)(i), including the (i) location, (ii) project description, (iii) number of proposed units, (iv) date the application was submitted to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, (v) date the project was announced publicly?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 107—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to the government's National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCIF): (a) what is the total number and dollar value of housing projects resulting from the NCFI; and (b) for each project resulting from the NHCIF, what is (i) the status of their progress, broken down by the Canada and Mortgage Corporation's four tracking and reporting phases (conditional commitment, financial commitment, construction or repair underway, completed), (ii) the number of units, (iii) the federal funds committed, (iv) the partners' funds committed, (v) their location by municipality and province or territory, (vi) their location by federal electoral constituency, (vii) their project description, (viii) the date the application was submitted, (ix) the date the contribution agreement was signed?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 108—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:**

With regard to the government's National Housing Strategy: (a) what is the total number of housing units that have resulted from the strategy, broken down by program, funding envelope, and project; and (b) for each project in (a), what is the status of their progress, broken down by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's approach for tracking and reporting on a project through its four different phases, including (i) conditional commitment, (ii) financial commitment, (iii) construction or repair underway, (iv) completed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 109—Mr. Earl Dreshen:

With regard to government projections on the impact of inflation and rising interest rates on homeowners: (a) what are the government's projections and analysis related to the impact that higher prices on essential goods, due to inflation, will have on the ability of homeowners to make mortgage payments; (b) does the government have any estimates on how many homeowners won't be able to make their mortgage payments as a result of inflationary pressures, and, if so, what are the estimates; (c) does the government or the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation have any projections related to the average increase in mortgage payments as a result of future interest rate increases, and, if so, what are the projections; and (d) does the government have any estimates related to the number of homeowners who will be unable to afford their mortgages as a result of future interest rate increases and, if so, what are those estimates?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 110—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to the government's decision to "set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers," as laid out in Environment and Climate Change's 2020 plan entitled "A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy": (a) what is the full list of "manufacturers, farmers, provinces and territories", as defined by the "A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy" plan, that were consulted about this decision prior to the release of the plan; (b) what are the details of all consultations which were held regarding the economic impact of this decision prior to the release of the plan, specifically on the agricultural sector and food production; and (c) what is the full list of "manufacturers, farmers, provinces and territories", as defined by the "A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy" plan, that have been consulted regarding the economic impact of this decision from December 2020 to the present?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 111—Mr. Blake Richards:

With regard to the economic impact of the COVID-19 negative molecular test requirement for fully vaccinated travelers on the tourism industry in Alberta: (a) what was the number of foreign international travelers who arrived at the land border crossings in Alberta, broken down by month since the border opened for non-essential arrivals on August 9, 2021; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by point of entry; (c) what was the number of international travelers who arrived at each point of entry in Alberta, broken down by month in the year prior to the border closure in March 2020; (d) does the government have an estimate on the amount of lost tourism revenue in Alberta as a result of the test requirement for vaccinated travelers and, if so, what is the estimate; and (e) what estimates or projections does Parks Canada or Destination Canada have related to the lost revenue as a result of the test requirement on tourism and revenue levels in Banff National Park, in particular as it relates to the 2021-22 ski season?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 112—Mr. Joël Godin:

With regard to the labour shortage problem and delays in obtaining work permits for foreign workers: (a) how many foreign workers are waiting for a response (i) in Canada, (ii) for the province of Quebec, (iii) in the riding of Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier; (b) what time frame does the government deem acceptable for ensuring that a work permit is obtained for a foreign worker; (c) what is the current time frame for work permits for foreign workers in each province; (d) has the government found solutions to its major breakdown with Service Canada that is causing significant delays in the delivery of work permits for foreign workers and, if so, what are they; (e) what is the cause of Service Canada's computer glitches with foreign worker files; and (f) does the government have any analysis of changes in the labour shortage and, if so, what is the government's estimate of the labour shortage over the next 10 years?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 113—Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to the impact of labour shortages on Canadian fruit growers and fruit processors: (a) what are the government's estimates on the shortage of workers during the 2021 fruit harvesting season, broken down by region; (b) what was the estimated loss of yield or production in the Canadian fruit industry in 2021 as a result of labour shortages, broken down by region and crop; and (c) will (i) Immigration and Refugees and Citizenship Canada, (ii) Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, take specific actions to ensure that the Canadian industry doesn't face another labour shortage in 2022 and, if so, what are they?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 115—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to all contracts signed by the government where advance payments were made since February 1, 2020, broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: (a) how many such contracts were awarded; (b) what is the total value of those contracts; and (c) what are the details of each contract with advance payment, including the (i) date, (ii) description of the goods or services, including the volume, (iii) final amount, (iv) vendor, (v) country of the vendor?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 118—Ms. Niki Ashton:

With regard to Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) audit programs for businesses and particulars, since November 2015, broken down by year and by program: (a) how many audits were completed; (b) what is the number of auditors, broken down by category of auditors; (c) how many new files were opened; (d) how many files were closed; (e) of the files closed in (d), what was the average time it took to process the files before they were closed; (f) of the files closed in (d), what was the risk level of each file; (g) how much was spent on contractors and subcontractors; (h) of the contractors and subcontractors in (g), what is the initial and final value of each contract; (i) among the contractors and subcontractors in (g), what is the description of each service contract; (j) how many reassessments were issued; (k) what is the total amount recovered; (l) how many taxpayer files were referred to the CRA's Criminal Investigations Program; (m) of the investigations in (l), how many were referred to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada; and (n) of the investigations in (m), how many resulted in convictions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 120—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), broken down by province and region and constituency: (a) how many Canadians experienced a reduction in their GIS in 2021, as a result of receiving income from a COVID-19 related financial support program, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit; (b) how many Canadians have applied for a reassessment of their GIS since their assessments were released in July 2021; and (c) how many GIS reassessment applications for 2021 have been successful, or are still in the process of review?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 121—Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin:**

With regard to international transfers of Canadian prisoners detained abroad: (a) how many applications has Canada approved over the past 10 years, broken down by year and by country where the applicant was being detained at the time of application; (b) how many applications has Canada denied over the past 10 years, broken down by year and by country where the applicant was being detained at the time of application; (c) how many applications for transfer to Canada were denied by the country where the applicant was being detained over the past 10 years, broken down by year and by country of origin of the application; (d) what are the conditions for applying for a transfer from Japan; (e) which article of the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons states that a sentenced person must have served one third of their sentence to be granted a transfer to Canada from Japan; (f) for all the transfer applications over the past 10 years, how much time, on average, elapsed between the transfer application and the transfer; (g) over the past 10 years, how many times has Global Affairs Canada intervened in favour of an accelerated transfer for a transfer application from a Canadian sentenced abroad; (h) over the past 10 years, how many administrative arrangements for transfer have been approved by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Public Safety; and (i) over the past 10 years, how many administrative arrangements for transfer has Canada signed with convention signatory countries?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 122—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:

With regard to the government's plan to set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers: (a) does the government accept MNP's analysis from September 2021 that cumulative lost production of canola could total approximately 151 million tonnes between 2023 and 2030, and if not, why not; (b) does the government have any analysis which is contrary to MNP's analysis, and if so, what are the details, including the findings; (c) what are the projected economic impacts on the domestic production of biofuels related to the lost production of canola or other biofuel crops for the period between 2023 and 2030; (d) has the government carried out any impact analysis study of absolute reductions of fertilizer (i) prior to making the announcement, (ii) after making the announcement, and if so, what are the details, including findings; (e) has the government carried out any impact analysis study of emissions intensity reduction from fertilizer prior to making the announcement, and if so, what are the details, including findings; and (f) will the government carry out an impact analysis study related to absolute reduction and emissions intensity reduction from fertilizer before any such target or restriction is imposed, and if so, what are the details?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 123—Mr. Terry Dowdall:

With regard to the importation of batteries for electric vehicles (EVs) into Canada and the government's concerns about current and future shortages of batteries for EVs: (a) what specific plans does the government have to improve the battery shortage faced by Canadian EV manufacturers; (b) does the government have any plans to ensure that more EV batteries are manufactured in Canada, and if so, what are the details of the plans, including the projected increase in the number of domestically manufactured batteries; (c) does the government's plan include an industry reliance on foreign produced EV batteries for Canadian manufactured vehicles, and if so, what percentage of the batteries in new Canadian EVs are expected to be foreign produced, broken down by each of the next five years; (d) what standards are in place to ensure that EV batteries imported to Canada are not made (i) from child labour, (ii) from forced labour, (iii) with materials mined by children or exploited workers; (e) have any EV batteries destined for Canada been intercepted by Canada Border Services Agency in the last five years due to concerns related to labour standards, and if so, what are the details; (f) what are the government's current assessments related to problems with the global supply chain associated with EV batteries; (g) what is the government's assessment of the impact that the United States' Buy American policy has on the shortage of batteries for Canadian EV plants; (h) what are the government's projections related to the number of new electric vehicles expected to be produced in Canada in each of the next five years; and (i) what are the government's projections related to the number of EV batteries which will be available to Canadian EV manufacturers in each of the next five years?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 124—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to the government's decision to "set a national emission reduction target of 30% below 2020 levels from fertilizers," as laid out in Environment and Climate Change Canada's 2020 plan entitled "A Healthy Environment and a

Healthy Economy": (a) has Farm Credit Canada done any analysis related to the impact that lower fertilizer amounts will have on crop production, and if so, what are the details, including findings of the analysis; (b) what is the projected increase in both demand and federal budget for business risk management (BRM) programs like AgriStability and AgriRecovery, as a result of this decision; (c) what new measures are proposed to adjust for the decline in crop yields, specifically pertaining to the historical reference period used for determining eligibility for BRM programs; (d) what new insurance programs or financial assistance programs will be available for farmers whose crop yields rely disproportionately on their ability to use fertilizer, and will be disproportionately affected by mandatory reductions in fertilizer use; (e) what are Farm Credit Canada's projections regarding yield gaps, broken down by each different type of Canadian crop, each year from now until 2030; and (f) has Health Canada or any other government department or agency done any analysis on the ability of Canadians to pay more for food at the grocery store as a result of lower yields by Canadian farmers, and if so, what are the details, including findings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 125—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:

With regard to the Chinook tool used by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in the processing of study permits and temporary visas: (a) why has the use of Chinook not been publicly disclosed; (b) who developed this tool and why; (c) how does the tool work; (d) what are the different steps in its use; (e) has the tool been subject to one or more cybersecurity audits and, if so, by which firm or individual; (f) why is its use not disclosed directly to immigration applicants; (g) why can't details of decisions made using the tool be saved or retained in some way; (h) what oversight does IRCC provide to ensure that immigration officers use the tool correctly; (i) what data is processed using the tool; (j) how are immigration applications ranked and based on what indicators; (k) what efficiency gains does Chinook provide; (l) what keywords or indicators are most likely to increase the risk level of an application; (m) what keywords or indicators are most likely to lead to a refusal of an application; (n) what do we know about the algorithms used by the tool; (o) why have refusal rates for study permit applications increased significantly since the tool was implemented in March 2018; (p) what guidance is provided to IRCC staff about using the tool; (q) what visa offices, in Canada and abroad, use Chinook, broken down by office; (r) in (q), what version of Chinook is used; (s) what visa offices processing study permit and temporary visa applications, in Canada and abroad, do not use Chinook; (t) in (s), why; and (u) was the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship at the time of Chinook's implementation consulted about its implementation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 126—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to the Special Immigration Measures for Afghans who assisted our Canadian Armed Forces as interpreters or locally engaged staff, since July 22, 2021, to present: (a) how many of these Afghans have reached Canada; (b) how many of these Afghans have been referred by the Department of National Defence (DND) to Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and received an invitation to apply; (c) how many of these Afghans have been referred by DND to IRCC, but have not received an invitation to apply; (d) of the Afghans referred by DND to IRCC who have not been invited to apply, (i) what database are their names being held in, (ii) who is responsible for making the decision to put their names into the Global Case Management System, assign them an application number, and send an invitation to apply; and (e) what criteria are being used to determine which Afghans should receive an application number and an invitation to apply and when, and are these Afghans being tiered based on the severity of their individual security circumstances?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 127—Mr. Damien C. Kurek:**

With regard to members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) reserves applying to transfer to become full active members of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, since January 1, 2016, and broken down by each branch applied for: (a) what is the number of reservists who have applied to become members of the Army, Navy or Air Force; (b) of the applications in (a), how many were successful; (c) what was the average time between when an application by a reservist was received and a final decision was made; and (d) what are the CAF's service standards related to the length it takes to make a decision on such transfers, and what percentage of applicants received a decision within the service standard timeline?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 128—Mr. Damien C. Kurek:

With regard to complaints received by the Canada Revenue Agency related to its various assistance by telephone lines and numbers: (a) what is the number of complaints received since January 1, 2019, broken down by month; and (b) of the numbers in (a), what is the breakdown by type of complaint, including (i) line not working or out of service, (ii) dropped calls, (iii) long hold times, (iv) other, broken down by type?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 129—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to documents sent by or received by Health Canada or the Public Health Agency of Canada related to COVID-19 vaccines, drugs, or treatments and excluding correspondence from the general public, since March 1, 2020: what are the details of each such document including the (i) sender, (ii) recipient, (iii) title, (iv) date, (v) file number or tracking number, (vi) type of document (memorandum, application, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 130—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:

With regard to the processing of applications by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) how many applications has IRCC received and processed since January 2021, broken down by month; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by visa category and type of application; (c) how many applications did IRCC receive each month in 2020, broken down by month; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by visa category and type of application; (e) how many of the applications received since January 2021 are considered in backlog; (f) how many of the applications received in 2020 were considered in backlog; (g) since January 2021, what is the average visa processing time, broken down by category; and (h) in 2020, what was the average visa processing time, broken down by category?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 131—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:

With regard to the applications and resettlement of refugees from Afghanistan submitted to Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) what is the number of applications of Afghan refugees broken down by stage of processing; (b) what is the average processing time for an Afghan refugee application under the special immigration program; (c) how many Afghan refugees who applied to IRCC are in third countries; (d) what is the country breakdown of refugees in (c); (e) how many Afghan interpreters have submitted a refugee application; (f) how many Afghan interpreters' applications have been processed; (g) how many Afghan interpreters' applications have been denied; (h) what is the breakdown of (g) by reason for denial; (i) how many Afghan refugee applications have been made by refugees who identify as a targeted religious minority; and (j) what is the timeline for IRCC to resettle all 40,000 Afghan refugees in Canada?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 132—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:

With regard to the allegations of racism and discrimination reported by employees of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in the IRCC Anti-Racism Employee Focus Groups Final Report by Pollara Strategic Insights delivered in June 2021: (a) how many complaints of racism and discrimination have been made by employees at IRCC since January 2019; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by month since January 2019; (c) how many of the complaints made by employees were referred to or handled by the Office of Conflict Resolution; (d) what is the number of complaints of racism and discrimination handled by the Office of Conflict Resolution since its creation, broken down by month; (e) what authority and recourse does the Office of Conflict Resolution have to respond to complaints of racism and discrimination; (f) how many members of the anti-racism task force at

IRCC identify as racialized; (f) what measures, other than the IRCC Code of Conduct, have been implemented to combat racism and discrimination in IRCC; (g) how are these measures, and the IRCC Code of Conduct, being enforced by IRCC management; and (h) what is IRCC doing to ensure that racism and discrimination does not affect the processing and review of immigration, refugee, and citizenship applications, and the approval or denial of these applications?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 133—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:

With regard to vehicles provided for the use of ministers and the federal executive vehicle fleet, as of November 29, 2021: (a) what is the total number of vehicles provided for the use of ministers; (b) what was the total cost of procuring the vehicles currently in use by ministers; (c) for each ministerial vehicle, what was the (i) date purchased, (ii) make and model, including the year, (iii) purchase price, (iv) whether it was manufactured in Canada; (d) what is the total number of vehicles in the federal executive vehicle fleet; (e) what was the total cost of procuring vehicles for the fleet; (f) for each vehicle in the fleet, what was the (i) date purchased, (ii) make and model, including the year, (iii) purchase price, (iv) whether it was manufactured in Canada; and (g) what is the government's official policy related to buying vehicles manufactured in Canada for ministerial vehicles and the federal executive vehicle fleet?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 134—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive (FTHBI) announced by the government in 2019, from September 1, 2019, to date: (a) how many applicants have applied for mortgages through the FTHBI program, broken down by province and municipality; (b) of those applicants, how many have been approved and accepted mortgages through the FTHBI program, broken down by province and municipality; (c) of those applicants listed in (b), how many approved applicants have been issued the incentive in the form of a shared equity mortgage; (d) what is the total value of incentives (shared equity mortgages) under the program that have been issued, in dollars; (e) for those applicants who have been issued mortgages through the FTHBI, what is that value of each of the mortgage loans; (f) for those applicants who have been issued mortgages through the FTHBI, what is that mean value of the mortgage loan; and (g) what is the total aggregate amount of money lent to homebuyers through the FTHBI to date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 136—Mr. Martin Champoux:

With regard to federal public servants who have been placed on unpaid leave due to their vaccination status: (a) how many are there in total; (b) of the total in (a), what is the breakdown by federal department and agency; and (c) for each federal department and agency in (b), what percentage of total employees do the employees who have been placed on unpaid leave account for?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 137—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and proposed changes by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, including the Draft Conservation Network Design for the Scotian Shelf-Bay of Fundy Bioregion: (a) for each proposed change or additional MPA, what would be the impact to the lobster fishery and lobster quotas; (b) what would be the impact in Lobster Fishing Areas (LFA) 27 through 34, broken down by LFA; and (c) what are the details of all memorandums, briefing notes, reports, or correspondence related to the MPAs or the proposals since January 1, 2016, including (i) the date, (ii) the type of document, (iii) the sender, (iv) the recipient, (v) the title, (vi) the summary of the contents, (vii) the internal file or tracking number?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 139—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to the job posting which closed in October 2020 where the Privy Council Office was looking for a storyteller to join the Prime Minister and Visual Communications team: (a) how many storytellers are currently working for the Privy Council Office or the Office of the Prime Minister; (b) what is the organizational structure for the storytellers, such as is there a lead storyteller that the other storytellers pitch their stories to; (c) who decides whether or not a story is worth telling; (d) what is the yearly budget of the storytelling department; (e) who does the lead storyteller report to; (f) of the storytellers currently employed, how many have prior experience writing fictional stories; (g) what metrics are used to judge the quality of the storytelling; (h) what is itemized breakdown of the storytelling budget; (i) how many stories have been told by the storytellers; and (j) of the stories in (i), how many were fictional?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 140—Mr. John Williamson:

With regard to legal costs incurred by the government in relation to its legal application launched in June 2021 against the Speaker of the House of Commons, as well as any subsequent legal action related to this case: (a) what is the total number of billable hours incurred by outside legal counsel to prepare this application and subsequent legal action; (b) what is the total amount (i) paid out, (ii) scheduled to be paid out, by the government to outside legal counsel to prepare this application and subsequent legal action; (c) what is the total number of federal civil servants that were assigned to assist in the preparation of this application, broken down by department or agency; (d) which ministers, ministerial exempt staff, or senior government officials participated in the preparation of this application; (e) which ministers, ministerial exempt staff, or government officials had outside legal expenses covered by the government in relation to this application or the related order of the House of Commons; (f) what was the total amount (i) paid out, (ii) scheduled to be paid out, in legal expenses related to (e); and (g) which departments or agencies allocated resources to prepare the legal application, and what specific resources did each department or agency allocate?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 142—Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:

With regard to the funding granted in 2020 to United Way Centraide Canada, through the Emergency Community Support Fund, to increase response capacity and expand 211 service coverage to all Canadian residents, with said funding coming to an end on March 31, 2021: (a) what amount was spent to expand coverage of the 211 service across Quebec; and (b) how many referrals were made through the 211 service broken down by (i) each region of Quebec, (ii) month, between March 2020 and March 2021?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 143—Mr. Brad Redekopp:

With regard to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, broken down by province and territory, and fiscal years from 2018 to present: (a) how many work permits have been processed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and are expected to be processed for 2021-22; (b) of the permits in (a), how many of those migrants have come to Canada to fill jobs; (c) what employment sectors have those jobs been in; (d) what is the expected duration of the work permits for the migrants in (b), in each sector; (e) what was the average processing time for work permits in each employment sector; (f) what was the average wait time between application, processing and arrival time in Canada to begin employment, for each economic sector; and (g) is the government providing new opportunities for these migrants to become permanent residents?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 144—Mr. Brad Redekopp:

With regard to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, broken down by province and territory, and fiscal years from 2018 to present: (a) how many Labour Market Impact Assessments has Employment and Social Development Canada (i) undertaken, (ii) completed; (b) what was the average processing time for the applications in (a); (c) how many jobs has the program filled within the heavy trucking sector by class of license; and (d) how many of the temporary foreign workers in (c) became permanent residents of Canada?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 145—Mr. Bob Benzen:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircrafts, since January 1, 2021: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 146—Mr. Bob Benzen:

With regard to usage of the government's Airbus CC-150 Polaris aircraft, since January 1, 2021: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 147—Mr. Bob Benzen:

With regard to the Ottawa quarantine hotel set up for the Prime Minister and the delegation that travelled with him to Europe in June 2021: (a) what was the total amount paid to the hotel to accommodate the Prime Minister and his entourage for the purpose of quarantining; (b) how many individuals quarantined at the hotel; (c) of the individuals who quarantined at the hotel, how many received their initial COVID test results back and were permitted to leave the hotel in (i) less than 12 hours, (ii) 12 to 24 hours, (iii) 24 to 48 hours, (iv) more than 48 hours; (d) are the quarantine hotel travel expenses incurred by the Prime Minister and his exempt staff posted under proactively published travel expenses, and, if so, on what date were these expenses posted; (e) what costs were incurred to transform the hotel from a regular hotel to a designated quarantine hotel, and what is the itemized breakdown of the costs; and (f) how many returning international travelers not associated with the Prime Minister's trip were permitted to use this Ottawa hotel as a designated quarantine hotel upon arriving in Canada?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 148—Mr. Stephen Ellis:

With regard to COVID-19 vaccines procured by the government: (a) what are the government's estimates regarding how many vaccine doses were not administered; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by reason (expired, wasted, improperly stored, etc.) and by vaccine manufacturer (Moderna, Pfizer, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 149—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to the government's renovation project of the former United States Embassy building at 100 Wellington Street in Ottawa: (a) what are the total costs incurred by the government since January 1, 2016, related to renovating the building; (b) what is the itemized breakdown of the costs in (a); (c) what is the projected total budget for the renovation project; (d) what is the timeline of the renovation project, including the expected completion date; and (e) what will the renovated building be used for once the project is complete?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 151—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to interactions between the government and social media companies since January 1, 2019: what are the details of each time the government flagged or made a request to remove or put a warning on a social media post, broken down by department or agency, including the (i) date of request, (ii) platform (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), (iii) description of post or content, (iv) reason for flagging or removal request, (v) name of account or handle associated with the post subject to the removal request, (vi) whether or not the social media company removed the post, (vii) whether or not the social media company put a warning on the post, (viii) title of government official or exempt staff member who made the request?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 152—Mr. Corey Tochor:**

With regard to government spending on COVID-19 vaccine production facilities: (a) what is the amount actually spent to date on such facilities; and (b) what are the details of each facility which received funding, including the (i) location, (ii) company name, (iii) how much funding has been received, (iv) how many COVID-19 vaccines are currently being produced at the facility each month, (v) what is the status of the facility, (vi) when will the facility start producing vaccines, if it is not yet producing vaccines, (vii) on what date did the facility start producing COVID-19 vaccines, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 153—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to any contracts or businesses dealings between any government department, agency, Crown Corporation, or other government entity and Global Health Imports Corporation, since the company was incorporated in April 2020: (a) what are the details of any contracts with the company, including the (i) date, (ii) value of the contract, (iii) description of goods or services, including the volume, (iv) reason the contract is not listed through proactive disclosure, if applicable; and (b) what are the details of all submissions, proposals or inquiries received by the government from the company, including the (i) sender, (ii) recipient, (iii) date, (iv) title, (v) summary, (vi) summary of response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 154—Mr. John Brassard:

With regard to the development of Snapchat filters by or for the government, including agencies, Crown corporations, and other government entities, since January 1, 2018: (a) what amount has been spent developing the filters; (b) what is the description or purpose of each filter; and (c) for each filter developed, what are the details, including the (i) amount spent on development, (ii) date of launch, (iii) analytic data or usage rates, (iv) campaign for which the filter was developed, (v) locations where filters were available?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 156—Ms. Leah Gazan:

With regard to government funding for fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21 allocated within the constituency of Winnipeg Centre: what is the total funding amount, broken down by (i) fiscal year, (ii) department or agency, (iii) initiative, (iv) amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 160—Ms. Jenny Kwan:

With regard to Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) since January 1, 2020, how many applications have been (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) rejected, (iv) are in inventory, broken down by month, stream (e.g. Home Child Care Provider, citizenship, etc.), and whether the application was inland or outland; (b) how many applications have passed eligibility, criminality and security, but do not have a final decision since January 1, 2020, broken down by month, stream, and whether the application was inland or outland; (c) for applications in (b), what is the average time that has passed since passing the most recent of those steps, broken down by stream, and whether the application was inland or outland; (d) how many first-stage decisions on applications for the Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots have been issued between January 1, 2021, and June 30, 2021; (e) broken down by year and reason for refusal (including reason for not passing eligibility), what is the number of Humanitarian and Compassionate applications that were refused since 2015; (f) for how many applications in (e) did an officer request additional information from an applicant prior to issuing a refusal; (g) broken down by stream, how many applications submitted to bilingual streams (Stream A, Stream B and International Graduates) of the temporary resident to permanent resident pathway were issued refusals for failing to submit French language test result; and (h) how many applications in (g) received a positive eligibility assessment following a reconsideration?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 161—Ms. Jenny Kwan:

With regard to the National Housing Strategy, broken down by type of applicant (e.g. non-profit, for-profit, Indigenous organization), stream (e.g. new construction, revitalization), stage (e.g. letter of intent, finalized agreement, servicing), date of the submission, province, number of units, number of units for Indigenous households, whether or not construction has been completed, and the dollar amount (for grants and loans): (a) how many applications have been received under the National

Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) since 2018; (b) for NHCF applications that resulted in finalized funding agreements, what is the (i) length of time in days between their initial submission and the finalization of their funding agreement, (ii) average and median rent of the project, (iii) percentage of units meeting the NHCF affordability criteria, (iv) average and median rent of units meeting the affordability criteria; (c) how many applications have been received under the Rental Construction Financing initiative (RCFi) since 2017; (d) of the applications in (c) that resulted in loan agreements, what is the (i) length of time in days between their initial submission and the finalization of their loan agreement, (ii) average and median rent of the project, (iii) percentage of units meeting RCFi affordability criteria, (iv) average and median rent of units meeting the affordability criteria; (e) how many applications have been received for the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) since 2020; and (f) of the applications in (e) that resulted in loan agreements, what is the (i) length of time in days between their initial submission and the finalization of their agreement, (ii) average and median rent of the project?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 162—Ms. Jenny Kwan:

With regard to the government's response to the crisis in Afghanistan: (a) under the special measures for people in Afghanistan, broken down by month, how many people have (i) applied, (ii) been provided with a Canadian visa or confirmation of Canadian citizenship, (iii) received invitations to go to an airport, (iv) been approved to be a permanent resident; (b) under the special measures for Afghan nationals outside of Afghanistan and their dependents, broken down by inland and outland origin of requests and by month, how many applications have (i) been received, (ii) been approved, (iii) resulted in the applicant landing in Canada; (c) what are the details of any briefing notes on Afghanistan provided to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship since 2019, including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) internal tracking number; (d) what are the details of any briefing notes on Afghanistan provided to the Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2019, including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) internal tracking number; (e) what are the details of any briefing notes on Afghanistan provided to the Minister of National Defense since 2019, including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) internal tracking number; and (f) what are the details of any responses to the briefing notes in (c), (d) and (e), including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) recipient, (v) internal tracking number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 164—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to government public awareness or advertising campaigns related to potential harms associated with cannabis use, excluding those focused on the dangers of drug impaired driving: what are the details of each such campaign launched by the government since January 1, 2019, including the (i) campaign title and description, (ii) date campaign was launched, (iii) start and end date of the campaign, (iv) campaign budget, (v) targeted age range or other demographics, (vi) names of the traditional and social media outlets or platforms used by the campaign, (vii) specific potential harms of cannabis highlighted by the campaign?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 165—Ms. Melissa Lantsman:

With regard to relations between Canada and the United States, broken down by minister: (a) how many meetings has each minister had with their American counterpart since being sworn in on October 26, 2021; and (b) what are the details of all such meetings, including the (i) date, (ii) type (in person, Zoom, etc.), (iii) agenda items, (iv) titles of American counterparts participating, (v) results from the meeting, if any?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 167—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan): (a) how many projects have received funding through PrairiesCan since the announced creation of the agency on August 12, 2021; (b) what are the details of each project in (a), including the (i) date of the announcement, (ii) project description, (iii) project location, (iv) funding recipient, (v) projected total project cost, (vi) amount of federal contribution towards the total project cost, (vii) expected completion date of the project; (c) what are the addresses of the PrairiesCan service locations in (i) Lethbridge, (ii) Fort McMurray, (iii) Grande Prairie, (iv) Regina, (v) Prince Albert, (vi) Brandon, (vii) Thompson; (d) for each location in (c), is the location currently in operation, and, if not, when will the location be in operation; (e) for each location in (c), what is the (i) 2021-22, (ii) 2022-23, operating budget; and (f) how many full-time equivalents have been assigned to work at each location in (c)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 169—Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin:

With regard to the International Aerocity of Mirabel, managed by Aéroports de Montréal (ADM): (a) how many times has the minister responsible been consulted on the real estate development of this site since 2000; (b) for which projects involving the leasing of land on this site has the minister responsible given his approval since 2000, broken down by year; (c) for which projects involving the construction of buildings on this site has the minister responsible given his approval since 2000, broken down by year; (d) which projects involving the leasing of land on this site has the minister responsible refused to approve since 2000, broken down by year; (e) which projects involving the construction of buildings on this site has the minister responsible refused to approve since 2000, broken down by year; (f) based on what criteria does the minister responsible make the decision to approve or refuse a lease or construction project on this site; (g) in total, what is the amount of rent collected by ADM for land leases on this site for which the minister responsible has given his approval since 2000, broken down by year; (h) what foreign companies have established themselves on land on this site since 2000; (i) what steps has the federal government taken to transfer unused land on this site to the City of Mirabel, as indicated on page 28 of ADM's 2019 annual report; (j) what are the terms and conditions of the lease between ADM and the federal government with respect to the development of this site; and (k) in what locations and in what official documents are the terms and conditions of ADM's mission for the real estate development of industrial and commercial lands of this site, other than for its airport operations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 170—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Department of National Defence, since August 10, 2021: (a) how many existing contracts and procurements have been (i) cancelled, (ii) modified to change the order, (iii) modified with a cost increase; and (b) for all the items in (a), what are the details, including the (i) contract or procurement number, (ii) supplier, (iii) product or service being ordered, (iv) date ordered, (v) date cancelled, (vi) original cost, (vii) modified cost, (viii) reason for cancellation, (ix) reason for cost increase?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 172—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Department of Health, and the regulations to the Statutes of Canada 2014, Chapter 24, also known as Vanessa's Law, which came into effect on December 16, 2019: (a) how much has been spent on initiatives informing medical professionals of the new mandatory reporting requirements; (b) what is the breakdown of the spending in (a), including the (i) date and the duration, (ii) type of initiative, (iii) number of recipients, (iv) amount spent, (v) description of the initiative; (c) since the regulations came into force, how many reports of adverse drug interactions and medical device incidents has the government received; and (d) what is the breakdown of each report in (c), including (i) the date, (ii) the location, (iii) the product or drug being reported, (iv) the type of interaction or incident, (v) whether the interaction or incident resulted in a fatality?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 173—Mr. Ryan Williams:

With regard to the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program from municipalities in Ontario that have a Canadian Armed Forces installation, since March 2020: (a) has the government received any correspondence on issues with the PILT Program from municipalities in Ontario that have a Canadian Armed Forces installation, and, if so, what are the details of each correspondence, including (i) the munic-

ipality, (ii) the recipient, (iii) the date received by the government, (iv) whether the government responded to the correspondence; (b) for each government response to correspondence in (a), what are the details, including the (i) date of the response, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) author, (v) internal tracking or file number; and (c) what are the details of all briefing notes written since March 2020 related to the PILT Program, including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date, (iv) recipient, (v) summary of content, (vi) internal tracking or file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 174—Mr. Ryan Williams:

With regard to the Department of Industry's Innovation Superclusters Initiative, since May 24, 2017: (a) what is the total amount spent on the initiative, broken down by (i) supercluster, (ii) year; (b) what are the number of jobs created by the initiative, broken down by (i) supercluster, (ii) project invested in, (iii) province of investment, (iv) year; (c) what is the total economic output created by the initiative, broken down by (i) supercluster, (ii) project invested in, (iii) province of investment, (iv) year; and (d) what is the total number of intellectual property (IP) assets created, broken down by (i) supercluster, (ii) project invested in, (iii) type of IP asset, (iv) province of investment, (v) year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 175—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to the acquisition or purchase of data sets, such as mobility data, on Canadians from websites, search engines, telecom providers, or other data providers, by any government department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity since March 1, 2020: what are the details of all instances where data was purchased or acquired, including (i) the date, (ii) the amount paid, if applicable, (iii) the company or organization that provided the data, (iv) the description and type of data provided, (v) whether the government requested the data or was the data offered by the company or organization, (vi) summary of data contents, (vii) how the government used the data?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 176—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to the Small Craft Harbours program: (a) for the 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 fiscal years, what are the details of all project expenditures which have been made by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans under this program, including the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) location, (iv) project description or summary, (v) constituency; (b) what is the amount of fixed annual funding allocated to each harbour, broken down by location; and (c) what are the specific criteria and metrics used to determine how much funding is allocated to each harbour?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 180—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to companies funded by the Natural Resources Canada's Emissions Reduction Fund: (a) what are the names and addresses of the headquarters of all companies which received funding from the Offshore or Onshore Program; and (b) broken down by company funded, what are the details of each grant, including (i) the date signed, (ii) the start and end date, (iii) the total dollar amount, (iv) the list of outcomes or metrics the company must report to the government with respect to emissions reduction, (v) what are the deadlines for which the company must meet any specific metrics or outcomes, broken down by target or requirement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 181—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to the offices of the Minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations, Minister for Indigenous Services, and Minister of Northern Affairs from July 1, 2016, to December 8, 2021: (a) how much was spent on contracts for (i) temporary employment, (ii) consultants, (iii) advice; (b) what are the details of all contracts related to (a), including for each (i) the date and duration of the contract, (ii) the vendor, (iii) the value of the contract, (iv) the description of services provided, (v) whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bid process, (vi) the file number; and (c) what are the names of the individuals who provided the services to the minister's office in relation to the contract?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 182—Mr. Adam Chambers:**

With regard to the February 9, 2021, announcement from the government that self-employed individuals who applied for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and would have qualified based on their gross income will not be required to repay the benefit, provided they also met all other eligibility requirements: (a) how many CERB recipients had their repayment obligations waived related to this decision; (b) what is the estimated cost to the Treasury of the decision announced on February 9, 2021; (c) how much money did the Canada Revenue Agency and Service Canada return to individuals who had already repaid the amounts owing related to this criteria before the government made this announcement; and (d) how many individuals were returned money related to (b)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 184—Ms. Raquel Dancho:

With regard to the government's hotel quarantine being run by a third party at the Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel and Suites for certain returning international travellers: (a) what company or organization is the third party running the quarantine operation; (b) how much is the company or organization being paid to run the hotel quarantine; (c) how much was this Hilton Toronto Airport and Suites paid by the government to have their hotel used as a quarantine facility; (d) why were some mothers staying at the facility denied access to formula for their infants; (e) on what date did the government become aware that some mothers were being denied access to infant formula; (f) what specific steps did the government take to rectify the situation in (d), and on what date was each step taken; (g) why were individuals with food allergies and other dietary restrictions not allowed access to food that they can eat at the quarantine hotel; (h) on what date did the government become aware that certain individuals did not have access to food to which they were not allergic to; (i) what specific steps were taken to rectify the situation in (g), and on what date was each step taken; (j) what specific measures were included in the terms of the government's agreement with the quarantine facility operator related to access to fresh air for travellers; (k) why did some travellers experience delays of over 24 hours between when they received a negative test result and when the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) allowed them to leave the facility; and (l) what specific steps did the PHAC take to address the delays in (k), and on what date was each step taken?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 186—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) recipients who received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, the Canada Recovery Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit: (a) what are the details, including the findings, of any studies, analyses, estimates or projections of the impact of reducing the monthly amount of the CCB; (b) for the documents in (a), what are their titles and dates; (c) have any projections been made of the impact of the monthly reduction in the CCB on families with incomes below the low income cutoff; (d) of the projections referred to in (c), what are their titles and dates; and (e) what are the findings of the projections referred to in (c)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 187—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the Canada Workers Benefit (CWB) recipients who received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB), the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB) and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB): (a) how many CWB recipients received the (i) CERB, (ii) CRB, (iii) CRCB, (iv) CRSB; (b) of the applicants in (a), how many single individuals reported income over the adjusted net income in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted net income in the 2019 tax year; (c) of the applicants in (a), how many single individuals reported adjusted net income over \$24,573 in the 2020 tax year compared to the higher adjusted net income in the 2019 tax year; (d) of the applicants in (a), how many families reported income over the adjusted family net income in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted family net income in the 2019 tax year; (e) of the applicants in (a), how many families reported income over the adjusted family net income of \$37,173 in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted family net income in the 2019 tax year; (f) of the applicants in (a), how many had their monthly CWB amount reduced in 2021 compared to 2020, broken down by (i) single individuals, (ii) families; (g) of the applicants in (f), what was the average monthly reduction in their CWB payment, broken down by each month in 2021; (h) of the applicants in (f), how many receive the disability supplement; (i) of the applicants in (g), how many single individuals reported income over the adjusted net income in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted net income in the 2019 tax year; (j) of the applicants in (g), how many single individuals reported adjusted

net income over \$30,511 in the 2020 tax year compared to the higher adjusted net income in the 2019 tax year; (k) of the applicants in (h), how many families reported income over the adjusted family net income in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted family net income in the 2019 tax year; (l) of the applicants in (h), how many families reported income over the adjusted family net income of \$43,118 in the 2020 tax year compared to the adjusted family net income in the 2019 tax year; (m) of the applicants in (h), how many had their monthly disability supplement payment reduced in 2021 compared to 2020, broken down by (i) single individuals, (ii) families; and (n) of the applications in (m), what was the average monthly reduction in their disability supplement payment, broken down by each month in 2021?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 188—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the Canada Workers Benefit (CWB), broken down by province: (a) how many recipients had their CWB reduced because they received income support from a COVID-19 financial assistance program, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit; and (b) of the applicants in (a), what was the average monthly reduction in their CWB payment, broken down by each month in 2021?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 189—Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:

With regard to government agreements related to the development or production of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada: (a) what companies or organizations currently have agreements with the government related to developing or producing made-in-Canada vaccines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and (b) what are the details of each agreement, including the (i) date of the agreement, (ii) name of the company or organization, (iii) location of the development or production, (iv) amount of government contribution, (v) type of the contribution, (grant, repayable loan, etc.), (vi) expected date of approval, (vii) date when production is expected to begin, (viii) amount of vaccine expected to be produced each month, (ix) timetables agreed to?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 190—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:

With regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the opioid crisis in Canada: (a) what are the government's estimates on the number of opioid related deaths in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021 to date; (b) for each estimate in (a), how many of those deaths were accidental; (c) what is the estimated number of total overdose deaths in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021 to date; (d) for each estimate in (c), what percentage of those deaths involved opioids; (e) what are the government's targets related to reducing the number of opioid related deaths in (i) 2022, (ii) 2023; and (f) what specific measures will the government implement in 2022 to reduce the number of opioid deaths and on what date will each measure be implemented?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 191—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to the sale of federal properties since January 1, 2020: what are the details of each federal property sold, including the (i) province or territory, (ii) city, (iii) street address, (iv) type of listing (residential, office, etc.), (v) asking price, (vi) sale price, if different than the asking price, (vii) buyer, (viii) future use of the property, if known?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 192—Mr. Richard Cannings:**

With regard to the \$50 million to support Indigenous tourism initiatives as part of the Tourism Relief Fund announced in Budget 2021: (a) what was the policy rationale for administering these funds through regional economic development agencies rather than through an Indigenous organization; (b) for each regional economic development agency, how many Indigenous tourism operators have applied and how many have received funding to this date; (c) what are the names, locations and amounts contributed to the recipients in (b); and (d) have there been any complaints regarding the application process?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 193—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:

With regard to the National Housing Strategy and the statement by the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion on December 7, 2021, that the government's National Housing Strategy has a rural lens to it: (a) what are the details of the rural lens applied to the National Housing Strategy; (b) when and how was the rural lens developed; (c) who was responsible for developing the rural lens; (d) what is definition of "rural community" when using a rural lens for the program; (e) what specific criteria is used for determining which communities are included as a rural community; (f) how did the government calculate that 38% of Rapid Housing Initiative projects are in rural and Indigenous communities; (g) what is the breakdown of (f) by type of community, including the amount of money that has been spent in communities that fit under the definition in (d); and (h) what are the government's targets for the number of houses built through the Rapid Housing Initiative, by type of community?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 195—Mr. Dan Muys:

With regard to dealings between the government and foreign law enforcement or security bodies: (a) what agreements are currently in place related to security and intelligence sharing with foreign states which have not ratified the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UN CAT); (b) does the government ever share the personal information of Canadian citizens with security or intelligence units of states that have not ratified the UN CAT, and, if so, under what circumstances; (c) what steps does the government take to ensure that security and intelligence information shared with other states does not lead to acts of torture abroad; (d) which members of the government, government caucus or public service have met with members or representatives of security or intelligence organs of a state that had not ratified the UN CAT, in the last 12 months; (e) what are the details of each of meeting referred to in (d), including the (i) date, (ii) attendees, (iii) purpose of meeting, (iv) meeting outcome, (v) agenda items; (f) is the government examining or considering any changes to existing security or intelligence sharing agreements with nations that have not ratified the UN CAT, and, if so, what changes are being examined or considered, and is the government contemplating the signing of new agreements in this area with such states; and (g) did the government raise issues respecting human rights in general or the treatment of detainees in particular during any meetings referred to in (d), and, if so, during which meetings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 196—Mr. Scott Reid:

With regard to the agreements entered into by the government signatories for procurement of COVID-19 vaccines, or vaccine candidates, that were provided to the Standing Committee on Health in June 2021: (a) did the government delay or defer its provision of the agreements to the committee for the purpose of providing a copy of each agreement to the committee simultaneously; (b) why were the provisions of the Access to Information Act used as the basis for determining which pieces of information to withhold from the committee; (c) which other standards were considered and rejected as the basis for determining which pieces of information to withhold from the committee; (d) did feedback from any of the counterparties influence which standards were used or rejected as the basis for determining which pieces of information to withhold from the committee, and, if so, which counterparties provided such feedback and what was the feedback in summary; (e) for each agreement, after the effective date, (i) how many, on what dates, and under what authorities has the government received requests or orders for disclosure of the agreement, in whole or in part, (ii) on what date did the government signatory first engage the counterparty relating to the disclosure of the agreement to the committee, (iii) on what date was the final agreement between the government signatory and the counterparty reached relating to the disclosure of the agreement to the committee, (iv) what were the actions taken by the government, pursuant to the agreement, in order to disclose the agreement to the committee, (v) which sections of the agreement were engaged for the purpose of disclosing the agreement to the commit-

tee; and (f) with regard to the sections of the agreements relating to confidentiality and disclosure, including but not limited to section 16 through 16B (Sanofi), section 22 through 22.4 (Medicago), section 16 through 16.8 (AstraZeneca), section 7 through 7.6 (Moderna), section 10 through 10.4 (Pfizer), section 13 through 13.6 (Novavax), and section 17 through 17.8 (Janssen), (i) is Parliament, including any of its powers or constituent or subsidiary parts, explicitly included, or should be reasonably understood to be included, in any exclusions to the sections and, if so, to what extent or, if not, why not, (ii) did the government signatory seek or receive legal advice on the applicability of the sections with respect to orders or powers of Parliament, including any of its constituent or subsidiary parts and, if so, what were the conclusions and recommendations of that advice in summary or, if not, why not, (iii) did the government signatory seek or receive legal advice with respect to a potential conflict between the rights and powers of Parliament, or its committees, and the requirements of the sections and, if so, what were the conclusions and recommendations of that advice in summary or, if not, why not, (iv) were the terms of the sections initially proposed by the government signatory and, if so, from what document, policy, or other source did the terms of the sections originate, (v) in the course of negotiating the contract or agreement, did the government signatory propose or seek agreement for less stringent terms in the sections and, if so, what was the response of the counterparty in summary, (vi) were the Governor in Council, the designated minister, or the head of the institution consulted on the terms of, or agreement to, the sections, (vii) was agreement to the sections approved by the Governor in Council, the designated minister, or the head of the institution, (viii) what are the reasons the government signatories agreed to the terms of the sections, (ix) was the government signatory aware, at or before the effective date, of the text or terms of analogous sections agreed to by foreign governments in analogous contracts or agreements and, if so, to what extent?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 198—Mr. Dane Lloyd:

With regard to the Chemical Management Regime as found under the Department of Health, the Department of the Environment and the Public Health Agency of Canada in the Supplementary Estimates (A) 2021-22: (a) what were the planned and actual expenditures of the Chemicals Management Plan from 2018-19 to 2020-21, broken down by fiscal year and by program activity; and (b) what are the transfer payments following the reclassification of the Chemical Management Plan to the Chemical Management Regime in 2021-22?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 199—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) recipients who have received payments from any support program related to COVID-19 and have experienced a reduction in GIS or become ineligible for GIS: (a) on what date did the government become aware of the risk of a GIS reduction or loss by recipients; (b) how many internal memos, presentations or other similar documents have been prepared by the government on the risk of GIS ineligibility; (c) of the documents in (b), what are their titles and dates; (d) how many meetings were held between ministerial offices and departments, including the (i) date, (ii) name and title of participants, (iii) format (in-person, Zoom, etc.); and (e) how much correspondence has been received by the government on the issue of recipients who experience a reduction or loss of their GIS?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 200—Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to renovations made by the government at the residences used by the Prime Minister, including Harrington Lake, Rideau Cottage, and 24 Sussex Drive: (a) what are the details of all renovations completed since July 1, 2020, including, for each project, the (i) name of the property, (ii) detailed description of renovations or work completed, (iii) items or features added to the property or renovated at the property, (iv) date of completion, (v) total cost of the project, (vi) itemized breakdown of costs; and (b) what are the details of all renovations which started after July 1, 2020, and are still ongoing, including, for each, the (i) name of the property, (ii) detailed description of renovations or work completed, (iii) items or features added to the property or renovated at the property, (iv) anticipated date of completion, (v) total cost of the project, (vi) itemized breakdown of costs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 201—Mr. John Brassard:

With regard to the Governor in Council appointments and the appointment of the Clerk of the House of Commons: (a) is the clerk, as a Governor in Council appointee, subject to the Privy Council Office's Ethical and Political Activity Guidelines for Public Office Holders, and, if so, (i) is the position considered, for the purposes of the guidelines, to be a quasi-judicial one which is subject to a much more stringent standard and should generally avoid all political activities, (ii) is the clerk subject to the general principle of refraining from participating in political activity, including expressing partisan views in a public setting where this may reasonably be seen to be incompatible with, or impair the ability to discharge, the office holder's public duties, (iii) are the guidelines considered to be a term and condition of appointment, (iv) did the current clerk certify that he will comply with the guidelines; (b) is the clerk, as a Governor in Council appointee, eligible for a Governor in Council appointee performance pay, and, if so, (i) what was the maximum performance pay he was eligible for, since 2017-18, broken down by fiscal year, (ii) what performance award was he provided (did not meet, succeeded, surpassed, etc.) each fiscal year since 2017-18, (iii) what performance pay was he provided each fiscal year since 2017-18, broken down by fiscal year, (iv) is the clerk required to deliver on the government's objectives and corporate commitments in order to receive a performance award, and, if so, what objectives and commitments, (A) was the clerk required to meet, (B) did the clerk meet, broken down by fiscal year since 2017-18, (v) who provided input or feedback, or was otherwise consulted, on the clerk's performance, broken down by fiscal year, since 2017-18, (vi) who approved the clerk's performance awards, broken down by fiscal year, since 2017-18?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 202—Mr. Ryan Williams:

With regard to federal funding for housing construction since January 1, 2016: (a) what is the total amount of funding for the construction of housing in Canada, broken down by (i) year, (ii) program; (b) what is the total amount of housing construction announced by the government using the funds identified in (a), broken down by (i) year, (ii) province, (iii) municipality, (iv) program, (v) type of residence; and (c) what is the total actual amount of housing actually built using the funds identified in (a), broken down by (i) year, (ii) province, (iii) municipality, (iv) program, (v) type of residence?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 203—Mr. Ryan Williams:

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), since June 22, 2017: (a) what is the total amount of federal funding given to the CIB, broken down by year; (b) what are the details of all infrastructure investments made by the bank, including, for each project, the (i) name, (ii) location, (iii) description, (iv) date the agreement was signed, (v) total agreed expenditure by the CIB, (vi) total expenditures to date by the CIB, (vii) agreed completion date, (viii) current expected completion date; and (c) what is the yearly amount spent by the CIB on (i) salaries, (ii) bonuses, (iii) consulting fees, (iv) rent or lease payments, (v) travel, (vi) hospitality, (vii) infrastructure programs, (viii) other expenses, broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 204—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the level of government investments in mental health since 2017 through the Shared Health Priorities and the bilateral agreements between the federal government and provinces and territories, since 2017: (a) what is the status of the Canadian Institute for Health Information's (CIHI) development and release of additional mental health and substance use health indicators to track system performance on an annual basis beyond 2022; (b) what is the status of CIHI developing a

comprehensive dataset capturing public and private mental health and substance use health spending, by province and territory and category of spending; and (c) what amount of funding have Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada invested directly in community mental health and addictions organizations, programs and services?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 205—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to government investments in Indigenous mental health, since 2015: (a) what steps has the federal government taken to (i) establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in mental health and addictions outcomes with Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, (ii) adopt common investment models and deepened integration among federal funding bodies and between federal, provincial and territorial funding bodies; and (b) what steps has the government taken to (i) reorient investments in support of Indigenous community wellness plans, (ii) increase the mental health and substance use workforce serving Indigenous communities?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 206—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to government action towards addressing the opioid epidemic: (a) what concrete steps has the government taken to (i) increase the number and accessibility of supervised consumption sites, (ii) decriminalize simple drug possession, (iii) increase access to diversion programs and alternative justice strategies for people accused and convicted of drug crimes, especially for First Nations, Métis and Inuit persons; and (b) since 2015, how much funding has the government disbursed to provinces, territories and community-based organizations for substance use treatments and supports?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 207—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regard to Canada Child Benefit (CCB) recipients who received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB), the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB) and Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB): (a) how many CCB recipients received (i) CERB, (ii) CRB, (iii) CRCB, (iv) CRSB; (b) how many reported income above the adjusted family net income in fiscal year 2020-21 compared to fiscal year 2019-20; (c) of the recipients in (a), how many experienced a reduction in their monthly CCB payment in 2021 compared to 2020; (d) of the recipients in (c), how many have a net family income of less than (i) \$40,000, (ii) \$30,000, (iii) \$20,000; (e) of the recipients in (c), what was the average monthly reduction in their CCB payment, broken down by month in 2021; and (f) of the recipients in (c), how many are receiving the (i) CCB young child supplement, (ii) child disability benefit?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 208—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regard to the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) recipients, broken down by province and territories: (a) how many recipients have experienced a decrease in their CCB since July 2021 because they received payments from a COVID-19 financial support program, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit; and (b) of those recipients in (a), what was the average monthly reduction in their CCB payment, broken down by each month in 2021?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 209—Mr. Frank Caputo:

With regard to the backlog of cases at Veterans Affairs Canada: (a) what is the number of backlog applications for disability benefits as of December 8, 2021; (b) what is the current backlog in terms of time between when an application for benefits is made and the veteran finally receives the benefits; (c) what specific steps have been taken to address the backlog, and when was each step implemented; and (d) what are the government's precise targets for the amount of the backlog that will be reduced by (i) April 1, 2022, (ii) July 1, 2022, (iii) October 1, 2022, (iv) January 1, 2023?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 211—Mr. Clifford Small:**

With regard to proposed Marine Refuge Areas and Marine Protected Areas, by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, such as the Eastern Canyons Marine Refuge: what are the details of each proposed refuge and area, including the (i) area description, size and location, (ii) scientific justification, (iii) list of species, ecosystems, or other organisms in need of protection, (iv) proposed level of control (i.e. up to no take *zones*), (v) current stage of proposal, (vi) stage of the consultation or development process, (vii) projected timeline for when a decision will be made on the proposed refuge?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 213—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:

With regard to the impact of COVID-19 measures on private companies and organizations that rent commercial space from the government in the National Capital Region (NCR): (a) what is the total amount of rent collected each month since January 1, 2020; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by type of company or organization (retail, non-profit, etc.); (c) what is the total number of clients that paid rent to the government each month since January 1, 2020; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by type of company or organization; (e) how many clients terminated their lease with the government since March 13, 2020, broken down by type of company or organization; (f) how many new clients have signed leases since March 13, 2020, broken down by type of company or organization; (g) how much commercial space owned by the government is currently vacant and available for lease, broken down by type of space; and (h) for each answer in (a) through (g), what is the breakdown on the (i) Ontario side, (ii) Quebec side of the NCR?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 215—Ms. Lianne Rood:

With regard to the claim that “[s]ince 2015, the Government of Canada has made available over \$7.2 billion to close this unacceptable gap in service” contained in the document entitled “Canada’s Rural Economic Development Strategy: Progress Report”, August 2021 related to connectivity for rural Canadians: (a) what is the breakdown of the \$7.2 billion by initiative or program; and (b) what are the details of all projects which received more than \$10,000 of the \$7.2 billion, including the (i) amount of federal contribution, (ii) start and end dates of the project, (iii) project description, (iv) project location, (v) funding recipient, (vi) company involved in the project, if different from the funding recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 216—Ms. Lianne Rood:

With regard to federal funding in the constituency of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, between January and November 2021: (a) what applications for funding have been received, including for each the (i) name of the applicant, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they applied for funding, (iv) date of the application, (v) amount applied for, (vi) whether the funding has been approved or not, (vii) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved, (viii) project description or purpose of funding; (b) what funds, grants, loans, and loan guarantees has the government issued through its various departments and agencies in the constituency of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex that did not require a direct application from the applicant, including for each the (i) name of the recipient, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they received funding, (iv) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved, (v) project description or purpose of funding; and (c) what projects have been funded in the constituency of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex by recipients tasked with subgranting government funds (e.g. Community Foundations of Canada), including for each the (i) name of the recipient, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they received funding, (iv) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved, (v) project description or purpose of funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 217—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to federal funding in the constituency of Timmins—James Bay, between December 2020 and December 2021: (a) what applications for funding have been received, including for each the (i) name of the organization, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they applied for funding, (iv) date of the application, (v) amount applied for, (vi) whether the funding has been approved or not, (vii) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved; (b) what funds, grants, loans, and loan guarantees has the government issued through its various departments and agencies in the constituency of Timmins—James Bay that did not require a direct application from the applicant, including for each the (i)

name of the organization, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they received funding, (iv) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved; and (c) what projects have been funded in the constituency of Timmins—James Bay by organizations tasked with subgranting government funds (e.g. Community Foundations of Canada), including for each the (i) name of the organization, (ii) department, (iii) program and sub-program under which they received funding, (iv) total amount of funding allocated, if the funding was approved?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 218—Ms. Raquel Dancho:

With regard to fully vaccinated travelers being forced to quarantine due to issues with the ArriveCAN application, including not pre-registering on app: (a) how many such individuals returning from the United States by land were required to quarantine between (i) November 22, 2021 and November 29, 2021, (ii) November 30, 2021, and December 7, 2021, (iii) since December 7, 2021; (b) were the travellers in (a)(ii), who were still under quarantine as of December 7, 2021, informed that their quarantine requirement had been removed following the minister’s additional guidance to CBSA regarding ArriveCAN usage by travellers, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) how they were told, (ii) on what date they were told; (c) what was the average amount of time impacted quarantined travellers were unnecessarily in quarantine between the time the guidance was issued and when they were informed they were no longer required to quarantine; and (d) have any such individuals returning from the United States by land been required to quarantine since December 7, 2021, despite the additional guidance from the minister, and, if so, how many?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 219—Mr. John Brassard:

With regard to the statement in the Chamber on December 9, 2021, by the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development, and Disability Inclusion that “my office and my department follow up on every allegation of fraud, and this would be no exception”: what specific actions did the (i) minister’s office, (ii) department take to follow up on the allegation made on a Calgary radio station about the member from Calgary Skyview, and when was each action taken?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 221—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the handling of cases and claims pursuant to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement by the department of Justice Canada, Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada: how much has been spent on settled cases, requests for direction, and other proceedings where Canada has been either the plaintiff or defendant before appellate courts (such as the Ontario Superior Court or the Supreme Court of British Columbia) related to survivors of St. Anne’s Residential School between 2013, and December 1, 2021, (i) in total, (ii) broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 222—Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:

With regard to new housing constructions in Canada under federal housing programs since 2015, broken down by year, province, stream, and units: (a) how much funding has been committed under pre-National Housing Strategy (NHS) programs (i) in total, (ii) to projects that have reached finalized agreements, (iii) to projects that have conditional commitments without a finalized agreement; (b) how much funding has been committed under the NHS (i) in total, (ii) to projects that have reached finalized agreements, (iii) to projects that have conditional commitments without a finalized agreement; and (c) how many units funded under pre-NHS and NHS programs have completed construction?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 223—Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:**

With regard to federal housing programs: (a) since 2015, broken down by year, province, program and units, how many social housing operating agreements receiving federal funding (i) were active on January 1st for each year, (ii) have ended, (iii) have been renewed; (b) since 2015, broken down by year, province, program and units, how much federal funding has been provided through social housing operating agreements; (c) broken down by province and program, how many units of social housing under the National Housing Strategy (i) are expected to be built, (ii) have finalized agreements and (iii) have conditional commitments; and (d) broken down by year and program, how many units of social housing have been built since 1946?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 224—Mr. Taylor Bachrach:

With regard to Canadian citizens and permanent residents returning from travel from countries subject to quarantine orders due to variant B.1.1.529, since November 2021: (a) how many travelers were not allowed to leave their quarantine facility upon receiving a negative test result; (b) of the travelers in (a), what was the average length of stay before being allowed to leave the quarantine facility; (c) for what reasons were travelers in (a) not permitted to leave their facility upon testing negative; (d) for travelers in (a), what measures of the Public Health Agency of Canada protocol were not followed; (e) for how many travelers were the Public Health Agency of Canada unable to verify compliance with quarantine orders, as a proportion of total arrivals; and (f) of the total number of tests conducted under these new quarantine orders, how many were missing or unable to be matched to a traveler?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 226—Mr. Brian Masse:

With regard to the Universal Broadband Fund and the government's commitment to provide high-speed Internet services to 98% of Canadians by 2026 and 100% by 2030, broken down by province and territory: (a) how many applications for funding were received; (b) of those applications in (a), how many were approved; (c) what is the total amount distributed by the fund since its official launch; (d) how many applications were classified as coming from a local government district; (e) what are the details of all funds awarded, including the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) location, (iv) project description or summary; (f) of the details in (e), how many jobs were created, broken down by (i) federal riding, (ii) municipality, (iii) census agglomeration, (iv) census metropolitan area, (v) economic region; (g) of the jobs in (f) how many are directly related to (i) the Universal Broadband Fund, (ii) provincial government initiatives, (iii) municipal initiatives; and (h) what is the percentage of Canadians with access to high speed internet service to date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 227—Mr. Don Davies:

With regard to the government's \$49 million investment in Mastercard's Intelligence and Cyber Centre in Vancouver made through the Strategic Innovation Fund, since January 23, 2020: (a) to date, what is the actual number of jobs (i) created directly by this investment, (ii) maintained directly by this investment; (b) for the jobs in (a), where are they located and how many are (i) full-time, (ii) part-time, (iii) permanent, (iv) temporary; (c) what method was used to estimate that 380 jobs would be maintained and created through this \$49 million investment; (d) how is the government ensuring that its \$49 million investment meets the objectives of its National Cyber Security Strategy; (e) to date, what are the objectives of its National Cyber Security Strategy that this investment has achieved; (f) what are the conditions attached to this investment; (g) which of the conditions in (f) have not been met; and (h) until what date must the conditions in (f) be respected?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 228—Mr. Don Davies:

With regard to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC): (a) since March 2020, including both the total number as well as change from the previous month or quarter, how many staff members has the PHAC employed in each month or quarter; and (b) in each month or quarter, how many of each of the following kinds of employee did PHAC employ, including both the total number as well as change from the previous month or quarter, (i) medical professionals and experts, (ii) communications personnel, (iii) administrative and operations personnel, (iv) policy personnel?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 229—Mr. Brian Masse:

With regard to the Fall 2020 Economic Statement which promised more urban parks to protect nature and designating or creating ecological corridors to provide connectivity across landscapes and investing in more natural infrastructure to protect against climate change and the management of Ojibway Shores in Windsor, Ontario: (a) what are the government's plans to transfer Ojibway Shores from (i) the Windsor Port Authority to Transport Canada, (ii) Transport Canada to Parks Canada, to begin the establishment of a new National Urban Park in Windsor; and (b) is the government planning to work with the Province of Ontario, Indigenous Peoples, local environmental groups and land trusts to connect the federal lands like Ojibway shores and Point Pelee with Rondeau and other protected areas and to ensure that they remain well managed for biodiversity, climate change and the benefit of Ontarians and all Canadians?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 230—Ms. Heather McPherson:

With regard to the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE): (a) how many complaints have been received; (b) how many complaints have been investigated, broken down by status or outcome (e.g. review is ongoing, referred to arbitration, allegation determined to have been unfounded); and (c) how many times has the CORE provided advice to the Minister on any matter relating to their mandate (i) in total, (ii) broken down by month?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 231—Ms. Heather McPherson:

With regard to Canada's vaccine procurement and international vaccine commitments: (a) how many COVID-19 vaccines has Canada accessed through COVAX, broken down by month; (b) how many COVID-19 vaccines does Canada currently have access to in general; (c) how many COVID-19 vaccines has the government committed to donating through COVAX or other initiatives; (d) how many COVID-19 vaccines has the government donated to date, broken down by country and initiative (e.g. COVAX); and (e) what timelines has the government committed to for fulfilling its COVAX commitments?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 233—Ms. Jenny Kwan:

With regard to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada: (a) broken down by country and year since 2015, how many Temporary Resident Visa applications have been (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) refused, (iv) refused under 179(b); (b) which immigration streams use the Chinook tool for assessing applications; (c) at which stages in the application step is the Chinook tool used; (d) what measures are in place to ensure that immigration officers are able to provide the same consideration with the Chinook tool on the circumstances of an application as they would without the tool; (e) broken down by year and stream, how many applications that have had the Chinook tool used in the assessment process since the tool has been put to use have been (i) accepted, (ii) refused; (f) for the streams and time period identified in (e), broken down by year and stream, how many applications that have not had the Chinook tool used in the assessment process have been (i) accepted, (ii) refused; and (g) broken down by year since 2015, what are the details of any briefing notes on the Chinook tool provided to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship since 2015, including the (i) title, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) internal tracking number?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 234—Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to Canadian humanitarian and development funding in Afghanistan: (a) what is the total amount of development funding Canada has committed to Afghanistan for 2021-2025; (b) how much of this funding in (a) is allocated through Canadian organizations, and what is the breakdown by (i) organization, (ii) date, (iii) project, (iv) status; (c) what is the total humanitarian funding Canada has allocated to Afghanistan for 2021 and 2022; (d) how much of this is allocated through Canadian organizations, and what is the breakdown by (i) organization, (ii) date, (iii) project, (iv) status; (e) how many current signed contracts does Canada have with Canadian organizations for humanitarian or development programming in Afghanistan; (f) what is the status of all contracts with Canadian organizations working in Afghanistan (i.e. operational, on hold, cancelled); and (g) what is the current guidance given by the government to Canadian organizations working in Afghanistan regarding risk and exposure to criminal liability?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 235—Mr. Randall Garrison:

With regard to the government's existing commitment to the eradication of HIV/AIDS: (a) what actions are being taken to accelerate the eradication of the virus; (b) how much federal funding has been allocated and spent so far, broken down by year and government department; (c) how many HIV self-test kits have been purchased by the government and how are they being distributed, broken down by province and territory; (d) what is the amount of federal funding being spent on funding anti-retroviral medications and delivery programs, broken down by province and territory; and (e) what specific programs are in place to ensure there is access to HIV testing and treatment for rural, remote, Indigenous, racialized, and marginalized Canadians?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 236—Mr. Taylor Bachrach:

With regard to tugboats under 15 gross tons registered with Transport Canada, since 2015 and broken down by year: (a) how many safety inspections undertaken by Transport Canada officials have occurred to ensure compliance with the Canada Shipping Act and related regulations; (b) for inspections undertaken in (a), how many registered vessels were found to not be in compliance, broken down by safety issue; and (c) how many such vessels have been involved in marine incidents reported to Transport Canada or the Transportation Safety Board, broken down by year and type of accident?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 237—Mr. Taylor Bachrach:

With regard to the end of the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB): (a) what are the details, including the conclusions, of any studies, analyses, estimates or projections of the impact of the decision to end the CRB; (b) of the documents mentioned in (a), what are their titles and dates; (c) has an impact study or studies been conducted to assess its effect on self-employed workers, including (i) independent contractors, (ii) workers on online platforms, (iii) workers on contracted businesses, (iv) on-call workers and temporary workers; (d) of the documents mentioned in (c), what are their titles and dates; (e) what are the findings of the studies referred to in (d); (f) what are the anticipated impacts on low-income workers; (g) what are the findings of the projections referred to in (f); (h) has a gender-based analysis been conducted as part of this decision and, if so, what are the findings; and (i) does the government have any figures or projections on the financial impact of the end of the CRB on low-income individuals and, if so, what are the findings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 238—Mr. Taylor Bachrach:

With regard to Canada Child Benefit (CCB) recipients who received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), the Canadian Economic Recovery Benefit (CRB), the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB), and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB), broken down by province and territory, since July 2021: (a) how many beneficiaries experienced a reduction in their monthly CCB payment compared to the monthly payments in the corresponding months of the benefit years (i) 2019-20, (ii) 2020-21; (b) of the beneficiaries in (a), how many have (i) income below the official Canadian Poverty Line, (ii) income below 50% of the median income, (iii) spend 20% more than the average family on food, shelter and clothing; and (c) of the recipients in (a), how many have a total annual income of (i) between \$30,000 and \$60,000, (ii) between \$60,000 and \$80,000, (iii) between \$80,000 and \$100,000?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 241—Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:

With regard to marine protected areas, broken down by year since 2015: (a) how much funding has been directed towards the identifications and protection of marine protected areas; (b) broken down by province and territory, how many full-time permanent jobs have been created; (c) how much funding has been provided to Indigenous Guardian programs; and (d) through consultation with Indigenous peoples, what species have been identified as priority species at imminent risk of disappearing?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 242—Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:

With regard to government funding for fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21 allocated within the constituency of Nanaimo—Ladysmith: what is the total funding amount, broken down by (i) fiscal year, (ii) department or agency, (iii) initiative, (iv) amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 243—Mr. Brad Vis:

With regard to Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan): (a) how many projects have received funding through PacifiCan since the announced creation of the agency in August 2021; (b) what are the details of each project in (a), including the (i) date of the announcement, (ii) project description, (iii) project location, (iv) funding recipient, (v) projected total project cost, (vi) amount of federal contribution towards the total project cost, (vii) expected completion date of the project; (c) what are the addresses of the service locations in (i) Victoria, (ii) Campbell River, (iii) Prince Rupert, (iv) Fort St. John, (v) Prince George, (vi) Kelowna (vii) Cranbrook; (d) for each location in (c), is the location currently in operation, and, if not, when will the location be in operation; (e) for each location in (c), what is the (i) 2021-22, (ii) 2022-23, operating budget; (f) how many full-time equivalents (FTEs) have been assigned to work at each location in (c); (g) what is the address of the headquarters in Surrey; (h) how many FTEs have been assigned to work at the (i) Surrey, (ii) Vancouver locations; (i) what is the operating budget for (i) 2021-22, (ii) 2022-23 for the Vancouver PacifiCan office; (j) what is the operating budget for (i) 2021-22, (ii) 2022-23 for the Surrey PacifiCan office; (k) how many FTEs are being or have been transferred from the previous Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED) office in Vancouver to the new PacifiCan offices; and (l) how many former WED employees have been transferred to each location?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 244—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to the caretaker convention: (a) is the government, as of the date of the notice of this question, observing the caretaker convention; (b) if the answer to (a) is negative (i) when did the government cease observing the caretaker convention, (ii) what prompted this change, (iii) was that consistent with section 1 of the Privy Council Office's "Guidelines on the conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, exempt staff and public servants during an election" publication which provides that the caretaker period "ends when a new government is sworn-in, or when an election result returning an incumbent government is clear"; (c) what is the government's definition of "when an election result returning an incumbent government is clear" in cases where the government party represents fewer than a majority of seats in the House of Commons; (d) did the government consider the November 25, 2021, House of Commons vote on Government Motion No. 1 (business of the House and its committees) to be a confidence vote; and (e) if the answer to (d) is negative, were Governor in Council appointments (i) P.C. 2021-0969 through P.C. 2021-0985 (November 29, 2021), (ii) P.C. 2021-0988 through P.C. 2021-0991 (December 1, 2021), each consistent with the caretaker convention and, if so, why?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 245—Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to the impact of the government's cap on emissions produced by Canada's oil and gas sector: (a) how much foreign oil is projected to be imported into Canada broken down by year for each of the next 20 years, and how much of that amount is to make up for the anticipated shortfall due to the cap; (b) has the government done any analysis on the impact of the cap on the Northern Alberta economy, and, if so, what were the findings; (c) what is the exact cap on oil and gas emissions broken down by year for each of the next 20 years; (d) what is the breakdown by country of where the foreign oil imported into Canada will come from, broken down by year for the next 20 years; (e) what is the government's policy regarding the importation of oil from countries with unacceptable human rights records; (g) what is the government's policy regarding the importation of oil from countries with lower environmental regulations than Canada's; and (h) what precise actions, if any, is the government planning to take to ensure that Canadian oil producers are not put at a further competitive disadvantage to that of their foreign competitors as a result of the cap, and when will each action be taken?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 246—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to each of the 42 long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on reserves which were still in place as of December 9, 2021: (a) which of the advisories will be lifted by the end of 2022; and (b) for each advisory which will not be lifted by the end of 2022 (i) what is the expected date when the advisory will be lifted, (ii) what is preventing the government from fixing the problem and lifting the advisory prior to the end of 2022?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 247—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to the June 23, 2021 contract awarded to Lifelabs for \$66,307,424.27 listed on proactive disclosure: (a) what are the Treasury Board guidelines related to contracts over a certain value requiring the approval of the Minister of Public Services and Procurement; (b) did the then Minister of Public Services and Procurement approve the contract to life labs; (c) if the answer to (b) is negative, who at Public Services and Procurement Canada approved the contract; (d) on what date was the contract modified by \$37,501,883.50 from \$28,805,540.77 to \$66,307,424.27; (e) what was the reason for the modification in (d); (f) who approved the modified amount, and on what date did the Minister of Public Services and Procurement become aware of the modification to the contract; (g) what was the contract for; (h) how many companies bid on the contract; and (i) did the then Minister of Public Services and Procurement recuse herself from any dealings involving contracts bid on by Lifelabs, and, if so, when did the recusal take place?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 248—Mr. Dean Allison:

With regard to COVID-19 transmission within Canada: (a) how many Canadians are known to have contracted COVID-19 while on a domestic flight, (i) between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, (ii) between July 1, 2021, and October 29, 2021, (iii) between October 30, 2021, and November 29, 2021, (iv) since November 30, 2021; (b) how many Canadians are known to have contracted COVID-19 while in an airport (i) between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, (ii) between July 1, 2021, and October 29, 2021, (iii) between October 30, 2021, and November 29, 2021, (iv) since November 30, 2021; (c) how many Canadians are known to have contracted COVID-19 while on a VIA Rail train (i) between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, (ii) between July 1, 2021, and October 29, 2021, (iii) between October 30, 2021, and November 29, 2021, (iv) since November 30, 2021; and (d) how many Canadians are known to have contracted COVID-19 while in a VIA Rail train station (i) between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, (ii) between July 1, 2021, and October 29, 2021, (iii) between October 30, 2021, and November 29, 2021, (iv) since November 30, 2021?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 249—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Department of National Defence: of those placed on administrative leave for non-compliance with CDS Directive 002 released November 2021, how many were (i) in their 24th year of service, (ii) on medical leave, (iii) undergoing remedial measures?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 251—Ms. Laurel Collins:

With regard to Canadian Environmental Protection Act investigations and prosecutions during 2020-21, broken down by category of offence: (a) how many investigations were conducted; (b) how many investigations have resulted in prosecutions; (c) how many prosecutions have resulted in convictions; (d) what was the average length in days of an investigation that resulted in a conviction, from initiation to either laying of charges or discontinuation for (i) small and medium enterprises, (ii) large enterprises; (e) how much money was spent investigating violations by small and medium enterprises, broken down by industry; (f) how much money was spent on investigating violations by large businesses, broken down by industry; (g) how much money was spent prosecuting violations by small and medium enterprises, broken down by type of business; and (h) how much money was spent prosecuting violations by large enterprises, broken down by type of business?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 252—Mr. Randall Garrison:

With regard to the recommendation from the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights report entitled "The Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure in Canada", which calls on the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada to immediately establish a federal-provincial working group to develop a common prosecutorial directive for dealing with the criminalization of HIV: (a) has the Minister of Justice convened the working group; (b) if not, when will the Minister of Justice convene the working group and who will be invited to participate in the working group; and (c) will the mandate of such a working group include (i) a deadline for reporting back, (ii) clear instructions to consider the impacts of prosecutions for HIV non-disclosure on Indigenous, racialized, and marginalized Canadians?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 253—Ms. Lori Idlout:

With regard to the Canada School of Public Service, broken down by department: (a) how many government employees, by unit and percentage of total employees, have completed the Indigenous Learning Series, as of June 10, 2021; (b) is participation in the Indigenous Learning Series mandatory; (c) are new employees expected to complete any part of the Indigenous Learning Series as part of their training; (d) how many employees have access to the available learning products of the Indigenous Learning Series; (e) are employees, both new and experienced, given time to complete training through the Indigenous Learning Series during contracted working hours; and (f) what percentage of content available through the Canada School of Public Service is available in an Indigenous language?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 254—Ms. Lori Idlout:

With regard to government investments in long-term care and home care in Nunavut, broken down by year since 2015: (a) how much funding has been promised to Nunavut for the purpose of home and community care services; (b) of the funding in (a), how much of that funding has been delivered; (c) how much funding has been delivered towards the implementation of the international Resident Assessment Instrument; and (d) how much funding has been provided towards the transportation to long-term care facilities outside of Nunavut to (i) seniors and elders, (ii) family members?

(Return tabled)

*The Address***Question No. 256—Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB): (a) since 2017, broken down by year, province, and project sector, how much (i) federal funding, (ii) private funding, (iii) total funding, has been provided for Canadian infrastructure projects; (b) since 2017, broken down by year, province, and project sector, how many CIB projects have been (i) conceptualized, (ii) started, (iii) completed, (iv) cancelled; (c) since 2017, broken down by year, province, and project sector, what percentage of available funds have been spent when compared to budget targets established by CIB Leadership and the government; (d) since 2017, broken down by year, province, and project sector, how many projects were denied because programs were oversubscribed; and (e) since 2017, broken down by year, province, and project sector, what percentage of private funding has come from (i) Canadian investors, (ii) US investors, (iii) other international investors?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 257—Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:

With regard to accessible housing in Canada: (a) since 2010, broken down by year, province, and units, how many units of accessible housing existed in Canada in total; (b) since 2010, broken down by year, province, and units, how much federal funding has been provided to (i) build accessible housing units, (ii) convert housing to accessible units, (iii) maintain and improve accessible units; (c) how many accessible units funded under the National Housing Strategy and its previous programs have (i) completed construction, (ii) been lost or decommissioned?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 258—Mr. Blake Desjarlais:

With regard to the government's operation of call centres: (a) what are the details of each call centre operated by or on behalf of the government, including (i) the department or program, as applicable, for which it provides services, (ii) the purpose, (iii) the location, (iv) whether it operates wholly or in part with remote staff; (b) for each call centre in (a), is it wholly or in part the object of a tender or contract for third-party provision of services, and, if so, what are the details of the contracts, including the (i) name of the vendor, (ii) value of the contract, (iii) term of the contract; and (c) for each call centre in (b), was a business case for contracting out carried out, and, if so, what were the justifications for contracting out?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 259—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:

With regard to the government's \$49 million investment in Mastercard's Intelligence and Cyber Centre in Vancouver and made through the Strategic Innovation Fund, since January 23, 2020: (a) to date, what is the actual number of jobs (i) created directly by this investment, (ii) maintained directly by this investment; (b) for the jobs in (a), where are they located and how many are (i) full-time, (ii) part-time, (iii) permanent, (iv) temporary; (c) what method was used to estimate that 380 jobs will be maintained and created through this \$49 million investment; (d) how is the government ensuring that its \$49 million investment meets the objectives of its National Cyber Security Strategy; (e) to date, what are the objectives of its National Cyber Security Strategy that this investment has achieved; (f) what are the conditions attached to this investment; (g) which of the conditions in (f) have not been met; and (h) until what date must the conditions in (f) be respected?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 260—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:

With regard to the National Housing Strategy and the claim by the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion that the government has "supported the creation of about 100,000 units" since 2017, broken down by stream and year: (a) how many units of housing has the federal government supported the creation of; and (b) how many of the units (i) have received funding, excluding funding commitments that have not been finalized, (ii) are part of funding commitments that have not been finalized, (iii) have not yet received federal funding, (iv) have completed construction, (v) have not yet started construction?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 264—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:

With regard to the monitoring studies of recreational fishing areas in British Columbia: (a) what studies have been done concerning the mark selective fishing (MSF) program currently in place requiring wild unmarked fish to be released unharmed; (b) what are the results of the studies on MSF program; (c) how is the system being enforced; (d) what steps is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans undertaking to implement a comprehensive MSF program for Chinook salmon; (e)

what public consultations have been undertaken in this regard; and (f) what are the results of the public consultations?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand at this time.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[English]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I wish to inform the House that because of ministerial statements, Government Orders will be extended by 17 minutes.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me today to rise in response to the Speech from the Throne that was presented by the Governor General in the other House on November 23, 2021. In her opening comments, the Governor General made reference to the recent flooding in the Fraser Valley and in southern British Columbia. The memories were very fresh at that time and they are still very fresh today.

I want to start on a positive note. I agree with the statement made in the Governor General's opening remarks when she said, "But in a time of crisis, we know how Canadians respond. We step up and we are there for each other."

I agree with that. There are many examples of Canadians stepping up to help each other in this time of crisis. People were working day and night, sandbagging and trying to protect farms, buildings and equipment. There were farmers helping other farmers rescue their cattle and getting them onto higher ground.

There are many examples of churches and other charitable organizations stepping up and helping their neighbours, making very generous donations and financial contributions to emergency relief for those who needed it the most.

I am thinking also of the Sikh Guru Nanak's Free Kitchen, which is always there to help people in times of need and supply food. I am also thinking of pilots with private airplanes operating out of Langley Airport in my riding, flying rescue missions to Hope and to the interior of British Columbia, to rescue people and bring food and supplies. It is people like that who make us all proud to be Canadians.

I also want to highlight the work of an exemplary corporate citizen in my riding, the Mutual Fire Insurance Company of British Columbia. This is a company created by farmers for farmers. During its now more than 100-year history, that is exactly what it has been. This company is on the hook for millions of dollars, because it has insured so many farms in the Fraser Valley, but it is happy to step up to honour its commitments and to pay out on insurance premiums. That is what the company is: farmers helping farmers.

On top of that, this great corporation has also made a very generous donation of almost half a million dollars beyond its legal obligation to do so, to help those most in need and who are perhaps without insurance.

This is what Canadians do. Yes, we are all very proud of them.

The Speech from the Throne goes on to state what the government has been doing. It says, “The government will continue to be there for the people of British Columbia.” Sadly, the government was not there in response to the many studies done after the 1990 flooding. We were all very aware of the needs to preserve the diking, to enhance and seismically upgrade the dikes. There was report after report, and no action.

The most recent report is dated November 2020, commissioned by the City of Abbotsford, and it estimated the cost of repair and enhancing the diking system to be somewhere between \$339 million and \$580 million. That sounds like a lot of money but it is pocket change compared to the billions of dollars that the rehabilitation of the farmland in Sumas Prairie and throughout southern British Columbia is going to cost. The railroads, highways, private farms and homes, and road systems throughout are going to cost billions of dollars.

The government seems not to have learned a very basic lesson that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Just like the government fails time and time again to achieve its very ambitious and lofty Paris Agreement goals, so too it has been absent when the need for us to adapt to climate change reality is glaringly obvious.

I want to pivot to what the Speech from the Throne says about housing. The housing affordability crisis in metro Vancouver is ground zero of that crisis. The speech says, “Whether it is building more units per year, increasing affordable housing, or ending chronic homelessness, the government is committed to working with its partners to get real results.”

Let me tell members about real results that ordinary Canadians have been waiting for, and are running out of patience that they will ever arise.

• (1550)

I was speaking with Alison in my riding just the other day, and she and her partner have been doing everything right. They want to buy a townhouse in Langley. They have saved a lot of money for a down payment and earn pretty good money. They pre-qualified for a mortgage and they understand the housing market. They have been bidding, hoping to get a house, yet in one bid after another they have failed. They have bid on a property 10 times and 10 times they have failed. For the most recent bid, they decided to go way over asking price and they failed.

The Address

She is giving up hope. She is asking what she is doing wrong. I said she is not doing anything wrong; it is the government that does not understand the basic economic principles that are driving up housing costs. If the cost of something is too high, then supply is not keeping up with demand, so build more homes.

There is another thing that our federal government does not seem to get. The Liberals did not anticipate what pumping billions of dollars of liquidity into the marketplace in response to the pandemic was going to do to inflation. There is billions of dollars of cash out there, and that is partially what is driving up prices.

An idea the government could adopt from the Conservative Party's platform is to restrict the sale of homes to Canadians, rather than allow foreign investors to buy. I do not know how many of these 10 houses that Alison bid on went to a foreign investor, but it is a safe guess to say that foreign money has been driving up prices in Canada, making it nearly impossible for young families to buy a home.

That is an idea the government could adopt from the Conservative platform. There are two ideas, as a matter of fact. First, increase the supply and work with other levels of government to find a way to increase the supply so that it meets demand. Second, adopt our proposal for a two-year ban on foreign investment in new housing. These are two great ideas. Please adopt them.

I want to refer to what the Speech from the Throne says about truth and reconciliation. It says, “We know that reconciliation cannot come without truth. As the Government continues to respond to the Calls to Action, it will invest in that truth, including with the creation of a national monument to honour survivors”.

I have spoken with residential school survivors who live in my riding, Kwantlen First Nation people, right next door to beautiful and historic Fort Langley. For them the memories are fresh, the pain is real and the anger is just below the surface. I asked what the government could do to help and what I could do as their member of Parliament to help. I did not ask them what they thought about a monument. I had not read that, and maybe a monument is a good idea. I will ask them the next time I meet them. However, this is what they told me they need and what their children are telling me they need: They want local care for seniors designed by first nations for first nations at home on reserve, not in an institution. The survivors of residential schools do not trust government-sponsored institutions. They do not want institutional care. What they are looking for is long-term care on reserve.

Routine Proceedings

A study was brought to my attention, a report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, from the 42nd Parliament, dated December 2018. It is entitled “The Challenges of Delivering Continuing Care in First Nations Communities”, and I suspect it is just sitting on the shelf and being ignored. The people in my community are well aware of it and have found some very interesting things in it. As the member of Parliament for Langley—Aldergrove, I will be advocating for them and their community to get them what they need: real, true reconciliation and long-term care for seniors on reserve.

• (1555)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member talked about how Canadians step up when a crisis looms. He used the example of British Columbia, and it is an excellent example because Canadians from coast to coast to coast recognized the flooding and things that were taking place there. The contributions were quite immense, and they supported the people of B.C. in hard-hit areas.

It is the same idea with regard to the coronavirus. We have seen different levels of government, non-profit organizations and private companies coming together.

Could the member provide his thoughts on how we as a society benefit when we see that sort of cohesion in working and dealing with the things we need to overcome?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Madam Speaker, I agree completely that Canadians do step up and help fellow Canadians. There are so many great charitable organizations that are doing really good work. They should have the support of the government.

The government cannot solve every problem; the government is not the best at solving every problem. We need to allow free enterprise, people with charitable intent and the many well-run charitable organizations to step up and do their part. The government just needs to help them.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned, as did the previous questioner, the terrible floods we had in British Columbia last November. It was a terrible year in British Columbia, with the fires that destroyed Lytton and the fires through the southern interior, including in my riding. It is clear that we are being impacted by climate change right now.

We do have to commit to mitigating these issues. We have to stop putting carbon in the atmosphere so that this does not get any worse. It is clear that we are being impacted right now.

Does he think the federal government should be more ambitious in funding climate adaptation projects, things like FireSmarting communities and reinforcing infrastructure to help stop flooding? Should we not be upping the game in that department?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Madam Speaker, I know the member opposite's riding was also impacted by the recent flooding, so he would have first-hand experience with how significant that has been.

Yes, absolutely, the government has to step up with very serious dialogue about climate adaptation. It is glaringly obvious that it needs to be done. It should have been done 10 years ago. It should have been done 20 years ago. Now is the time to get it done.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, there is never a conversation with friends here in Ottawa or back home where the housing crisis does not come up. People are confused, concerned and not happy. Even if the value of their homes is increasing, they are not happy because they are scared. The first question they ask is what the government is doing about it.

To my hon. colleague, what is the government doing about the housing crisis?

• (1600)

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Madam Speaker, clearly the government is not doing enough. I just gave two suggestions that the government could do. It could increase the housing supply. I know there is lots of talk of that, but there is very little action. Alison is a perfect example: She is waiting for results that are just not happening. There should also be restrictions on foreign ownership. Those would be two really good things.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move that the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[English]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to be in the House of Commons representing the wonderful people of Calgary Midnapore. I want to recognize the fantastic speech given by my colleague, the member for Langley—Aldergrove. He always speaks with so much wisdom and local experience when he speaks to what he has seen in his community.

I was asked today to speak specifically about foreign affairs in response to the Speech from the Throne as a result of my time at Global Affairs Canada. Page 23 of the Speech from the Throne holds special importance regarding foreign affairs. The title of this section says, “This is the moment to fight for a secure, just, and equitable world.” This is the moment. Page 23 goes on to say, “In the face of rising authoritarianism and great power competition, Canada must reinforce international peace and security, the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights.” This is the moment.

Frankly, when I look at the last six years and the Liberal government's approach to foreign policy, I would not say this is the moment. I would ask, when is the moment?

I think it is impossible to be here in the House today and not mention what is going on in the capital. We should ask ourselves what brought these individuals here. Was it indifference, being ignored, not being heard? Canadians are sick of the division. They are sick of being treated as less than. They are sick of being gaslighted, as we saw in the House earlier today. They are sick of being told that their feelings are not valid. The government brought this group to Parliament Hill today. When Canadians voted, there was a plurality of Conservative votes, frankly, so when the Prime Minister talks about an obstructionist agenda, it is actually him obstructing the plurality of Canadian votes.

I thought more about this. There is the same approach to foreign affairs as there is to everything the government does, and it is applied in all that it does: arrogance and indifference to the minority. It does not affect their electoral chances, so who cares? It is the same approach regarding foreign affairs. That is why there is no consistent foreign policy from the government. I will remind the government that we cannot conduct foreign affairs through social media, selfies and tweets. I ask again: When is the moment?

If I look back on the actions of the government toward the major foreign affairs activities that have taken place in our world since the Liberals have been in office, I have the same question: When is the moment?

We can look at Venezuela, for example, where there was no clear offer from the government to mediate the conflict. The government ignored the roles of Russia and China in aggravating the conflict in this country. Any assistance that came was always too little, too late. In fact, in *Digest Venezuela* today, it was reported that 96% of

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Venezuelans are living in poverty. This is even before we start to consider regional influences and the lack of help Venezuela has had within the region regarding migrants going to other places and those sorts of tolls. I ask again: When is the moment?

• (1605)

When we think about Saudi Arabia, the Deputy Prime Minister used Twitter, of all facilities and methods, to speak out against the kingdom following the imprisonment of civil society activists on women's rights. She used Twitter, social media, when diplomacy should have been used, which is again a fault of the current government.

What the government was able to do was expedite an export permit for \$1.5 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia. That is pretty interesting when we consider what is going on in Ukraine today. The government did not speak up in December of 2018 when we saw the murder of journalist Khashoggi. I ask again: When is the moment with the current government?

Regarding Hungary, since Orbán came into power we have seen him centralize that power. He has weakened the rule of law. He has taken away academic freedom and freedom of the press. Again, the current government has not taken a strong position against this leader who continues to infringe upon democratic rights and rules. I ask again: When is the moment?

Then we have China. How can we forget China and the lack of action we have seen from the current government when China messes with our export market when it comes to soy and pork? The government did not stand up for us.

Who can forget the story of the two Michaels? My own colleagues from Global Affairs Canada actually reached out to me to say that I needed to speak up on this and that more had to be done to help these individuals. It was again the weakness of the government, with no clear values and using social media, that resulted in such a lack of action and poor stance.

Who can forget the plight of the Uighurs? We saw within the House a motion passed to support them, to stand up for their rights in China, yet the current government has done nothing since that time. I ask again: When is the moment?

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As the shadow minister for transport, I oversaw the heartbreaking study and injustice with respect to PS752. The current government did little more than a study, not to mention that the House passed a motion, once again, that we hoped would see the IRGC placed on the list of terrorists. The government does this all the time. It has a complete disregard for what the House decides to do. Whether it's with respect to the IRGC, the Uighurs or the documents regarding the lab in Winnipeg, the government has had a complete disregard for the House, never mind Canadians and the Canadians who are on Parliament Hill today. I ask again: When is the moment?

The U.S.A. was previously our best friend, our closest ally. Then Trump got in and the Liberals would compare the opposition to him. Then Biden comes along, and they find out that they are actually powerless. When they went to the three amigos summit, it was not the three amigos summit. It was more like Canada: the third wheel. We got no wins out of CUSMA whatsoever, so I ask again: When is the moment?

Finally, we come to Russia today, where we are seeing Ukraine, a close friend of Canada, not being given the help and support it deserves.

I will tell the House when the moment was. The Conservatives have always stood for the strong values of justice, democracy, prosperity and the rule of law. Every decision made in a Conservative government was one of clarity and transparency, in complete opposition to the actions and positions of the current government. There was no foreign policy based on social media and no reactive foreign policy. That was the moment. Today is not the moment.

Look outside. We must listen. We must understand. How we do something is how we do anything, at home or abroad. It is not "this is the moment". It is "when is the moment?"

• (1610)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, when I was on the defence committee a number of years ago, we had the opportunity to go to Ukraine, meet with government officials and talk about the efforts that Canada was making in Ukraine. We sat with the chair of their defence committee at one point. He looked at us and said that other countries wanted to be involved in Ukraine because Canada was there and because of Canada's leadership on this front.

It had nothing to do with the politicians. It had nothing to do with Liberals. It had nothing to do with Conservatives. What it had to do with was our men and women who were on the ground, the way that they engaged with Ukrainian people and the way that they engaged with other countries who were there as part of Operation Reassurance and Operation Unifier.

Does the member not see that there is tremendous benefit to Canada's contribution in Ukraine?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, the reality is that engagement in foreign affairs is at the lowest level it has been since 2015, both in developmental aid and election observations around the world, which have been completely pulled down by the current government. The member can certainly stand there and talk about

the good feelings and the example that he feels the men and women there have set. I wish he and his government and their leadership would do the same.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her speech. I would also like to thank my colleagues for their presence today and wish them a good session.

My colleague mentioned what is happening on Parliament Hill right now. It is troubling to see what is happening and to see people who are fed up with the situation. There is a sense of collective frustration, and we are all feeling it. Some demands are more legitimate than others: the right to protest, for example.

As I said earlier, this is an unusual situation, because there is no single leader representing everyone and issuing one specific demand. Rather, there are several. How do we negotiate and talk with them? What does my colleague think the government should do in this situation?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, I think that, even though there is not a single leader, the group is made up of a lot of people who represent different segments of the population across Canada.

The reason these people are here is because they have an opportunity to make themselves heard and tell us why they have problems and feel frustrated. I think that, as members from across the country, we have a responsibility to listen to them.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate that my colleague spent a lot of time during her speech talking about Canada's role in the world and how we should use our foreign affairs resources. Many countries in the world right now are dealing with the detrimental effects of climate change, and we know those effects are only going to get worse as the years go by.

I wonder if my colleague can inform the House of any practical things the Government of Canada could be doing vis-à-vis those countries, whether it is in direct aid or sending Canada's expertise and know-how to help those countries deal with the everlasting effects of climate change and how much worse it is making it for their home populations.

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• (1615)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, the reality is that when we promote democracy, justice, the rule of law and human rights, as Conservative governments have always done, we create opportunities to have better social environments, better living environments and better environmental environments. I think that we have the same objective, which is to have a better world, but I believe that we need democracy, rule of law, human rights and an effort to have these as the building blocks and the base for a better world for everything.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time this afternoon with the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler.

Happy new year to you, Madam Speaker, to my colleagues and indeed to all Canadians as we return to Parliament.

Normally, I debate and provide my remarks in the House quite off the cuff. However, today I have sought to choose my words very carefully, because the circumstances warrant that I do.

Today, we are debating the Speech from the Throne, the document that laid out the priorities of this government and was read by the Governor General before Christmas. The document is intentionally broad in its scope, outlining the issues of the day: climate change, reconciliation, economic recovery and, perhaps most important in the short term, getting us collectively through to the other side of this pandemic.

The government launched a series of measures: first and foremost, the procurement of vaccines for all Canadians and booster shots to combat the wave of the omicron variant; then vaccine mandates for professions under federal jurisdiction; continued purchasing of rapid tests for provinces; and income supports for individuals and businesses who have been impacted by health protocols, all to prevent our health care system from being overwhelmed.

Most Canadians have embraced vaccinations, with over 80% of our citizens vaccinated, one of the highest vaccination rates in the world. However, I would be remiss if I did not use this opportunity to provide my thoughts on those who have objected and who have chosen to protest at events like we have seen this weekend and which continue outside this chamber as we speak.

My father was a truck driver. His name was Gordon Douglas Blois. He left high school at a young age and worked hard to provide for our family. I am so proud to stand here today as a member of Parliament whose dad drove a truck. Let me go on record thanking the men and women who are truck drivers and other essential workers, who show up for work to make an honest living, contributing in an invaluable way to our society. If there has been perhaps one silver lining of this pandemic, it may be the greater emphasis and understanding of the importance of our sometimes unsung heroes.

What is my take on the so-called “Freedom Convoy” that has arrived in Ottawa? Let me first acknowledge that I am sympathetic to Canadians who are tired, frustrated and, frankly, want this pandemic to be over. I share that desire too and, frankly, I think we are all waiting to get to the new normal. I am also sympathetic to an individual who wants to protest and make their voice heard on govern-

ment policy and decision-making. We live in a democracy where freedom of assembly is a constitutionally protected right. However, what we saw this weekend was not simply truckers showing up for a protest. We saw swastikas and Confederate flags, both symbols of hate. We saw people harassing journalists, urinating on and disrespecting the National War Memorial, intimidating and stealing from a food bank, and desecrating a statue of our national hero, Terry Fox.

While there may be truckers as part of this crowd, they are certainly not sanctioned by the organization that speaks for truckers, and the prevailing voice of the past four days is one of a much more sinister crowd and outlook. The goal seems to be less about raising the issue of vaccine requirements at the border, and more about overthrowing government and eliminating any public health measure to protect against COVID-19.

While I have concerns as to why individuals do not want to follow public health advice and do not want to get vaccinated, we must balance individual freedoms with collective freedoms. Let me explain.

No one in Canada is being forced to take a vaccine. However, for those who choose not to vaccinate, there are consequences to those individual choices. Provincial and territorial governments along with the Government of Canada are imposing restrictions on those who have made an individual choice to not vaccinate in order to protect the collective well-being of those who have made their own individual choice to follow the recommendations of public health, to follow the science and to be vaccinated. The protesters outside have freedom. They just do not like the consequences of their choice.

Why is all of this being done? It is not a global ploy to control the masses. It is not governments installing microchips through the vaccine. It is because there is an overwhelming disparity among those who are unvaccinated in the number of ICU cases in the public health system across the country as a result of COVID-19.

• (1620)

In Nova Scotia, 44% of ICU cases are from a population representing just 9% of Nova Scotians: those who are unvaccinated. This brings us back to freedom. Where is the freedom for individuals whose life-saving surgeries have been delayed because hospital beds are being taken up by individuals who chose not to follow the recommendations from public health?

One of my constituents, Mark Clark, a dedicated community volunteer, requires open heart surgery, but he must wait because there is a lack of beds in Nova Scotia. Where is his freedom? Who is protecting his right to life, liberty and security? It is certainly not the individuals who are screaming of freedom outside.

The Address

It also bears repeating that the policy that was supposedly the impetus for this protest, the inability for unvaccinated truck drivers to travel across the border, is being imposed by the United States, not the Government of Canada. Yes, Canada is reciprocating for American truck drivers; however, these decisions are driven to protect our collective well-being.

The world will not fall apart. Our supply chain will continue to be strained, as is the case around the world, but we will not go hungry in this country for the decision of the 10% of individuals who are exercising their choice to not get vaccinated.

Perhaps what is most concerning is how certain members of this House have sought to give credibility to what we have seen this weekend, in particular the member for Carleton. Not only has he not condemned the blatant disrespect of a national war memorial and our national hero Terry Fox, but he has also not made clear whether or not he supports eliminating all health-related protocols to the pandemic, as this group of protesters is calling for. In fact, it raises the question of where the Conservative Party of Canada stands on this issue. Does it support the idea of eliminating all health-related protocols immediately?

How long will these individuals stay in Ottawa? We heard from the government House leader earlier today the call for these protesters to go home. The mayor of Ottawa has certainly called for the same thing, as have local residents.

Members will recall in early 2020 there were protests across the country following a dispute on Wet'suwet'en territory that led to a blocking of highways, bridges and railroads. Many Conservative members of this House were quick to call for the police to intervene. I agree with that proposition, that protesters, regardless of their issue, should not be allowed to shut down public infrastructure.

What hypocrisy it would be if Conservative members in the House were to stay silent and not call for these protesters to remove their vehicles from the downtown. Sure, if these individuals want to continue to demonstrate and picket on Parliament Hill, they can fill their boots, but shutting down the corridor of our capital city cannot continue.

I believe it is incumbent on all governments of all levels and all political stripes to be mindful of the importance of demonstrating and explaining in detail to Canadians how health-related protocols will help get us to the other side of the pandemic. This ties back, of course, to what I said, which is that there is a growing frustration and fatigue. As fatigue sets in, it will be important for Canadians who understand the importance of collective sacrifice to see the path beyond COVID-19.

We colleagues, as parliamentarians, and indeed all elected officials, need to be mindful that our actions and our words have consequences. Of course, we must stick to our principles and beliefs, but we must not drive rhetoric or half-truths simply for partisan gain. It undermines our collective ability to come together, and it further fragments society and the communities and constituencies we represent.

Finally, Canadians are closing in on the two-year anniversary of COVID-19 going from a far-flung concern in Asia to impacting our

lives directly. Governments have worked to protect our collective well-being by implementing a series of measures to reduce the spread of a novel virus. Has the government done this perfectly? It has absolutely not. Have there been impacts and sacrifices? There undoubtedly have been.

However, in a short period we have developed vaccines that give us greater protection. We have avoided a complete collapse of our health care system and saved thousands of lives in the process. While our sacrifice is different, there are parallels to the collective effort of the nation during the world wars. Generations before us have met their own generational challenge, and we too must continue to rise to meet our challenge of today.

Together, we will get to the other side and, collectively, we will all be better off as a result.

• (1625)

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, earlier today, on my way to the agriculture committee with the hon. member, I spoke to some police officers from the Ottawa police force and the Toronto police force in town. I asked them how the weekend went and how things were going today, and they said that there were definitely some bad apples. As the grandson of grandparents from the Netherlands who suffered under Nazi occupation, I was brought to tears by the hate that I saw this weekend. Even seeing that flag in the nation's capital brought distress because it has impacted my family directly.

The member talked about hospital capacity. Is it not wrong that we have spent so much money in the last two years, and I cannot point to a single new hospital in this country?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for calling out the hate symbols that we saw this weekend. Again I would articulate that there are some well-intended people who are part of that crowd. The problem is the rhetoric and the noise coming from the group, by and large, has a much more sinister view.

The member mentioned hospitals. I appreciate the question. This government, over the past two years, has poured billions of dollars into supporting the provinces with COVID funds. We do not build hospitals. We provide that money to the provinces to roll out.

Any suggestion that all of a sudden we can fix the health care system overnight at a time that we are dealing with the pandemic is a bit foolhardy, but we have been there. We have provided billions of dollars to help support and strengthen the health care system through this time.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, my father is also a truck driver, and I am extremely proud of him and what he does. I did not know that I had this in common with my colleague.

The Address

Like 90% of truckers and other Canadians, my father has had his three doses of the vaccine. Most of them have received two doses and will soon be getting their third. I think that the protest outside right now has swelled far beyond the scope of the truckers' initial demands.

I agree with my colleague that we need to set an example as members of Parliament. We need to show unity. When I see all these social divisions, I am deeply troubled. I think that this is our responsibility. However, it gave me pause to hear the Prime Minister say that the protesters were whining. I do not think that that is going to defuse the situation.

How does the hon. member suggest that we end this crisis?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, my French is so-so, but I will try to reply in French.

First, I am happy to hear that my colleague's father is also a truck driver. It is a noble profession, and that is great.

Let me just say that all federal parliamentarians, including the Prime Minister, as well as all our provincial colleagues, should try very hard to keep their arguments reasonable. In the days to come, that will enable us to figure out how to end the pandemic through necessary measures that protect our colleagues, friends and neighbours from COVID-19. The vaccine is absolutely necessary to finding a way out in the days to come.

I think it is incumbent upon all members to understand people's frustrations and concerns with respect to provincial policies, as well as—

• (1630)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith for a quick question.

[*English*]

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, one thing I did not hear about in the member's speech was seniors. Specifically in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, seniors are losing their homes because of clawbacks to their GIS supplements. Canada's most cash-strapped seniors are being punished for receiving much-needed emergency pandemic benefits while companies rake in profits and sit on public funds off the backs of everyday Canadians, including at-risk seniors.

Can the member share when the government will do what is right and stop punishing seniors by excluding emergency pandemic benefits from the calculation of GIS eligibility?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would like to remind members that, when I ask for a brief question, if they could pose a brief question, as there will only be 30 seconds left. That question took almost a minute.

The hon. member for Kings—Hants has time for a brief response.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I will try to respond very quickly. This government introduced important measures for guaranteed income supplements in the 42nd Parliament. We strengthened old age security. We have a platform commitment to increase GIS by \$500 per year.

We did announce as part of the economic update before Christmas that we would be addressing this issue. Our government will stay true to its word, and I appreciate the member raising it here today in the House.

Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am humbled and honoured to rise today for the first time in this special place as the member of Parliament for Kitchener South—Hespeler. I am grateful to the fine people of Kitchener South—Hespeler for placing their faith in me to represent them and to be their strong voice in Ottawa. I am also honoured to serve with fellow members from across Canada who have been chosen to represent the interests of their fellow Canadians.

Of course, nobody arrives at this place on their own, and I owe a debt of gratitude to my three children. Brad and Allison encouraged and supported me from the beginning and worked hard on my nomination and election campaigns, and Ian cheered me on from a distance in Houston. I am in fact what I refer to as a “late-onset politician”. I followed my son Brad, a Toronto councillor, into this line of work, and he was very instrumental in helping me to achieve this lifelong goal.

I would also like to thank my tireless team of volunteers, who stretched from Ottawa, Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo and all the way to Windsor. Many of them were with me right from the beginning when I first sought the nomination well over a year ago and stayed with me throughout the journey. I would not be standing here today without their dedication, enthusiasm, hard work and determination. Some of them have now transitioned into staff members in my constituency and Hill offices. They continue to serve the residents of Kitchener South—Hespeler.

My journey to this place has been a long and winding road. I grew up on a dairy farm near Dunnville, Ontario, where I learned the value of hard work and responsibility at an early age. For the past two decades, however, I have called the region of Waterloo home.

Over my working life, I have been able to experience working in a number of careers, both in the public and private sectors. These included the tourism industry, financial services, real estate, media and municipal government. Most recently, I spent the last 15 years working in the field of economic development for the great city of Kitchener, focusing on business development in the manufacturing sector, which is still the largest sector of the local economy. Public service is my passion, and I am excited to have the opportunity to continue my commitment to public service in this new way.

The Address

Life, for me, has not always been easy. I suddenly found myself a single parent when my children were ages three, six and seven. It was a struggle raising three children on my own without a safety net, as I did not have family close by who could help out on a regular basis or on short notice. Failure was not an option. There was no plan B.

I know many Canadians are facing these challenges today. I have been there and I empathize with those struggling to balance family, finances and careers. These past two years have only made it harder.

This is why I am so passionate about our government's early learning and affordable child care plan, which will enable parents, primarily women, to participate fully in the economy, as they are able. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it makes sense from an economic standpoint. The best thing the government can do to get more women into the workforce, close the gender gap and build our economy is to provide more affordable child care. Canada is at its best when all individual Canadians are at their best and able to fully utilize their skills.

Our government is committed to delivering on this and has successfully completed agreements with all provinces and territories, save Ontario. It is a shame that Ontario families are the only ones left out at this point. Rest assured, our government will continue to pursue affordable child care for the children and families of Ontario so that no one is left behind.

Another area of focus for me is that of workforce development. I had the privilege of serving on the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin for eight years, including the past three years were as its chair. It is critical for the success of Canada and our economy that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and enjoy meaningful work that they are trained and equipped to succeed in.

This is a very achievable goal, but it will require the involvement and co-operation of all levels of government. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that this is indeed possible. We need to continue that level of collaboration and co-operation to help all Canadians succeed and prosper.

● (1635)

Canada is at its best when individual Canadians are at their best and are able to participate fully to their maximum potential. I believe the federal government can do great things when it listens to people, takes action and supports our most vulnerable. Let us build a future where everyone can succeed and let us build it together.

I am looking forward to working with members from all sides of the House to make this happen for Canadians. The recent unanimous passage of the bill banning conversion therapy demonstrates what can be accomplished when we set aside our differences, put the needs of Canadians first and work together for the benefit of all. Canadians expect and deserve no less.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler on her very first speech in the House of Commons.

One thing she said really stuck out to me, and that was that we need to work together in the House. Under the Liberal government, the cost of housing in her community in the fourth quarter of last year went up 36.2%.

Is the hon. member willing to work with the Conservatives to reverse some of the negative policies put forward by the government, and the inaction in not addressing the housing supply crisis that we find ourselves in, in Canada today? It is impacting those young mothers who want to go to work, but they do not have a safe place to raise their families anymore because it costs over a million bucks to get a home.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Madam Speaker, I share the hon. member's concern about housing affordability. Unfortunately, the rest of the world has discovered what a wonderful place the Waterloo region is to live. However, our government has done a number of things to address this.

In fact, it was our government that first announced the national housing strategy, a 10-year plan to invest over \$72 billion to give more Canadians a place to call home. Launched in 2017, it would create up to 160,000 new homes, meet the housing needs of 530,000 families, and repair and renew more than 300,000 units. We also have the rapid housing initiative. The first round exceeded its initial target of creating up to 3,000 new affordable units. It has actually resulted in the construction of more than 4,700 units across Canada since October 2020.

Expanding on this successful initiative, 10,000 new affordable housing units will be created across the country through the rapid housing initiative, exceeding the initial goal of 7,500 new units. Most of these housing units will be constructed within the next 12-18 months. We are also introducing a new rent-to-own program that will help people who cannot accumulate a down payment or meet the requirements for a mortgage to be able to buy their houses over time.

● (1640)

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the hon. member for her maiden speech in the House. We heard her speak at length about when Canada is at its best. We have watched a kind of disproportionate response: the coddling of white nationalists on the footsteps of Parliament juxtaposed with the kind of violence that has been unleashed against indigenous people across these lands fighting for their freedoms.

In these upcoming weeks and months, as we debate these critical issues in the House to ensure true reconciliation, and the reckoning of the thousands of bodies of children who have been recovered at residential schools and the ongoing police violence used against indigenous peoples of these lands, what will the hon. member be doing to move toward the place that she talks about when Canada is at its best?

The Address

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Madam Speaker, I share the hon. member's concern. The residential schools, which we should not refer to as schools because that is not what schools do, are a shame on all of us. I am honoured and privileged to have the Anishnabeg Outreach centre in my riding of Kitchener South—Hespeler. It has done a lot of work on reconciliation and outreach not only in the indigenous communities, but with all members of the community.

As Stephen Jackson likes to mention, in order to reconcile, we have to heal on both sides. We are hurting too, and we feel shame when we see what has happened. We are all united in making sure that it never happens again. This will not happen overnight. The problem was not created overnight. It will take a lot of work with all sides of the House working together through this painful journey and supporting our indigenous brothers and sisters as they come to terms with it.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, as this is the first time I am rising in the House since being elected, I want to thank the constituents of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa for once again placing their trust in me to be their voice in Parliament. I give special thanks to my campaign team for running a successful operation in a riding geographically larger than the entire province of Nova Scotia and with over 200 rural communities. I would also like to thank my family, and in particular my wife Leigh for her unwavering support.

I have been asked by many constituents what the purpose of a throne speech is. I tell them that the throne speech is supposed to be a guiding document that will pave the way for the priorities of the government in the upcoming parliamentary session. In other words, it is the plan. It is supposed to be a clear strategy of how the government will improve the lives of Canadians and will improve this nation.

Once Canadians understand what a throne speech is supposed to be, they may ask themselves: Does this plan help me? Does it empower me to make a living and provide for my children? They may ask themselves if the throne speech will enable their parents to live out their golden years as planned or if the plan will unite the country. However, if they had read this throne speech, they would be asking themselves where that plan was.

If the Prime Minister spoke to Canadians across the country today and asked whether life was getting better for them, he would hear the majority say that life was not getting easier. In a recent poll by Angus Reid, 57% of Canadians described feeding their family as “difficult”, and only 8% of Canadians expected to be better off financially at this time next year. It is clear that life is not getting easier under the Liberal government, and life is certainly not getting easier for rural Canadians.

Life may be getting easier for some. For example, life may be getting easier if one is a well-connected Liberal insider or a friend of the Prime Minister. Of course, with this pandemic, we have seen government kickbacks to insiders and billions of dollars more paid to consultants, but the people I represent are not these people. I represent hard-working, everyday Canadians who are slow to anger and do not ask for much. They are Canadians who believe in hard work, Canadians who want to give back to their community and support one another, and Canadians who believe in personal re-

sponsibility. I read the throne speech, and I did not see a plan for them.

What is the plan for seniors? Many of the people I represent are seniors. They have worked hard their entire lives to help build the country that we know today, but seniors in this country feel left behind, and I understand why. As a matter of fact, the word “seniors” was only mentioned once in the entire throne speech. Our aging population is only growing and many seniors depend on fixed incomes to get by, but when the costs of everyday essentials such as home heating, groceries and gas are rising at record rates, fixed incomes are stretched to their limits. A senior wrote to me the other day. He stated, “Food prices are out of my pay grade”. How can we as a country allow food to reach prices that are unaffordable? Who are we, as a nation, if we neglect the hard-working individuals who contributed so much to make the nation what it is today?

Despite promising not to, this Liberal government will make life even more unaffordable for our seniors by raising the carbon tax again. In a few months, the Liberals will increase the carbon tax for the third time during this pandemic. The prices of propane and natural gas will continue to rise and, as a result, energy poverty will continue to make heating one's home even more unaffordable. If the fixed incomes that our seniors depend on do not grow quickly enough to keep up with inflation, the value of their paycheques becomes worth less and less. It was just last year when our members of the House supported our seniors by voting to increase the old age security benefit. Guess what? The Liberals voted against it.

● (1645)

I ask the House what the government's plan is for our seniors, because I do not see one. The narrative given in the throne speech was far different from the reality of what is happening across the nation. We hear language from the government all the time, whether it is “sunny ways” or “we have your back”. However, rarely do we ever see those words turn into action. Words do not solve the problems of Canadians: action does.

I found it interesting that in the throne speech the following statement was made:

As we move forward on the economy of the future, no worker or region will be left behind.

That is right, that is laughable. I will read that statement again because many Canadians will find it very surprising: “no worker or region will be left behind.” I encourage the Prime Minister to ask western Canada if it has been left behind, and to ask the Prairies if they feel they were left behind. I would encourage him to ask all rural Canadians if they have been left behind. I can assure him that they do feel left behind, and they have felt this way for far too long.

The Address

How can the government say that no worker will be left behind when so many workers have felt neglected since the government took office? For the last six years, there has not been a plan for the Canadian energy worker, there has not been a plan for the Canadian farmer, there has not been a plan for the Canadian fisherman and there has not been a plan for the small business owner. If there has not been a plan for the last six years for the regions and workers who I believe are the engine of our country, why should they believe that a plan exists now?

Canadians were also looking for a plan to get our country back on track. They were looking for details on when life would return to normal. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister has normalized lockdowns as the solution to our problems. The Ottawa-knows-best approach can no longer be the path forward. We need to re-evaluate what is working and what is not.

Just last week, two of my constituents travelled to the U.S. They are both triple vaccinated and both received negative PCR tests before returning to Canada. However, they were still required to take an at-home test and mail it to the city to get another set of results. As many rural Canadians know, not all courier services operate in rural areas of this country, so as instructed the couple drove to the closest shipping location to their farm to send away their tests. Hours later, to their surprise, an individual from the testing company Ottawa is funding to administer the program showed up to pick up their tests. The designated driver drove over five hours from Winnipeg to pick up tests that were supposed to be sent by mail, and drove back another five hours without the tests. This couple is waiting longer than ever to confirm that they can go back to living their lives normally, despite following all the rules and instructions. Canadians are frustrated, and rightfully so.

In conclusion, I think it has become clear that there is no plan. This throne speech does not address the inflation that has fuelled the affordability crisis sweeping across our nation. It does not have a plan to support our seniors who are struggling to make a living on their fixed incomes. This throne speech also has no evidence that the government is going to take rural Canada seriously, and it certainly does not put forth any details of how it is going to make life better for everyday Canadians.

• (1650)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend from friendly Manitoba and I have a very common interest on the issue of water, which we talked about extensively on the plane last night. However, I want to challenge the member. He talks about his support for seniors and families, but what the hon. member said did not really square with reality. The member's party voted against reducing the age of eligibility for the CPP, it voted against the Canada child benefit, it voted against an increase for the guaranteed income supplement and also against a middle-class tax cut.

I am wondering this: How does the hon. member square the rhetoric that we have heard today with the actual record of the Conservative Party?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Madam Speaker, as far as squaring it off, I do not know how the government justifies charging a carbon tax to se-

niors on fixed incomes to heat their homes. How can it go up by 100%? The term “energy poverty” was used in the speech. I think he should take that pretty seriously, in my opinion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech.

I found several parts of his speech very interesting, particularly those relating to rural life, the cost of living and especially seniors.

I would like to know what he thinks we should do. He mentioned the carbon tax, but I do not think that is the way to go. Would it not be simpler to immediately increase old age pensions starting at the age of 65, without discriminating and without creating two classes of seniors?

We have been demanding this for months, but the government is not budging. I am reaching out to my Conservative friends so that we can lead the fight for this. Does my colleague agree?

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Mazier: Madam Speaker, affordability is what this all comes down to for anybody with a fixed income or a moderate income. As soon as inflation hits people who are trying to make ends meet, life becomes more unaffordable. That hurts everybody. People had plans, decades ago, about how they were going to make a living while they were seniors. It has all gone to shambles because of the Liberals' poor policies on addressing their needs.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am incredibly proud to be here representing the tremendous people of North Island—Powell River.

I am curious if the member could talk to the House about the fact that so many working seniors who lost their jobs because of the pandemic and applied for the only support that was available, just as every other working Canadian did, lost their guaranteed income supplement as a result. We have seniors who are losing their homes. We have seniors who cannot afford to pay for medication or food.

I wonder this: Will the member join my call to have this payment given to seniors across the country today?

• (1655)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Madam Speaker, I have also heard heart-wrenching stories of people having government payments removed. Actually, they are phoning them, saying they owe some money.

I look forward to working together with the member in having seniors and their needs addressed.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to stand in the House and to speak on behalf of the people of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan. I thank my wife Cassandra, our two beautiful daughters who are watching today, and my family for its love and support.

The Address

One person who was unable to see me elected was my grandmother. She was instrumental in inspiring me in not only my service as an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force, but also my service as a city councillor, as a mayor of the City of Moose Jaw and now as a member of Parliament.

I am the son of Scottish immigrants who came to Canada to make a better life for themselves and their family. My parents experienced challenges and turmoil with the loss of an infant. It affected their emotional and mental health. As a result, I grew up in a single-parent home where my mother struggled to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table, and suffered from bouts of depression.

Growing up below the poverty line for the greater part of my early childhood and early teenage years, I know what it is like to receive a handout. I know what it is like to see nothing under the Christmas tree. Despite what was or was not under the tree, I was always loved. I spoke of my grandmother helping to shape my future by telling me stories of the past. As a young child I would spend my Saturdays with her hearing about my Scottish heritage, my family overseas and the difficulties of enduring the Second World War. She was the greatest storyteller I have ever known. One story had a profound impact on me. It is a constant reminder to me to honour the past and of the responsibility we have to the next generation.

My grandmother had to evacuate from the city of Glasgow. She had all of her belongings in one suitcase and the most precious thing in her other hand: my mother. As she waded through the waves of airmen, seamen and soldiers in the train station in Glasgow, an Australian officer came along and escorted her onto the train. As he placed her on the train, he looked at two British soldiers and said to them that if the air raid siren went off, he wanted them to help this woman and her child to the air raid shelter. Not 30 seconds went by and that terrifying sound went off, and those two British soldiers bolted. As my grandmother struggled and my mother started crying, that Australian officer came back and escorted my grandmother to the air raid shelter. They waited out the bombing, and afterward the train was cancelled, so that Australian officer escorted my grandmother and my mother to my great-aunt and great-uncle's tiny flat in Glasgow. They invited him in for tea and shared rations. As he looked around at the size of that flat, he looked at my grandmother and asked if this was what her man was fighting for. I can tell members that it was not what my grandfather was fighting for, it was who and it was for a way of life.

This son of Scottish immigrants believes in a better future and opportunity for all Canadians. We are here today debating the throne speech. I want to focus on issues not included in the speech. They are issues important to my riding, such as energy, agriculture, infrastructure spending and honouring our elders.

Energy is an important industry in Saskatchewan and it is uniquely positioned to help Canadians recover from the pandemic, yet all the government can talk about is killing ethical energy produced in Canada along with the livelihoods of thousands of Canadians. Another livelihood under attack is agriculture. Agriculture is among the largest industries in Saskatchewan. In my riding it is the largest single employer. It is also a sector largely ignored by the Liberals and left out of the throne speech.

A study conducted by the University of Regina says Saskatchewan has experienced a history of drought, including the years 1910, 1914, 1917 to 1921, 1924, 1929, 1931 to 1939, 1958 to 1963, 1967 to 1969, 1974, 1977, 1979 to 1981, 1983 to 1986, 1988 to 1992, 2001 to 2003, 2009 and now 2021.

● (1700)

Policy should be there to help us, not punish us. A carbon tax has not solved, and will not solve, the problems farmers are facing today. The solution to their challenge is obvious to them, but not to the Liberal government: It is irrigation.

Completing the Lake Diefenbaker irrigation project would create jobs, save livelihoods and generate a financial return. There is a difference between investing in infrastructure projects important to communities that are part of our economic engine and wasting money on projects that are dictated by the Liberal government without consultation. After a year of drought and plummeting income, agriculture does not even warrant a mention from the Liberal government. No one should be surprised by this omission.

Let us take a moment to talk about useful and necessary infrastructure projects for local communities. As mayor, I witnessed firsthand how useless the federal government's infrastructure plans for communities have been. Moose Jaw is in the middle of a 20-year project to replace cast iron water mains, which will cost local taxpayers over \$120 million. Water is essential to the livelihood of a community. Instead of listening to what the city needed, the Liberals tried to give the city, with a population of 35,000, \$15 million for a green transit system. The transit system is already underused and does not meet the community's needs. Moose Jaw needed its 100-year-old cast iron water mains replaced. The current government forgets that water is essential, whether it is drinking water for cities or first nations or irrigation to combat droughts.

The international coalition to combat climate change is actually an international coalition for justifying inflation, creating global instability and not actually lowering emissions. The Liberal government is selling us out to other nations that do not have our best interests at heart. What is needed is alignment and collaboration with municipalities and provinces that know where their infrastructure dollars need to be spent. Local solutions are needed for local problems.

The Address

During my five-year tenure as mayor, we brought in over one billion dollars' worth of investment, creating jobs and prosperity for the community, and we tackled essential infrastructure. That is what is really needed.

The Liberal government has lost its way. It has stopped listening to the people who matter and started putting itself first. People feel it is giving up on the next generation, leaving it with more debt and more problems to solve.

My parents came here to make better lives for themselves and the next generation. However, seniors today are having that dream taken away from them. They are being asked to sacrifice more and leave less behind. Because of inflation, the equity people have built up in their homes or farms is under attack. Their legacy is being taken away from them.

Every generation must be responsible for the time it has been given. This generation is faced with making life better for the next generation. Voters have entrusted me with a gift. My commitment is that I will be an advocate for my constituents who are being left behind by the current government and this throne speech.

Ethical energy workers need to be rewarded for complying with surpassing new federal standards. Agriculture producers deserve recognition for what they contribute. Communities deserve a say in how infrastructure dollars are spent. Veterans and seniors deserve more. The stories of our past play an important role in shaping our future. We owe it to the generations that have gone before us to do better for the generations that follow us. We can do much better.

• (1705)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his remarks in the House today, certainly regarding his Scottish lineage and a lot of his family background.

He mentioned agriculture. As a member who sits on the agriculture committee, I want to inform him of some of the investments the government has made. Perhaps he can take those back to his constituents and provide a clearer picture of what the government has done.

With respect to business risk management, it was the Harper Conservatives who cut this program under the leadership of the then Minister of Agriculture. We have actually installed and increased those programs.

Let us talk about supports during the drought that happened in western Canada. We worked with prairie governments to establish programs to help support farmers across the prairie provinces. As it relates to irrigation, we have been there helping to support projects.

Although the member may not agree and concord with the government on every aspect, he needs to be fair and honest with his constituents that the government has been there to support projects not only in my area or my riding but indeed across the country, including in his home province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Madam Speaker, I would like to point out that I really do like the member's tie. It does sit well with the Scottish heritage that I have. I appreciate that.

The province of Saskatchewan relies on agriculture. It is our main source of income. We have felt left out and unheard when we have tried to speak with the government in power. If there is a bridge that could be built, then I look forward to doing that. My first and foremost job here is to advocate for the people who elected me.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his first speech in the House. I could go on about the Scottish heritage. I just hope the member likes my tie as well.

I come from a riding that depends on agriculture. I grew up on a small orchard in the South Okanagan Valley. It depends on irrigation above all, so I hear concerns about that. I hear his concerns about municipalities and the difficulty that Canadian municipalities have in funding some of these projects that are necessary.

While I would probably completely disagree with the member on the mitigation of climate change and how essential that work is, I would hope to find agreement with the funding of adaptation. Irrigation is probably an important part of that in our ridings. I have had some trouble getting irrigation money from the federal government.

I am wondering. Would the member support a new funding program, especially for climate-related disasters, that would let smaller communities off the hook when it comes to the 20% funding requirement for those projects?

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Madam Speaker, I will give the member third-best tie. I have to put myself in second.

It is very interesting. It is something I have been advocating for in my area. The city of Moose Jaw is 20 kilometres away from its water source. Farmers rely on water, obviously, for growing crops. This is a challenge in my region. I am not surprised that it would be a challenge in other regions across this country. I am open to suggestions and would be willing to have a conversation with the member later on, sharing the stories of how I have been advocating in our region for a water source within the community, not only for potable drinking water but also for agriculture.

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague, who talked about all the things on which the Speech from the Throne is silent. There are silences in several sections of the throne speech. There are some repetitions, but there are also silences. I am concerned about the latter, particularly as regards agriculture.

Speaking for my riding, I would say that the throne speech is silent on the French language. It talks about bilingualism, but it does not mention the French language. I suggest to my colleague that we combine our silences so that we can speak out more strongly in response to the throne speech.

The Address

• (1710)

[*English*]

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Madam Speaker, I spent a number of years in la belle province when I served in the military. Yes, there is a lot of silence. Our job is to speak up and address those silences that have come with the throne speech.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. The member opposite who was just providing remarks certainly talked about the importance of irrigation in agriculture. I have before me a Government of Canada document that relates to the investment of \$1.5 billion—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. That is a part of debate. If the member wants to move a motion, that would be different. I could maybe entertain that.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

It is a pleasure for me to address the House in relation to the throne speech. However, I will confess that it was not a pleasure to read it, because it contained almost nothing.

My introduction will be fairly brief because I have a lot to say. I have plenty of content, and the Bloc has plenty of proposals. The throne speech may be vague, rambling and meagre, despite the fact that it took over 60 days to write it, which really boggles the mind, but the Bloc Québécois has things to propose. We are humbly putting those proposals on the table.

The throne speech encroaches on many areas under Quebec and provincial jurisdiction, including housing. Some of the measures in the throne speech may be worthwhile, but the government needs to be careful when it comes to jurisdiction. It talks about fighting inflation and creating a child care program. I congratulate the government for transferring funds unconditionally to Quebec. That is commendable.

However, there is still work to be done elsewhere. If the government really wants to fight inflation to help those most in need and those bearing the brunt, I have one little word to say. I said it earlier when asking a question: “seniors”.

People over the age of 65 who no longer work, who are receiving old age security and the guaranteed income supplement, need a decent increase to their income, not an insult to their intelligence and integrity. If the government is going to give an increase of \$1.25 a month, it might as well not give one at all.

I am having a hard time with this. Other members spoke about this issue earlier and kept remarkably calm. I tip my hat to them, because the more time goes on, the more I struggle to keep calm when I am talking about seniors. This situation is revolting and needs to be fixed as soon as possible. The majority of members in the House would support this increase. I will therefore ask the government to make a formal commitment to this.

Other intrusions into areas of provincial jurisdiction include police reform, mental health, natural resource management, and the prevention of violence against women. We all agree on these general principles. I do not want anyone to think that we disagree with the actions. When it comes to Quebec's jurisdiction, however, the role of the federal government, which collects half the income tax but does not assume half the responsibilities, is to sign a cheque and send it to the person responsible for managing it. It is essential not to add any more layers. That is fundamental.

Rather than meddling in areas where it does not belong, I suggest that the federal government provide adequate transfer payments, in particular in health care. I will come back to that later. I also suggest that it look after its own affairs. I believe my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia will also talk about this.

With respect to gun control, for example, we are not just talking about domestic regulation, but about increasing and improving border controls. What is happening in our cities in Quebec is awful. It is a national emergency that must be addressed immediately. Managing international borders actually is the federal government's jurisdiction, so let us co-operate on this issue.

There are a lot of things missing from the throne speech. It is a vague document that does not say much. It says nothing about health transfers. I mentioned this earlier. All of the provinces and Quebec are unanimous. This is not a matter of separatists wanting to pick a fight. I do not want to hear anyone say that to me later. Please, let us elevate the debate. All of the provinces and Quebec are asking for an increase in health transfers and for the government to pay its fair share of the costs. Let it do this unconditionally, please.

We are talking about the energy transition and green financing. Let us take concrete action.

• (1715)

Let us also talk about the need for employment insurance reform, which was missing from the throne speech. Right now, there is someone who has to wait 12 weeks because a public official thinks that there may be fraud involved. The person waiting is a father or mother who is not getting any cheques, who cannot pay rent, who has trouble getting groceries and who has to wait 12 weeks because an official thinks that someone may have committed fraud.

We need to pay these people. It is okay if the investigation takes three years, public officials can eventually get the money back, but in the meantime people need support. Employment insurance is not something people should have to beg for; it is not a privilege, it is an insurance plan that workers contribute to.

I am getting angry because these are frustrating situations. I am thinking about people with a severe illness. It is terrible. Why not increase the period of benefits to 50 weeks?

I have already talked about seniors. Obviously, when I rise, my colleagues think that I am going to talk about agriculture and agri-food. What is there in the throne speech about that? Absolutely nothing. I would like my Liberal colleague to enlighten me about that, because I do not understand it. Is it because they do not have any ideas? Is it because they have no vision?

The Address

I certainly have a vision. I am not being pretentious, because my vision was developed through teamwork. It is not the vision of the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé, but rather the Bloc Québécois's policy: We have a vision of the future and concrete proposals to make.

What I would like to hear in a throne speech is the government's vision. After that, we could work with the Conservatives' and the NDP's visions for the future of farming, and we could sit down together, as we manage to do in the standing committee on agriculture and agri-food. We could work together to find something feasible. Instead, after a 60-day wait, we have been given a document with nothing in it. I tossed my paper but that is okay, because there was really nothing of substance written on it. That was my summary of the throne speech. It boggles the mind.

As usual, my time is swiftly running out. I will therefore address three topics. Food sovereignty is a priority. Everyone is talking about it, everyone is making speeches with tears in their eyes, and so on. However, we need to act; we need to promote buying local.

Earlier when I rose, I removed my mask, which was made by the Prémont company in Louiseville. It is a Humask brand mask, made locally in Quebec. Before the holidays, my party was forced to move a motion in the House calling for the masks that are provided at the door in Parliament not to be made in China. I will refrain from saying the word that springs to mind as I think back on that ludicrous episode.

Let us talk about food sovereignty. We have to protect our people and keep our promises. I talked about the empty throne speech, but fortunately, there were a few lines on this subject in the mandate letters of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. That reassures me, and we will work on that with my Liberal friends.

Our goal is to support people under supply management who were sacrificed in CUSMA and pay them the compensation they were promised. These people expect this to happen immediately. Supply management must not be compromised any further. We know the solution to this problem. We know what to do. We will reintroduce a bill on this and ask once again for the government's support, which I greatly appreciated in the last Parliament. These are things we can do.

The second point I want to make about agriculture and agri-food is the environmental partnership. A Conservative member brought up this topic earlier. We must support the people who work the land and who are actively working to protect the environment. We must provide financial support, for what it is worth, in the form of a sort of "agri-investment". We should give these people the money they need to invest in their own businesses.

The third point I want to make has to do with the reciprocity of standards. International trade is here to stay, but the government could show some basic respect to producers and subject imported goods to the same standards as goods produced here. The government will have to allocate resources at the border and conduct inspections. Let us respect Canadian producers and take real action. We are here and willing to work together. The door is wide open.

• (1720)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to address the issue in terms of both the environment and the masks.

When I think of the environment, whether it is our farmers or consumers, Canadians as a whole have an interest and want to do something, and all contribute in some way or another to a healthier environment. We need to do what we can to encourage that. Quite often, it is the other way around, where we are encouraged, all parliamentarians at different levels of government, to do more for the environment, so I applaud those Canadians for reaching out.

In regard to the masks, and this is what my question is based on, it is important to recognize that prepandemic, the number of masks that were being manufactured in Canada was negligible. Today, there is a healthy PPE industry that will survive, not only in the weeks ahead but in the months and years ahead, because of many initiatives that this government has brought forward. I wonder if the member can provide some comment on how important it is that we keep some of those industries.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, of course it is important to keep these industries. The fact that we were manufacturing fewer masks locally before the pandemic is one of the lessons to be learned.

That is why I am talking about food sovereignty. I am not talking about stopping international trade, but we must have a minimum of local production.

As for the masks that were handed out to us at the doors of Parliament at the start of the session last November and December, I am very sorry for my colleague, but there is no excuse for the fact that they were not locally made. I am still not over it. We had to get a motion passed about it.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé for the good questions he asked this morning about the crisis taking place in my riding, in British Columbia.

I agree with him today that there was not much in the throne speech about the housing crisis across Canada.

Can the hon. member give us some ideas for improving the situation of young Canadians with regard to the housing crisis?

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague. I am happy to hear that he appreciated my comments this morning. This shows that we can work constructively.

I commend him on his excellent French. He made a tremendous effort to ask his question in French.

The Address

From what I understand, my colleague wants us to talk about housing, which is, indeed, an important issue. I think that the idea of taxing foreigners has potential. However, as I mentioned earlier in my speech, the government needs to be careful with such taxes because there is a potential overlap with Quebec's and the provinces' jurisdictions. I am not saying that we should do nothing, but the government must work with the level of government responsible for the issue even if that means transferring the funds.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague and I sit as members of the agriculture committee, and I do very much enjoy working with him.

In the times we find ourselves in, many Canadians across the country are demanding bold action in so many areas, including in confronting our climate crisis, our housing crisis and the growing inequality we see. For so many of these areas, we see a government that is prepared to only advance half measures, and a lot of the anger and frustration that we see out there are symptomatic of that. People are not seeing our major concerns being addressed.

I know my colleague addressed some of this in his speech. I am just wondering if he can elaborate a bit further on how we find ourselves in a moment that does demand bold action and how that is what Canadians right across the country are expecting to see from their elected federal members of Parliament.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I also appreciate the work that he does.

He spoke about how people are fed up, which is only natural. Things are difficult for everyone, and these reactions are understandable.

My colleague asked me to talk about bold action, so I would like to talk about one of the key measures among those I spoke about earlier, which is support for environmental measures.

The government should not hold back from supporting farmers. Everyone in the House knows that farmers south of the border get twice as much funding, often through direct subsidies. The ratio is even bigger when we compare ourselves with Europe. People here work very hard and are subject to significant restrictions. They need our help.

The government should compensate them for taking tangible environmental actions, such as renovating a building or restoring riparian zones that are no longer being farmed. There needs to be some economic value, and it needs to be tangible to encourage people to keep taking action.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to wish you a happy new year. I believe this is the last day we are allowed to do that. I am really happy to be here and to get back to the work of Parliament. We have been looking forward to coming back, albeit under unusual circumstances, in a situation that we have not seen very often on Parliament Hill in recent years.

Let us get back to the throne speech, which I think is always a great opportunity for opposition members to see whether any priorities or proposals from opposition parties are included in the government's road map.

As I was driving to Ottawa, I listened to a podcast where the host talked about the meaning and importance of a throne speech. Strategists commented on their own experience. It seems to be a common and well-known practice to insert opposition party priorities here and there in a throne speech so that those parties will be consistent in their position, vote in favour of the throne speech and not bring down the government.

I was all set to “CTRL+F” the speech to see how many times the government talked about things like climate change, the environment, green finance, health, seniors, agriculture—which my colleague talked about—and employment insurance reform. I did not get a lot of hits. To be honest, I was very let down by how pointless the document in front of me was.

I think a throne speech should convey the government's overall plan for carrying out the mandate it was given in the election. This government was bound and determined to have an election despite the pandemic and the risk to people's health. The people voted for the status quo. They made their wishes clear. They gave the Liberal Party another minority government, so the government should obviously act accordingly and come up with a pretty substantial road map. There is a lot of work to do.

What we have here, though, is woefully short on substance, ideas and direction. It is a mere catalogue of general statements. This was why we had an election? This is what is supposed to get us through the next four years? Given the sparse priorities scattered throughout the speech, I have my doubts.

As I said, we are returning to the House under rather unusual circumstances, and I would be remiss if I did not address the subject. I understand that everyone is frustrated, for a variety of reasons, after nearly two years of this pandemic. We are all fed up, and honestly, no one more so than me.

However, seeing these divisions in society is deeply troubling to me. I do not always agree with what the government does, how it does it or the measures it chooses to bring in, but I believe that, as elected officials, it is our duty to some extent to show solidarity and call for unity when we see such divisions.

Health measures have been put in place for a reason, specifically to protect our health and to protect the most vulnerable and front-line workers. In my humble opinion, these measures are still necessary. If we want to defeat the virus, vaccination seems to be the best solution. Unfortunately, not everyone agrees.

The Address

I will give an example. Previously, when I addressed a somewhat delicate issue such as gun control on social media, I expected to receive my share of negative or more aggressive comments. Some issues are more divisive than others. However, now it is almost impossible to discuss anything without receiving a barrage of negative comments. I am not complaining, I am just saying that it is troubling to see such hostility, sadness and distress among the public, and not just on social media. We have seen it here in person on Parliament Hill over the past few days.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the many security officers who were on the Hill over the past few days to ensure everyone's safety. I have to thank them.

I believe that this call for unity and solidarity should be part of the government's plan. This also applies to my opposition colleagues. I truly believe that it is our role to inform the public as best we can, but above all to reassure the people we represent, to answer their questions, recognize their distress and provide the assistance they need.

Currently, throughout Canada and particularly in Quebec, there are people who would normally be receiving EI benefits. I appreciated my colleague's passion in pointing this out. For weeks, dozens of people have been calling my constituency office every day. I imagine my Quebec colleagues have experienced the same thing, because hundreds of people have had their cases frozen and are no longer receiving benefits. These people need help, as they no longer know who to turn to and are at the end of their rope.

• (1730)

These people called Service Canada many times and were told to call back later or apply for social assistance if they were not happy. People were told that they had to prove they were no longer able to pay their bills and they had applied to use a food bank, for example, for their file to be processed quickly.

Clearly, there is a lack of resources at Service Canada. These are honest workers, mostly seasonal workers in my riding who have worked all summer, who are entitled to receive these benefits and who count on receiving them. However, Service Canada is having a hard time processing all that. The government was able to put a system in place rather quickly to deliver the CERB to people who needed support. I find it hard to believe that they cannot bring in something similar or at least more resources.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I have lobbied the government and intervened in the media to change things and ensure that this problem is resolved right away. It makes no sense to leave people like that, without money for weeks on end. Processing delays are still too long, unfortunately, but I was pleased to read in the paper this morning that more resources will be assigned to Service Canada and that public officials may be able to make an extra effort to work with the MPs in every region of Quebec and resolve this issue quickly. I think people deserve to be treated with dignity.

I was also disappointed to see that the Speech from the Throne did not mention employment insurance in general or EI reform. The problem we are discussing right now is an ongoing problem and it needs to be resolved quickly. However, there are many other flaws in the EI program, including the spring gap problem, that the peo-

ple of eastern Quebec have been waiting to see resolved for a long time.

It is a little disappointing that the government is not making this a priority. When I looked, I did not see a lot of words indicating that the government was going to do this reform or even initiate it. The Bloc Québécois has to keep coming back and putting this back on the table, which is what my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville is doing on the parliamentary committee. We have no choice but to address it, because the problem has persisted for so long.

I know the pandemic makes it hard to govern normally and introduce major reforms or start big projects, but I would like to compare this situation with that of a politician I admire a lot. Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States, was elected during a serious economic crisis. That did not stop him from being a visionary and wanting to take on big projects and major reforms, which is what he did. If he did that, then I refuse to believe that members of the House of Commons cannot also start working on other problems that our constituents have been facing for so long.

There are so many more things I would have liked to talk about, but this is the biggest issue my constituents are dealing with right now. Earlier I mentioned the collective sense of frustration and the fact that people are fed up with the pandemic in general. I hear from so many people about employment insurance, people who are really on the brink. One mother contacted me about her son, who is contemplating suicide because he does not know what else to do. He has to move back in with his parents, he is not making any money, he does not have a job right now because he is a seasonal worker. He needs these benefits.

People are in distress, and this is the public sentiment we are seeing. I think it is our responsibility to give them solutions. We promised them this. We were elected to do this.

I will end by saying that this is not just about EI. We are fighting multiple battles. My colleague mentioned some of them, such as the rising cost of living, which is having a devastating effect on seniors, who are not seeing their benefits increase accordingly. I am also thinking of health care workers, who are holding the health care system together, at least in Quebec, and who could really use a financial helping hand. It should not be that hard to transfer the money that has been requested for so long by all the premiers of Quebec and the provinces.

These are the battles that we will continue to fight. I am reaching out to the government and the opposition parties and asking them to fight these battles alongside us for the people we represent. I am showing good faith, and I hope they will do the same.

The Address

• (1735)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): First of all, Madam Speaker, I want to tell my colleague not to worry. The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion is working actively on EI reform.

My colleague mentioned that she does not necessarily support the COVID-19 measures taken by the Government of Canada to protect public health. Can she specify which ones she does not support?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Perhaps my remarks were misunderstood. I may not agree with everything the government does in general, but at least we agree on one thing: The health measures in place right now are legitimate. I always say that as much as I can to anyone who will listen when I am interviewed on television.

Yes, everyone is fed up, but the measures are in place so that we can get through this pandemic together. We believe that vaccination is the best way to do that, so I encourage everyone to comply with the health measures.

I was speaking with my colleague earlier. My father is a truck driver and is one of the 90% of truck drivers who are vaccinated. He does not necessarily support the movement going on outside right now, but we in some way understand the collective frustration. I think these people have a right to be heard and to demonstrate, but it is important to remember that health measures are in place for a reason: to protect our health.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member made reference to the issue of unity and working together. I applaud the appeal of her messaging in trying to get members to work together.

If we take a look at the last couple of years, we will see that the Government of Canada has been working with provinces, municipalities, stakeholders, non-profit organizations, individuals and Canadians to try to minimize the negative impacts of the coronavirus. This is at the same time, as the member was saying, that we have been building on a vision for Canada with a national housing strategy, a child care program and public transit strategies.

Can the member provide her thoughts on a proactive government dealing with national strategies, such as the three examples I just gave?

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

I agree that we can walk and chew gum at the same time. I think the government has shown some goodwill in that regard. There are a number of major projects under way, but the housing crisis is a recurring issue in big cities.

I represent a very large rural riding where there is a housing crisis too. In both 2020 and 2021, the Gaspé and Lower St. Lawrence

regions saw positive net migration, which had not occurred for over 30 years. We are happy to welcome new people, but we have nowhere to house them. We do not have adequate services to offer them and our infrastructure is outdated.

I think the government has indeed been working hard, but more can be done, and we want to work with the government on that.

[English]

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's acknowledgement of the importance of specific issues in our ridings being in the throne speech so we can best begin dealing with them. Too many in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, for example, are struggling to get by. Over half of the lone-parent families here in my riding are living in poverty. We all know that Canadians deserve to live with dignity, security and human rights.

Does the member agree with the constituents of Nanaimo—Ladysmith who are asking the government to make the decision to end poverty, implement Bill C-223 and develop a framework for guaranteed livable, basic income?

• (1740)

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's very specific question. I would not want to speak about something I am not familiar with, as I have not read the bill she mentioned. However, I completely agree with her that we must address the issue of poverty.

I mentioned that the rising cost of living is having a devastating effect on so many people, especially the most vulnerable. I am thinking, for example, of seniors and middle-class families, who are dealing with the rising cost of living and inflation. We agree that we must do more for these people. Once I have read the bill my colleague mentioned, I will gladly discuss it with her.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

First, I want to say just how grateful I am to be here again in the House, in person, despite the protests being held in downtown Ottawa. I am especially grateful to the Parliamentary Protective Service and the Ottawa Police Service, who are working tirelessly to keep everyone safe, including protesters, MPs, Ottawans and House of Commons staff. They are there to protect us and to ensure that we can continue to do our job on behalf of Canadians.

The Address

I rise today to speak to the priorities that our government presented in the Speech from the Throne. I will concentrate on the key concerns of my constituents in Outremont, which includes the Côte-des-Neiges and Mile End neighbourhoods, and I am sure they are concerns shared by all Canadians: the economic recovery, the fight against climate change, the construction of affordable housing, and, of course, gun control.

[*English*]

First and foremost, we have put forward a plan to ensure a fair and just economic recovery. Across the country, the economy is recovering from the shock of the pandemic, even with the current challenges posed by this most recent Omicron wave. Make no mistake that the shock was, and has been, severe.

Let us take, for example, the unemployment rate. After reaching a 40-year low of 5.5% by the end of 2019, it shot up to an all-time high of 13.7%. In real terms that means that, in the space of only a very few months, three million Canadians lost their jobs. That is 15% of the entire labour force in this country lost their jobs. In the face of these unprecedented disruptions, our government moved quickly, introducing the CERB, the wage subsidy, the emergency business account and direct payments to low-income households and families. All of this was done in a matter of weeks.

In retrospect, the experts are very clear now that, without those quick and decisive measures taken by our federal government, the Canadian economy would have faced permanent scarring. Our poverty rate would have soared and countless more small businesses would have had to close their doors. Instead, we now have more businesses operating than in February 2020 and more workers employed here in Canada than in February 2020.

[*Translation*]

Canada's economic recovery is under way. Not only have we recovered all of the jobs lost during the pandemic, but we also had the highest level of third-quarter economic growth among G7 countries.

That said, we need to do more to combat the rising cost of living, and that is exactly what we are going to do. We will be there to support Canadians, through initiatives like the Canada-wide early learning and child care plan, an increase to the guaranteed income supplement for our seniors, and a new financial incentive for first-time homebuyers.

● (1745)

[*English*]

We all know, or at least we all should know, the economy cannot thrive unless we address the enormous challenge of climate change. My constituents understand the importance of fighting climate change. In fact, prior to the holidays a few weeks ago, I stood in this very chamber to present a petition on behalf of citizens in Outremont and Mile End. For Our Kids and The Council of Canadians are calling on our government to act swiftly to implement a just transition to reduce emissions and to create good, well-paying jobs. I bring their voice to this House.

There is no sugar-coating it, our planet is at the brink. There is more that our government needs to do, and will do, to combat the

climate crisis. We need to increase our world-leading price on pollution. We need to urgently phase out fossil fuel subsidies. We need to cap emissions from the oil and gas sector, ban exports of thermal coal, and protect our land and waters.

More than a year ago, the parents of young Adam, Oscar and Marion asked me to fight for a codification into law, a right protected by law to a healthy environment, and I am proud to stand in this House and confirm that we will do so.

I would like to turn now to affordable housing.

[*Translation*]

The rising cost of housing is a major concern across the country. The average cost of a house in Montreal went up by 23% last year. Rents in Côte-des-Neiges are skyrocketing as well. For many Canadians, paying rent is getting harder and harder, never mind buying a house.

I have witnessed first-hand the impact that our investments in housing have had on my own community. I am currently working on a wonderful pilot project led by Mission Old Brewery to turn a former hotel on Park Avenue into studios for the homeless.

I also recognize that there is still work to be done to address the housing crisis and homelessness.

That is why we plan to launch a new housing accelerator fund, through which we will invest \$4 billion to reduce red tape so that municipalities can build more housing units more quickly. This fund will have a target of building 100,000 new affordable homes by 2025.

We will also be reducing closing costs to help renters become property owners and will be instituting a tax on non-resident foreign buyers to curb speculation.

We will do everything we can to tackle this crisis head-on.

I will close by addressing another crisis that is hitting Montreal hard, namely, the staggering increase in shootings.

All told, there were 200 shootings in 2021 and more than a dozen homicides committed with firearms. That is unacceptable.

Those who know me know that gun control is an issue I have supported for many years with a great deal of humility and a sense of responsibility.

A few weeks ago, I attended the commemoration of the anniversary of the Polytechnique massacre on the Mount Royal lookout. Last Saturday, I travelled to Quebec City to mark the fifth anniversary of the tragic attack on its mosque. All the survivors say the same thing: We must redouble our efforts. We must fight harder against gun violence.

The Address

When I think of 15-year-old Meriem or 16-year-old Thomas, both killed in a shooting, I feel overcome with emotion. These two teenagers had their whole lives ahead of them, and they were gunned down with weapons that have no place whatsoever in our streets. We must make sure their memory strengthens our resolve to defeat this scourge.

I am so grateful to all those who continue to fight this battle. Activists like those at PolyRemembers do invaluable work to counter the gun lobby's lies. I also find it very encouraging to see groups of young people like Thomas's friends organizing to lobby politicians.

• (1750)

[*English*]

We have more work to do. We have already expanded background checks. We increased funding to fight gun smuggling. We banned 1,500 different models of assault-style weapons. We will implement a mandatory buyback program. We will increase penalties for smugglers. We will crack down on high-capacity magazines, and we are ready to do more. Families of the victims of gun violence deserve clear answers and real action. I will continue to be their voice, and members can rest assured I will continue to make the gun lobby very, very mad.

Whether it is on the economy, the environment, housing affordability or gun control, our government has a strong and ambitious agenda and a plan to move Canada forward.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, I got tweaked by the member's statement.

The question I would have for her is about her reference to subsidies for oil and gas. I will lead her in this direction, because I am looking all the time for subsidies for oil and gas.

As a matter of fact, I made a statement in the House today, if she was paying attention, about half a trillion dollars being supplied by the oil and gas industry to this country over the last 20 years. That is \$500 billion that will need to be replaced because the industry is not subsidized.

I was at the finance committee this morning, and I will tell the member that one of her friends, who is in an environmentally funded organization, presented before that committee. I asked her to please name for me one subsidy that the government has, and she mentioned the Canadian development expense. That was done away with six years ago.

Can the member name one subsidy she thinks exists for the most contributing sector in the Canadian economy?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, honestly, I know sometimes we like to speak in long parables in this House. I will answer very simply: exploration tax credits.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. She talked about gun control. I hear her talk about that topic often.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the vigil for the fifth anniversary of the Quebec City mosque shooting. Several events were

organized by the mosque, in collaboration with Polytechnique. I was able to attend the webinar they hosted. It was heartbreaking to hear the speeches by the people who were directly affected by the shooting, people who were at the mosque that evening or in a classroom at Polytechnique and who said that since the mosque shooting, almost nothing has been done, despite the Liberal government's promises.

A list of banned weapons was drawn up. However, some similar weapons are not on the list and are not banned. An amnesty period is drawing to a close, and it seems as though this file has been forgotten. It has been shelved. In the meantime, the scourge of gun violence continues to grow across the country.

I hear the government say that it will work on this. Unfortunately, for five years, almost nothing has been done. What will the government do, and when will it do it?

I hear the Minister of Public Safety, who has no—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, I know my colleague has done good work on the firearms file, but I disagree with her on this.

I personally attended a solemn ceremony in Quebec City commemorating the Quebeckers we lost five years ago.

With respect to our political battle over the firearms file, I would note that we have banned over 1,500 assault weapons. We have strengthened border security and added more resources to prevent firearms from crossing into Canada from the U.S. We will keep collaborating to get more done.

I would like to reach out to my colleague so we can work together and make progress on this file.

• (1755)

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, during the member's speech, I heard her speak a lot about housing and affordability. I want her to know that the housing costs of the people of North Island—Powell River have gone up in some communities by 65% to 70% in the last year. It is absolutely astonishing.

I want to let the member know that we have a lot of small rural and remote communities are desperately seeking housing for seniors because as they age, they are being forced out of their communities to much larger communities where they do not have the social infrastructure. I think of communities like Texada and Cortes Island. I think about Port Hardy, which has raised a significant amount of money, but because they cannot get the federal government to stand up and help out with any of these resources, they continue to have to send people they have known for 40 or 50 years away to larger communities.

The Address

I am wondering if the member will stand up to the government and say that it needs to see housing as a real priority, not just another talking point.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in my speech, I am working on the ground now to create affordable housing in my riding, as are 338 MPs in this room. It is through our efforts and funding from our government, as I mentioned, that we will build 100,000 new affordable housing units by 2025. That is a record number of units in a record amount of time.

I encourage the member to work with us in order to identify the particular locations in her community that need this urgent housing to be built, and we will get it done.

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a tremendous honour and privilege to be a voice for the residents and businesses of Mississauga East—Cooksville and to be able to speak in this 44th Parliament representing my great community.

My heartfelt thanks go to the constituents of Mississauga East—Cooksville for placing their trust in me from the year 2003, both in my provincial and federally elected roles. I am so thankful to my dedicated staff of Radhika Sriram, Natniel Solomon and Maheen Nazim, and to an amazing team of volunteers for their wonderful support throughout these years, and I send a big hug to my loving, lovely family of my wife Christina and my twin boys, Alexander and Sebastian. I thank them for their dedication, love and support, and, of course, for putting up with me. To my parents, who fled a fascist dictatorship in Portugal, as you would know, Madam Speaker, the country that you come from, and left there to make their life here in Canada, and who were received with open arms and so much opportunity for them to be able to build their lives, I thank Maria Fonseca and Joaquim Fonseca.

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the unceded territory of the Algonquin and Anishinabe in Ottawa and the Mississaugas of the New Credit in Mississauga. I did not get a chance last December to congratulate every member here, newly elected and re-elected, and you, Madam Speaker, on your re-election and role as Assistant Deputy Speaker. I have so much respect for all members and all those who work on our behalf. They are all truly amazing, talented, dedicated and passionate individuals who are all here to help make Canada an even better place than it is today.

As members of Parliament, we are all here for one reason: to represent our respective constituents and make our communities and country even better tomorrow than today, creating a healthier, stronger, more inclusive country that is a beacon for all. I know from the thousands of conversations that I have had with residents and businesses in my riding that there are top priorities that continue to be my North Star. They include protecting their health and providing for a better future for their families, including taking care of their aging parents and grandparents.

That is why we have taken bold action through the pandemic and since forming government in 2015. These bold actions include the Canada child benefit, increases to the GIS and OAS for seniors, investments in infrastructure and housing, and putting a price on pollution. These initiatives and so much more led to a stronger, re-

silient and resourceful Canada, a Canada that created well over a million jobs, a Canada that raised over a million people out of poverty, a Canada that showed it cared for everyone, including our indigenous people, ethnic groups, the LGBTQ2 community, seniors, families and small businesses. It is a Canada that does not and will not leave anyone behind.

In the last election, Canadians sent a clear message to parliamentarians. They want us to work together to put this pandemic behind us. They expect us to deliver results and solutions to the other challenges we face. Our government will continue to remain focused on moving Canada forward for everyone.

The Speech from the Throne comes nearly two years after the world was plunged into a once-in-a-century pandemic. Our plan will finish the fight against COVID-19, take strong climate action, make life more affordable, walk the shared path of reconciliation, put home ownership back in reach, create jobs and grow the middle class.

Our government completely understands that the rising cost of living is making it harder for Canadians to put food on the table and buy necessities. That is why we have a plan to make life more affordable for all Canadians. From \$10-a-day child care to supports for low-income seniors, our government will be there for as long as it takes to ensure that no Canadian gets left behind. Our government's top priority has been to have Canadians' backs, supporting Canadians in fighting COVID and addressing the hardships it has placed on Canadians' health and finances. Now, as we work together to finish this fight against COVID-19 and get the job done on vaccines, our government will continue to be there for Canadians.

Thanks to the hard work of Canadians, we reached our target of one million jobs and more, restoring employment back to pre-pandemic levels. Now it is time to go well beyond a million jobs. We will continue to focus on ensuring that Canadians have access to good jobs and that our economy continues to grow.

• (1800)

We will also tackle housing affordability and supply in Canada. All Canadians deserve an affordable and safe place to call home. We cannot leave young families and middle-class Canadians behind. Our government will continue our work to make life more affordable for all Canadians, including through \$10-a-day child care to help families access quality, accessible and affordable child care.

The Address

It saddens me that in Mississauga, Ontario, the province I am from, every day that the province delays signing up for this historic program, we are denying the right for those families to be provided with better access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care programs. Ontario is missing out on the community-based early learning and child care system that would make life more affordable for families, create new jobs, get parents and especially women back into the workforce, and grow the middle class, while giving every child a real and fair chance at success.

There are a few key takeaways from the Speech from the Throne. One of the top priorities for my constituents is to build a healthier today and tomorrow. When we started the year 2020, little did any of us think we would be facing COVID-19. Against this once-in-a-century pandemic, Canadians stepped up. We armed ourselves with our best weapon to defeat this invisible enemy: We went out and got vaccinated. I recall at the vaccination sites in my riding how proud people were to do their part to protect themselves, their family, our community, our country, and the world for that matter. There were tears of joy and national pride. How Canadians responded was no surprise. I want to give a big thanks to all of the residents of Mississauga East who got vaccinated, and to all our frontline workers, particularly those in health care, who provided the most selfless support to those who needed it the most.

Our government wasted no time in prioritizing the utmost important things our country needed, whether it was procuring the vaccines effectively or providing key benefits immediately to our residents who lost jobs because of the pandemic. The Conservatives questioned—

• (1805)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is the hon. member having issues with his Internet connection? The sound is not very good.

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, can you hear me now? Is it working?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): No. It is the sound in the chamber that we do not get.

With the indulgence of the chamber, I would ask to give the hon. member the two minutes left for his speech and time for questions at the end of all the speeches we still have.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would be happy to step in so we can move his questions to the end.

I am thrilled to rise today on behalf of my constituents and the opposition to talk about the Speech from the Throne. In reality, expectations were high for the Speech from the Throne. Canada and Alberta have struggled for almost two years under lockdowns, restrictions and confusion. Canadians were hoping for a path back to a more normal way of life. They wanted a plan for a recovery. In-

stead, there were platitudes and rhetoric, with no clear plan in the Speech from the Throne.

Canadians were right to expect more, since the Prime Minister triggered a \$600-million election that he claimed was to address the pandemic. However, the results were clear: Canadians, 67% of them, voted against giving the Prime Minister and the Liberals more power. They had seen what he did with a majority the first time and were not willing to trust him or give that to him again.

What have we seen since the election? The Prime Minister took a vacation during the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, he delayed the return of Parliament for 60 days as Canadians waited for Parliament and parliamentarians to get back to work, and, not surprisingly, he broke yet another promise to deliver action within the first 100 days.

Instead of rallying the country as good leaders do during a time of crisis and challenges, he hatefully called people he does not know, and does not care to understand, misogynists and extremists. That is what he called them. He clearly does not take the concerns of Canadians or the threat of hate groups seriously. He is actually promoting hatred to advance his own agenda, which is disappointing for the leader of a country.

In the lead-up to the speech, for Alberta and my riding there was a feeling of anger and a question of how much more we could lose. The government has shown that it is not a question of if it would level another attack at Alberta, but what would be attacked next.

At the recent climate change summit, the only announcement was to penalize one of Canada's main economic drivers, despite that the energy sector is one of the few with a public net-zero emissions plan, well ahead of the government's own deadlines. Alberta and Canada need a government that supports our low-carbon energy sector and its hundreds of thousands of workers, a government working for the return of the 134,000 jobs that were lost. These were blue-collar, high-paying energy jobs that the government killed with its antienergy policies.

Small businesses in the communities across my riding are looking for a plan to end the lockdowns and get people back to work, to get supply chains that are secure and reliable, to get new projects that need government support up and running. Families are looking for certainty to get back to normal, to end the fear and bring prices back under control.

Many Canadians have rejected the Speech from the Throne as having nothing for them. They are angry at the overreach designed to keep government empowered at Canadians' expense. As Thomas Jefferson said, "When government fears the people, there is liberty. When the people fear the government, there is tyranny." Sadly, the Liberals move closer to tyranny every day.

The Address

There was a surprise at how little detail there was in the throne speech after an election and two months to work on it. Inflation was mentioned, but only that it was not a real problem. Canadians deserve a plan to manage inflation driven by the government's decisions. They deserve a plan to get our economy back on track and to tackle the many other issues facing Canada and Canadians.

My riding has a large rural economy. There are many farmers and ranchers who endured yet another tough year trying to survive a very severe drought. Our agriculture sector is critical to our trade, our international relations, our domestic economy, our rural economy and our food supply. Why were farmers and rural Canada largely ignored in the Speech from the Throne? They deserve better as they face challenging times, carbon tax bills in the tens of thousands of dollars and shrinking access to global markets.

● (1810)

Dealing with today's challenges should be the priority of the government. The throne speech should have reset policy mistakes, acknowledged them and addressed them for the benefit of all Canadians. As National Bank Chief Economist Stéphane Marion noted, in the last five years, private sector investment in Canada shrank every year, even with a good economy. Liberal policies have driven out investments and weakened our economy. Everyone can see it, so why not acknowledge reality, take some advice and change course? Why not acknowledge the serious crime problem that continues to grow, with more shootings by criminal gangs with illegal, smuggled guns? The policies of the last six and a half years have not only failed to protect Canadians, but made things worse. Instead of addressing the problem, the Liberals are doubling down on policy failures in the hopes that press releases and media stories will bury the actual facts.

Why not acknowledge that our Canada is not prepared to address rising global tensions or cyber-threats? Russia is on the verge of invading the Ukraine. China continues its threats and intimidations of Canadians. The world is at its highest international tensions since the Cold War. A promise to stand strong against these aggressors rings hollow today as the Liberals are not sending the supports Ukraine needs. The most obvious policy, to ban Huawei, has remained in study for five years. What is also surprising is there is still no acknowledgement that the Liberals benefited in the last election from Communist China's misinformation campaign targeting Chinese Canadians.

Canada is standing more and more isolated from our allies, who no longer recognize us. We were left out of the Indo-Pacific security agreement. We have been excluded from the U.K.-U.S.-Australia security pact. We have been slow to denounce Chinese hacking, aggressions and attacks, and are often the last of our allies to make any decisions. Our allies, or perhaps, unfortunately, our former allies, have noticed. Our response to Russian aggressions seems to be only tweets. Take that Putin.

While our response weakens internationally, our democracy weakens here. Canada and our Parliament need to revitalize our democracy and shared values, ones that follow the letter and spirit of our laws. The government has run roughshod over our democracy, and its lack of respect for our laws is apparent. This has included suing Parliament, blocking information disclosures, proroguing

the House to block information on scandals and consistently breaking ethics laws, all while falsely decrying others as partisan. Should the entire House not decry a Prime Minister who breaks ethical laws multiple times, who tries to force changes to criminal court proceedings to support his donors and who appeases our fiercest enemies?

We need to return to transparency to be accountable to Canadians, who we are here to service. We need a commitment to support all provinces, now in particular when they are all seeking help with health care costs. We need a team Canada partnership, not the fight club that federal-provincial relations have become.

Better is possible. I would like the Prime Minister to show us better, not just promise it or tweet it. Do it. Show us cross-aisle cooperation. Show us support for Canada's and Alberta's energy workers. Show us a willingness to reverse mistakes and fix problems in housing, in jobs and in the inflation fight we are in.

The people of my riding and all Canadians deserve to be heard and respected by their government. They deserve a clear plan for their communities and their country. They deserve a plan to manage inflation and reduce costs, a plan to reduce crime, a plan to deal with our national security, a plan to restore our democratic values, a plan to end the perpetual pandemic and a plan for recovery.

The Speech from the Throne failed to show a clear plan on the priorities of Canadians and for Canadians. Failure to plan is planning to fail. We have all heard that. This speech has no plan and therefore should fail to get the support of the House.

● (1815)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member mentioned agriculture and the fact that it was mentioned just a couple times in the speech. I would remind the member that these are intentionally broad documents that do not lay out all the different policy initiatives of a particular government.

Given the fact that he is in an area where agriculture is extremely important to the economy, as it is in my riding, I want to remind him it was this government that increased the business risk management programs after Harper cuts. I want to remind him it was the Conservative-led government that killed the wheat board in western Canada. I want to remind him that we have supports for the Prairies through the AgriRecovery framework for droughts. We put a billion dollars into irrigation projects in Alberta last year. There is a litany of different programs.

Will the member ever explain to his constituents that the government is actually investing in his constituency and his province, notwithstanding the fact that he may not recognize it here in the House?

Mr. Glen Motz: Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize that, from my perspective, coming from rural Alberta and rural Canada, I am well aware of the programs that are available.

However, many constituents in my riding say they do not qualify or that there is some other problem they face when trying to qualify. The programs do not go far enough. They miss the boat.

Regarding this drought, for example, with some of the programs that were put in place, I still get producers saying they are going under. These are cow-calf producers and cattle feeders. I had a gentleman last week call me in tears saying, “I have a couple thousand head in my feed lot. The plants are not taking them. The feed lots are not taking them. I am losing \$400 an animal. How am I going to survive? I cannot survive. I am going to lose half to three-quarters of a million dollars this year alone. There is no program that the government has in place to help me, none. Zero.”

What we need to recognize, as parliamentarians, is that the government needs to be receptive to being flexible with the programs that exist and to make adjustments as needs arise.

• (1820)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments and the previous member for his question. I got the sense that both of them care about agriculture, and I think that is great.

We could easily spend several hours talking about what various governments have done in the past. My colleague mentioned the slaughter backlog, a serious problem that is impacting Quebec in particular. Application processing times for foreign workers, especially in the poultry sector, are also horrendously slow. There is a backlog of hogs. It is appalling.

Unfortunately, a Conservative government set caps on the number of foreign workers in agri-food and processing, but that is not the point I want to make. We have since managed to raise that cap to 20%, but it took a very long time. The announcement was made in August, but it just recently came into effect. I am sure my colleague will agree that it took a long time to implement. Does he not think the hiring cap should be raised yet again? What can be done to recruit workers for this sector and facilitate immigration—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I apologize for interrupting the hon. member.

The Address

I need to give the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner the opportunity to respond.

[*English*]

Mr. Glen Motz: Madam Speaker, I would agree. Canada's agricultural sector in different parts of our country relies on foreign workers and temporary foreign workers to come in and help. Not only is the whole immigration process seriously backlogged, but I think personally there are ways to fast-track certain streams for the SAWP and for the temporary foreign worker program, for example in agriculture, that would allow people coming in to work in those sectors to be fast-tracked through.

The employers and the businesses in this country go through a significant amount of effort and work to try to get these people in place, and sometimes they do not get them in time. There is a huge greenhouse industry in my riding and it relies on temporary foreign workers almost exclusively. It struggles. Rather than spend months to get an employee, sometimes employers spend—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am going to try to give another possible question, so the member gets three questions.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I was really interested to hear about the member's issues around agriculture in his riding. I know in my riding there are a lot of farmers as well.

I live in a rainforest, and we are seeing drought like we have never seen before. It is very important that, as we are having these discussions, we make sure the solutions for funding from the federal government look at climate change and the impacts it is going to have on that sector.

People from one of the farms in my riding took me out and showed me they had dug a very deep hole. It had become its own little ecosystem. It filled with water from the winter months, and during the drought, the farm was able to use the water from that enormous hole to look after watering plants during temperatures over 40 degrees.

Would the member agree we need to have a regional approach that really recognizes the different ecosystems our farmers are farming in?

Mr. Glen Motz: Madam Speaker, I grew up on a ranch in central Alberta. In the west, we dig holes all the time. They are called dugouts, and that is how we feed our livestock. That is how we gather more water, because over the years we have had varying degrees of moisture. Yes, there should be programs in place to allow opportunities for dugouts to be built and for farming practices to be changed. From my experience in the agriculture industry, there are no greater stewards of our land than those in the agricultural sector.

The Address

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to stand in the House for the first time since the election to provide a speech. It has been since last fall, so I want to thank the citizens of Brandon—Souris for allowing me the privilege of representing them here in the House of Commons again.

I want to speak to the throne speech today. It seems like a lifetime ago when the throne speech was tabled, only last November, and it has only given me more time to reflect on how disappointing it was to hear the lack of vision from the government for farmers, our agri-food sector and rural Canada, just as my colleague for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner indicated. The throne speech is not just a symbolic document wrapped up in pomp and circumstance. It is the government's first opportunity in a new Parliament to lay out its blueprint for the coming years.

I can assure members that the ministers, the deputy ministers, the Privy Council Office and the entire public service take this document quite seriously. Moving forward, they will use the throne speech, coupled with ministerial mandate letters, to set cabinet priorities and determine which government bills will be tabled and then debated. As someone who represents a vast rural constituency, where countless jobs and families' livelihoods are directly tied to the agriculture sector, I must inform these people that they do not exist, according to the Liberal throne speech. They are the invisible Canadians, out there in rural Canada. As someone who farmed for decades, I never thought I would see the day that the Government of Canada would so nonchalantly forget an industry that is so integral to our country.

Who does the government think raises and grows the food we put on the tables? We are all aware that the issue of the day is who transports that food, as well.

Canada has the potential to become a food powerhouse on the world stage, yet there is not a mention of the agricultural industry's potential. With the global population growing and wealth growing, the need for trusted food sources will only get larger. To meet the targets laid out in the Barton Report, we need a vision and a plan to get there. In the coming months it will have been four years since that report, and we have yet to see an action plan to seize the tremendous potential of our agricultural sector. Some provinces have done a better job of that than the federal government has. It has a lot of people wondering, "Where is the beef?" How do they deliver? There are over two million Canadians whose jobs are connected to the agri-food sector. It is worth billions of dollars to our economy, and its potential for growth is as large as the prairie sky.

In Manitoba, we have thousands of farmers. We also have value-added processing for such things as vegetables, dairy, sunflowers, flax seed, canola, peas, potatoes, beef and pork. If we want to grow our agri-food sector, it starts at the farm. To support farm families, I took concrete action in the last Parliament by introducing my private member's bill, Bill C-208. Despite the Liberals' attempt to quash my bill, it is now the law of the land. Bill C-208 sends a message of hope to young farmers who want to carry on what their families started. No longer will parents be given a false choice between a larger retirement package after selling to a stranger or a massive tax bill after selling to a family member, their own child or grandchild.

I will remind my Liberal colleagues that their government is still sowing confusion, as it said it was going to amend Bill C-208 sometime in November, 2021. That date has come and gone, and we are now into a new tax year. That means the government will make retroactive tax changes back to November, 2021, but it will not tell us what it actually plans until some later date. That level of uncertainty is the last thing farm families and small businesses need right now in Canada.

I was looking for a clear commitment in the throne speech on what initiatives the Liberal government planned to introduce in this Parliament. I was looking for practical steps the government would take to grow our beef herd and to support our livestock producers, who are still struggling as the drought has depleted pastures and feed costs continue to rise. I wanted to see additional supports to assist farmers and producers impacted by the drought by expediting access to business risk management programs and making up any provincial funding shortfalls. I wanted to see a commitment to amend existing laws to allow livestock owners to use local abat-toirs.

● (1825)

We need to make permanent the temporary measures that allowed provincial authorities to enable trade across the country, and to use their abattoirs for products that would move across provincial borders. These are common-sense policies the Liberals could have announced in the throne speech that could have been welcomed across the country.

It is also clear that we need to reform and improve business risk management programs, particularly AgriInvest and AgriRecovery, as my colleague just mentioned. The throne speech should have included a commitment to bring agricultural stakeholders together for a summit-like meeting with the Minister of Agriculture to develop a way forward on insurance programs such as AgriStability.

Instead of just fully exempting farmers from the carbon tax, the Liberals announced a complicated rebate system that has been widely panned as unfair. The Grain Growers of Canada reported that some farmers are only going to get back 20% to 30% of the taxes they paid. To fix this once and for all, the Liberals could have just exempted farmers from the carbon tax in its entirety. There would be no need for rebates, no need for paperwork and no need to create unnecessary red tape. Rising input costs, such as skyrocketing fuel and fertilizer prices, are already causing financial challenges. The one thing the government could do to help farmers overnight is just exempt them from that carbon tax.

The throne speech also did not contain any clarity about the government's plans to reduce fertilizer emissions by 30%. As many western farmers can attest, any time the Liberal government muses about making changes that will impact their operations or livelihoods, there is always a sense of apprehension. As a farmer, as a farm leader and then as an elected representative, I know the disconnect between those in Ottawa who think they know best and those who sow their fields.

It was not long ago that the Liberals called farmers tax cheats. Their 2017 proposed tax changes would have cost farm families thousands of dollars. Thanks to the farmers and entrepreneurs who loudly opposed those tax changes, and the fact that Bill Morneau is no longer the finance minister, those tax hikes are yesterday's news.

Whether the Liberals are attempting to eliminate the deferred grain tickets or doing everything in their power to delay the implementation of my private member's bill, there is enough evidence to suggest farmers' anxieties are well-founded. No details have been announced on the Liberals' plans to reduce fertilizer emissions, and this has caused all sorts of consternation within the farming community. Instead of working collaboratively with farmers, the Liberals have decided to stick out this arbitrary number with zero information on how they plan to implement it. This is not the right way to govern, nor does it inspire any confidence in the thousands of farm families across our country.

A report just released by Meyers Norris Penny outlined the potential impact of reducing fertilizer emissions by 30%, and the numbers are staggering. They have calculated that for corn, canola and spring wheat, there would be a total value of lost production of 10.4 billion bushels per year by 2030. As the report stated, this would have a dramatic impact on Canada's ability to fill domestic processing capacity. This would also reduce our ability to export, as well.

I would be remiss not to talk about the logistical challenges that farmers and agri-food processors have faced due to either the B.C. floods, the pandemic or the fact we need to vastly expand our infrastructure system. As the recent Auditor General's report stated, the Liberal government's investing in Canada plan was unable to provide meaningful public reporting on overall progress. If Canadian farmers and agri-food processors are going to continue to grow and export around the world, we need to make sure the roads, bridges, highways, railways and ports have the capacity for them to do so.

I raise these agricultural issues as I fear that farmers do not have a voice in the Liberal government. I worry their concerns fall on deaf ears. Unfortunately, the Liberal throne speech was silent on these matters and it lacked any bold vision for the sector. There is life in rural Canada. There is hope, and there is a strong future. I implore the Liberal government not to forget about farmers. Do not take them for granted. Let us work together and implement many of the ideas our Conservative team has been advocating for. Farmers are not asking for the moon. They just want to be treated fairly and want a government that is willing to listen.

• (1830)

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

The Address

Speaker, the member highlights infrastructure and the importance of trade as what he believes to be really important to our agricultural community. There is no government in the history of Canada that has signed more trade agreements than this government. In the last six years we have signed more trade agreements than any other government prior.

When we look at infrastructure dollars, we are talking about historic amounts of infrastructure dollars to be able to build the roads and do so much more for Canadians.

If the member believes that infrastructure and trade are so important, why does he not acknowledge the Liberals' accomplishments that are historic in their very nature? They will no doubt help our farmers and agriculture, as well as urban communities.

• (1835)

Mr. Larry Maguire: Madam Speaker, it is déjà vu. I want to thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for his fine question, but I would have thought he was asking me that question on the years of the Harper government, which signed more trade agreements than any government in the history of Canada. He is absolutely wrong when he says that the Liberals have signed more than the Harper government did, and they still have not gotten them all implemented. They are still trying to enforce the CETA, and still trying to get more agreements that were signed in those days to actually be implemented into the world trade issues.

From the comments that I made here, it is very obvious that the government has failed to get the dollars out. It is fine to announce infrastructure dollars, but it has not gotten them out the door and the projects are not going. I have a fine case of a bridge that needs to be built in my own community. I authorized that bridge for that constituency under the Harper government in 2015, and it has not started to be built yet.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my valued colleague from Brandon-Souris for his speech. I will once again have the privilege of changing the dynamic in the House so that we stop focusing on who did what and who did it better and start focusing on constructive feedback and the content.

I would like my colleague from Brandon—Souris to tell me about the minister's mandate letter. He is right in saying that the throne speech contains absolutely nothing for the farming community; we agree on that. That is why I went back to the document, which contained a little bit of content. The minister's mandate letter talks about facilitating the transfer of family farms. We managed to work together to pass a historic law during the previous Parliament. I thank my colleague again for promoting and introducing this bill.

The Address

I would like to know if he is concerned about that note in the mandate letter. When the Liberals want to try to make changes to the great work we have done, what aspect of the law does he think we need to keep an eye on?

[English]

Mr. Larry Maguire: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague and his Bloc cohorts for the work they did with me on that particular bill, as well as Guy Caron, the previous interim New Democratic leader who brought the same bill forward, which the Liberals killed in 2017 and tried to kill again in the 2021 session.

However, my colleague is so right in that we need to make sure that we are vigilant. I mean, I hope that the Liberals have had an epiphany and are not going to change that bill or try to, because people have already made the investments in selling their operations to their own families, which I think is a credit to how much this bill was needed. I have had some indications from some of the largest accounting firms in Canada that that bill has, unbeknownst to me when I brought it forward, probably done more for small businesses than any bill in the House of Commons concerning the tax department for small businesses that qualify in the last 25 years.

I give my colleagues credit for the support that we got on that and for my Liberal colleagues who supported it too, because there were 19 of them in the House who did support it as well. I also thank the Senate for passing it as expeditiously as it did last June. I look forward to hopefully working with my colleagues again if there are any potential changes that may come down the road.

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the members for allowing me to finish my speech.

I will move to a part of the Speech from the Throne that speaks to our resilient economy. Our government has supported Canadians through the COVID-19 pandemic and introduced further investments in budget 2021 and the recovery plan to ensure an economic recovery that includes everyone.

Together we have helped Canada maintain a strong fiscal position compared to international counterparts, preventing long-term increase in the federal debt-to-GDP ratio. This encouraged global markets to maintain confidence in Canadian bonds, bringing the cost of borrowing to record low levels and protecting millions of Canadian jobs.

Major credit rating agencies have also reaffirmed Canada's AAA credit rating and Moody's praised the budget for its focus on supporting growth, which will reinforce Canada's economic recovery and limit potential long-term scarring from the pandemic.

Inflation is still a challenge that countries around the world are facing. While we all know that Canada's economic performance is better than that of many of our partners, we have a challenge to keep tackling the rising cost of living. Housing and child care are top priorities for Canadians, and hence for our government.

The Canada child benefit has already helped lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty and will continue to increase to keep up with the cost of living. As I mentioned before, our government's \$10-a-day child care is available for families who so badly

ly need it. Our government is still keen on working with Ontario to finalize agreements. Investing in affordable child care, just like housing, is not only good for families but also helps grow the entire economy for Ontario and Canada.

Though we have had a difficult start to this decade, the decade itself is still young. There is so much more that our government has to offer for all Canadians. My focus will always be on helping the amazing residents of Mississauga East—Cooksville succeed and representing their aspirations in this 44th Parliament of Canada.

I like the way the Speaker always talks about respect and listening, and now we, as parliamentarians, should be setting an example for our younger generations who are listening to us and learning from us. Let us keep this session more respectful—

• (1840)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We will have to leave it at that.

Continuing with questions and comments, we have the hon. member for Hamilton Centre.

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to the hon. member for Mississauga East—Cooksville, who shared about his family's story of fleeing Portugal from fascism. I want to extend congratulations to the Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa, whose socialist party won a majority in Portugal's recent snap election. Indeed, the fight against fascism continues in his parents' homeland and the homeland of thousands of my Portuguese friends and neighbours here in Hamilton Centre.

Learning from the success of Portugal's progressive life-saving drug policies, which centre harm reduction for drug users as a public health issue rather than a criminal one, does the hon. member support our party's call by the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni for the decriminalization of drugs, safe supply and harm reduction, so we may work better to save the lives of vulnerable people here in Canada?

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, I have many friends who live in the area of Hamilton Centre, and it is a wonderful riding. It is second best maybe to Mississauga East—Cooksville. Also, congratulations, yes, to the Costa government, which was re-elected in Portugal.

Portugal has taken steps to address many of its addiction and drug issues, and I know here in Canada opioids have been a crisis for our country. That is why our government has worked together with provinces, and especially with municipalities, to address what is happening, as the member mentioned, in B.C. or other jurisdictions. We look to work with jurisdictions on ways we can address this opioid crisis.

As well, we are putting a significant amount of funds into dealing with mental health issues and other issues that are afflicting many of our populations. The only way to do it, as the member knows full well, is to do it in partnership with our provincial counterparts, as well as with municipalities.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am very grateful to be in on the debate because the hon. member was chairing the finance committee earlier today. There has been some banter back and forth in this place, and I hope he can help me correct the record. It was between the member for Calgary Centre and the member for Outremont.

The member for Calgary Centre claimed that earlier today a witness before the finance committee was unable to name a single fossil fuel subsidy. I think the hon. member for Calgary Centre misheard the witness, because she clearly said Export Development Canada. The witness was from the International Institute for Sustainable Development. They did a detailed report and found approximately \$13 billion in subsidies to fossil fuels from Export Development Canada. The hon. member for Calgary Centre misheard, I think, because he stated that the program no longer existed. It is not a program. It is Export Development Canada, and it is providing subsidies to fossil fuels.

I do not know if the hon. member was there for the exchange between the member for Calgary Centre and the hon. member for Outremont, but perhaps he can recall that the witness this morning at the finance committee certainly had no trouble naming some subsidies to fossil fuels in this country.

• (1845)

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, our government has stood steadfast on putting a price on pollution, understanding that polluters must pay. I believe that lens speaks for our entire country, that all Canadians believe that polluters must pay. If they are polluting, they should pay for the pollution that they produce. That is why we have a robust climate action change plan that puts a price on carbon and on pollution.

Advocates like those we had before us at the finance committee are so important. They bring the facts and information to committee, which informs our committee, and this House for that matter.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to order made earlier today, the House shall now resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 5 under government business.

[*Translation*]

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

SITUATION IN UKRAINE

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 5, Mrs. Alexandra Mendès in the chair)

Government Orders

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members of how proceedings will unfold.

Each member will be allotted 10 minutes for debate, followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments. Pursuant to the order made earlier today, the time provided for debate may be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each.

[*English*]

Members may divide their time with another member and the Chair will receive no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent.

We will now begin tonight's take-note debate.

[*Translation*]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.) moved:

That this committee take note of the situation in Ukraine.

He said: Madam Chair, I will be sharing my time this evening with the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[*English*]

Canada has always been clear about our steadfast support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, from being the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence to the deep partnership we have developed in the years since and to the expanded support our government has announced in recent days. Ukrainians have the right to determine their future. Canada, alongside our allies, will always stand firm in defence of that right.

When people elect a government, collectively choose a path forward and want to make progress, these democratic choices have to be respected, but right now that is not what Russia is doing. Russia is seeking confrontation.

[*Translation*]

Russia is trying to destabilize and provoke a sovereign democratic state.

This direct threat to the Ukrainian people's right to self-determination should be of concern not just to Ukraine and eastern Europe, but to all of us.

[*English*]

Russian actions are once again standing in direct opposition to democratic principles. These actions are calling into question the fundamental principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity enshrined in the UN charter. That is why we must show unity and resolve in standing with Ukraine. That is why Canada and its allies have been clear that any further incursion into Ukraine will provoke severe costs and serious consequences, including the imposition of coordinated sanctions. We will continue to be there to provide support to Ukraine.

Government Orders

• (1850)

In 2015, Canada launched Operation Unifier, a military training mission that has helped train about 33,000 members of the Ukrainian security forces. Last week, I authorized the extension and expansion of Operation Unifier. As part of this commitment, the Canadian Armed Forces is deploying 60 personnel to join the approximately 200 women and men already on the ground, with further capacity to increase the number of people up to 400. We are also sending additional support in the form of non-lethal equipment, intelligence sharing and help to combat cyber-attacks.

[*Translation*]

As previously announced, we are also providing a loan of up to \$120 million to support Ukraine's economic resilience. We will provide up to \$50 million to deliver development and humanitarian aid.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our teams who are working hard on these files. I would like to emphasize that our Minister of National Defence is currently in Ukraine, working with her counterparts, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs was recently there as well. Of course, the Deputy Prime Minister remains very involved in this file.

I also want to thank the members of the Canadian Armed Forces participating in Operation Unifier. I had the chance to meet them a few years ago when I was in Ukraine. They are doing an exemplary job.

[*English*]

Canada has a long history of standing up to bullies, but standing up to bullies does not mean that we want conflict. Let us be clear about the facts. NATO is no threat to Russia. It is a defensive alliance built on the free choice of its members to support each other in collective security. Ukraine is not provoking Russia or threatening its security.

In the days and weeks to come, we will continue coordinating closely with Ukraine, NATO allies and our other international partners to stand firm in support of Ukraine and to deter further Russian aggression. The fate of Ukraine matters to the world and to Canadians. I have made this very clear, including directly to President Zelenskyy. I have defended the rights of Ukrainians to choose their own future with organizations like the G7 and NATO in the past, and I will continue to do so. We are always stronger together, and we will not be intimidated.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Chair, I am honoured to be able to stand tonight in this debate on the future of Ukraine's ability to protect itself. I appreciate the comments made by the Prime Minister, but at the same time, we know that it was Ukraine's biggest demand of NATO allies, including Canada, for the last four or five years, to beef up its lethal defensive weapons, knowing that at any moment Russia may want to invade Ukraine.

Now we have over 100,000 Russian troops standing on Ukraine's borders on the north, on the east and down in the south. It has Ukraine surrounded. I know that President Zelenskyy and the embassy here have been asking the Government of Canada to provide lethal weapons. The Prime Minister has been completely mute on

this. Why has he not supplied lethal weapons to Ukraine? Is he going to wait until Russia invades Ukraine? By then, it is too late.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Madam Chair, I will point out that Canada has been steadfast in its support of Ukraine, and that is why we have engaged directly with Ukraine and Ukraine's leadership to hear what they need. The number one ask from President Zelenskyy was economic support, which we delivered in a \$120-million sovereign loan to help the Ukrainians counter the economic destabilization in which Russia is engaging.

Their other ask, indeed, is a preoccupation with their ability to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity. On that, we have responded. We have responded by extending and enlarging Canada's extraordinarily successful mission, which has directly trained up 33,000 members of the Ukrainian defence forces and continues to be one of the most impactful and positive elements of NATO's support for Ukraine.

Canada will always be there for Ukraine, but we will respond to the Ukrainians' asks in a way that responds to their priorities. That is what friends do.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Madam Chair, I thank the Prime Minister for his remarks.

The government keeps repeating that it favours a diplomatic approach to resolving this potential conflict, but apart from crying wolf, what is Canada actually doing?

In my view, diplomacy means dialogue, but there does not seem to be any dialogue with either side. Just last week, the Russian ambassador said that Canada-Russia relations are dysfunctional, to say the least. Apart from an exchange between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister Lavrov in Russia, which took place several months ago, the highest level of dialogue was with him, the ambassador.

The ambassador himself said that the Prime Minister should speak directly with President Vladimir Putin to discuss a solution to the problem, as did the French president, Emmanuel Macron. According to the ambassador, Russia would even be willing to lift the entry ban that has been placed on the Deputy Prime Minister if she travelled to Russia for this purpose.

What is the Government of Canada actually doing on the diplomatic front?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Madam Chair, I am very pleased to be able to answer this question because we fully acknowledge that Russian propaganda continues to try to deny the aggression in Crimea and the threats to Ukraine's territorial integrity.

Vladimir Putin is very familiar with our position on Ukraine very well because I have shared it with him many times over the years. A few weeks ago, the Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke directly with her Russian counterpart to reiterate our position and our unwavering support for Ukraine.

We are absolutely seeking a diplomatic solution, but we are also demonstrating that there will be serious consequences for Russia if it attacks Ukraine's territorial integrity and the people of Ukraine again.

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Chair, I would ask the Prime Minister what his government is doing to ensure that the feminist foreign policy is front and centre as we deal with this current crisis in Ukraine and what his government is doing to ensure that women are at all negotiating tables right now. The Canadian government is advocating for women to be present and to be at all of those tables at this time. If he could answer that, that would be great.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Madam Chair, I am pleased to underline that it is a continued preoccupation of this government to have a feminist foreign policy, which is certainly something that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is actively engaged in.

In terms of concretely on the ground, when I was last in Ukraine I engaged directly with members of civil society to talk about how Canada was supporting various actors to encourage full gender equality in their approach. We also have specific measures within Operation Unifier in training that address gender issues. We will continue to make sure that the path to peace includes women, because we know from countless examples around the world that women are key to solving long-term conflicts and making sure they stay solved.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Chair, it is a pleasure to see you in that seat.

I am pleased to be in the House this evening to talk about an issue that is a priority for this administration, but also one that is rallying every foreign minister in the western world. The facts are simple. As we speak, there are 100,000 Russian troops on the borders of Ukraine, troops equipped with tanks and missiles, armed troops that are ready to go on the offensive. The threat is real.

Vladimir Putin is trying to pull Ukraine back into his fold by force, and that is completely unacceptable. Canada has no choice but to support the democratic will of the Ukrainian people. When a foreign power tries to forcefully take over another country, every democracy in the world must stand up and lend a hand.

• (1900)

[*English*]

What is at stake here is the very principle enshrined in article 2(4) of the UN Charter, the respect of sovereignty and independence. It states:

All Members shall refrain...from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

The Russian government claims it values the UN Charter. It needs to show it and de-escalate.

Canada is resolute in supporting Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. We stand with Ukrainians and we are absolutely committed to a diplomatic solution. We are a country that has a long-standing diplomatic history. We are the one who can

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bridge different countries together, friends to the United States but also friends to Europe. We have more than 1.4 million Ukrainian Canadians here in Canada, and we understand Ukraine.

Since my appointment, working on a diplomatic solution has been my top priority. I have had extensive conversations on this matter with my counterparts around the world, in Washington, Riga, Stockholm, Liverpool, Kyiv, Paris, Brussels and, of course, right here in Ottawa, and with many members of the House.

In my recent trip, I had productive meetings with the leadership of Ukraine, the president, the prime minister, the deputy prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs. With the leadership of the European Union, I met with the president of the council and the foreign affairs minister, and also with the secretary general of NATO. I also had good meetings with the foreign ministers of France and Belgium and constructive conversations with U.S. Secretary of State Blinken, as well as Germany's Minister Baerbock. Just today I spoke to my counterparts in Denmark, Netherlands and Latvia. We all agree, de-escalation is key, and it is urgent.

Russia's aggressive actions are threatening global stability. In that sense, Ukraine's security is not only Europe's security. It is the world's security, including ours, right here at home in Canada. Now is the time to be united. Now is the time to speak with one voice in support of Ukraine and its people.

We also need to invest in deterrence, sanctions and economic support for Ukraine. Extending and expanding Operation Unifier are our immediate actions. On sanctions, any further aggression will have serious consequences, including coordinated economic sanctions with allies. Canada is ready.

[*Translation*]

As for economic stability, as we know, the Russian threat is not only creating untenable regional tensions, but it is also destabilizing the economy of Ukraine, which is in great need.

During my meeting with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy, there was one clear request: support Ukraine financially to ensure stability in the country. In the span of just a few days, thanks to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of International Development, we responded by offering a \$120-million loan to Ukraine. This support sparked a solidarity campaign among our allies. Shortly after our announcement, the European Union announced that it would provide 1.2 billion euros in loans and grants to Ukraine.

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When it comes to military training, Ukraine can count on us with the extension and expansion of Operation Unifier. The Canadian Armed Forces have trained more than 30,000 soldiers and members of the national guard since 2014. There are 200 CAF members in Ukraine right now, mainly from the Valcartier base in Quebec. We will increase that number and continue to participate in the training and professionalization of the Ukrainian armed forces.

[*English*]

In addition to military development and financial assistance, Canada's diplomatic service continues to work around the clock.

• (1905)

[*Translation*]

To support the Canadian effort, we are increasing diplomatic resources both in Kyiv and in Ottawa. It is important to support the efforts of civil society as well in these difficult times.

My message is the following: I am calling on all members of the House. The situation is serious, and we must do everything we can to ease tensions for the sake of our national interest.

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have to say that it has been incredibly disappointing to see the minister go over empty-handed on her trip to Ukraine. She did, after her return, announce \$120 million of financial assistance, which I know is welcome, but we know for a fact that there have been demands from the Government of Ukraine for the last several years for more military help, including the provision of lethal weapons.

We know that one of the very first things that the Liberal government did when it came into power several years ago in 2015 and 2016 was stop the provision of RADARSAT images. The people of Ukraine and the Government of Ukraine could actually see what the Russian forces were doing in places like Crimea and Donbass, which is sovereign Ukrainian territory but is now illegally occupied by the Russian Federation.

When will the minister actually provide the kinetic energy and military might that is required for Ukraine to fend off this potential Russian invasion? When will the Liberals provide those lethal weapons? When will they restore the use of RADARSAT images, which are world-renowned and would really help with the security situation on the ground?

Will they actually stand with Ukraine rather than just offer empty rhetoric and half measures?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I do not agree on everything. We agree on the fact that we need to make sure that there is no further invasion of Ukraine. However, right now the most important thing we need to do is make sure that we invest in diplomacy and deterrence, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Right now, we are really the country that is bridging all the other countries of the alliance together and making sure that there is strong unity, which is the case. We are also specialists in Ukraine because, just as my colleague himself is of Ukrainian descent, we

have 1.4 million Ukrainian Canadians in Canada, and therefore we can make sure that people know about Ukraine even within the NATO alliance.

On the question of deterrence, Ukraine needed support financially. We were there within three days with a loan of \$120 million. Ukraine wanted more support in terms of military training. We were there within a week. Ukraine also wanted more cyber support; we were there also within a week. For all that, President Zelenskyy himself said thanks to Prime Minister Trudeau and this government.

The Speaker: Before moving on, I want to remind the hon. members that when we are speaking of someone, we use their title and not their name. I just want to make sure we remember that, as I know we have been away for a while.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Montarville.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister rightly pointed out that 100,000 Russian troops have been amassed on the Ukrainian border.

If that sounds familiar, it is because last winter and spring there were also some 100,000 Russian troops amassed at the Ukrainian border.

As members know, I am vice-chair of the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, and the chair of this group is here today. On April 22, 2021, representatives from the foreign affairs and defence departments graciously briefed us on the situation.

Last week, these same departments gave us another briefing, and I must say that it was certainly similar to the first one. I asked if there had been any news since then, and the representative from foreign affairs candidly told me that, aside from troop movements at the Ukrainian border and in Belarus, he did not really know.

My question for the minister is the following. The government decided to join the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in withdrawing non-essential personnel from the embassy, while our other NATO allies did not. Does this decision not stoke the fear of further aggression in Ukraine, which even the Ukrainian authorities have denounced?

Even the Ukrainians are calling for this to stop. They are struggling under the weight of these tensions.

• (1910)

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, what is fundamental and what I want to reiterate to my colleague is that Russia is the aggressor right now.

There is no form of aggression on the part of Ukraine or any member of NATO at this time. I think we need to agree on this issue here in the House, because it is fundamental to our understanding of the conflict at the moment.

I would like to point out something else. My colleague asked the Prime Minister earlier about our relationship with Russia.

Russia knows our point of view. Not only does Russia know our point of view, but Russia is currently trying to divide NATO members. We are not going to fall for this misinformation, and I hope that my colleague will not either, because it is in our national interest.

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House saying that we stand with Ukraine, an important friend and ally of Canada, important not just to the 1.4 million Canadians with Ukrainian ancestry but important to every single Canadian in this country, because Ukraine is our friend, our trading partner and our ally.

This is a debate not about hashtags or holding a sign up on Twitter, as the minister and the Liberal government have done; this is a debate about who Canadians are as a friend on the world stage. This is a debate about our values as a nation and the dependability of Canada as an ally. From Vimy Ridge to Kandahar to all points in between, to the Donbass today, is Canada that friend and ally that the world knows? Is Canada living up to its reputation as a founding member of NATO? Is Canada living up to the fact that NATO would not have been formed but for the role that Canada played in bridging the Atlantic nations in World War II, and as Winston Churchill described us, as the linchpin between the free peoples of Europe and of North America?

Ukrainian Canadians are demanding more from this government than hashtags. Canadians, and indeed our allies and friends around the world, are asking Canada for more than hollow words and empty gestures. We can send as many ministers to Kyiv as we wish, but if they come with nothing but hollow words as we evacuate our people, that is letting our friends down. It is also letting our country down for its values.

[*Translation*]

An important principle of Canadian foreign policy should be that we must never turn our backs on our friends and allies. We should not hesitate to help them when they ask for it, as we have always done in Canada's history.

[*English*]

From Vimy Ridge to today, Canada has been known to be there for our friends, for our allies, but also for our values of liberty, freedom and dignity of person. These are values we have fought and died for.

Ukrainian Canadians have built this great country, and there are members on both sides of the House. There was the first Ukrainian-Canadian Governor General, the great Ray Hnatyshyn, former Conservative member of Parliament. I think of the first cabinet minister of Ukrainian extraction, whom I met because he is from my area, Michael Starr, the former MP from Oshawa. My first event as an aspiring politician was at the Lviv Hall with my Ukrainian-Canadian friends in Oshawa. My friend from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, my wingman of late, introduced the Holodomor commemoration in the House, one of the first western parliaments to talk about the horrific famine brought on the Ukrainian people by the Russian overlords at the time, by the Soviet Union, a neighbour that has al-

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ways impinged on the freedoms of Ukrainians, and it is up to us as Canadians to be there now for them.

In fact, I had the honour in 2014 to be in this chamber for a speech from President Poroshenko, the President of Ukraine, who was invited to speak about that friendship between our two countries, and he said this:

Today thousands of brave Ukrainian men and women are sacrificing their lives for the right to live the way they choose, on their land, under the blue and gold colours of the Ukrainian flag, colours that are so dear to many Canadian Ukrainians. In these dark days, we feel your strong support. Thank you very much for that.

● (1915)

He went on to say:

It is in our time of need that we see our friends, and there is no other way to put it: Canada is a friend indeed.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker challenged Russia to allow free elections for Ukrainians. It was the Mulroney Conservative government that was the first ally to recognize the independence of Ukraine. It was Prime Minister Harper who famously, after the invasion of Crimea, said to Vladimir Putin, "Get out of Ukraine." What do we have from the current Prime Minister? We have hashtags. We have ministers embarrassingly holding up a sign on Twitter. That is what Canada is known for now: Twitter diplomacy, but not standing with our NATO allies.

In fact, everything that has been done in the last decade for our allies and friends in Ukraine was initiated by Conservative governments: Operation Reassurance; Operation Unifier; the use of RADARSAT images, which the Liberals removed a few years ago; and military equipment. It was all of those measures. In fact, we had to push to get the government to extend Operation Unifier. Liberals waited until the very last minute.

The Ukrainian government, including its former ambassador just this weekend, has been asking for lethal defensive weapons. Why? Here is what they are facing. There are citizens in Ukraine today being trained on how to use a rifle, being trained on hand-to-hand combat. We are so fortunate as Canadians that this is something we do not have to worry about. There are 130,000 troops lining up. There are 60 battalions, tactical groups, that the Russians are lining up on the border. Russia outnumbers Ukraine four to one in military personnel, 22 to one in fighter planes, 15 to one in attack helicopters and five to one in battle tanks. They are asking for our help in their hour of need, and other allies have responded: the U.S., the U.K., Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic. Where is Canada? When our friend and ally is in need, where is Canada?

[*Translation*]

The Liberals will be all over the Internet and social media talking about how they support Ukraine, but they will not give Ukraine what it needs to stop those who threaten its sovereignty.

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The time for half-measures is past. Ukraine needs our help and support now, but all the Liberal Prime Minister does is post hash-tags on Twitter. That is not good enough for our allies and friends, and it does not reflect our country's values.

[*English*]

The world is watching. This is not a time for Twitter. This is not a time for hollow words and rhetoric. There is a real chance that there could be an invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Mr. Putin has shown his callous disregard for sovereign territory, as we have seen in Crimea, the phony war in the Donbass, the influence, the cyber-attacks, the shutting down of the hydro grid. The bad actor of the world needs to be called out, and NATO is doing that, but one of the founding countries of NATO, Canada, is missing in action.

On this issue, I am sure many in the Liberal government wish they were doing more than just brief trips over there to say hello. I am sure many are wishing they were responding to the request of our ally in its hour of need.

Canada may be a smaller nation. Having served in uniform myself, I know we do not have the standing armies and we do not have the fleets of fighter jets, but we have a passion in our glowing hearts. We were always there for our friends and values from the earliest days, before our American friends.

● (1920)

As Lester B. Pearson, a Liberal Prime Minister, once said, if a rifle is fired on the Korean Peninsula or in Europe, it is just as important to defend Canada as if it was done here on our own soil.

The government has a choice while there is time left. Step up and help our friends in Ukraine. Step up with the equipment they say they need to fight against overwhelming odds. Show the world Canada remains a friend and ally who is there through thick and thin.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not because my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, states facts that they are necessarily true. In that sense, our actions have been clear. First, we gave \$120 million in a sovereign loan. Second, we doubled the troops in Operation Unifier in Ukraine.

Does he know that we have the biggest foreign military training presence in Ukraine as of now? Does he know that Canadians right now are standing shoulder to shoulder in Kyiv and in 13 different places around Ukraine? Does he know that the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, said, "Canada is one of the leading countries in NATO when it comes to providing support for Ukraine"? He also added, "There are not many other countries at the equal level of efforts, doing as much as Canada."

The member talks about the great glowing hearts of our CAF members, and I agree with him. However, the reality is they are the ones and we are the ones in Ukraine right now. What does he have to say about that?

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for her intervention, as she asked if I knew the facts. Yes, I do. In fact, Operation Reassurance; Operation Unifier; the sharing of military intelligence, including RADARSAT, and military equip-

ment; and the training she talked about, the training we are both very proud of our men and women in uniform for, were all started by the Conservative government. Only reluctantly, as the minister knows, one of her predecessors, Mr. Dion, withdrew some of that support and wanted to normalize relations with Russia. That was their foreign policy out of the gate. However, whether it is the appeasement of Russia, a completely out-of-touch policy on the communist regime in China, letting down our NATO allies or not even getting phone calls from the United States anymore, Canada needs to stand up.

A loan is important, and I thank the minister for the loan, but once Ukrainians lose their liberty and freedom we cannot loan them the freedom they will need and we cannot loan them the military equipment when the attack is under way. I urge the minister to do the right thing and give Ukrainians the tools they need to defend themselves.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the opposition leader for his speech. To those of us in the Bloc, it is pretty clear that beneath the veil of humanitarianism lies the real reason for Canada's involvement: fossil fuels.

That said, here is my question for him: Would his hawkish, provocative stance not just strengthen Russia's ties with China?

● (1925)

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, we must stand with our allies. Defending our values internationally is not provocation, especially when Russia is poised to invade Ukraine. The time to defend our values as a country is now.

As I said, our men and women in uniform have always stepped up to defend freedom. They did so at Vimy Ridge, in Afghanistan, in France, in Europe and in Korea. Now we have to step up to provide military equipment to Ukraine.

This is not the time for rhetoric on the part of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister, nor is it the time for Twitter hashtags. It is time to take concrete action for our allies, who are presently in danger in Ukraine.

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one thing that bothers me the most about the member's comments today is that he speaks about lethal force and action, but I do not hear him talking about diplomacy. I do not hear him talking about using what we can to de-escalate the situation right now. What I want him to understand is that it is the Ukrainian people who will die if there is a war in Ukraine. It is the women and children in Ukraine who will die if we continue to escalate the situation.

Now, his party, when it was in power, was the one that decimated foreign aid. It was the one that decimated our diplomatic corps. Perhaps he does not believe in diplomacy. Perhaps he does not believe in sanctions and the power of the international community to find a peaceful resolution.

I am wondering why he thinks, as someone who will not have to go to war in Ukraine, that war is such a wonderful idea for the Ukrainian people right now.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, the member was misstating the fact that I am suggesting war is a good thing. I am fortunate to be a veteran who never had to serve in Afghanistan, but I have seen, not only in my time in the military but in my time as the veterans affairs minister, the incredible toll that war and conflict take on our military and on civilian populations. It is those very Ukrainians that she says are at risk who are now in Legion halls and church basements being trained on how to defend themselves. All they want is for their friends in Canada to give them some equipment so they do not have to call senior citizens to the front lines.

If we do not have appropriate military counterbalance, which is why NATO was created, we cannot engage strategically and effectively in diplomacy. We support diplomacy. It was Raynell Andreychuk, a senator, who brought Magnitsky sanctions to Canada, sponsored in the House by my friend from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

We should be using sanctions. We should be using pressure. We should be using diplomacy. However, hollow commitments through social media empower a dictator like Vladimir Putin. We need to stand by our allies and stand up for Ukraine.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our leader spoke briefly at the end about Magnitsky sanctions and I want him to follow up on that point. What I have been hearing from many experts is the importance of using the Magnitsky act to specifically target kleptocrats who are investing Vladimir Putin's money overseas. I wonder if the opposition leader has a comment on specifically targeting those kleptocrats as a way of getting at and having real accountability from the Putin regime.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my learned friend for his advocacy. He is absolutely right. Not only is the Putin regime putting Ukrainians at risk and putting stability in Europe and indeed around the globe at risk, but it is also leading a kleptocracy that is robbing Russians of their ability to actually build up their lives. Putin is doing this through some oligarchs and through a system of money laundering throughout the world. We need to work with our allies, through FINTRAC and other agencies, to root this out using sanctions and pressure, and call these regimes what they are.

It should trouble the minister that one of her mentors, Mr. Dion, was actually advocating rapprochement with Mr. Putin after he invaded and occupied Crimea. It was her government that withdrew RADARSAT imaging, which allowed Ukrainians to track Russian movements in the Donbass. For years, Vladimir Putin has been plotting what he is doing now.

Now is the moment for us to give our ally what it needs. We need to continue, as my friend said, to apply Magnitsky sanctions and work diplomatically. However, we have to make sure we have a re-

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al stick to have diplomacy. Right now our friends in Ukraine are asking Canada to stand alongside the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland and other allies, and be there for Ukraine when it needs us most.

• (1930)

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition accused the minister of returning from Ukraine having made empty promises and using empty words. I am looking at a tweet from none other than the defence minister of Ukraine talking about the centuries-old friendship between Canada and Ukraine, and thanking her, our Minister of National Defence and the Prime Minister for delivering on upping the campaign in Operation Unifier.

Are you saying that he is using empty words and engaging in Twitter diplomacy?

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition will respond in 30 seconds or less. I want to remind hon. members to speak through the Chair and not directly across.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, it is rather ironic that a Liberal MP will stand and criticize my critique of Twitter diplomacy by quoting a tweet about diplomacy.

What does Ukraine want? We all know this. The minister knows this from the closed-door meetings. We saw the former Ukrainian diplomat to Canada talking this weekend about the requests, for many years now, for lethal military aid. Our friends are in need, and while loan guarantees and a range of other things are positive, we have to help Ukraine now. I ask the minister to finally deliver on this military equipment.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I must say that I was somewhat surprised by the minister's answer to my question a few moments ago. To use a mixed metaphor, I would say that my ears could not believe my eyes.

Is the minister suggesting that if we were to push for a diplomatic solution, if we were in favour of that, if we insisted on it, we would be playing into Russia's hands? Is the minister suggesting that President Macron is playing into Russia's hands and creating division among the allies by picking up the phone to speak to Vladimir Putin? I believe that the answer is obvious.

Had the minister paid the least bit of attention to some of my speeches, in particular the one I gave to the Parliamentary Assembly to the Council of Europe, she would know that I have been highly critical of Russia on several occasions.

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If we want dialogue, we cannot have a unilateral monologue. If we want to be a credible mediator between Russia and Ukraine, we have to speak to Russia as President Macron did. As far as I can see, aside from crying wolf, the Canadian government has done nothing to lead us to a diplomatic solution.

That is all I wanted to say. Do I recognize that the aggression against Crimea and Russia's destabilizing actions in Donbass are unacceptable? Of course I do. I do not even see how the minister can call that into question. Not only am I surprised, but I am a little offended. What I said is that we must engage in dialogue.

As I mentioned a few minutes ago, the fact is that the buildup of 100,000 Russian troops on the Ukrainian border is pretty much the same as it was a year ago. What has changed? We do not really know, as the minister's officials at Global Affairs have admitted.

Why then this talk of escalation, this fearmongering that is leading us to think that Russia is going to attack tomorrow morning, whereas both the Ukrainians and the Russians agree that that is not going to happen? Why take this alarmist tone rather than trying to calm things down? Again, why pull out non-essential staff from our embassy when basically only the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia have done so? The other NATO allies have stayed behind to show their support for Ukraine in a concrete way. Why pull out and contribute to escalating ongoing tensions?

Earlier the minister told us that Russia is the aggressor. I do not disagree. I challenge anyone to disprove the unwavering support of the Bloc Québécois and its members for our ally, Ukraine. However, I would like to point out to the minister that Jocelyn Coulon, an expert in geopolitical issues and former adviser to her predecessor, former Liberal candidate Stéphane Dion, put himself in Russia's shoes for a minute. He explained that when Germany reunified, NATO promised Mikhail Gorbachev that the Atlantic alliance would never cross the border of East Germany.

What happened after that? Several Soviet bloc countries and even some former Soviet republics were admitted to NATO, a move that Russia perceived as an attack, aimed at bringing western troops closer to the Russian border. For whatever reason, Russia decided that the red line would be Ukraine and that it would not allow Ukraine to join NATO.

The minister was talking about unity among NATO alliance countries. That is great, but can the minister deny that at the Bucharest summit in 2008, France and Germany expressed reservations about the possibility of admitting Ukraine to NATO?

All I am saying is that we can maintain the illusion that all member countries of the NATO alliance are on the same page, but that is not the reality. This explains why the French president phoned Vladimir Putin while Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom continue with this rather belligerent rhetoric towards Russia.

There are very divergent views within NATO. It is not playing into Russia's hands to admit this; it is simply acknowledging the facts. Where do we go from here? Do we really want to be a useful mediator? If the answer is yes, we must act accordingly. We need to take consistent action to lower tensions.

• (1935)

We have made commitments to Ukraine. We have to honour those commitments to Ukraine, but it would be disingenuous to pretend that Ukraine's admission to the NATO alliance does not require the unanimous approval of all the alliance members—but where is the unanimity of the NATO alliance on this issue?

I think we have to be honest with ourselves and with Ukrainians. However, we still have a responsibility towards Ukraine, because we have given our word.

There are therefore some things we need to do from the perspective of the partnership that should exist between Ukraine and the NATO alliance. There are things that must also be done to meet Ukraine's needs. Although we obviously favour the diplomatic option, we cannot deny that Ukraine is asking for Canada's support, which, admittedly, is relatively limited.

Although the Standing Committee on National Defence noted in 2017 that a number of experts would support Canada selling weapons to Ukraine, the reality is that Canada itself has few weapons that could help Ukraine, particularly in terms of anti-tank and anti-aircraft defence.

There are certainly things that can be done in terms of intelligence and cybersecurity, considering that Ukraine was recently the victim of a Russian cyber-attack seeking to destabilize its institutions. There is work to be done on that front, alongside diplomatic efforts, to get these parties talking and to try to find a peaceful resolution to the current conflict.

• (1940)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned dialogue, and I agree. I would like to remind him of the three diplomatic channels all allies are currently using.

The first is direct dialogue between the U.S. and Russia, and we are, of course, in touch with the Americans on this.

The second is between NATO and Russia. As a NATO member, we are actively participating in NATO's dialogue with Russia.

The third is the Normandy format, which developed out of the Minsk treaty and which states that four countries must engage in diplomatic discussions on security in Europe, in particular with respect to Ukraine. The four countries include Ukraine and Russia, along with France and Germany.

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This is why President Macron spoke with President Putin. This is why I had the opportunity to dine at the Quai d'Orsay with my French counterpart, Jean-Yves Le Drian. I was there to speak directly with France, and I also had the opportunity to speak with the German foreign affairs minister. That is why France and Germany's position on this matter is extremely important.

I hear my colleague's concern about being able to talk to the Russian government given that we strongly disagree with it. That is why I took the opportunity to speak with my Russian counterpart while I was at the OSCE meeting in Sweden just the other month. I raised the subject of Ukraine. I told him I was extremely concerned, and his reaction was a very strong one.

We will continue to raise those concerns. I want to point out to my colleague that this is actually not a potential invasion of Ukraine, but rather another potential invasion of Ukraine, because Crimea has already been invaded and the Donbass is currently occupied as well.

What we need to keep in mind at this point is the fact that one country has decided to use force to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another country.

My question to my colleague, whose political allegiance I am obviously aware of, is this: How can he condone one country violating the sovereignty of another by use of force?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, how can the minister claim that we support Russia's forcible annexation of Ukrainian territory? Based on what speech, what intervention, what press release can she say that? What intervention by the Bloc Québécois can she refer to to claim today that we support Russian aggression?

If she had been listening a few moments ago, she would have heard me say that the attack against Crimea and Russia's destabilizing efforts in the Donbas region are absolutely and totally unacceptable. How can she now claim that we support these aggressions?

It insults everyone's intelligence to hear the Minister of Foreign Affairs say such a thing here in the House today. It is totally unacceptable. I hope that the minister did not invoke the Normandy Format to avoid responsibility for the role Canada must play if it truly wants to play its past role, namely the role of helping resolve disputes between countries.

I hope the minister is not simply shrugging off responsibility by putting it on the shoulders of France and Germany. Thank goodness that France and Germany are not playing up the danger like the Anglo-Saxon bloc of countries, if I can put it that way. It is totally unacceptable to say such a thing.

When the minister tells us that there is communication between NATO and Russia, she should know that the partnership for peace between them is de facto non-existent, because not only is there no longer any collaboration on the civilian and military levels, but the respective missions of the two are over. How can the minister claim that there is a relationship between NATO and Russia when it has been almost completely severed?

As for relations between the United States and Russia, we cannot applaud the fact that President Biden is also crying wolf about a

possible "re-invasion"—let us call it that, because the minister insists—or a new invasion into Ukrainian territory.

When the U.S. government cries wolf and says that if the intervention were limited, the reaction from western countries could be just as limited, I think that should give pause for thought.

I will say it again. It is a good thing that Germany and France are there to try to actually find a diplomatic solution, because this does not seem to be the path that Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs wants to take.

• (1945)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would prefer to make a comment rather than ask the member a question. He explained his position very clearly as well as that of the Bloc Québécois. I would therefore prefer to comment on the narrative.

I am a Canadian MP and I am of Polish descent. I was born in Poland and lived the history of eastern Europe. I would say that when we talk about NATO moving its borders closer to Russia, it means that countries like Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia and others asked of their own accord to become members of NATO to escape the oppression from Moscow and the Russian federation.

It was a choice, not just in terms of foreign policy, but a choice made by these peoples to escape from those who occupied their countries and who were part of the Warsaw Pact. When we talk about the history, we can say that NATO is not the aggressor, but rather the one who accepted new members that wanted to be part of an alliance that would defend them.

I think it is important to point that out. It is not the Russian interests that should prevail, but the interests of these Eastern European peoples and countries.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, in my youth I visited Poland when it was under the communist regime. At the time, General Jaruzelski was in power in Warsaw.

I was also able to travel to Hungary and Czechoslovakia, which both had communist governments. I understand that these countries sought to get out from under the control, or at least the influence, of their powerful neighbour Russia, then the Soviet Union.

That is not the point I want to make. I am simply pointing out what Jocelyn Coulon, a former Liberal adviser, said about how NATO failed to keep its word. NATO promised Mikhail Gorbachev that it would never expand beyond East Germany.

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That said, the countries in question were clearly acting in good faith by wanting to join NATO. That is not what this is about. This is about the promises that the west made to Russia, to Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, that NATO would not expand beyond East Germany.

From the Russian perspective, we failed to keep our word, but does that undermine the legitimacy of the countries that wanted to join NATO? Absolutely not.

• (1950)

[*English*]

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while New Democrats support the non-combat military training, we do not support the provision of arms or lethal military gear, as my colleague so adequately put forward.

I noticed the member across the way reacted quite well, so could he expand on his thoughts to the pushing from Conservative members on that provision of lethal military gear and what the consequences of that are.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, Canada has already been supplying non-lethal gear to Ukraine since 2014. As I have already stated publicly, if we were to provide so-called lethal weapons, Russian soldiers would not be shaking in their boots. Canada is unfortunately not in a position to provide the anti-tank or anti-aircraft weapons Ukraine would need to hold off Russian aggression.

The Conservatives like to say that we should sell weapons, but the truth of the matter is that we are not really in a position to provide military assistance to Ukraine. We must be mindful of that.

[*English*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

On behalf of all New Democrats, our thoughts are with the Ukrainian community in this difficult time. Ukrainian communities here in Canada, in Ukraine and around the world are not only grappling with a global pandemic, which has caused incredible difficulties in people's lives and immense sacrifice and hardship, but also, on top of that, the people in Ukraine are now worried and deeply filled with anxiety and fear about the threat of invasion.

In all of this, I want to be very clear that New Democrats collectively stand in full solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

[*Translation*]

My thoughts are with the Ukrainian community at this difficult time. Our Ukrainian friends not only have to deal with the pandemic like the rest of us, but on top of that, many are concerned about the threat of a Russian invasion. The NDP stands in solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

[*English*]

We know this fear, worry and anxiety is based on legitimate threats. Russia has already invaded Ukraine and at this very mo-

ment, as we all know, illegally occupies both Crimea and Donetsk, occupations New Democrats strongly denounce.

The ongoing and active conflict in eastern Ukraine continues to cause a heavy humanitarian toll for millions of civilians. Even before this last escalation of tension, 2.9 million people, including over 400,000 children, required humanitarian assistance. Children in eastern Ukraine have grown up knowing conflict for the past eight years, enduring violence, shelling and being displaced from their homes. Escalating hostilities could lead to further mass displacement, a refugee crisis and an untold number of casualties.

[*Translation*]

This conflict continues to have serious humanitarian consequences. For example, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes, and the regional economy has been devastated.

[*English*]

Canada was the first country to recognize Ukraine's independence 30 years ago. We must continue to support an independent and democratic Ukraine.

New Democrats believe Canada should continue to work with our allies to find a real diplomatic solution to this looming crisis. Canada should focus its efforts on diplomacy, non-lethal assistance and economic sanctions against Russia, including but not limited to the Magnitsky sanctions as a deterrent. Bloodshed must be avoided through coordinated international pressure and stronger sanctions.

• (1955)

[*Translation*]

It is not by sending guns that we will succeed in stabilizing the situation. In the wake of decisions by Conservatives and Liberals, Canada's diplomatic corps has been severely reduced such that we now have less diplomatic leverage to help in this conflict. Nevertheless, we believe that peace can only be achieved through diplomacy, not war.

[*English*]

New Democrats have always believed that peace is achievable only through diplomacy. New Democrats urge the Canadian government to continue to do its part to support the people of Ukraine through robust diplomacy. Millions of eastern Europeans are counting on us to help foster peace. Let us not disappoint them.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased and relieved to hear the leader of the NDP say that he stands in solidarity with Ukraine.

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However, the NDP member for Winnipeg Centre described the Ukrainian government as “an anti-Semitic, neo-nazi & fascist militia”. The NDP member for Churchill—Keewatinook Aski retweeted a suggestion that our Deputy Prime Minister’s “Nazi past” is the reason that Canada is supporting Ukrainian sovereignty.

Will the leader of the NDP denounce these inflammatory, offensive comments from his caucus members in the House, comments which I would say resemble, very eerily, Russian propaganda?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, the members in question expressed regret about those comments. I want to be very clear that New Democrats stand in solidarity with Ukraine. We absolutely condemn the actions of Russia. We condemn the illegal occupations that are ongoing.

As a further point, my colleague is right to raise concerns about the language. Language that is thrown around that strikes the core of anti-Semitism has no place in our Parliament. New Democrats are strongly in solidarity with not just Ukraine and Ukrainian people, but we are opposed to language that is used inappropriately.

When throwing around words like “the Holocaust” or “Nazi”, we have to know that they have real, dire impacts and that they have dire impacts on the Jewish community. For that reason, we are very concerned about that type of language when it is used inappropriately.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on what was just asked. The leader of the NDP just apologized for the hateful comments that came from the member of his caucus for Winnipeg Centre. Will this member be sanctioned for her very callous and hateful comments about the Ukrainian army, as well as the people of Ukraine? Never mind the Ukrainian Canadians who make up a large percentage of her own riding of Winnipeg Centre, including the headquarters of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, which is in Winnipeg Centre.

To have one of his members get up and try to label those who are fighting for their freedom today as Nazis and calling them anti-Semitic, to me, is deplorable. I would ask that the leader of the NDP sanction that individual in his caucus.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear that New Democrats stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. I know there are so many Ukrainian Canadians, people who come from Ukraine, who have deep ties and deep connections and care deeply about what is going on. They are seeing their relatives and their friends right now living under fear, anxiety and worry about further invasion.

The escalating conflict has borne a lot of pain already and continues to apply a lot of pressure and a lot of fear on Ukrainian Canadians, as well as Ukrainians across the world and, of course, in Ukraine.

I want Ukrainian Canadians and the Ukrainian community at large to know that we stand in solidarity with them. We support an independent democratic Ukraine, and we will continue to be allies and to push for de-escalation and a diplomatic solution to protect the people of Ukraine.

• (2000)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his support for the Ukrainian community.

We have seen, under the Conservatives and then the Liberals, a decimation of international development, our foreign policy and Canada's role in the world. Can he comment on what this could look like if Canada still had strong peace keeping, diplomatic and international development efforts?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, we have seen that Canada's role in the world has been diminished. Consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments have been cutting our resources, whether it is the diplomatic corps or our peacekeeping roles. If we had that role, we could play a greater partnership in pushing for peace and we could have a greater impact on the global stage, and that is something the New Democrats have continued to push for, increasing our peace keeping and our federal diplomatic corps, so that we can play that role in pushing for and promoting peace.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my leader, the member for Burnaby South, for his comments tonight in support of the Ukrainian community.

As many people have said before tonight, Canada has a very special relationship with Ukraine. Canada was the first country to recognize Ukraine as an independent sovereign country 30 years ago. There are over 1.4 million Canadians who identify as being of Ukrainian heritage in Canada, and while Ukrainians have chosen to settle in communities across Canada, nowhere else has their impact been as great as within the prairie provinces, such as my own home province of Alberta. Ukrainians have been instrumental in building our communities, our cities, our provinces and our country.

Edmonton has a strong, vibrant Ukrainian community. Recently, I visited one of my dear friends, Theodora Harasymiw. She is a Ukrainian artist. She makes unbelievably beautiful mosaics that celebrate the pride and the history of the Ukrainian people in Canada, and I am very proud to say that the New Democratic Party stands strongly in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

Over the years, my NDP colleagues have called repeatedly for greater support for Ukraine through increased development aid, for democratic and governance support, for Canada to extend visa-free travel to Ukrainians and for increased trade relationships, such as the 2016 Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. Linda Duncan, my predecessor in this position, with whom many members have worked, was actually awarded the Executive Hetman Award for her support of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Canadian community.

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As the NDP foreign affairs critic and the vice-chair of the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, I will continue the work that has been done by my NDP colleagues to strengthen Canada-Ukraine relations, and it is that special relationship that has me rising to speak in the House today. At this moment in time, when Ukrainian Canadians are so worried about their friends and families, and people in Ukraine are increasingly being threatened by an aggressive and belligerent Russia, Canada must do more to work with its allies. We must work with the United Nations, we must work with the OSCE and we must work with NATO to find real diplomatic solutions to this looming crisis. Canada must not escalate and inflame an already precarious situation, but rather focus its efforts on diplomacy, non-lethal assistance and economic sanctions, including Magnitsky sanctions, to deter Russia from escalating this conflict.

I am worried about my friends, and I am worried about everyone in Ukraine. We cannot give Putin a further excuse to invade. We have to use every diplomatic tool we have, including sanctions, to prevent a devastating war that would cost lives. If Russia further invades into Ukrainian territory, Ukrainians would pay the price. Ukrainian civilians would be injured, displaced and killed. Children and women in Ukraine would bear the brunt of this violence, and those impacts would be felt for decades or longer.

UN Secretary General Guterres has urged the use of diplomacy, stating that there should not be any military intervention, but rather that diplomacy is the way to solve the problems. Under-Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo repeated that any military intervention involving Russia or NATO alliance forces must be averted.

Canadian Global Affairs Institute fellow Andrew Rasiulis, a defence expert and former Department of National Defence official, has explicitly said that if Canada sends arms to Ukraine, it would aggravate the situation:

You'd be neutralizing your effect. If you put arms in and then try to negotiate—you could do both, there's no law against it—but you'd be neutralizing your effect.

There is still time. Working with its allies, Canada can de-escalate this conflict. We can use economic sanctions. We can include removal of Russia from the SWIFT international payment system and place sanctions on Russia's sovereign debt. How we respond to this crisis and how we use diplomacy and sanctions to de-escalate this crisis will be an indication of whether Canada is indeed back on the world stage.

● (2005)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the statement that Canada does have a very special and unique relationship with Ukraine. When something is happening in Ukraine, it matters in Canada, not only to the 1.4 million people of Ukrainian-Canadian heritage but to Canadians as a whole. That is why we need to have the government engaged, and the \$120-million loan is badly needed. It is warranted and it is supported by the government. We have seen a need over the years to train 30,000 military personnel in Ukraine, and to enter into agreements such as the free trade agreement to give more hope to the people of Ukraine and here in Canada.

I am hoping we will hear more tonight about that special relationship, and through that special relationship we have an obligation. I believe the government needs to continue to move forward responsibly, as we have, thinking in terms of how we can support the people of Ukraine.

Could my colleague provide her thoughts on that?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for again highlighting just how important the relationship is that we have with Ukraine. There are many things we could do right now.

We could work with sanctions. We should in fact be investing more in our diplomatic corps so that when there are conflicts around the world Canada could take back that place that we have seen so diminished, under both the Conservatives and the Liberals. We do not have a peacekeeping diplomatic corps. We are no longer the convener of world peace. We are no longer who we should be, and it is disappointing.

I would like to see Canada invest in things like international development, in our diplomatic corps and in peacekeepers. We had promises of peacekeepers going out into the field that have not been met. It has not even been close. There are so many more things we could do that would help in situations like what we are facing in Ukraine and in future situations. This is not the first time, and it is not the last time, that a bully is going to try to invade and impose its will on another country.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will just respond to some of the member's comments. I do not know if I will have a question. It is more just a commentary.

She compared the Russian Federation and President Putin with a bully. We know that bullies only respond to strength, not to more talking. At this point, more talking without some type of action, without a response that strengthens Ukraine's capacity to defend itself, is just going to encourage President Putin and the military to keep preparing for war. They have been moving troops into Belarus on this fake training exercise, so they have this longer undefended border that they could invade through.

Other countries are already contributing firearms and weapons to Ukraine, whether Turkey, Latvia, Estonia or Poland. They have been providing arms to Ukraine. We know they need to defend themselves. They need the means to try to equalize the huge differences in forces between an all-weather, very professional combat force in the Russian military, and Ukraine, which is still trying to pick itself out of fighting an endless war with Russian separatists, supported by the Russian Federation.

More talk is not going to achieve this. The bully is not going to go away. The bully is getting more arms, more people and more weapons, and it is delivering more crushing blows to the Ukrainian government.

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• (2010)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with my colleague across the way. Hitting a bully is not the best way to deal with bullying. Realistically, I have a 13-year-old son, and I certainly would not want the member advising him how to deal with bullying at his school.

I think there are better ways for us to do that. There are more responsible ways to do that. I would say that, for example, if someone is dealing with a person who is being aggressive and they punch them in the nose, it is not going to de-escalate the situation. It is not going to turn down the temperature. To be perfectly fair, I am not going to be in Ukraine. The member is not going to be in Ukraine. There are women, there are children, and there are civilians who are going to get caught in the middle of this.

When this is escalated, those are the people who pay the price. It is not him, not me and not anyone in this chamber. We have an obligation to be responsible. We have an obligation to seek a peaceful resolution.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise as a part of this emergency take-note debate on Ukraine and the buildup of Russian forces along its borders. I will be sharing my time with the member for Parkdale—High Park.

A week and a half ago, I was joined by a number of my colleagues in requesting this emergency debate. We thought it was important that members from all parts of this country and from all parties have a chance to discuss and debate Canada's and the international community's response to this crisis that is so important not only to the people of Ukraine but to our allies and to Canada. I would like to thank members from all sides of the House for supporting the motion for this debate.

Just over 30 years ago, Ukraine declared its independence. When Ukraine declared its independence, I was watching the news coverage with my grandfather, Ivan. My grandfather was a great Ukrainian patriot. When he lived in Ukraine under the Soviet Union, he risked his life on many occasions to try to defend Ukrainian culture and heritage and to allow for and enable Ukraine's independence. When Ukraine became independent, we were watching it on the news. It was probably the proudest day of his life.

I was about 14 years old at the time, and I remember my grandfather saying to me that now that Ukraine was independent we had to keep working to defend its independence. I called him *Dido*. I said to him, "*Dido*, what are you talking about? Ukraine just declared its independence. The people of Ukraine want it. The international community has recognized it. You are wrong. The battle is over."

I was wrong. In 2014, Russia twice invaded Ukraine: once in Crimea, when it illegally annexed it, and then in eastern Ukraine. That war has raged until this very day. Fourteen thousand Ukrainians have died in that war and one and a half million people have been displaced. In 2014, the world did not do enough. It did not do everything possible to deter an invasion, and it did not do everything possible to support Ukraine.

Recently, Russia has amassed 100,000 troops on Ukraine's borders along with significant military assets. This aggression is a major threat not only to Ukraine, but to Canada and to our allies. An

invasion of Ukraine would put Russian soldiers on NATO's eastern border. Just imagine the military, diplomatic and financial resources Canada and other countries would have to invest to defend our NATO allies from a further invasion. It also puts Canada under threat. Russia is our neighbour to the north, and Russia has tried in the past to claim parts of the Canadian Arctic for its own.

If we allow an invasion of Ukraine, I can only imagine the message that would send to countries that wished to invade their neighbours or change borders by force. I can only imagine the message it would send to Russia with regards to the Canadian Arctic. That is why Ukraine's security is Europe's security, it is the world's security and it is Canada's security. That is why I believe Canada and its allies must do everything possible to deter an invasion of Ukraine and to support Ukrainians.

Over the past eight years, this government has done a tremendous amount to support Ukraine. We heard the Prime Minister and the minister speak to that. Last week, the Prime Minister announced a number of important initiatives: the expansion of Operation Unifier, humanitarian aid, a \$120-million loan, etc. He also announced that Minister Anand, our Minister of Defence, would be travelling to Ukraine to understand what Ukraine's needs were and that all options were on the table. The minister is in Ukraine now. I hope that we do everything possible and everything we can to deter an invasion and support Ukraine.

On that day with my grandfather in 1991, I was wrong. In 2014, the world was wrong. We cannot afford to get this wrong again. There is too much at stake.

Ukraine's security is Europe's security, it is the world's security and it is Canada's security, so let us take stock of what is needed. Let us take every step we can and every step that is possible. If we do this, we will succeed in deterring an invasion. If we do that, we will have much more to celebrate, not for one year and not for just another 30 years, but for generations to come in Ukraine, in Canada and around the world.

Slava Kanadi! Slava Ukraini!

The Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Calgary Shepard.

Before he goes to his question, I just want to remind members that although I realize it is kind of relaxed and we are here, when we are referring to someone we refer to their title and not their name. I know sometimes it slips away on us, so I just want to remind everyone.

The hon. member for Calgary Shepard.

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● (2015)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was what I would term a strong endorsement of support for Ukraine and for ensuring its territorial integrity. I am of Polish origin. Many eastern Europeans fled to Canada over the last century. They usually came here in different waves. Eastern Europe is still a troubled region, typically because of the Russian Federation and the different names that it has been known by.

The member talked about doing everything possible and about all the options out there. I want to remind him that countries such as Turkey, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Poland are sending arms to Ukraine.

Could the member comment on that, and on whether the Government of Canada will be doing that as well?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Speaker, like I said, Canada and the international community need to do everything possible.

As the Prime Minister announced, the minister is in Ukraine to assess Ukraine's needs and what can be best done to deter an invasion. I look forward to hearing what the Minister of National Defence has to say when she returns. Like I said, it is incumbent upon all of us in the international community to do everything we can, because it is not just in Ukraine's interests but in Canada's interests as well.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for articulating so well exactly what is at stake here. We must remain steadfast in supporting Ukraine.

I am very pleased to see that our government is standing up to Russian aggression and that we are doing so with every tool available: with our diplomatic tools, as we have seen both our foreign affairs minister and our defence minister in Ukraine in recent days; with over 400 sanctions on individuals or entities; with a sovereign loan of \$120 million to Ukraine; and through our presence there and years of military support to Ukraine through Operation Unifier and Operation Reassurance.

I would like to ask my colleague why it is so important that we use every single tool at our disposal to show our resolute support for the people of Ukraine.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question and for her support.

I think it is important for a number of reasons. First of all, when we look at what could happen if Russia invades Ukraine, Russia will have again violated the sovereignty of its neighbour Ukraine. This is not the first neighbour's sovereignty that Russia will have violated. It invaded Georgia in 2008.

This is a threat to the international world-based order where we respect each other's boundaries, and we respect each other's borders. If this is allowed to continue, other countries, be it Russia or others, will get the message that the international community will tolerate military powers invading their neighbours. We cannot allow that. It is a threat to our European allies, and it is a threat to Canada.

As I said before, Russia has in the past tried to lay claims to the Canadian Arctic. I think we have to give some serious thought as Canadians to what would happen and what kinds of threats are posed to us and to our allies in Europe, if Russia is allowed to do this.

Vladimir Putin has, in the past, expressed his desire to reconstitute the Soviet Union under Russia with some of the eastern European countries that my Conservative colleague spoke about. Let us imagine the threat to them. This is a threat not only to Ukraine but to Europe and to Canada, and this is why it is so important that we take every measure possible.

● (2020)

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as New Democrats, we support the extension of Operation Unifier, but we remain concerned about reports of extremism within small parts of the Ukraine military and problems in our own military. We feel that our own forces should not train or support any far-right extremist groups. Does the member agree that we should assist the Ukrainian military to become more democratic and accountable, and how are we doing that currently?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Speaker, it is important that we help the Ukrainian military improve in every way possible. In fact, that is what I think Operation Unifier has been doing.

If we look back at all the various elements of training that Operation Unifier has provided, it is not just combat training. It is leadership. It is integration. It is learning how the militaries of countries that are part of NATO operate. That is so critical for Ukraine, because not only does strengthening Ukraine's military allow it to defend itself against these Russian invasions, but it increases the potential, the probability, that Ukraine will be able to enter NATO. That co-operation, that integration among NATO allies, is one of things that makes this defensive alliance possible.

I think Operation Unifier is an incredibly important mission, and it plays an incredibly important role in the short term and also in the long term.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today on January 31 here in Ottawa, I want to reference something at the start of my comments. I agree fundamentally on the importance of protests and free expression in any democracy, but I also agree we must all denounce hatred and vilification. Things like the waving of swastikas and Confederate flags are jarring at all times, particularly on the fifth anniversary of the Quebec mosque shooting and days after International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

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Equally jarring is seeing people dance on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The National War Memorial is dedicated to those veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice to give us the freedom to do things like protest. Those veterans deserve our respect because they died fighting authoritarianism.

This brings me to authoritarianism right now, and what we are witnessing in eastern Europe and with Vladimir Putin. Let us make no mistake. The aggressor in this context is Russia. It is Russia who invaded and annexed Crimea illegally. It is Russia who invaded Donbass eight years ago. It is Russia who is now the aggressor amassing 100,000 troops on Ukraine's eastern and northern borders.

Our support of Ukraine is steadfast. That is not a partisan issue, thankfully, in this chamber. It is based on our long and steadfast history. In recent years it has meant things like Operation Unifier and Operation Reassurance. It has meant sanctions under the Magnitsky legislation, and it has meant things like the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. In the last several weeks, literally in the last 14 days, that bond has ramped up.

What have we done? What concrete actions have been taken? This has been put into some debate on the part of the official opposition.

We have sent HMCS *Montréal* to the Mediterranean as part of Operation Reassurance. That left Halifax two weeks ago. We have had the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Kyiv. The minister of defence is in Kyiv as I speak. We have sent \$50 million in humanitarian assistance, something the NDP has injected into this debate, rightfully, about assisting on the ground. That is being done with Canadian federal dollars. We have provided sovereign loans to the tune of \$120 million, something emphasized by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We have not just renewed Operation Unifier, but we have expanded Operation Unifier. We are providing military equipment. We are also addressing something that is brand new, which did not exist at the time the official opposition was in government, such as cyber-threats. We are addressing cyber-threats and using Canadian know-how to team up with Ukrainian know-how to better assist in that particular aspect of the fight.

We have launched a renegotiation of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, and I was happy to participate in that launch with the Minister of International Trade.

Why does this matter? It matters because, as we have heard from my colleague from Etobicoke Centre, the security of Ukraine is the security of Europe, which is the security of the world and, ergo, Canada's security.

It matters to Canadians. We have heard the member opposite for Calgary Shepard talking about his own Polish background. I represent, for example, Polish Canadians and Ukrainian Canadians. For any person in this country who is from eastern Europe, or who has ancestry from eastern Europe, they know what Russian aggression looked like under the Soviet Union and they are seeing it again now. It is causing them considerable anxiety, anxiety to which we must respond as a nation-state.

What is at stake? It is the sovereign ability of any nation to determine, on its own, its security arrangements and to make independent decisions about how to protect its citizens.

To those who say Canada is a small player and the actions it takes will be inconsequential, I say they are dead wrong. They are dead wrong because Canada can lead and has led.

How have we led? When we deliver \$120 million in sovereign loans, the EU then follows with additional money in sovereign loans, because they see Canada leading by example. We have heard Jens Stoltenberg, the secretary general of NATO, reference the leadership of Canada. That is what we need more of. That is why I called, together with the member for Etobicoke Centre and six of my colleagues, for this debate this evening.

What I pledge in this chamber right now, on behalf of my constituents and on behalf of the Canadian people, is that we need to continue to do more.

What more can be done? Two things can be done. We can address economic sanctions as a package, and we can address economic sanctions now. We need to demonstrate to a person like Putin that the cost of potentially going to war is far more expensive than the cost of peace.

Lastly, we must address Ukraine's defence where it is needed. Where we can provide assistance in defending Ukraine, we must do so, including things such as providing electronic jamming equipment, which I understand the Ukrainian minister of defence has recently put in a request for. Those are the types of things I will advocate for in this chamber, I will advocate for with my government and I will advocate for on behalf of the Ukrainian Canadians whom I represent.

• (2025)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to thank the member for what I also think is a speech in strong support of the right of Ukraine to its self-determination and its borders.

I mentioned there is a series of countries that have offered and already transferred weapons and arms to Ukraine in an effort to try to bolster its military forces to act as a deterrent to the Russian Federation potentially invading different parts of Ukraine and prolonging the war it has been fighting with them for several years.

Will the member perhaps explain the Government of Canada's delays in sending arms from Canada to Ukraine in support of our allies to ensure they can defend themselves against Russian aggression?

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Chair, I take issue with a certain characterization he made that the Government of Canada has been delaying. The fact that I was able to list about five different actions we have taken in a 14-day span is the antithesis of delay. We have taken direct action.

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Most notably, the issue of providing assistance to defend Ukraine is a live one. It is one where all options are on the table. That is my first point. My second point is that we have to consider what Canada has been able to do thus far. Since Operation Unifier was launched, we have provided training to no less than 33,000 Ukrainian soldiers. That is an unbelievable number. It is a significant impact for a middle power in terms of providing security and assistance in the sovereignty and defence of Ukraine.

I have been there myself to observe those troops during the celebration for independence on the Maidan in 2018. I have seen what Canadians are doing. I have seen what Ukrainian Canadian soldiers are doing on the ground. It is needed, it is wanted and it is respected. That is more of the type of contribution we need to see.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Chair, we heard members from the governing party mention several times that the crucial thing, the thing that matters most in this case, is diplomacy and deterrence.

Many have criticized the government's diplomatic efforts, saying that it was focusing a bit too much on soft power in circumstances that did not call for it. The actions taken may also be causing some confusion. The Ukrainians are complaining that we are not responding to their request for weapons and that we are responding too late, while Russia is accusing Canada of being too alarmist by recalling its diplomatic corps.

I have a simple question. Can my colleague suggest what could have been done better in terms of diplomacy, since that is what is at the heart of this issue for the government?

● (2030)

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Chair, that is a good question. To be honest, from a diplomatic point of view, western allies need a more unified approach. For one thing, we have not talked about the Nord Stream 2 pipeline during this evening's debate.

[*English*]

Germany is reliant upon Nord Stream 2 as a source of energy. This is causing some division among western nations. We know the European Parliament, areas of Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are against Nord Stream 2. If that kind of project goes ahead, it poses some instability within the western alliance. It is that kind of diplomacy we need to unify the western alliance so that we can approach projects like Nord Stream 2 in a unified manner and approach combatting Russian aggression in a unified manner.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Chair, I have quite a strong community in London from the diaspora, the Ukrainian folks there. Daria, the president of the London chapter of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, brought her concerns directly to me.

Considering the member has such a diverse community, I would like to hear some of the concerns he is hearing directly from his community members as to what is ultimately going on and the government's response to it.

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Chair, what I am hearing from constituents in my community is the anxiety, fear and concerns about action and

wanting as much action as possible as quickly as possible. I am hearing from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. The president of the congress lives in my riding.

What I am also hearing is that, when people misconstrue what is actually being provided and misconstrue the situation among the Ukrainian armed forces, it does not help matters much.

I am going to return to a comment raised earlier about the member for Winnipeg South and the very volatile comments she made, which unfortunately still exist on Twitter as I speak. Yes, an apology has been made by the leader of the NDP, but the fact that those tweets from the member for Winnipeg South remain on the record is not constructive to the conversation or to the support of Ukraine.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

I want to make sure I correct the member for Parkdale—High Park, who just spoke. It was the member for Winnipeg Centre who made that tweet, not the member for Winnipeg South. It was a colleague of his, and I know it would be unfair to him to associate him with those ridiculous and hurtful comments by the member for Winnipeg Centre.

I know that all of us here, first and foremost, stand in unity with Ukraine, and I know that we all stand here to denounce the aggressive escalation of actions taken by Vladimir Putin and the Russian Federation. We all know that Putin is provoked by weakness. That is why it is so important that we all come together and stand in unison to denounce how the Russian Federation has tried to force NATO's hand, is using Ukraine as a bargaining chip in all of this and is prepared to again invade Ukrainian sovereign territory, on top of the illegally occupied lands that they are on in Donbass and Crimea, territories which we, especially those of us on the Conservative benches, will always see as Ukrainian sovereign lands. I would never acknowledge that they are Russian, even though they have their forces holding the citizens in Crimea and Donbass at gunpoint.

Vladimir Putin has played this game before. It is coincidental that it always seems to happen around the time of the winter Olympics, whether it was the invasion of Crimea after the Sochi Olympics and before that in Georgia and South Ossetia. It seems the Olympics are the trigger for Vladimir Putin to invade a neighbour. Ukraine has done nothing but try to get along with the Russian bear to the north. It has definitely wanted to see more integration with the European Union, with NATO and its western allies.

Those of us who are of Ukrainian heritage are proud of our Ukrainian heritage, and we have always stood up for Ukraine. Luckily, I am an elected member, as many members here are, and I can stand and denounce Vladimir Putin and his kleptocrats in the Kremlin for the disgusting display they are putting on right now, with over 140,000 troops positioned along Ukraine's border. They have troops in Belarus, they have troops across northern Ukraine, right around Kharkiv, down through the Donbass and Rostov-on-Don. Their navy is sailing on the Sea of Asov and of course on the Black Sea, with 30,000 troops in Crimea today. All of that is just sabre-rattling, but we could see a greater escalation.

As a Conservative and a Ukrainian, I am proud that, as was very well articulated by the Leader of the Opposition, it was Conservative governments that recognized Ukraine sovereignty back in 1991. It was a Canadian government under Stephen Harper that started Operation Unifier, that provided the first defensive weapons for Ukraine, that worked with it on reform and trying to de-escalate the situation, because we understood that a strong Ukraine would be a deterrent to an invading Russia. NATO gets that, and that is why NATO has always kept the door open to have an open-door policy with Ukraine as a potential member. Russia is coming forward now with ridiculous demands about trying to increase its sphere of security, trying to get NATO to withdraw troops from neighbouring nations that are already NATO members and saying that Ukraine can never get there.

We know that we have to do more. We have to use Magnitsky sanctions and other economic sanctions to deter Russia now, not after it invades. We know Ukraine wants lethal weapons. The former ambassador of Ukraine to Canada, Andriy Shevchenko, also said it needs to have lethal weapons. We need to restore the RADARSAT images that the Liberals cancelled in 2016. We thank the Liberals for what they did in expanding Operation Unifier. It is something we have been calling for since 2019 and 2021, but there is more that needs to be done. The half measures that have been taken so far by the Liberal government have not deterred Vladimir Putin. All they have done is appease him.

• (2035)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Chair, I want to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for his intervention. He certainly knows a great deal about this topic, and I have always respected everything he has had to say. I have learned a lot from him on this file.

We used to sit on the defence committee together. At least I used to be there. I imagine he still is. We had the opportunity to travel to Ukraine a number of years ago. One of the things I felt so inspired by as a Canadian was the stories we heard when we were there. I remember the member and I sitting among other people when the chair of the defence committee of the Ukraine told us that other countries were coming to support Ukraine because Canada was there. Canada played an incredible leadership role in mobilizing and encouraging other countries to get involved and be part of that presence in Ukraine.

Can the member share his thoughts on how Canada's role goes beyond, at times, just monetary and other asset resources?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair, that was a great trip to go over there and see how our military was working with and training the Ukrainian armed forces and Ukrainian national guard.

I want to thank all those members of the Canadian Armed Forces who, over the past eight years, have been going back and forth to Ukraine and working with them. By training Ukrainian troops, we have not only made them better soldiers, but we have also helped save lives.

We know that more of that has to be done, but that is why we started calling, back in 2018, for a long-term expansion and extension of Operation Unifier. Conservatives have also been calling for,

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since 2018, us to provide lethal defensive weapons because Ukraine has asked for them. Our other allies have provided them. Why is Canada not doing the same?

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would also like to thank the member for his comments. I have worked with him in the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group. He is extremely knowledgeable on this topic, and I have also learned a great deal from him.

Earlier in the year, we were on a television interview together and he brought something up that has been sitting with me for a very long time. As I listen to Conservatives talk about how we need to escalate, have lethal weapons and amp up this war talk, my thoughts go back to when he said the Conservative government would concede not one inch. How did that work out in 2014? That was the government of the Conservatives, and it gave more than an inch.

Why does he think that a Conservative government, which was not able to prevent the invasion of Ukraine in 2014, would be able to prevent the invasion with the exact same rhetoric in 2022?

• (2040)

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair, our rhetoric needs to be strong. It is one thing that Vladimir Putin understands. There is only one person that is talking about war in Ukraine and that is Vladimir Putin.

However, what we are talking about, what the Ukrainian-Canadian community is talking about, and what the people of Ukraine are asking for is the ability to defend themselves. They are prepared to do the street fighting if Russian soldiers march over the border again to try to grab more Ukraine territory. We want to make sure they have the ability to do to protect their homeland, their families and their communities.

In not providing those lethal defensive weapons, and in only providing empty rhetoric, we have failed them. It is time for us to stand up, do the right thing and stand with our friends, families and allies in Ukraine.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I have the opportunity to work with the member closely. I have been on the defence committee with him, but also on the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group.

I was a little surprised at one moment during his speech when he talked about how the Conservative government sent lethal weapons to Ukraine. The Conservative government did not send lethal weapons to Ukraine. I do think it is interesting that he spoke to that here and is advocating for that here, suggesting that it has been done in the past, but it has not been done in the past. In 2014, the world did not do enough.

As someone who has been on the defence committee and knows the armed forces so well, could he speak to the importance of training the Ukrainian armed forces and the impact that is having for the Ukrainian armed forces as it defends itself against the Russian invasion.

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Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair, I said we should provide defensive weapons. Just to be clear on it, Canada actually approved export permits for a Canadian company selling sniper rifles to Ukraine and we helped facilitate that so that the Ukraine army could actually come here and buy high-quality Canadian sniper rifles to defend their territory. We made sure that those approvals and permits were put in place. We cannot even get that from the government today.

Therefore, I say this: Let us get off our duffs and let us do the right thing. Let us step up before Putin marches across the border, and provide the people of Ukraine with all the tools, whether they are sanctions or weapons, whether it is intelligence or financing, but give them all the tools so they can defend their own territory.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Chair, as the Conservative member of Parliament for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, I am proud to recognize the contributions that Canadians with Ukrainian heritage have made to Canada, including former governor general Ray Hnatyshyn and the Hon. Michael Starr, the first Canadian cabinet minister of Ukrainian descent. He was a member of the government of the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker who gave Canadians the Bill of Rights.

It bears repeating that Canada enjoys a special relationship with Ukraine. Almost 1.4 million Canadians can claim membership in the Ukrainian diaspora, the largest outside Ukraine and Russia. It is ironic that this debate is taking place while average Canadians have started a popular movement, the “Freedom Convoy”, to gain back freedoms Canadians enjoyed prior to the Liberal Party lockdown mandate.

It is ironic because the roots of the current crisis in Ukraine date back several years to the popular uprising that took place in Ukraine's capital of Kyiv. The Ukrainian revolution of the Maidan was the outpouring of people longing for freedom, democracy, the rule of law and the dream of a better future, which is the same thing our truckers want for all Canadians.

Canadians cheered the Orange Revolution and cheered again the revolution of the Maidan. Canada was the first western nation to recognize Ukraine's independence after the fall of the Soviet Union. Ukraine's citizens look to the west to realize their dreams. They are still looking for Canada.

At first, the revolution of the Maidan was met with brutal violence and aggression. The pro-Russian government of Viktor Yanukovich used the same kind of language to describe Ukrainian protesters as Canadians are hearing from the Prime Minister and certain members of his ruling clique to describe the Freedom Convoy. This eventually led the pro-Russian oligarch Viktor Yanukovich, who had been president of Ukraine, to abdicate, going into hiding and fleeing the country.

It was during this time of turmoil and chaos that Russian President Vladimir Putin seized the southern Ukrainian region of Crimea. Next came the taking of the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Historians make the reference to the events that preceded World War II and the seizing of territories from adjacent countries by Nazi Germany using the same excuses as the Russian President is using to seize Ukrainian territory.

Compounding today's crisis, America suffers from a domestically unpopular president whose policies have divided America. Power abhors a vacuum. There is no shortage of nations that are ready to exploit American weakness, such as China and Russia. That leads to the situation the world finds itself in today. Since 2014 and the Russian seizure of Crimea, almost 14,000 people have lost their lives. Many children have been maimed by land mines. There are a million and a half displaced persons.

Now is the time for diplomacy and diplomatic language. Lives are in the balance. What was the Prime Minister thinking when he signalled the state broadcaster, CBC, to float a wacky Russian conspiracy theory? Was he trying to discredit the Canadian freedom protesters with his clumsy attempt at disinformation? It failed.

Once again, the Prime Minister is the object of scorn and derision, not just among Canadians but around the world. All the world is watching Canadians and the protest outside. So far, the Russian media have been content to ridicule the leader of the Liberal Party. The people of Ukraine do not need the Prime Minister saying or doing something foolish. We know from the experience of World War I how quickly a seemingly minor, unrelated action can trigger a chain of events too horrible to think of.

There is no denying that we live in disturbingly anxious and contentious times. Apocalyptic assertions of climate change by the environment minister and ignorant tirades, public shaming tactics, and crude weapons of moral accusation by the Prime Minister have increasingly taken the place of rational discourse.

Even before the shameful of the Afghanistan debacle, there has been a disgust with the self-serving incompetence of the current government and its lack of a coherent foreign policy. The time for half measures has long passed. Ukraine needs Canada's support. The Prime Minister and his deputy have let Ukraine down.

● (2045)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Chair, I had a very hard time following the logic there, and I am sure if we had given the member another five minutes, maybe we would have had this connected back to Area 51 and aliens. The member was in Ukraine with me about three years ago when we were on the defence committee together, and she heard the chair of the defence committee in Ukraine talk about the incredible contribution that Canada makes to Operation Unifier and Operation Reassurance.

Can she somehow justify for me why she has such a different view of things from the realities of what we heard together when we were there?

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Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Chair, I recall that when we first decided to do Operation Reassurance and Operation Unifier, people were very happy. In fact, we were even instrumental in setting up the centre of excellence, StratCom, in Latvia for the misinformation that was being perpetuated by the Russians. However, I am afraid to say that the member opposite's memory is not quite that great. Although I would have loved to be in Ukraine with the defence committee, at that time I was unable to. I was with him there in spirit, and I hope to be there one day in the future, when Ukraine is enjoying peace throughout the land.

• (2050)

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to start off by saying that I feel like I am back in university. I spent a number of years at King's College, University of London, in England studying war studies. The history of Ukraine, the history of Russia and the geopolitics involved make for a very long history. We have to recognize the Ukrainian people and their sacrifice during World War II to liberate us from potential Nazi oppression. Over eight million people sacrificed their lives. They were sacrificed by a nation, Russia, that did not really care for them.

I am afraid that the narrative has been taken away and put on Russia, and it is trying to defend itself. A nation does not defend itself by expanding its borders and using another nation as a pawn. Would my colleague agree with that?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Chair, first of all, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his service in the Canadian military and his academics on the subject.

Yes, I do agree with him. I have nothing but courage, and I look to the actions of the Ukrainian people and their indomitable spirit as they go ahead to create a land and live in a land that is free.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I was listening intently to the member's remarks, and I think a lot of members during this debate have spoken about the need to deter Russia's further invasion of Ukraine. I am wondering if the member could speak to the steps that she believes Canada and the international community need to take to deter the further invasion of Ukraine.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Chair, we could continue showing our support and training the troops there. One of the things we could do is provide them with RADARSAT imagery so they can see more clearly what is forming in front of them and then protect themselves more fully.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, I am just following up on my question. One thing that has changed so much for the Ukrainian military since 2014 is its capability, and much of that capability has been developed through the support of its partner countries, such as Canada through Operation Unifier, the United States, the U.K. and others that have training missions.

I wonder if the member could speak to whether she believes this aspect has been important in helping the Ukrainians strengthen their position in defence of their country and whether this is an important aspect of deterrence as well.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Chair, the Ukrainian people are facing a military on land, sea and air. On land alone there are upwards of 130,000 troops. Their numbers are far smaller.

I am confident that what we have done in the past is helping them greatly, but 2014 came as a total surprise. In fact, I was at a NATO meeting at that time and they were all enjoying the peace dividend. That was a warning. During the night, little green men came across the border and everybody was shocked. Now we should not be shocked when it happens, if it happens. We still pray that calmer minds will prevail. However, we are with the people, no matter what.

• (2055)

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time with the hon. Minister of Tourism.

It is essential that we continue to support Ukraine in the days ahead and that we remember that we are not only supporting a nation; we are supporting its people. These are people who are living with the uncertainty of a potential invasion, who continue to struggle to build their democracy in the shadow of Russian threats and who continue to be affected by the humanitarian impact of the ongoing conflict in eastern Europe.

Canada has been a consistent supporter of the humanitarian response in Ukraine since 2014. Our humanitarian assistance provides support to the people most affected by this crisis, including those in non-government-controlled areas where restrictions have separated the population from the rest of Ukraine, many of whom are underemployed or elderly and find themselves cut off from social services such as health care and their pensions.

Through our experienced humanitarian partners, including United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross, Canada has sought to address the basic needs of the Ukrainian people, to protect civilians living near the contact line and to respond to increased needs due to COVID-19. Since 2014, Canada has provided over \$49.5 million in humanitarian assistance funding to the Ukrainian people, making us the fourth-largest single-country donor of humanitarian assistance funding to Ukraine.

This funding is having a real impact on the ground. In 2020 we helped support 69 health centres, provided water and shelter assistance to over 1.4 million people, increased food consumption for over 220,000 people and boosted food production for over 32,000 people. We are prepared to do more. Last week, our government announced that we will provide \$15 million in new humanitarian assistance to support humanitarian partners to respond with the flexibility that Ukraine requires.

Our assistance will focus on priorities that matter to the people on the ground, ensuring people's access to basic services such as health, water, sanitation, shelter and food security. The increased assistance will also strengthen protection, including for the almost one million individuals who remain internally displaced. We will provide advocacy and support for freedom of movement for the families that remain separated by the contact line, who in many cases are unable to even communicate with family members cut off from them because of the conflict.

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Our support for the immediate humanitarian needs of those affected by the conflict in Ukraine is complementary to other long-term development and security support that is also supporting Ukraine's resilience in the face of a continued escalation of Russian aggression. Since 2014, in addition to our support of humanitarian assistance, Canada has provided over \$250 million in bilateral development assistance to support Ukraine to advance democracy, the rule of law, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and sustainable economic growth. Through this development assistance, we have supported rural women entrepreneurs to improve their agricultural production and business financial management, generating economic opportunities for the most vulnerable people living in rural conflict-affected areas.

We have fostered a vibrant and diverse civil society landscape in Ukraine that can play a vital role in building functioning democracies, upholding the rule of law and access to justice, and promoting and protecting human rights. We have ensured that women's voices are heard by helping local women's organizations and networks to promote women's rights and their advancement.

Now, in the face of this aggression, Canada is increasing development assistance by up to an additional \$35 million. This support will fund strategic peace and security initiatives that respond to the evolving needs on the ground. These initiatives will work to strengthen community resilience and mitigate the drivers and impacts of instability. Our increased development assistance will help improve the crisis management and emergency response capacity in Ukraine. It will also allow some of our departmental partners on the ground to scale up programming to help Ukraine respond to the evolving needs of its citizens and ensure it has the capacity to continue to deliver services and provide help to people if the situation deteriorates even further. It will also enhance our support to civil society, including independent media and human rights activists.

Our development aid does not exist in isolation, but is part of a consolidated Canadian effort to help the government in Ukraine build its economic capacity. Our offer of a sovereign loan of up to \$120 million, announced on January 21, will also help the Ukrainian government reinforce its economic resilience.

• (2100)

It remains Canada's hope that the situation in Ukraine does not deteriorate, but this depends on Russia. We will continue to seek a diplomatic resolution. With our allies and partners, we will continue to call on Russia to de-escalate and engage in a meaningful dialogue in good faith. We will do so not only because it is in the best interests of the people of Ukraine, but also because it is the only viable path forward for Russia. Whatever comes, Canada will stand alongside the people of Ukraine. Our humanitarian development support will be there to help them meet their daily needs and to help them as they fight for an independent future.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the minister for taking part in this debate and explaining Canada's humanitarian help to Ukrainians.

I talked about civic institutions and how important it is to build them in Ukraine, and one of things the minister mentioned is media. We know that there is a large disinformation campaign being run by the Kremlin through different outlets, and closer to home we

have one of these outfits operating right here in Canada, which is called "Russia Today". It is a 24-hour, pro-Putin, pro-Kremlin, pro whatever the Russian government thinks it wants to spew into our airways, and it gets carrier rights. While we are also helping overseas to try to limit the damage that these disinformation campaigns can cause to sap the morale and strength of civic society to resist in these types of situations, I wonder if the minister would agree that Russia Today does not belong on Canadian airways either.

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan: Mr. Chair, we have been concerned about Russia's cyberwarfare tactics and the methods it has been using when it comes to misinformation. The cyber-attacks that occur, especially the disinformation that comes within Canada, are why we have also offered up support from our Communications Security Establishment to provide cyber-support in these cases.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the minister for his intervention this evening and for providing some clarity for us on Canada's intentions with regard to international development. However, I would be remiss if I did not raise the fact that right now Canada is giving a very low amount of overseas development assistance. We are at 0.31% of GNI, which is much lower than we should be at, and much lower than the government has repeatedly promised to get to.

While what we are seeing in Ukraine right now is a very urgent need, I think what we can be very clear on is that there is going to be more conflict around the world. The best way we can deal with conflict is to prevent it from happening, and international development plays a key role in that.

Will the minister commit on behalf of the Government of Canada to increasing our overseas development assistance to be able to fully implement the feminist international assistance policy?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan: Mr. Chair, I agree with the hon. member that it is very important for all of us to work toward preventing conflict. This is why our government has increased our international development funding, and the Speech from the Throne has also mentioned this. I look forward to working with the member to look at other conflicts. However, in particular, in Ukraine, we have stepped up and we will look at other opportunities as the situation changes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the minister for his remarks, which I actually found very refreshing.

Throughout this evening's debate, our government colleagues have talked about diplomacy and deterrence. They have actually talked more about deterrence than diplomacy, but they have not been clear about what they mean by deterrence. In other words, what I am hearing is deeply acrimonious and aggressive messaging at a time when, from a diplomatic perspective, there should be more emphasis on calls for discussion and dialogue.

As I understand it, the minister is pledging more money to support people in difficult situations, such as those resulting from the pressures exerted by the massive Russian presence at the border and those Ukrainians face in their day-to-day lives. To pick up on what my NDP colleague said, what concrete action will the government take to move beyond words and really help people in need on the ground?

• (2105)

[*English*]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan: Mr. Chair, our government's response is comprehensive. I have had the opportunity to visit Ukraine on many occasions. I am very proud of the time I had there. I had the opportunity to attend President Zelenskyy's inauguration, and I took my daughter to an event in Toronto where he spoke because this is an all-Canadian effort.

Yes, we are very proud of the work that we are doing with Operation Unifier and trade, but also of the development of support that is needed right now. We will continue to evolve our support as the situation changes.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to join in this important take-note debate this evening. This debate comes at a moment of deep anxiety for people across the country. Ukrainian Canadians across the country fear for their friends and families back in Ukraine. As an MP from Edmonton, I have spent my whole life surrounded by the beauty of the Ukrainian culture, growing up with Ukrainian speakers and Ukrainian friends. It is an essential part of the tapestry of our community. At this time it is crucial that we stand with our Ukrainian friends and with the entire diaspora around the world.

It is important for us to make very clear that the situation itself is clear and stark. Russia is the aggressor, and Ukraine is the victim. Russia's military buildup recently announced during military exercises at Belarus, hybrid attacks on Ukrainian government websites, propaganda and disinformation campaigns and its weaponization of energy all represent a direct threat to the Ukrainian people.

This is also occurring against the backdrop of Russia's ongoing aggression with Ukraine, including its attempted annexation of illegal occupation of Crimea in 2014, its support for military formations in eastern Ukraine and human rights violations.

[*Translation*]

Canada's response to this crisis is guided by the following principles: seeking diplomatic resolution, preparing tough deterrents to support diplomacy, and providing additional support to Ukraine.

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[*English*]

Our allies and our partners have engaged in intense diplomacy along several tracks, including at the NATO Russia council.

[*Translation*]

However, we will not compromise on the fundamental principles of sovereignty, self-determination and a country's right to forge its own path. These principles are enshrined in the UN Charter and are non-negotiable.

[*English*]

At a council meeting on January 17, we offered Russia three new meetings to discuss NATO Russia relations, the security situation in Europe, as well as risk reduction, transparency, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Russia has yet to accept any of these meetings.

[*Translation*]

The Minister of Foreign Affairs recently travelled to Kyiv, Paris and Brussels to continue to advance Canada's ongoing efforts towards a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

[*English*]

In her meetings with Ukraine's President Zelenskyy and Foreign Minister Kuleba, the minister underscored Canada's steadfast commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. We have always been clear that there is only one way forward and that is for Russia to de-escalate. It is Russia that invaded Georgia in 2008, and it is Russia that violates international law every day as it continues to occupy parts of Ukraine's territory. Canada is taking action and has offered Ukraine a sovereign loan of \$120 million as of January 21 in response to President Zelenskyy's request for additional support. This loan will reinforce Ukraine's domestic stability and support the country's economic resilience and governance reforms.

A secure, peaceful and prosperous Ukraine strengthens our shared transatlantic security, which Canada has a vested interest in promoting and protecting. In this work, I want to underscore the importance of unity and coordination with our partners on firm and severe response measures. Canada has also been working closely with many like-minded countries to develop a set of robust and concrete punitive measures, chief among them are economic sanctions.

We are prepared to meet further Russian military action with immediate and harsh sanctions that target individuals and entities linked to key sections of the Russian economy. All options are on the table.

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Our engagement was further reinforced by the announcement of the extension and expansion of Operation Unifier to provide enhanced military training and mentorship to Ukraine's security forces through to the end of March 2025. Canada will continue to work with our allies and partners including the G7, the EU, NATO, OSCE and the UN, along with the international community writ large to coordinate our responses and continue to push Russia to come to the table to dialogue or face severe consequences and costs. However, it is ultimately Russia's choice to de-escalate this crisis and we are ready to meet Russia on either path.

We urge Russia to adhere to its international commitments, including those under the OSCE Helsinki Act, the OSCE Vienna Document and the Minsk Agreement for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Canada will be steadfast in our support of Ukraine sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-determination.

• (2110)

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Chair, what is the government's priority? Is it the self-determination of the people in Ukraine, or allowing for aggression and bullying from Russia?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Chair, I think the stakes are very stark in this conflict, and it is pretty clear to us on the government side that this is a battle of authoritarianism versus democracy. I know personally that this is the biggest test for western democracies in my lifetime.

We need to stand together with our partners in western and eastern Europe against Russian aggression. The world is watching and we need to get this right. We are steadfastly committed to a peaceful, de-escalated resolution to the situation, and we must not stand for increased Russian aggression in Ukraine.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Chair, New Democrats have called for and support many of the actions that are being taken by the government. One of the things we have called for is the use of Magnitsky sanctions. This has not been used by the government since 2018. It is a clear and strong tool that Canada could use against human rights violators.

Why is the government not going forward with this reaction?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Chair, I thank the hon. member for her support and very important question. If we take a look back at Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, Canada did indeed impose sanctions on more than 440 individuals and entities, many in coordination with our allies. Just to give some subtext on that, Canada had sanctioned 120 individuals and 81 entities related to Russia's violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Ukraine. We sanctioned 202 individuals and 42 entities related to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and the ongoing Russian occupation in parts of eastern Ukraine.

We have been very clear, as a government, that should Russia increase its aggression in Ukraine, it will be met with stiff and severe economic sanctions in coordination with our international partners.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I would like to highlight, as many have, the important contri-

bution of the Ukrainian Canadian community to building the Prairies in Alberta. That community continues to add so much to the vibrancy of the Prairies.

Could the minister comment on what he is hearing on the ground? We know that in Alberta there are 370,000 Ukrainian Canadians living in the province. I am sure that the minister is bringing their voices to cabinet, and I would like to hear from the minister what specific requests they are making to him and what they would like to see from our government.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Chair, I thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance for the very kind question.

I see that the member of Parliament for Winnipeg South is there even with his hand up, and I have to say that he was the moderator of a very moving and important conversation at a Zoom town hall that we held across the west with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and the MP for Winnipeg South Centre. We had 500 people in that Zoom meeting. With 130-some years of waves of immigrants from Ukraine, that means that if one is in the west, they probably eat *pedaheh* and *holubtsi*. I go to French Canadian weddings and I can tell members that Ukrainian food is a staple. It is because we are all knitted together.

The community is nervous. It is frightened. It is afraid for the people and family they have in Ukraine. They have asked us to stay very close to what the Ukrainian government has asked us to do. That is why, in maybe a historic amount of time, our government was able to deliver a \$120-million loan, and I thank the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs for that.

We are going to watch the situation carefully. We are going to stay very closely connected to community leaders, like the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, both here in Edmonton and Calgary, in Alberta, across the west and across the country.

• (2115)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Lakeland.

Canada's security is inextricably linked to that of Europe and it has been for centuries. Once, the conflicts between the French and British empires had a direct impact on us here on this continent, and conflicts between the Spanish empire and other empires have had a direct impact on the security on this continent. Today, our security is inextricably linked to that of Europe.

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In the last century, in the First and Second World Wars, Canada's security was inextricably linked to that of Europe. We all know the names of places where Canadian blood was shed in defence of this country and its values, names like Passchendaele, Vimy Ridge and the Battle of the Somme. We can think about the Second World War and the names that are indelibly etched into the minds of Canadians, names like Juno Beach, Normandy and Arnhem. In fact, it was Canadian soldiers who, in 1945, liberated the Netherlands. Some 7,000 Canadian soldiers died in the canals, the fields and the villages of the Netherlands liberating the Dutch from the tyranny of Nazism.

In the 20th century, some 100,000 Canadians died defending this country in two world wars: 60,000 Canadians died on the battlefields of France in the First World War and some 40,000 Canadians died around the world during the Second World War, most of them in Europe. Almost all of those Canadians are buried in graves that dot the Normandy coastline, the fields of Normandy, the Netherlands, Italy and many other places throughout Europe.

After the First World War, because of the blood that had been shed, Canada began to gain her independence. The Balfour Declaration led to the Statute of Westminster and eventually to Canada's independence from the United Kingdom.

After the Second World War, because of the high price we paid, we were a founding member, in 1949, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Canada played and continues to play a key role in peace and security across Europe. In fact, Canada has contributed to every single NATO mission since the alliance's inception in 1949. We are one of only two countries that are non-European members of the NATO alliance, and now NATO is being threatened. An estimated 130,000 Russian troops are built up on the Ukrainian border, and we have a government that has failed to take any real action to support Ukraine.

We are facing a situation today of grave consequence. While the government, on January 21, announced a loan of \$120 million to Ukraine, and while it recently announced the extension and expansion of Operation Unifier, it has failed to grant the key request of the Government of Ukraine, which is to provide lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine for its defence. The United States has provided some \$650 million in defence equipment, \$200 million of which is lethal aid for Ukraine. The United Kingdom has supplied lethal aid and lethal weapons in the form of anti-tank weapons. Others, such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Czech Republic, have also provided lethal weapons.

Diplomacy that is not backed up by credible threats to use military force, and in limited and rare circumstances the use of that force, is naive talk and empty rhetoric. That empty talk and rhetoric will result in damage to Canada's security and the security of Europe and Ukraine. That is what a previous generation of Canadians understood in 1945 when they created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization out of the bloodshed that had happened in the previous 50 years. That is not something the Prime Minister understands. He has said this will only be solved through diplomacy, not through the threat of force to defend democracy.

• (2120)

I urge the government to get off of its naive position, defend the rules-based international order and ensure that lethal defensive weaponry is provided to a democracy, to Ukraine, in order to uphold that order.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the hon. member's speech was thoughtful and historical.

I want to get his views on a quote by Henry Kissinger where nations do not have friends or enemies, that they only have interests. I would like him to articulate, as the member for Etobicoke Centre did, why it is in Canada's best interest that we give full-throated support to Ukraine.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, the answer to the question is simple. For centuries Canada's security, the safety and security of our citizens and the safety and security of our borders have been inextricably tied to that of Europe. If democracies in Europe are being threatened with an attack, with invasion, then Canada must stand up not only for the security of those nations in Europe but for the security of Canadians here at home and provide all assistance necessary to ensure that happens; assistance including diplomacy, humanitarian aid and assistance including the threat of use of force and lethal defensive weapons as the Government of Ukraine has requested.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Chair, the member has been a great, reasonable voice on foreign affairs in our caucus and in this House. I know that he takes what is happening in Ukraine very seriously, as he just articulated. Perhaps he could elaborate.

The world is watching what happens right now in Ukraine. Despots around the world are waiting to see what NATO and the alliance does in response to these threats from the Russian Federation and Vladimir Putin in particular. If we are not able to contain this situation and protect Ukraine's sovereign territory and the people of Ukraine, what possibly could happen by other despots who see the position that Canada has taken and other nations as weak?

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, I could not agree with my colleague more. In fact, what is going on right now often reminds me of the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s where the duly elected and recognized government of Spain, the republican government of Spain, was under threat from the nationalists, from a civil war and a coup d'état that had erupted, led by Spanish generals. Spanish republicans pleaded to western democracies to provide lethal defensive weapons, lethal military weapons, for the defence of Spanish republicans, but democracies in the 1930s turned a blind eye and refused those military weapons. Germany and Italy, being fascist powers at the time, sent plenty of weapons to the nationalists who eventually triumphed, leading into the dark events of the war of 1939 to 1945.

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When I hear about governments and democracies refusing to send lethal defensive weapons to a fellow democracy under threat from another authoritarian regime, it brings me back to that period of time in the 1930s where we as democracies turned a blind eye to rising authoritarianism in Europe and paid a very high price over the subsequent six years to 1945. That is the lesson we have failed to heed from the situation that is currently unfolding in eastern Europe.

● (2125)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Chair, I thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for his leadership and this opportunity.

This debate is urgent and personal. Lakeland has deep connections with Ukraine. In 1891, 125 Ukrainian families first came to Lamont County, called the cradle of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, where I grew up. In 1903, my father-in-law's Satskyv family came by train to Innisfree to farm. By 1930, the more than 50,000 Ukrainians in Alberta were the biggest community outside Ukraine. It is as strong as ever in Lakeland. From churches and festivals, the Ukrainian village, the ancestral home built by former Premier Ed Stelmach's grandparents, the Victoria settlement near Smoky Lake and St. Paul's Garlic Dome to the world's largest pysanka in Vegreville, Glendon's giant perogy, and Mundare's kolbassa, symbols of Ukrainian food, faith, family, language and culture help define Lakeland.

Today, outside of Ukraine and Russia, Canada has the world's largest Ukrainian population of more than a million people. Historically, Canada stood with Ukraine to defend its territory and democracy. Almost three decades ago, under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government, Canada was the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence from Russia only one day after an overwhelming declaration from the Ukrainian people. Canada's support was immediate and unequivocal.

In 2014, Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea was met with a swift, powerful response from Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government. He led the charge to boot Russia out of the G8, pledged millions of dollars in military trainers and other aid and imposed sweeping sanctions against hundreds of individuals and entities. He did not pull any punches with Putin at the G20 later that year and told him to his face to get out of Ukraine. He said, "Whether it takes five months or 50 years, Canada will never accept the illegal occupation of Ukrainian territory by Russia." Two years ago, he warned, "Ukraine's struggle is not over. We must continue to stand with the people of Ukraine in the face of ongoing aggression from the Putin regime." Today those prophetic words fall on the deaf ears of the current Liberal government like the pleas from Ukrainians in Lakeland and across Canada.

Natalia from Vegreville emailed me. She wants Canada to take a leadership role in support of Ukraine's independence and in defence of Ukraine's territory and to increase sanctions and military equipment and defensive weapons for Ukraine, among other measures. Vegreville has significant Ukrainian history and is a sister city to Kolomyia, Ukraine. Last spring, Vegreville hosted the red carpet premier of Troy Ruptash's award-winning film *They Who Surround Us*, which tells the story of a grieving Ukrainian farmer in Alberta who loses his wife in a tragic accident. He relives the trauma from

his childhood in Ukraine of being dragged from his home with his sister and mother by Russian invaders. When it ended, there was not a dry eye in the room.

The people of Lakeland are standing with Ukraine, and they expect their government to do the same. A constituent, Janet, wrote to me, imploring the Canadian government to do more. She said that Ukrainians "have the will and passion to fight, but not the army to defend against Russia's might. Needlessly, young people and their future will die if the world does not help. We must not forget them."

Well, Conservatives will not abandon Ukraine, nor will we forget the Ukrainian people. Last April, we condemned Russia's expansion of its illegal military presence in Crimea and called on the Liberals to counter with an increase in military defensive aid and to re-offer RADARSAT imaging to help identify Russian troop and equipment movements. Two weeks ago, in response to another buildup of Russian troops at Ukraine's border, Conservatives again called on the Liberals to expand Operation Unifier, restore RADARSAT imaging, give Ukraine lethal defensive weapons and use Magnitsky sanctions.

The Liberals first only offered a small loan that was politely welcomed by Ukraine's president, then non-lethal equipment, a small expansion of Operation Unifier's standard renewal, some humanitarian assistance and only 60 troops. That is not enough. Ukraine is facing 130,000 Russian troops. Their embassy said, "We need to defend our land. The U.K. and U.S. have already shipped the military equipment and we would appreciate if Canada follows suit."

The Liberals are ready to fall short again in another abrogation of Canada's proud heritage of actually leading and in joining allies when it matters most. For generations, Canadians have been world-renowned for their extraordinary efforts in defending freedom, equality, democracy, human rights and sovereignty, and punching above our weight no matter the strength of the foe. Those values, that courage and that moral compass are still in the hearts of the Canadian people, the Canadian Armed Forces and our international and diplomatic service. The Liberal government must stand with Ukraine and with all Ukrainian Canadians with real action.

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• (2130)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it was wonderful to hear, particularly in the first part of the member's remarks, a bit about her community of Lakeland and the Ukrainian heritage that so many people in Lakeland value and share, how they celebrate that, and how that inspires their concern for what is happening right now in Ukraine.

Could the member speak a bit about sanctions? She mentioned briefly in her remarks the need for sanctions. Over the course of the last few years, the government has sanctioned about 440 individuals and entities, mostly Russian but some Ukrainian as well, who were involved in threatening Ukraine's sovereignty and violating human rights. I wonder if the member could speak to what additional sanctions she would like to see and if there are any particular groups or entities she would like sanctioned.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, I would say that it is not only about sanctions. The response of the Canadian government must be multipronged. Sanctions are only one among the vast array of tools that Canada has to show real solidarity to defend the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The request is very clear, as the top priority, for lethal weapons. At least nine other countries in the world, including the U.S. and the U.K., have ensured that the military equipment the Ukrainian people require to defend themselves is there. Canada should be at the front of the pack.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, I know that my colleague, the member for Lakeland, has as many Ukrainians in her constituency as I do in mine. It was lovely to hear that commitment to the Ukrainian diaspora in her community.

The member will not be surprised when I talk about the need for de-escalation and the need for a peaceful resolution on this conflict. She spoke about the tools that we have in our tool box and all of the things that we could be doing.

From her perspective as a member of the Conservative Party, what are those things that Canada should be doing to de-escalate? Aside from providing weapons, aside from escalating with lethal-force weapons, what are those things that she sees that the government should be doing to de-escalate and to turn down the temperature on the conflict happening in Ukraine?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, I outlined a number of those specific measures that Canada could take and that Conservatives have consistently recommended since last April, which is a lot of time that has been expended with very limited action, while Ukrainians are vulnerable to expanding Russian military forces on the border.

Given that the member commented about my constituents, why do I not just tell her a few recommendations that Natalia from Vegreville sent me? These are things that Conservatives support too. She recommended accelerating a NATO membership action plan for Ukraine; increasing sanctions on Russia to deter further aggression; ensuring that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline never becomes operational; increasing the provision of military equipment and defensive weapons to Ukraine; and extending and expanding Operation Unifier, Canada's military training mission in Ukraine, which was of course launched by the former Conservative government.

As the member for Wellington—Halton Hills said, diplomacy is critical and must be ongoing, but to push back on the danger and the threats to free people and free countries everywhere against despots it must be founded by real, potential lethal action.

• (2135)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Chair, all evening in this debate, the Conservatives have been going on and on about Ukraine's requests for weapons.

I would like my colleague to comment on whether she believes that what Canada can bring to the table in terms of weapons would have much of an impact on the ground. In that context, does she agree with me that we should use diplomacy instead of weapons? Does she recognize that the diplomatic route is really more important than weapons and the latter must come second?

[*English*]

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, of course diplomacy is necessary and ought to be ongoing, but let us talk about the real cost to the Ukrainian people of only talking.

Natalia also pointed out that since 2014 the illegal invasion and occupation by Russia has cost Ukraine over 13,000 dead, over 30,000 wounded and 1.5 million internally displaced people.

This is why we should join our free and democratic allies who have already sent the weapons to Ukraine that the country needs to defend itself. This is why we should be at the front of the pack. Those are the real costs that happened while we put up hashtags on pieces of paper and sit around here debating diplomacy.

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank all members of the House tonight, as this debate would not be taking place if it were not for the unanimous agreement of all members in this chamber. I believe the reason we have that unanimous consent is that we stand united in purpose to stand with Ukraine. We need to remember that throughout this debate.

I rise today in support of Ukraine and of the initiatives of our government to support Ukraine in this difficult time. The links between our two countries are strong, and Canada has been and will be steadfast in standing in solidarity with Ukraine, especially in the face of unwarranted Russian aggression.

For me, the ties are strong. Not only do I have a large Ukrainian community in my constituency, but there are also many Ukrainian cultural and religious organizations, as well as the Ukrainian consulate. Canadians of Ukrainian descent strengthen our social and cultural fabric in Etobicoke, in Toronto and in the country.

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The community is strong and the ties that bind our two countries are many. They are my neighbours; they are my teammates; they are my classmates; they are my friends. As has been said many times before, when Ukraine became an independent state in 1991, Canada was the first western country to recognize it as such. Canada and Ukraine have enjoyed an even stronger relationship since.

The 1994 joint declaration on special partnership recognizes Canada's support for the development of Ukraine and the importance of that bilateral co-operation. Canada is committed to supporting Ukraine as it takes necessary steps to secure itself as a stable, democratic and prosperous country. We have been there to develop and strengthen democratic institutions in Ukraine, including election monitoring. I was there myself in 2019 as part of the delegation. I felt those bonds.

Since 2014, Canada has provided Ukraine with more than \$890 million in multi-faceted assistance to support Ukraine's security, prosperity and reform objectives. Since 2015, Canada has been providing military training to Ukraine under Operation Unifier. The operation's focus is to assist with security force training to help them improve and build their capability and capacity.

Over 32,000 of its security forces will help ensure Ukraine remains sovereign, secure and stable. Last week, our government announced \$340 million for the extension and expansion of Operation Unifier for three more years, as well as immediately deploying 60 personnel to join approximately 200 Canadian Armed Forces members on the ground, with the ability to surge to 400.

Military support is just one part of Canada's overall strategy. There are also economic supports through trade and investment. In 2020, the value of Canada's merchandise exports to Ukraine totalled \$161 million and the value of merchandise imports from Ukraine amounted to \$144 million. Last week, on January 27, Canada and Ukraine announced the launch of negotiations for the modernization of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement.

Since 2014, Canada has been one of Ukraine's leading bilateral development assistance partners, having committed more than \$245 million to development assistance, including the provisions of emergency basic health services, safe drinking water, food assistance, protection support, shelter and essential relief items.

This needs to be a non-partisan debate. As I said at the beginning, we are united in purpose. The Prime Minister is fully engaged. The Deputy Prime Minister is fully engaged. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs was in Ukraine last week, came back and granted the request of the President of Ukraine. The Minister of Defence is there as we speak. I expect, upon her return, we will see further action from Canada.

I hope we can maintain this united force and non-partisan approach.

● (2140)

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Chair, I heard Liberal members discuss about all options being on the table, but it seems to me that one of the options is providing military aid, lethal support, and we have been bringing this up over and over again.

It was a previous member of Parliament with the Liberal Party, former lieutenant-general Andrew Leslie, who said recently that the Liberal government does not take the military seriously. This impacts what we can do and provide for Ukrainians and is having a direct effect.

That is my concern. What we are able to do for Ukraine is just an outflow, other than a few troops coming in and doing a few different things. What it needs help with is military.

I wonder if the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore could speak about the deterioration of the military and the armaments we have in order to provide to Ukraine.

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, first of all, I am going to disagree with his characterization of the situation. There has been no diminished contribution. Canada has been there with Ukraine since the beginning. This goes back to 2014 with the invasion of Crimea. We have been talking about support of military lethal weapons. Canada did not do it then. The opposition is asking us to do it now.

Military support comes in many different fashions. We need only look at Operation Unifier. Over 30,000 members of the Ukrainian military are better trained because of Canada's contribution, so to say that Canada has not helped with military contribution is absolutely false.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, one of the things I asked earlier, and I would like to extend the question to the member as well, is around the assurance by the Government of Canada that it will be implementing some of those key lessons in our feminist foreign policy. One of those is that we do what we can to advocate to ensure women are at all tables, that women are part of all the discussions that lead to de-escalation, because we know that when women are at the table, different decisions are made.

I just want to be very, very clear. How is the government ensuring women are there, that they are part of the solution and part of the de-escalation efforts happening in Ukraine?

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, we heard the Prime Minister earlier this evening address that very issue. Canada is very proud to support the initiative to make sure women form part of the training exercise. If we look at Operation Unifier, women formed part of that training. International development programs that Canada has supported and has been part of have put great emphasis on that very issue. It is quite clear where Canada stands.

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• (2145)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Chair, the importance of diplomacy in resolving the conflict has come up a lot in tonight's debate. Some people put it second, some put it first, but everyone has talked about it.

This crisis may have exposed certain shortcomings in Canada's ability to engage in credible diplomacy. Several ambassadors have complained in the press about the very rapid turnover in certain embassies and the loss of institutional knowledge. Is tonight's debate not the right time to say that we need to reinvest in diplomacy and set a clearer, more assertive foreign policy?

[*English*]

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Chair, with all due respect, to suggest there has been a shortfall by Canada on the diplomacy front is simply wrong. Our foreign affairs minister was in Ukraine last week. Our defence minister left Ukraine hours ago. She is going to Brussels as we speak to engage in further diplomatic discussions. That is exactly the approach Canada is trying to take.

To answer the question as to what is a priority, everything is a priority to make sure that further invasion of Ukraine does not take place.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I want to wish you and all colleagues in the House a very happy New Year. I know it is the end of January, but this is my first chance to stand in the House virtually to speak and send those wishes.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to speak during this take-note debate on Ukraine and the buildup of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border. It is important for us to have this conversation and dialogue.

We live in troubling and unpredictable times. In addition to the global pandemic that the world is grappling with, what is happening at the Ukrainian border, with the accumulation and buildup of over 100,000 troops by Russia, is troubling to say the least. As a Ukrainian-Canadian, I have been following this development since its start last fall. My father's family is Ukrainian. They were and are very proud of their culture and heritage. They came to Canada as a broken family after World War II, reluctantly leaving their homeland, having no choice. They lost everything in the war. With the USSR taking over Ukraine, there was no hope for a future. They were devastated.

From a displaced persons camp and on one of the last boats to leave for North America, they came to Canada seeking peace and safety. The scars from the war and from that time remain with my family, and we are still healing from them. That is why I am so very proud of our federal government for its leadership and for stepping up to help Ukraine counter unprovoked Russian aggression.

I support Canada's strong push for peace and for a diplomatic resolution while supporting Ukraine economically and helping Ukraine to defend itself. For me, the right choice is to push hard and to explore any and every opportunity for a diplomatic resolution. Providing arms should be our last option, not our first one. I stand with Canada and with our government to defend the sovereignty, territoriality and independence of Ukraine. I fully sup-

port Canada's push for peace and for a diplomatic resolution while preparing, if we have to, to quickly step up our contribution should Russia choose armed conflict and invade Ukrainian territory.

As I am currently serving as the vice-president of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, I am also very proud of NATO's leadership under the direction of Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. NATO has been very clear that they are encouraging and are prepared to engage in political dialogue with Russia, while also being ready to respond if Russia chooses an armed conflict.

Now let us look at how Canada is stepping up to support Ukraine. There are many ways. When our Minister of Foreign Affairs went to Ukraine over a week ago, Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's number one ask was for economic loans to help stabilize Ukraine's economy. Within three days, our government stepped up with a \$120-million loan. The second thing Ukrainian President Zelenskyy asked for was help to defend Ukraine, so we urgently announced an expansion of the existing much-valued Operation Unifier at the cost of \$340 million. This extension and expansion of Canada's military presence in support of Ukraine will ensure that members of the Canadian Armed Forces will continue to provide enhanced military training and mentorship to Ukraine's security forces through to the end of March 2025. Additionally, Canada is providing non-lethal aid and working with the Communications Security Establishment to enhance cyber-operations. This increased support will help Ukraine strengthen its security and ability to defend itself against a range of threats. On top of that, we are providing \$50 million in development and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. In less than one week, there has been over \$500 million in support for Ukraine.

Our Minister of Foreign Affairs, who has been in constant contact with our many NATO allies, has indicated that we are ready to step up even more, together with our allies, with stronger economic sanctions against Russia, should there be military incursion into Ukraine. Any action by Russia in this direction will have serious consequences. Our Minister of National Defence has said the same thing. I want to say to both ministers how grateful I am for their extraordinary leadership during these unpredictable and troubling times.

In closing, while we live in troubling and unpredictable times, I have confidence that working together with NATO and our other allies, and in keeping the channels of communication open with Russia, it is not too late to find a diplomatic and peaceful way out of the current situation.

[*Member spoke in Ukrainian*]

• (2150)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Chair, I just have a comment for the member, whom I have known for a number of years now.

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Russia's military is not the only hard power tool that it has to intimidate Europe and Ukraine. It can also use energy as a weapon. It supplies 40% of Europe's natural gas, and if it cuts off natural gas supplies to Europe, people will freeze, industries will shut down and European GDP will plummet.

The Biden administration has been talking to countries around the world about increasing natural gas supplies to Europe in the event that the Russians cut off gas to Europe, except for Canada. Canada is not mentioned in any of the reports coming back about supplying natural gas in the event that this happens, even though we are the fifth-largest natural gas producer in the world.

When will the government see that energy is not only vital to our economy, but vital to our national security and to those of Europe and Ukraine?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, I want to thank the hon. member for his excellent comment and question.

I do believe that we recognize the importance of energy. If the member is suggesting that we should be looking at energy as one of the ways that we might actually want to support Ukraine in the future, I think the Prime Minister, all of the ministers who have spoken today and many of my colleagues who have spoken today have indicated that every option is on the table. Anything that we can do to continue to support Ukraine, to continue to de-escalate, will be on the table and will be part of the discussions moving forward.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my colleague for her intervention this evening.

In the previous intervention, there was some discussion about Canada and its efforts with regard to diplomacy and our diplomatic corps. I am not referring to ministers going for visits to Ukraine. I am referring to our diminished diplomatic corps.

Under the Conservatives, we had massive cuts to our diplomatic corps, especially when Global Affairs became something where they took away trade and development and put it all into one place. We lost a lot of our diplomacy, our ability to do diplomacy and our ability to have that role in the world, and we do not see that being built back up. We have not seen our international development and our ODA being built up. We also have not seen our peacekeeping efforts being built up.

What I want to know from the government is this: Will it commit to doing these things, building back our peacekeeping, building back our diplomatic corps and building back our international development, so that Canada can be back and we can be better suited for future conflicts like the one we are seeing right now in Ukraine?

• (2155)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, since we were first elected in late 2015, our government has very much put an emphasis on diplomacy and on strengthening diplomacy. Throughout this whole situation with the buildup of Russian aggression at the Ukrainian borders, we have had excellent diplomatic efforts from our Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Defence and from a number of my colleagues. That is an area that we will continue to strengthen.

One of the other things we announced is that Canada is creating a team out of Global Affairs Canada to support the further coordination of federal efforts in support of peace and security in Ukraine. We are trying to do everything we can to continue to expand our diplomatic efforts and to continue to open the lines of communication with our allies, with NATO and with anyone who wants to help find a diplomatic and peaceful solution out of the current situation we find ourselves in right now.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I thank the member for her very passionate and informed speech.

The Minister of Tourism referred earlier to a town hall of 500 Ukrainian Canadians hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We heard many of things that we are hearing tonight, of course. We heard from the ministers a theme very similar to the member's tonight, which is of Canada being flexible and resilient in its response and open to new options as the situation evolves. I think we have heard that message from our Minister of National Defence today.

Is that something that the member shares, that we should be open to new options?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Chair, I absolutely agree with the hon. member. I believe we are absolutely open to all questions we are looking for. As I said, I am an eternal optimist. I absolutely believe there is still a way for us to find a peaceful and diplomatic solution, and I think we have had the right approach here in Canada. I am proud of our leadership, and I am hopeful that we will find a solution moving forward.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with the member for Thornhill.

The Russians are ready for war with Ukraine and have the elements of 10 combined arms and tank armies surrounding Ukraine's borders. The Russians say they are normal troop deployments and that they are not looking to invade Ukraine. They said the same things in 2014 before they seized Crimea and the Donbass. With Georgia in 2008, Russia said its military buildup was a war game, and they took the northern part of the country by storm.

This time we know differently about Russian President Vladimir Putin's claims. Typically, only three Russian armies are stationed opposite Ukraine, and now we are seeing units from six other combined arms armies and the main strike force of the western military district, the 1st Guards Tank Army, move within miles of the Russian-Ukrainian border.

More Russian troops have been sent to Belarus along with fighter aircraft to both deter NATO and to threaten a northern invasion march on Kyiv. Belarus's army is on a heightened state of alert and ready to join Russia in battle. Russian forces in Transnistria have also been built up. Between five and six large Russian amphibious ships are on the way to the Black Sea with naval infantry. Smaller amphibious craft are coming by road. Russian pipeline troops have been deployed forward to establish fuel hubs for their armoured forces. The Russian navy is engaged in war games in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the North, Baltic and Black seas. Russia's strategic rocket forces are in war games, on a heightened state of alert and dispersed, and blood has been sent to Russian field hospitals, the last thing that happens before they become battle-ready. Blood is such a precious commodity that we use coloured water in exercises.

My husband and children are part Ukrainian. My heart is with that vulnerable democracy and its people. My heart is with the men, women and families of Canadian Armed Forces members who may be put in harm's way. The U.S., U.K. and other NATO states are ready to deploy forces to deter the Russian and Belarusian aggressors. What about Canada? In 2019 the Prime Minister announced in London Canada's contribution to NATO's high readiness force. Canada's total commitment to the NATO readiness initiative includes 12 CF-18 fighter jets, an expeditionary air task force, a maritime patrol aircraft, three frigates, a submarine, a mechanized infantry battalion, a mobile hospital and a platoon for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence.

Right now in the face of unprecedented Russian aggression against Ukraine and hybrid warfare directed at Poland and the Baltic states through its proxy Belarus, we have a 550-person force in Estonia helping to train and protect that vulnerable NATO state. We have 200 trainers in Ukraine with a couple hundred more maybe on their way, and a small special forces detachment, and the minister just announced that they are moving out of harm's way west of the Dnieper River. We have one warship, HMCS *Montréal*, in transit to the Black Sea, and one being made ready in Halifax.

The government has watched the Russian military build up in real terms since Zapad 2021 in September. We have had months to put together a robust list of both non-lethal and lethal aid to support Ukraine. It may not be a NATO member state, but it is surely a NATO ally. At this stage we should be supplying lethal defensive aid to help this fledgling democracy stand up to the bully of central and eastern Europe in Vladimir Putin.

As well, the cyberdefensive capabilities in our Communications Security Establishment should be leveraged to help Ukraine. As well, Canadian signals intelligence could be invaluable to monitoring Russian interactions. The satellite intelligence from RADARSAT would be most helpful in tracking troop movements. The Canadian Armed Forces can provide training in a much wider range of lethal combat skills than they are doing now, and Canada should start as quickly as Ukraine can accommodate extra help. Even a maritime patrol aircraft to monitor Russian actions in the Black Sea and Baltic would be helpful at this point.

Government Orders

• (2200)

If Canadians care at all about democracy, if we care about freedom and sovereignty, we must care about it everywhere.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Chair, we have talked a lot in the House about the failure of the Liberal government to provide leadership especially for women, but for both men and women, in the armed forces, and the toll this has taken on retention and recruitment in the armed forces. We talked about the additional stress of expanding Operation Unifier, which I agree with entirely.

Could the member maybe address the additional stresses this is going to put on the men and women in our armed forces?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Chair, this is a crucial issue within our Canadian Armed Forces right now. Madam Justice Arbour is tasked with looking at further recommendations, because the earlier recommendations were not all put in place. We are looking for further insights there.

We need more personnel in the Canadian Armed Forces and retention and recruitment are huge issues, but we have serving men and women who are trained and we know that they can do even more to help train in Ukraine and in vulnerable democracies such as Ukraine. As I said, Ukraine may not be part of NATO, at least yet, but it is surely a NATO ally.

• (2205)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, one of the things the government has done over the past number of years is impose sanctions on a range of individuals and entities who have either violated human rights or contributed to violating Ukraine's sovereignty. We know that in Crimea, for example, there are tremendous human rights abuses against the Crimean Tatars by the now occupying Russian forces and administrations. There is a democracy that is being repressed, etc., so sanctions have been imposed for a number of reasons on Russian officials and entities.

I am wondering what your thoughts are about the role of sanctions going forward and, if you believe sanctions are needed, are there particular groups of folks or types of folks that you believe should be sanctioned?

The Deputy Chair: I would remind the hon. member that he is to address all questions and comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock.

Government Orders

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Chair, I believe sanctions do work and diplomacy usually works, but we are dealing with a very aggressive country that has decided that in its interests, whatever it deems them to be, Ukraine is part of them going forward. Diplomacy should always come first, and sanctions along with diplomacy absolutely are a deterrent, but offering Ukraine every support short of assistance, I suggest, is not good enough. We have to stand stronger with Ukraine and democracy.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for her speech. I would like to expand on the question posed by my NDP colleague, who serves with us in committee.

As we can see, cybersecurity is very important, especially with respect to enemies such as Russia.

Does my colleague share my opinion that it is important to have better cybersecurity for ourselves and so that it can be better shared with our allies when the need arises?

[*English*]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Chair, I absolutely agree that it is essential. You may have noticed that the Russians shut down a lot of Ukraine's cyber abilities before stepping up even further with aggression. This is part of modern warfare: It is something that goes on all the time with aggressor states, and we need to do more to be alive to it, monitor it and prevent it.

The Deputy Chair: I would remind the hon. member as well that when she is answering questions, she is to address them to the Chair and not directly to members.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Chair, I want to thank the hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock for her views on the debate.

With that, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to a matter that I know Canadians are watching. It is not only those who have Ukrainian roots, but all those who believe in moral clarity and a principled approach to our country's foreign policy and our place in the world, and Canadians like me who have pieced together a first-hand history from the family dinner table of stories from the past that make today's threats so clear and obvious.

If there was ever an instance where Canada, where the Prime Minister and where the foreign affairs minister had the opportunity to do the right thing, it was last week. The government could have lent its support to Ukraine against Russian aggression by providing Ukraine with the lethal defensive weapons it needs, but Canada did not.

The governments of the U.S., the U.K., Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and others have already provided that support. Some have leaned on our past refusal to arm Ukraine as an excuse not to do it today. However, the difference now is that almost nine years have passed since Putin's continued occupation began and his constant escalation of aggression. Of course, we have all of our NATO allies.

We now know the situation has changed rapidly in the last week, so it becomes very difficult to understand why Canada has not joined our allies. In fact, the government has recognized this themselves by operational changes we heard about yesterday.

It is important for the House to understand the history of our relationship and the history that many members of the House will remember first-hand, because it was not that long ago that Canada was unafraid of principles and was Ukraine's most vocal ally in the G7. Today that is a not-so-distant in memory, but it will be replaced in our history that we are an observer to an imminent threat that we know to be true.

We have two clear options: We treat Ukraine as the allies that they are, as defenders of democracy and freedom who we would lend our full military support to on the path to European integration, or we excuse ourselves from the conversation to appease Putin's violence and walk away.

I know the answer was once clear. Our past action on this issue unfortunately does not seem like the right indicator for our future action. In the past, Canada's actions included targeted sanctions against Kremlin supporters, political and economic support to Kyiv's government, the redeployment of military assets as part of NATO's reassurance package in eastern Europe and the contribution of observers to Ukraine's election.

Today, they need more, and our action would have been clear. The steadfast support of our former prime minister was clear. He spoke directly and unambiguously about his views on Putin's occupation and the destabilizing force that Russia is in the world today.

It is important to understand the context of Russia's aggression and the very nature of its renegade ruler. He is a dangerous dictator uninterested in looking forward, but malevolently looks backward to the eventual expansion of a Russian empire. He is a violent aggressor to which diplomacy has always been answered with hostility.

Further to the obvious truth, which I think the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance understands better than almost anybody in this place, there was a valiant effort on the part of two American presidents to try to make Putin a constructive partner with some version of diplomacy, but here is the problem: He does not want to be.

The response from the government is a truly curious one. First, a loan that might suggest there was more hope of bringing back the special relationship that we once had, followed by an announcement of an extended training mission that would have been extended anyway. They are now on the brink of war without the equipment needed.

Government Orders

Over the course of the debate, we have heard about Canada's un-wavering support, but as some of my colleagues have stated, I invite the government to go beyond the words of support.

We have two very clear options for how we respond. We can immediately provide lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine, restore RADARSAT imaging and use the Magnitsky sanctions against those responsible for Russia's aggression against the Ukraine, or we can stand idly by. I believe the government truly understands the threat, but I do not believe they act as though they do. Maybe it is time.

• (2210)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, it was interesting to hear the member speak about former Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The member said that he spoke unambiguously. I do not disagree; I think he spoke unambiguously. I think the current Prime Minister has spoken unambiguously. I think our Minister of Foreign Affairs has spoken unambiguously.

One of the things that our Prime Minister has done, preceding my time in office but during my time in office as well, is that he has also acted unambiguously: unambiguously imposing sanctions, unambiguously extending and expanding the training mission, unambiguously providing additional foreign aid, unambiguously moving those trainers into eastern Ukraine where they were not originally, unambiguously helping Ukraine to reform so that it could be stronger and therefore better withstand the Russian invasion, and unambiguously signing a free trade agreement.

When Stephen Harper was prime minister, he refused to send those lethal weapons that are now being asked for. My question is, why?

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Chair, I know that the member for Etobicoke Centre is an advocate for the community and I know that table would be better off for having his advocacy there because I know that he does not agree with the actions that the government has taken. I know that he believes that the government can do more.

I do want to address one of the things that the member said, which is Canada's not arming Ukraine in 2014. He is probably referring to that. It is because Ukraine did not ask and it is because a lot of things have changed in almost nine years. That is the reason.

There was an ask and there is a need, and things have become quite dangerous. I know this member knows that and I know this member would believe that and I know this member would advocate if he had a seat at the table.

• (2215)

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Chair, I travelled to Kyiv months after Russia's invasion into Crimea and I met seriously injured soldiers being treated by Canadian surgeons assisting Ukrainian doctors. I met with officials there, and since then in Canada, through meetings arranged by Ambassador Shevchenko. They all asked repeatedly that our government reinstate our radar satellite systems that could have made a significant impact in improving their realization of what Russia was up to back then, and even now what Ukrainians are facing because of a lack of that oversight. I would like the member to speak to the fact that our government truly failed them in that moment.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Chair, I would like to speak about it a bit more.

There are a number of issues that have changed on the ground since the time the hon. member visited and the last time that we truly had a debate in this House about the situation in Ukraine. There are a lot of things that we can still do and there are a lot of things that the Ukrainians have asked for that Canada has not provided. There is an opportunity for the government to do the right thing and provide those three things that I spoke about in my remarks. Believe me, on this side of the House we would absolutely welcome that, and I would be the first to applaud the government if it did the right thing.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Chair, I will be sharing my time with my former seatmate, the member for Vancouver Centre.

It is getting late, and I note that at the end of this week is the beginning of the Olympics. There will be one nation out of all the nations in the world that will not be allowed to compete under its own flag, and that is the Russian nation. The Olympic committee finally got sick of all the corruption, doping, cheating and lying that was coming out of the Russian government and will not allow Russian athletes to compete under their own flag.

This is what we, meaning the family of nations, the universe of nations, including Canada, the U.S., the U.K. and Ukraine, deal with on a daily basis, because nothing happens in Russia without Vladimir Putin's express permission. When he says there might be 100,000 troops on the Ukrainian border or that they are just exercises and there is nothing to see, it is just nonsense and no one should really pay much attention because he does not speak the truth very often.

I was once privileged to spend some time with Senator Lisa Murkowski. She has available to her a map of the Arctic. I do not know if it is available publicly, but it is like looking at the Arctic from 50,000 feet above the North Pole. What it shows is the remilitarization of the Arctic by the Russian government, with all of the refurbished old bases and all of the new installations as well. While Canada, even from that map, is far away from the Russian bases, the U.S. is very close, at the Bering Strait, as are Finland, Sweden, Greenland, Denmark and Norway. The remilitarization of the Arctic, in my judgment, is what contributes to why it is in Canada's best interests to fully participate in the Ukrainian repulsion of this Russian aggression.

Henry Kissinger once said that nations do not have permanent friends or enemies; they only have interests. Regardless of whether one is Ukrainian or not, or whether one has diaspora in one's community or not, in my judgment it is in Canada's best interests to fully support Ukraine.

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Russia routinely launches massive cyber-attacks on Canada, the last one being at a hospital in Newfoundland. It is nothing but a mafia shakedown: “If you pay us millions of dollars, we’ll let you have your hospital back.” Russia routinely steals significant amounts of industrial and commercial intellectual property. Russian oligarchs have purchased significant pieces of industrial and commercial property in order to burrow deeply into Canadian society, and that money has been generated from very dubious sources. Russia is quite skilled at the game of misinformation and disinformation.

There are many, many more reasons why Ukraine’s security is our security and our security is Ukraine’s security. I would ask members to cast their minds along the eastern European flank to western Russia, because if Ukraine goes, the next place to go is Poland and the Baltics. When we get past Poland and the Baltics, we get to Finland. After Finland is Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and suddenly this is at our border.

I see my time is up, and I look forward to my colleagues’ questions.

● (2220)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Chair, I would like to thank the member for a great intervention in this House. I had the honour of serving with the member at the foreign affairs committee a few Parliaments ago. There is a lot of wisdom in the words he brings to the House, and that it is in our national interest to ensure that the Government of Ukraine remains independent, has territorial integrity, and is able to stand up to Russian aggression. I want to add a few things to what he said.

In 2015, when Russia attacked Ukraine, it used about a dozen battalion tactical groups. Today we are talking about up to 76 battalion tactical groups amassing on the border. The types of troops being amassed at the border of Ukraine are what indicate that Russia is serious about entering Ukrainian territory and staying in Ukrainian territory for whatever purpose, for whatever length of time.

I wonder if the member could expand on the comments he has made on what this would mean for our national interest, as well as for the national interest of NATO allies in the region.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Chair, the hon. member asks a very disturbing question. The reason it is disturbing is that this is a buildup like nothing else we have ever seen.

It has been appropriate that the family of nations, particularly the NATO nations, have reacted as swiftly as they have in a variety of ways. I, like him, share that concern. I would like to think that diplomacy would do the trick here. I would like to think that this is a feint or something of that nature, that this is just to trick the NATO allies. I am not convinced.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Chair, I want to elaborate on the question that was just asked.

We are talking about higher numbers of troops on the Ukrainian border. We are somewhat concerned that Russia will use other tac-

tics to ultimately annex Donbass, mainly by supporting the rebel troops in that area.

How can diplomacy have a role to play when things are being done in a clandestine way? I do not know if my colleague wants to comment on that possibility, which is nonetheless real.

[*English*]

Hon. John McKay: Madam Chair, the member is my favourite Bloc member on the defence committee, and I appreciate her question.

I would like to share the member’s optimism about the utility of diplomacy, but if they are interacting with a person who has a delusional sense of what constitutes Russia’s rightful territorial area of influence, they are starting in a pretty deep hole. It is difficult to arrive at an agreed upon statement of threat, or an agreed upon statement of fact. If there were those agreements or some basis for moving forward on diplomacy, I would be 100% enthusiastic. However, I do not think, at this time, this is going to work.

● (2225)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Chair, the troop buildup by Russia along the Ukrainian border is completely unacceptable as is its threatening posture towards Ukraine. Canada should absolutely be coming to Ukraine’s assistance and using whatever tools it can, including the Magnitsky act sanctions, which is something the government has yet to do.

I am wondering if the member has thoughts about why Canada has yet to deploy Magnitsky act sanctions as a tool to deter Russia, and whether we could expect that the government will in the near future.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Chair, that is an excellent question, and I agree with the member completely.

Bill Browder, who is the father of Magnitsky sanctions, said last week that we, meaning all of the NATO nations, need to align the Magnitsky sanctions with each other, because the gaps are where the Russians win.

Insofar as Canada has not aligned with other nations, I would encourage alignment. I would also encourage other nations to align with the initiatives that Canada has taken on Magnitsky. As Browder rightly says, these people who are hiding money in Canada, in plain sight frequently, have gotten it from abuse of human rights, and we should, under no circumstances, tolerate those kinds of investments in our country.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, I have been listening with a great deal of interest to all of the speakers and I think I want to speak to constituents out there. We all understand the issue. We know the regional—

The Deputy Chair: I am sorry. Does the hon. member have her headset on and her boom down? I cannot tell. That will be very helpful to us here in the House.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, can you hear me now?

The Deputy Chair: I will check with the interpreters.

Go ahead.

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Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, I want to speak to Canadians out there and constituents, because I have noted that many of them have been asking why Canada is worrying about this country. It is so far away up there in Eastern Europe, why are we bothered?

We are bothered because this is not just about us. It is not just about Ukraine. It is not just about NATO. It is not just about Europe. It is about the fact that one has to have a rules-based order to keep global security moving. One has to have relationships with countries based on trust.

What is shown is that in 1991, when Ukraine became a sovereign nation and became independent, it still carried the third-largest arms supply in the world. An agreement was made in 1994 at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe called the Budapest agreement. Everyone wanted nuclear disarmament and there was an agreement between the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan that said that if Ukraine got rid of all of its nuclear storage, they would all agree that in exchange Ukraine, as a sovereign nation, would be protected and not have any aggression levelled against it. Its territorial integrity and its sovereignty would be accepted and realized.

Russia broke that. It broke that rule when it went into Crimea in 2014. It broke that rule again when it was amassing troops on the borders of Ukraine and along the Baltic states. It broke that rule, as the hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood said, now that it is looking at arming the Baltic with warships.

Russia is giving us a message and the whole issue is about trust. We cannot trust its words, trust its agreements or trust its assurances. Global security is at risk when there is absolutely no trust, so we all need to be concerned about it. We have talked a lot about wanting peaceful solutions. We have talked a lot about not moving into war, but the way to prevent war is to have trust. The way to prevent war is to have a rules-based world order. The way to prevent war is to make sure that we can believe in each other and trust each other's word. Russia has proven itself not to be capable of that, and not only in 2014, when it moved into Crimea. We know that it has moved into Transnistria. We know that the Baltic states are all very concerned.

I think this is something we need to think about. I do not know if members remember this in history, but I recall a time when a certain government said it would only move in to take over Czechoslovakia. We believed it and agreed. We thought it was all fine and wonderful. Then we saw it move to take over all of Europe, and then came the Second World War. We are on the brink of a global war. We need to think about that.

Obviously, we need to negotiate. Obviously, we need to try to find a peaceful resolution to conflict, but we also need to have an iron fist in a velvet glove. As we talk about the kinds of things we need to do with respect to negotiating, we need to have solidarity in our backpack, pardon my mixed metaphors, and things such as Magnitsky sanctions. We need to understand that money is being hidden in our countries by oligarchs and Putin himself. That money came from corruption. It came from the human rights denials of many people around the world. This is a government that we need to stop where it hurts, in the pocketbook and in the personal pocketbook. If that does not work, we need to think about the fact that we,

as members of the OSCE and NATO, have to be prepared to take whatever steps we need.

Churchill said, “Meeting jaw to jaw is better than war”, but sometimes, as he showed us, we have to do what is necessary to protect global security.

● (2230)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Chair, I would like to thank the member for her contribution to this debate.

I guess I am going to sound a softer tone, but I am always worried that when we do comparisons to World War II we are not getting it right. This is not the Soviet Union anymore, but it is still the same type of Russian leadership that we are seeing. Its default stance is to be hyper aggressive towards its neighbours. We saw it do this to Georgia. It feels like just a few years ago, but it has been over 15 years since that particular conflict happened. Since then, it has created two of these autonomous, separate kinds of republics that nobody else recognizes.

I wonder if the member would comment on what the possible interest would be for the Russian federation in trying to either dismember Ukraine or destabilize it, because we in Canada, as many cabinet ministers have been mentioning, have been contributing a lot to the humanitarian and civil institutions' strengthening effort in Ukraine.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, I am talking about the word “trust” here. We trusted a government that told us it would be going into Czechoslovakia and it would not do anything else, and then it moved to take over Europe.

I do not know the bottom line of Putin's agenda, but I do know that he showed himself not to be trustworthy when he went into Crimea, when he armed his warships in the Baltic Sea, and when he threatened by his very presence a lot of the Baltic states and the Arctic Ocean. I think we need to remember that we have to be guarded. We should not be naive enough to believe whatever we are hearing from somebody who has shown that he is not to be trusted, and we need to be prepared. We need to start softly, but as with Georgia we also need to be prepared. I am not going to say we need to be prepared for war, but we need to be prepared to show our strength to come together as members of NATO or the OSCE.

● (2235)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Chair, as was said earlier, the buildup of troops by Russia along the Ukrainian border is not acceptable, and it is important that Canada work with our allies to send a very strong message about the fact that it is not acceptable. However, I have been troubled to see the extent to which it seems that some of our allies are not always inviting Canada to the table in some of the important discussions around a coordinated response.

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I think of the fact that, for many years now and under many governments, Canada has failed to renew its military equipment, so we have very aged equipment in our case. Also, in terms of gross national income, Canada's foreign aid budget is actually quite low. I think it is important that if Canada wants to play a real role in these conversations and have a seat at the table, that it recognizes it has to be renewing its equipment on an ongoing basis for the men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces. It also has to be making sure that it is an active participant on the world stage when it comes to providing aid and support to other countries. That is part of the infrastructure that a country needs in order to be taken seriously around these tables, and something that Canada had developed throughout the course of the Second World War, which was a reference that the hon. member had made in her own remarks.

I wonder if the member would like to comment on how it is that Canada finds itself struggling to get the recognition at international tables that it used to. What can we actually do to make sure that the Canadian name has the same force, value and presence that it had historically throughout the 20th century?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, Canada is at the table with NATO playing the role that it can and that it is asked to play around that table. Canada is at the table with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is made up of 57 nation-states. Canada is well respected and trusted at that table. These are the people who are talking about the steps to deal with Russia. These are the people who live close to Russia, and they know what to do. Canada is also a close friend and ally of the United States. We are at the table. We have been at the table ever since we have been dealing with OSCE agreements that included Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

We are playing the role that we can play. When one is on a team, one is asked to play a certain role, and we are doing that. At the moment, this is a role that we feel, and that everyone has felt, is a good role for us to play. We are prepared, I am sure, to move forward if we are asked to play other roles, but Canada is definitely at the table, and I know because I am very involved in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Chair, I thank all my colleagues for staying so late. We are starting things off with a bang today. The fact that there was unanimous consent to have this debate may indicate how important the Ukraine file is, as many have pointed out.

I would like to come at the issue from a different angle. I do not want to talk about what can be done now. This evening's debate in the House may change very little with respect to what needs to be done right away, but perhaps we should give some thought to the future, because current events are exposing some issues with the government's response.

Government members talked about the importance of diplomacy and deterrence. However, when diplomacy is not properly coordinated or not assertive enough, it is hard to then send an unequivocal message of deterrence. That is clear from the fact that the Prime Minister is still refusing to have a leader-to-leader discussion with Russia.

Canada is advocating for strong diplomacy as the primary weapon for resolving the crisis, but its diplomatic efforts still seem to lack a common thread. Many observers have criticized Canada for flying blind and lacking a clear strategy. Others have also recently criticized the revolving door at the Department of Foreign Affairs, a problem that has been highlighted by the crisis. The department has had five different ministers in six years, with everything that goes along with that in terms of different entourages, approaches and personalities.

One thing is for sure: Canada cannot stand by doing nothing in the context of the crisis with Ukraine. It was called upon to take action. It had to do something. It could not stand idly by. However, it seems that Canada was not necessarily ready to take the action that was needed, or to do so in a consistent manner. As we like to say back home, it is time to walk the talk. In this case, however, maybe that saying needs to be flipped around, because it seems that the government's words and actions do not line up, which is a bit frightening.

The problem with taking action is that it can be misinterpreted. Another problem is that even if the action is clear, it may contradict other actions. I feel like raising some of the actions that were taken in the context of the crisis that seem to be contradictory.

There has been talk of extending and expanding Operation Unifiler. It may seem like a good thing to send more troops to Ukraine to help train the army that is already in place. However, in the context of the crisis, that may send an overly optimistic message. We are sending troops for purposes other than combat, who will help with medical and security training for local troops. If the crisis boils over, we can expect that operation to be suspended and our troops to be withdrawn since they are not combat troops, whereas the troops that we are training in Ukraine may be mobilized if a conflict erupts. By taking that action, we are acting as though we expect the Russians not to take any military action, yet we are presenting this action as a response to a potential Russian invasion.

Another action the government has taken is to provide a \$120-million loan, but no one has mentioned the fact that there is a clause prohibiting the money from being used to procure military equipment, such as lethal equipment. Without getting into a debate about this equipment, it seems to me that this provision is somewhat of a slap in the face to Ukraine, which is specifically asking for military support. Again, we seem to be sending the message that we will help Ukraine but also hope there will be no crisis. The money will be used to support the economy, because Russia is threatening to destabilize the country, but this money will not be used to counter the Russian threat if the crisis comes to a head.

• (2240)

These actions seem unduly optimistic in contrast with the government's stated positions, such as recalling non-essential embassy staff, which even caused Russia to say that we must stop our alarmist rhetoric on the development of the crisis.

We seem to be sending mixed messages with the \$120-million loan, not to mention that the message itself is rather problematic. We are not responding to Ukraine's request for military equipment. Once again, without getting into a debate about the crux of the matter, it begs the question. A democratic nation, and an ally at that, is asking for support in the form of military equipment to respond to a threat from an authoritarian regime, and Canada is dithering. Meanwhile, Canada continues to send arms to Saudi Arabia. What message does that send?

The question is, why are we sending arms to Saudi Arabia while refusing to send any to Ukraine?

I am not here to debate the merits of the actions that have been taken, but it is worth remembering that these measures will not have any real consequences on the ground. Canada is not in a position to stand up to Russia, which is heavily armed and ready to go. The actions we take are about sending a message, but it seems as though, once again, the message is not clear.

This crisis has underscored a number of problems with our diplomacy. Many observers have pointed out that Canada may be doing itself a disservice by taking a soft power approach out of keeping with such a serious crisis.

I want to share a long excerpt from an article published today, in which Joël-Denis Bellavance spoke about the state of Canadian diplomacy:

Mr. Trudeau does not give the impression that foreign policy is a priority for him. That's too bad, because he has raised expectations around the world since coming to power. He missed a perfect opportunity to make it clear that "Canada is back!" He does not have any strong personalities on his team, with the exception of Chrystia Freeland, who can lead the charge in asserting—

● (2245)

The Deputy Chair: The hon. member is reading out the article as written, but she cannot mention ministers or the Prime Minister by name in the House.

Ms. Christine Normandin: I am so sorry. I will keep reading:

"...a more active and visible Canadian presence internationally", said a former diplomat who represented Canada in Africa and also wishes to remain anonymous.

Also coming under fire is the Prime Minister's bad habit of appointing deputy foreign affairs ministers who have never served in an embassy abroad. "The fact that the vast majority of top officials at the Pearson building have never set foot in an embassy is an outrage", said an internal source.

Former diplomat Ferry de Kerckhove [who makes frequent media appearances] feels it is time Canada's diplomatic corps found its bearings. The best way to do that is to produce a white paper on Canada's foreign policy. The last comprehensive review dates back to 2005; that is 17 years ago.

I hope this evening's debate will prove to be useful, an opportunity for us to acknowledge the importance of diplomacy and of funding it appropriately, investing in it to ensure it has a clear, overarching mission. We also need a clearer foreign policy because we never know when we will need to use diplomacy.

Credibility is not established in a day; I believe that goes double in times of crisis. I think what we need to acknowledge this evening is that we still have work to do. I hope that is the takeaway from today's debate.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague for her speech.

Government Orders

She talked at length about diplomacy. She pointed out some aspects of our diplomacy where she sees contradictions. I just wanted to say that on the issue of our Prime Minister meeting with Vladimir Putin, I think the decision to meet with someone or to not meet with someone is also part of a diplomatic strategy. It might be worthwhile.

In my view, I think the allies are united, and that is why certain individuals like President Biden, for example, are assigned the role of meeting with Mr. Putin. That is just my opinion, but I think it is a good strategy. It is important that we remain united.

As for the \$120 million loaned to the Ukrainians, I think it was more to stabilize their financial system, which is important. There was a strategy there.

As for the weapons sent to Saudi Arabia, we could have a long discussion on that, but my question has to do with weapons. Does the member think that Canada should be sending weapons?

Since we are sending weapons to Saudi Arabia, is the member suggesting that we should also send them to Ukraine?

Ms. Christine Normandin: Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for his very good question.

As my esteemed colleague from Montarville already mentioned, we do not think that sending arms to support Ukraine will make Russia shake in its boots. That is not going to have a tangible impact on the ground.

I will refer back to my speech, specifically to the idea that sending arms does more than just send a message. In that context, we must ensure that the message is properly perceived and received. That is more the role of diplomacy.

At present, I believe that mixed messages are being sent. I do not believe that sending arms alone will have a tangible impact. It is more about the message this sends, and we must ensure that it is clear.

● (2250)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Chair, I will speak in French as a sign of respect for our country's languages.

I want to comment on the debate over whether Ukraine's allies could supply weapons to Ukraine in an attempt to make Russia think twice before deciding to invade.

I believe that this would make a difference in diplomacy. Just look at President Trump's meeting with President Putin in recent years. I think that did a lot of damage to diplomacy in Europe and America. It was a huge victory for Russia, which broadcast propaganda around the world, including here in Canada, via Russia Today, a 24-hour propaganda channel.

Government Orders

We cannot forget that Russia has already fought two wars in Chechnya, sending 50,000 troops to fight each of those wars. Now, there are nearly 130,000 troops on the Ukraine-Russia and Belarus-Ukraine borders, and those soldiers are not normally there. These are tactical combat units deployed from all across the Russian Federation.

I think we need to be cautious in our diplomacy and avoid playing into the hands of Mr. Putin and the Russian Federation, which is preparing for a larger war while we spend our time talking.

Dialogue can have a diplomatic role in a war that might happen later, in a few weeks or months. We do not know. That is up to them.

We must remain vigilant so we can recognize when an adversary is using our time and our focus on diplomacy against us.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Madam Chair, in fact, the Bloc Québécois's position is to not close the door entirely on the use of weapons.

Nor did I say that that should follow diplomatic efforts. Both things can actually be done in parallel. They have to be done in parallel, because if there is a shipment of weapons, the message needs to be properly received.

We can send weapons and maybe irritate Russia more than anything else. However, if we do this and say we are prepared for the consequences, then there are things that can be done on their side so that we can talk. Both approaches have to be taken at the same time.

I am not trying to prioritize which of these things needs to be done first. I believe they can and should be done at the same time.

[*English*]

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Chair, I would also like to ask the question in French, but I do not know if I would communicate as effectively, especially at this late hour, so I am going to stick to English. Forgive me; I will work on it.

One of the questions that I asked my Conservative colleague on the defence committee earlier in the debate is one I would like to ask my hon. colleague in the Bloc, and I do appreciate her work on the defence committee as well. Working together has been good so far.

Ultimately, there has been a huge lack of Liberal leadership when it comes to the men and women who are serving in the armed forces. There is a lot of doubt about whether it is safe. Women who have served are giving up their entire careers because they cannot go forward. We have talked about that retention and recruitment problem. An additional stress is put on the women as we expand and amplify the Operation Unifier mission.

I would like to hear her comments and her thoughts on what we need to do from our end to better support the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces and to ensure that the Liberal Party and the Liberal government do the same.

• (2255)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for the question.

I will take this opportunity to mention that we work really well together at the Standing Committee on National Defence.

That is part of what all members want to work on, in other words, recruitment and retention within the Canadian Armed Forces. It is about improving the image of the forces, which has been tarnished over the past few years. It is important for the protection of Canadians and Quebeckers here at home, but also for our ability to respond internationally when required, especially in a context of climate change. There is a risk of increasing pressure on many levels. Is it not the role of the forces to intervene in those cases? It is worth discussing.

However, we will not be able to intervene if there is no one in the forces, and we see that is currently a challenge.

[*English*]

The Deputy Chair: It being 10:55 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 53(1), the committee will rise.

(Government Business No. 5 reported)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Accordingly this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 10:56 p.m.)

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