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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 13, 2022

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from March 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-215, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (illness, injury or quarantine), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I usually begin my speeches by saying that I am pleased to participate in the debate on a bill.

However, today, I have to say that I am really disappointed to be here once again debating a bill that, as we know, affects sick workers who need more than 15 weeks of special employment insurance sickness benefits.

During the previous Parliament, I had the privilege of introducing a bill that is similar to that of my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière. We are both concerned about people who worked and contributed their whole life and who did not choose to get sick, to get cancer, for example. They deserve more than 15 weeks of support.

It has been very well documented that, today, workers often need more than 15 weeks to recover. They need to fight the illness, receive treatment, heal and regain their strength before they can return to work. No one chooses to be sick.

As I was saying, I am always happy to debate, but I am incredibly disappointed today. I would even say that I am angry, because we are wasting time. As far back as at least 2011, all parties, including the Conservative Party, the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and even the Liberal Party when it was in opposition, agreed that it was time to amend the Employment Insurance Act and that these changes were needed to support workers through an illness.

I am disappointed because, as members know, I introduced Bill C-265 in the previous Parliament, and this bill was passed at second reading. We worked on it in committee, which was an amazing experience for me. It was the first time that I had the op-

portunity to debate with parliamentarians from all parties and to hear witnesses speak to Bill C-265. Today we are debating Bill C-215, which is practically the same bill. I am sharing this story with my colleagues because committee stage is the right place and the most appropriate place to have in-depth debate and improve the bill.

We can all agree that Bill C-215 is not a big bill. It seeks to amend just one section of the Employment Insurance Act. We are asking that benefits be extended from 15 weeks to 52 weeks. During the last Parliament, when we debated in committee, we heard from all sorts of witnesses. Quite honestly, I would say that we did not see any significant resistance to extending benefits from 15 weeks to 50 weeks.

What really caught my attention was the study from the Parliamentary Budget Officer. According to that study, we collectively have the means to provide the most vulnerable workers the support they need to return to work. The Parliamentary Budget Officer stated and documented the fact that a small increase in contributions, which does not amount to much in the lives of every employer, would financially help thousands of sick workers.

We all know someone in our lives who has gone through the process of recovering or fighting cancer. We know that some cancers can be healed in 15 weeks. However, we also know that if a person has the misfortune of being diagnosed with certain other cancers like colon cancer or rectal cancer, they will need 30 to 37 weeks of financial support to get through it. That is scientifically documented. Advanced technology and science are making it possible for more and more people with cancer to recover, but they still need to take the time to go through the treatment.

• (1105)

When it comes to honest workers who are among the most vulnerable, those who do not have group insurance or the necessary support from their employer, it is rather disgraceful that a rich country like ours is abandoning them.

I often joke that with a quick stroke of the pen, the government could decide, by ministerial order, to extend benefits from 15 weeks to 50 or 52.

Private Members' Business

It would be humane and compassionate of the government to say, after listening to the witnesses and the Parliamentary Budget Officer, that since bills have been introduced year after year for 10 years, enough is enough. It should quickly pass Bill C-215 or give it a royal recommendation in order to reassure the sick workers who are watching the debate today and who do not understand what is happening.

Personally, I wonder why the government is not taking action on this file. Members will recall that, last year, we passed Bill C-30, which contained a provision that would extend benefits from 15 weeks to 26 in 2022. Why wait so long? What is the justification?

Bill C-30 received royal assent on June 29, 2021, which was almost a year ago, but I am still trying to convince my colleagues that this failure to move forward makes no sense. Mainly, I am trying to convince my colleagues across the way, because they are the ones who are not on board. I know the Liberal benches over there are full of compassionate MPs who care about sick people, so why on earth is cabinet so dead set against it?

I have my theories, but I wonder which lobby group has been quietly telling cabinet to put it off for as long as possible. Maybe insurance companies, maybe employers? I have no idea, but I do want to point out that employers said they were not opposed to extending the special EI benefit period.

That leaves me wondering who is behind this, because I just cannot understand why I am still here on June 13 giving a speech about a bill to protect and support our most vulnerable workers.

I want to thank my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for not giving up and for reintroducing his bill, which will help put the spotlight on the government benches to make it clear to the Liberals that this is not a partisan issue. This bill is about humanity, compassion and understanding of the status of a worker who is seriously ill. Perhaps one day we will know who is preventing the government from moving forward more quickly.

It is supposed to come into force in the summer of 2022. According to my assistant, Charles, Quebec strawberries are in season, which means summer is here. If summer is here, why has the government not announced that it is giving royal recommendation to Bill C-215, so that we can give all our vulnerable and seriously ill workers all the support they need to fight their illness, recover and get back to work?

I appeal to the compassion and humanity of the Liberal members opposite.

• (1110)

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am not happy to rise for this bill. The previous speaker highlighted the frustration over how long this has taken, and Bill C-215 is just another attempt to bring some economic justice to this file.

Ironically, I am speaking here today because somebody is sick. I have been asked to cover off, at the last minute, our position as the New Democrats with regard to this private member's bill, which is very important.

When I first arrived in 2002, Yvon Godin of the NDP, the member for Acadie—Bathurst, was known as a champion with regard to Atlantic Canadians being taken advantage of by the employment insurance program we have in place. We fail to recognize that all Canadians, at the end of the day, are paying into a program that some will never have access to, and I have seen this over a number of generations.

It is really despicable, quite frankly, when we think about it. We pay into a program that is basically manipulated enough, predominantly against women and transitional workers, that we pay an extra tax. Oftentimes, it is the lowest earners in the system who pay this tax, and if they cannot collect it at the end of the day, then that is all it is.

This is no different from a regular insurance program we have privately. We might have it for a car, a house or anything like that. People often get very frustrated when they make an insurance claim and there is a massive deductible or when they are not eligible for some reason, such as a technical problem. However, here, our own government has crafted legislation that works against the lowest earners, in particular, with regard to collecting benefits.

The bill would rectify a problem when it comes to sick benefits. The member for Elmwood—Transcona, from the NDP, had a bill just recently on this asking for 50 weeks. Bill C-215 asks for 52 weeks, and I commend the member for bringing it forward. Again, I wish we did not have to speak about this again, but we do.

Let us remind ourselves of some of the important factors here. There is an argument for the workers: It would be a strong provision for the economy if we moved to a 52-week employment insurance program. However, let me back up. For an individual who has to apply for employment insurance, the rules have been made more difficult than ever before to get a claim in. Then, if the claim goes in, they are just getting a portion of their income, whether they have lost their job, there has been a layoff or, in this case, they are sick.

The Liberals are finally agreeing, although it has taken a long time, to extend this to 26 weeks, which ironically is the minimum threshold necessary for cancer treatment. However, we know now that for COVID-19 and other types of long-haul diseases, it is not sufficient. When a person is trying to recover, the anxiety, depression and not knowing whether they will get healthy during that process are very serious and affect the recovery rate.

Private Members' Business

One of the things that is missed in this debate is the fact that employers do better when they know that somebody will be off for a period of time. They can then train another worker and that worker will have stability. A worker could come in for a period of almost a year, and they would contribute much more effectively to a company affected by a person who is off the job. This is incredibly important because it is about investing in training and education and getting a return, especially since right now some sectors of the economy are understaffed and are looking for workers. This would provide a sense of stability for the worker coming in.

This is similar to maternity benefits. When we extended them, it was one of the biggest achievements of Parliament. However, one of the sad things is that we did not extend the amount of money. What we did was divide up the money over a longer period of time. That is another story of how the employment insurance system really is a rip-off for workers at the end of the day. Again, here is a system that should be there for Canadians. They pay into it, yet the rate of return is poor to start with, and on top of that there are all kinds of qualifications for getting the benefit.

Coming back to Bill C-215, there is no doubt that it would provide a real benefit, because companies would have the chance to train and attract employees who could turn into long-standing employees. Often, with maternity leave, when somebody comes into a company and it grows and is successful, that person can stay in the workforce, either in a similar job or a new job in the company. We have had all kinds of success stories.

• (1115)

Prior to being a member of Parliament, I used to work as an employment specialist for persons with disabilities. One of the challenges we often had was that, especially with someone in a new job in the workforce, depending upon the person's disability, this could create some temporary or unintended consequences at the work site, where the person may need accommodation or the person might have another injury. There would be a break or a pause to fix the situation, or the person might have to adjust. Paying into the system and having an employer know that the person will come back healthier or better trained and that this investment has not gone away was really important, and we had over 90% success rate.

Again, this is what we are talking about, providing some sense of stability in the employment sector. What is going to come out of the next number of years is the ability to fill a number of positions in the economy, and that stability would provide an opportunity. We see a lot of movement of workers. We even see workers being poached from Canada internationally, now more than ever before. We have heard this in a lot of the testimony we have had from different types of employers across Canada. One of the things we can do is provide these types of benefits and stability, so that workers know that if they get sick or have a health issue, the government has their backs.

This is money that the person has paid into. This is not reaching back into the pocketbook or the wallet of the nation. This is money that comes off people's cheques every single day when they work, which is then given back as benefits because they paid into it.

I come from the auto sector, where these types of benefits help at times with the economy or, alternatively, if there is a retooling or a

change in manufacturing. It provides stability because the workers will be coming back. There can be layoffs. What we have found is that companies have much better workforces and capabilities, which leads to better productivity in Canada. We actually compete on a better footing that way, because the company knows that it is going to get a person back after a period of time, rather than having to search for other answers.

This is what the NDP has been calling for with regard to employment insurance, which would be a much more progressive approach to employment. Sick benefits are just one of its features. This is how we should be looking at our model for employment insurance. How do we use it as a way of augmenting not only the attractiveness of being in the Canadian workforce, but also the productivity?

Extending the weeks would actually produce a better net result and provide better stability for employers who are looking to compete internationally with different manufacturing and other employment bases, knowing that strong programs exist, including day care, pharmacare and dental care coming up. All of those things are part of a company's decision to invest in Canada. Companies will inventory all those costs and benefits. I can tell colleagues that this is more attractive than some of the shortcuts we have seen when competing against the United States or Mexico, which do not have the same types of supports in place. Sometimes companies pay a little bit more up front, knowing that they are going to get a stable workforce and stable programs from the government, which will reduce their overall costs. Especially now, as we are seeing again that skilled trades and other types of occupations are being challenged internationally in whether Canadians stay or go, this is one of the things that we can actually offer as an attractive element to invest in Canada. These types of programs are a bona fide addition to a stable workforce.

I do not see why it is taking this long. I do not see how this would undermine the economy. I do not see how there is a cost to this, which is actually the revenue coming in from paying into other benefits, especially right now when we have a growing economy again. Thank goodness, we are seeing some turnaround in industries like the auto industry in Windsor here, where we have had some downtime, especially with a number of issues related to supply and demand. Investments have been basically poached from us for years because we do not have a national auto strategy. We still do not. We had a couple of victories recently, which was good, but we still need to do better on that. We are going to have increased production and increased capabilities, especially coming out of this pandemic, when we know COVID-19 has challenged so many people.

I thank the member for bringing forward this bill. It is sad that we are speaking about it again.

Private Members' Business

• (1120)

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the member from the Bloc, as well as from the NDP, because I feel this is the next segment to the speech, after listening to the member for Windsor West talk about the fact that we have to look at the economy. This has been going on too long, and we all know that.

I look at my years in the public service, especially as a constituency assistant working for Joe Preston in Elgin—Middlesex—London. Those 11 years of experience have given me the customer service that is so important for Canadians, especially when they are in need. One of the biggest gaps I saw was exactly what we are talking about today. It is when sickness benefits stop and people are expected to go back to work.

Building on what my colleagues previously spoke about, I want to talk about why this is important. This is something that I see everybody in the chamber does understand. I know there is compassion for workers. When they need to take time off, how can the Government of Canada be there to assist? How can we make sure that our choices in policy are going to be good economic policies for our future?

I want to turn to an evaluation that was done of the employment insurance sickness benefits. It is dated April 2022. This evaluation pulled out three key findings, and one of them was about the duration of benefits. I will quote from the results:

...the duration of the benefits is adequate for most claimants, but those with severe and/or long-term illnesses are more likely to use the full 15 weeks of sickness benefits and remain sick hereafter

there has been significant growth in claims for the EI Sickness benefits nationally since 2000....

These are things that we need to take into consideration. Yes, it may be something minor or perhaps somebody is sick. I know there is a benefit where, if people have a sick child, they can take up to 35 weeks. What can we do for that individual? Who is the employee who needs to take time off work as well?

Right now, employees can get only up to 15 weeks, but let us say it is someone like our wonderful Speaker who just had to take a few weeks off himself to get his heart looked at. We see the same things with many Canadians who, unfortunately, do not have that support. Employment insurance is the backup plan. There are about 45% of Canadians who have a backup plan. What happens when employment insurance is not there? Many Canadians have to use other insurance first before they go on EI sick benefits, but what happens to those Canadians who do not have those other benefits? Right now, if they are sick, they get 15 weeks. Let us think about a person who has cardiovascular disease, who has cancer, who has ongoing injuries or who is in a motor vehicle accident. We have seen some horrific things happen and there is so much repair that needs to be done there as well.

We have all noted how COVID caused a lot of problems when it comes to mental health. This is something that everybody in the chamber can agree on. As we are transitioning from the pandemic and being locked down for two years, we are seeing a lot of issues, so we need to be compassionate on this.

The history of sickness benefits goes back to 1971, when they were introduced. It has been 51 years and it is time to get this fixed, to come up to our standards in 2022. We have seen changes to the program. Back in 1990, we recognized that women who go on maternity leave sometimes require bed rest. The government responded to that by putting in a combination of both sickness and maternity benefits. I think of some other great things that were done for self-employed individuals who wanted to have these types of benefits and did not have private insurance. They can now get employment insurance sickness benefits through the Government of Canada. That is really important. We know that a number of years ago, there was a reduction in hours, from 700 hours down to 600 hours. We have seen, over the last 51 years, that the program has changed, but we need to continue to modify it to ensure that we get things done right.

I am really proud of the bill that my colleague has put forward to expand the sickness benefit from 15 weeks up to 52 weeks. This is a really great thing for people, like I said, who have cancer, who are perhaps having surgery this month, but next month may have to deal with chemotherapy and radiation. Perhaps after that, there will be different things that need to be done too. Therefore, the 15 weeks many times do not provide enough time.

• (1125)

Referring back to this evaluation done in April 2022, I want to talk about a statistic. Of the people who were surveyed, 45% did not return to work by the time they were supposed to, so there are issues here. About 55% of respondents who had exhausted their claims were able to return to work, but there is a whole gap of people who were not able to go back to work.

The average length of treatment for things such as breast and colon cancer, two of the most commonly diagnosed cancers, ranges anywhere from 26 weeks to 37 weeks. Currently, if we are looking at the benefits from the Government of Canada, one would be looking at a minimum of 11 weeks not paid. Members should think about that, think about the stress a person is already going through, as well as the stress on the family. One thing the Government of Canada can do is help take away some of that financial stress. We know this is not going to make people rich. This is not a program that makes people rich, but it does provide some benefits to help people during those difficult times. Taking that 55% of a person's earnings and increasing it over a time span of 52 weeks would be much more beneficial.

These are the things that I think it is really important to look at. One of the things we have to note is that we are asking this of the government, because this needs to come with a royal recommendation. We do need to spend money. We know from the last Parliament, from the discussions today and from the study that was just done, which I was just referring to, that the government knows there is a problem, so let us find the solution.

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This is why I am saying to the government that all parties and experts are onside here. We know everybody is rowing in the same direction. We want to see the employment insurance benefits for sickness increased. We all want to see that. The population needs it. There is 55% of the population that does not have additional benefits, so we need to be there for them.

We have taken into consideration things that people may be concerned with, and there are ways of dealing with them. I know some people will say there are possibilities of fraud. Over the last number of years, we have not been requesting medical certificates through employment insurance. This is a simple solution that we can put back in to help take some of those concerns away. We could go back and ask for a medical note. People can work with their physicians to ensure they get the time off they need.

Both the Bloc and the NDP had bills like this, so we know they are in favour. We know that in the House of Commons, the majority of members are in favour. This is where we are looking for royal recommendation and this is where the support from the government is really needed. We need additional funds to increase this from 26 weeks to 52 weeks, the number of weeks in the Budget Implementation Act, 2021, No. 1, effective July 1, 2022. That is what we are asking for. This is about compassion. It is about helping Canadians when they really need it.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has spoken about this. Yes, this would be a cost to the government, but as the speaker previous to me from the NDP noted, this is good for the economy. We hear all Canadians, not only employees but also the employers, saying that this is something we should be doing.

I want to reflect on those people who come to the office to say they have exhausted their benefits but cannot go back to work. Many people do try to go back to work. There are a lot of financial concerns. As I indicated, people are receiving only 55% of their salary in the first place, so all of the bills can and will continue to pile up. Having the benefit available for a longer period of time is really positive, so let us do that.

As we are looking at this, we need to look at the families and individuals under financial stress. This is one way of helping them out during this very critical time. Increasing the employment insurance benefits to 52 weeks would give people hope. It would give them time to heal and repair. A lot of times, people are rushing back to work. In some cases, their jobs cannot be modified to welcome them back, so sometimes people cannot return to work.

We need to be compassionate and do what is right for Canadians. I am asking for everybody's support on this important bill, Bill C-215.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank my hon. colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for his bill seeking to make changes to EI.

[*English*]

I am really happy to be speaking to this bill today, and I have enjoyed the debate because my colleagues from Salaberry—Suroît, Windsor West and Elgin—Middlesex—London have brought forward a lot of really good points. I think that speaks to the bill, that we have a lot of people speaking about the need for employment insurance reform and that members are bringing forward various examples.

What I would like to speak to, though, is what we have been doing in employment insurance reform and then speak to what I have heard today in debate.

On June 29, 2021, Bill C-30, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 19, 2021 and other measures, contained the provisions to amend the EI sickness benefit to bring it from 15 weeks to 26 weeks. It received royal assent back in June of last year and will go into effect this summer, when we will move from 15 weeks to 26 weeks. We did this because we recognized that the need for increased weeks of employment insurance is sometimes necessary for those who are sick.

Last summer, the minister joined the commissioners of the Canadian Employment Insurance Commission to launch the first phase of a two-year consultation on the future of the EI program. To reach as many Canadians as possible, the minister asked her department to launch a consultation portal, which included an online survey, where all interested Canadians could share their views. The survey was open from August 6 to November 19 last year and drew more than 1,900 responses. Approximately 60 written submissions came from a cross-section of labour, employer and other groups. The minister personally attended many of the 10 national and 11 regional round tables to hear feedback on how the EI program can better serve Canadians. Input was received from over 200 stakeholders across the country, including employer and employee organizations, unions, academics, self-employed worker and gig worker associations, parents and family associations and health organizations, to name a few.

The overarching goal is to bring forward a vision for a new and modern EI system that is simpler and more responsive to the needs of workers and employers. The first round of the consultations focused on key priorities related to improving access to EI, including how to address the temporary emergency measures that will expire this fall. We are also examining whether EI meets the evolving and diverse needs of Canadian families. As we have heard today in some of the debate, it seems there are some areas that we still need to look at.

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For example, how do we make maternity and parental benefits more flexible and more inclusive for adoptive parents? There are differing views, obviously, and I know that the minister has found unanimous commitment on the part of both employer and employee representatives to develop a modern EI program that is resilient, accessible, adequate and financially sustainable. The government is planning a second phase of round table consultations by summer.

Aside from the information, advice and recommendations from the round tables and online consultation, there are several other reviews, evaluations and reports available. In particular, I want to highlight the excellent work done in 2021 by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, which included 20 recommendations on modernizing the EI program.

As we have heard, the EI program has been a crucial part of Canada's social safety net since 1940. As we also heard today, we obviously need to get this right. My colleagues talked a little about severe illnesses, for instance, the case of cancer. We never want someone to feel like they have to go back to work if they are ill.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

When someone has cancer, we want them to focus on fighting the disease and getting better. We do not want them worrying about paying their rent or buying groceries, or what they are going to do if they do not have insurance.

I was told about some such cases in my riding, and that included friends of mine. I have a friend who is in the restaurant business and he had prostate cancer when he was 40 years old.

He did not have private insurance. He came to speak to us and was very frank. Instead of focusing on his treatments, he worried about losing his home and not being able to take care of his children. He spoke about what he called the business of cancer, something we never really think about. We think about the person receiving treatment, about them winning the fight against cancer, but we do not think about the human side and the financial aspects of this fight, or of its impact on the family.

Today, I listened to my colleagues from Salaberry—Suroît, Windsor West and Elgin—Middlesex—London, who talked about similar cases. Some people need more than 15 weeks, others more than 26 weeks. That is why we held consultations.

When we debate private members' bills, I always listen to the various positions and points being raised. We had a really good debate this morning, and I want to again commend my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for his Bill C-215.

[*English*]

I think, when we are debating legislation, what is really important is to listen to all of our colleagues across the way. This was a really good debate where examples clearly demonstrated that 26 weeks may not be enough and we might need more.

I know that a previous piece of legislation, very similar to this one, did require royal recommendation. I believe, in this case, it will require that as well. I believe this piece of legislation has the

support of the Conservatives, the NDP and the Bloc at the moment. I do not know who on my side is supporting it because it is a private member's bill. I think members brought forward very interesting arguments as to why we need to take a look at this and see if 26 weeks is sufficient.

I have not made up my mind, and I am sure there are people behind me or in the lobby who are saying that I am at it again, but I have not made up my mind on whether I will support this bill at second reading to go to committee. I think some interesting arguments have definitely been presented today.

[*Translation*]

The bill will likely need to address specific cases, such as cancer or severe illness, that require more weeks of benefits for those who need them. I know that not all Canadians have access to private or employer-provided insurance.

I think that is something that must—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I must interrupt and ask the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis to step outside the House to take his call.

I will remind members that they cannot be on the phone in the House. I encourage them to step out of the chamber if they need to use the phone, because we should not be hearing their conversations in here.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I was saying, I think it would be a good idea to revisit our EI program. I know the minister has done research and held public consultations and will continue to do so.

Bill C-215 needs royal assent to be implemented. When it comes up for voting this Wednesday, we will see what happens.

I would like to once again thank my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for his bill and all my colleagues who took part in the debates in the House. I think they raised some good points, very specific and useful points, to persuade all members to support Bill C-215.

• (1140)

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, since parliamentary life can be full of surprises, I rise somewhat unexpectedly to talk about Bill C-215.

I listened attentively to the speech by my colleague from Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, who presented a series of arguments in favour of the bill. The problem is that her government is currently resisting. We hope that the hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine will be sort of a Trojan horse and make sure that the truth about this issue gets back to the caucus and the Prime Minister's Office.

Bill C-215 amends the Employment Insurance Act to increase from 15 to 52 the maximum number of weeks for which benefits can be paid because of illness, injury or quarantine. This is our umpteenth attempt. For two decades, the Bloc Québécois has been working on this, and asking that the number of weeks of benefits be increased from 15 to 50. Our reasoning is still the same.

In December 2019, my leader, the member for Beloeil—Chambly, and my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville spoke publicly to support the request of two cancer survivors, Émilie Sansfaçon and Marie-Hélène Dubé, and their families, who have been fighting for years to get the federal government to make the necessary amendments to the special benefits program and increase the duration of benefits from 15 to 50 weeks.

Unfortunately, Émilie died on November 5, 2020, at the young age of 31, leaving behind her spouse, her two children, her mother, her mother-in-law and, of course, her father, Louis Sansfaçon. Louis Sansfaçon was a candidate for the Bloc Québécois in the last election, and I commend his courage and resilience in this ongoing, just struggle. Émilie did not live long enough to see the end of her fight to extend the number of weeks of EI sickness benefits from 15 to 50, despite a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau. I would actually like to give a shout-out to the Prime Minister, since we just learned that he has COVID-19, and I wish him a speedy recovery.

Émilie met with the Prime Minister to discuss this motion. However, the government still has not increased the duration of EI sickness benefits. That is why my esteemed colleague from Salaberry—Suroît, who spoke earlier, dedicated this bill, which was introduced in the last Parliament, to Émilie Sansfaçon.

Let us be clear: From Johanne Deschamps, a former Bloc member for Laurentides—Labelle, to my colleagues from Salaberry—Suroît and Thérèse-De Blainville, the Bloc Québécois has always fought to improve the EI system, including creating an independent fund, eliminating the spring gap, improving access to regular benefits, ending the classification of unemployed workers based on the claims submitted to the program, and increasing all types of benefits.

The special EI benefit for serious illnesses is totally absurd when you think about it, or when you know a person with a serious illness such as cancer or ALS. Obviously, with the COVID-19 crisis, the public coffers are not as full as they could be. This is not an easy task, and there is little leeway. However, it is precisely this crisis that made many people understand the importance of having a good employment insurance program, since it is an economic stabilizer.

In fact, when he testified before the Standing Committee on Finance, the former governor of the Bank of Canada, Stephen S. Poloz, admitted, when questioned by the Bloc, that employment in-

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sure was an important economic stabilizer and that Canada would stand up far better to the crisis if more people were covered. That is saying something. The Bloc asked, "Since employment insurance is an automatic stabilizer of the economy, in your opinion, wouldn't the economy be more stable in a time of crisis if the system covered more workers?" Mr. Poloz replied, "Certainly." What more do we need?

We know that the labour market has changed considerably since special sickness benefits were established in 1971. It has evolved significantly. Needs are now more urgent, especially when it comes to work-life balance. If a worker is laid off, they may be entitled to regular EI benefits. If they have a child, they may be entitled to maternity or parental leave. However, if they find out they have a serious illness that requires frequent or prolonged leave, they will get the same number of weeks of benefits as a worker who has to take leave for a broken bone. Something is wrong here. This makes no sense.

Illness involves the involuntary component of the purpose of the regular benefits program. Obviously, no one wants to get sick or be diagnosed with cancer. I say cancer, but it could be any long-term chronic illness. Cancer is a prime example because it affects almost everyone. I think that one out of three Canadians are at risk of getting cancer.

● (1145)

A person who receives news like that, which is already difficult psychologically, needs several weeks simply to realize what is happening and what it means. In fact, in an interview, our brave Émilie said that, when she was diagnosed for the second time, what first came to mind was her financial situation, not the fact that she would have to go back to chemotherapy. We can imagine how she felt. She immediately wondered how she would manage to survive during this long period of treatment.

We are not in the United States. In Canada, we want to help people and that is our mindset here in the House.

Marie-Hélène Dubé, the cancer survivor who fought alongside Ms. Sansfaçon, explained her difficult journey. She said, "I had to take out several mortgages on my house and postpone the surgery for my third cancer because I had not yet worked the 630 hours I needed to be entitled to 15 weeks of benefits. This had an impact on my remission. I was exhausted when I finally went in for surgery. I had several complications. Fortunately, I had the support of my boss, and I had a house. Someone who rents would find themselves out in the street".

In addition to undergoing treatment, she had to take out another mortgage on her house. That is not easy. The financial stress had an impact on her illness. As my hon. colleague from Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine said earlier, someone who rents would end up in the street.

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Another worker, William Morissette, had a medical certificate stating that he could return to work in a year, after undergoing an ostomy to treat his colon cancer. That is a typical case. Many people will heal or go into remission and be able to go back to work after a recovery period.

I also want to note that, according to the Supreme Court of Canada, the employment insurance power must be interpreted generously. This is what it said in a 2008 case: “Its objectives are not only to remedy the poverty caused by unemployment, but also to maintain the ties between unemployed persons and the labour market.”

As I mentioned earlier, I hope that my colleagues across the aisle will do the same so that, together, we can make this a non-partisan issue for Quebeckers and Canadians.

In conclusion, in honour of all viewers who are seriously ill or who know someone who is, the Bloc Québécois and I will continue this just and necessary fight and will vote in favour of this bill.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank all of my colleagues in the House who took part in the debate on Bill C-215 and whose sensitivity and unparalleled sense of duty enabled them to recognize the urgent need to take action and offer proper financial support to people who are recovering from a serious illness such as cancer. We are now at a crossroads with Bill C-215.

All of the members in the House understand the importance of this bill and of the second reading vote that will allow a committee to study the technical aspect of the royal recommendation required under our parliamentary procedures for a bill that has financial implications for the government.

It is far too easy for a government to shelve a private member's bill. The current rules water down the impact of members' work, even if the House votes for positive initiatives that are necessary for Canadians.

I realize this is a whole other debate, but pointing it out will give us a chance to think about it and change things in the House for the collective good. The House must draft acts and regulations with a view to enhancing Canadians' lives and well-being.

It is our duty as members to fix this provision of the employment insurance program that has existed for decades. The members' will should lead to concrete results. That is the very basis of our Canadian democracy.

When our work bears fruit, it gives hope and dignity to those who are held back a serious illness. At this stage, I wonder whether my Liberal colleagues are aware that obtaining the royal recommendation and increasing the number of weeks of EI sickness benefits from 15 to 52 depends on their good faith.

A study in committee would surely yield the same conclusions as the last one, but that is not what I am asking for here, since illnesses such as cancer do not wait. I hope that the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance will take responsibility and execute the will of the House by granting a royal recommendation to Bill C-215.

Right now, millions of Canadians are struggling to make ends meet in the face of soaring prices on necessities like food, housing and transportation. Now more than ever, sick people receiving medical treatment or recovering from illness need to know that they can count on their government for support.

Against the expectations of my hon. colleagues, who already know that we need to act, I call upon the Prime Minister and his right-hand woman, the Minister of Finance, to show compassion by making a concrete gesture that will lead to the passage of this bill. We have a social responsibility to the people we hold dear, the people we love, the people who gave us life, in the case of our parents. They deserve our support so they can get well with guaranteed financial security at the low cost of one cup of coffee a month, as I have said in the House before.

Let us hope that this bill goes in the right direction.

• (1150)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion.

[*English*]

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

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 15, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The House will now suspend to the call of the Chair.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:53 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 12 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1200)

[*English*]

ONLINE STREAMING ACT

MOTION THAT DEBATE BE NOT FURTHER ADJOURNED

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in relation to the consideration of Government Business No. 16, I move:

That debate be not further adjourned.

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[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places or use the “raise hand” function so the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

[*English*]

Seeing the interest in asking questions, I will be notifying members when their time is coming up, so I would ask them to limit their questions and comments to one minute. That way, we can hopefully get everybody in on the debate.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am going to be speaking directly to the camera and to Canadians at home so they can hear the question I am about to ask the government.

The motion that was just moved is a motion called “closure”. It is that the debate on Government Business No. 16 not be further adjourned, which means it is closure. What the government is doing through this motion and through Government Business No. 16, which we are debating today, is having a closure motion on a time allocation process, which means we will time-allocate time for Bill C-11 in committee to come to this House, time-allocate report stage in this House and then time-allocate third reading of that bill in this House. Anybody who is following Bill C-11 knows of and has great concerns about the censorship of the Internet in that bill, so what the government is doing today on a censorship bill is moving closure on a time allocation motion. They are censoring the censorship of their own censorship bill.

That is what is happening today. Why?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows very well that there has been extensive debate on this bill. There were more than 15 hours of debate at second reading, where we heard from 48 speakers, the overwhelming majority of whom were Conservative speakers, and there has been extensive debate at committee, 21 hours. The reason we are here today is that the Conservatives have been filibustering so much that they will not even let the bill get to clause-by-clause consideration, and they literally filibustered their own motion in committee.

They do not want to debate this bill; they just want to block it. They are fundraising off of fearmongering. We are going to make sure that broadcasters pay for great content in Canada. That is what this is about.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, we have seen what has happened at committee. I have seen it first-hand. It is unbelievable. We had the witnesses selected; then the Conservatives started filibustering the witnesses, including the CRTC chair and the minister, refusing to let them come to committee. Then the Conservatives filibustered some more and basically stopped all the committee's functions.

As members know, the job of the committee is actually to improve the bill. There were a number of intervenors. The vast majority of those who came forward at committee were in support of the bill, but they wanted to see improvements, and Conservatives are refusing to allow those improvements to be adopted.

I want to ask my colleague why the Conservatives are blocking everything and why they do not do their job as official opposition and actually improve the bill. That is the reason we are here.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives have had dozens of hours to debate this bill, and so have other members. Conservatives have been filibustering and have been blocking, and they do not want to see this bill move forward.

Just one of the benefits of Bill C-11 is that we would be updating the mandate of the CRTC to include specific focus on supporting francophone, racialized, indigenous, LGBTQ+ and disabled creators in Canada, and this means a portion of the contributions from broadcasting and streaming platforms would be directly supporting the development of these creative platforms and of people in the ecosystem who have been shut out.

As such, it is up to the Conservatives to tell Canadians why they are blocking legislation that would help creators who have been disadvantaged since the Broadcasting Act was first in place in 1991. Why are they not doing their job and making the bill better, instead of blocking it at committee?

● (1205)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would ask the minister why his government is blocking the release of the policy directive that they will issue to the CRTC.

We are waiting to hearing how the Liberal government will force the CRTC to implement the measures contained in Bill C-11. I note that on Friday the minister said he would not rush this through the Senate in order to allow the Senate lots of time to debate it. The bill only came to the heritage committee on May 17. Now the government is rushing it through both the committee and the House.

Now that the government is not going to rush it through the Senate, would the minister at least commit to tabling, for all Canadians to see, the policy directive that it would issue to the CRTC?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I sat with the hon. member at the heritage committee with years ago. He knows very well that policy directives are released after a bill passes.

What is dismaying for me is that the members opposite speak about democracy somehow being undermined. I have to say there is no greater threat to our democracy than when an opposition party attacks great institutions, great parts of the government and Canadian democracy, such as the CRTC, which is fully independent of government, and that is a good thing.

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What the bill is trying to do is open up the creative sector to more people and make sure that streaming platforms and big tech pay into the Canada Media Fund. That is a good thing.

Delay tactics will not help Canadians. Passing this bill will.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I too am concerned with some of the delay tactics we are seeing from some other parliamentarians here. I believe our democracy is sacred, and the governing party does have a mandate from Canadians, so it should have a place here to move on that. As members know, I have supported some time allocation motions in the past for this reason.

That said, this Motion No. 16 does not even allow all parliamentarians to put forward their amendments at committee if they are not moved by a certain time. This is now closure on even having debate on a pretty substantial motion. I wonder if the minister could share more on why such seemingly extreme measures are needed when we are not expecting an election to be called this summer. Why is the government going at this pace, given how important it is to get this legislation right?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, quite frankly, there has been debate at committee, and the Conservatives continue to block. They filibustered for seven hours in 29 hours of debate and 48 speakers. It has been a great amount of time.

While we are reluctant to be at this stage, this is critical legislation. Canadians asked us to pass it. They want us to move on this. This is going to help us shift from cable, which came to my town of Morinville in 1982. Here we are now in 2022, and we can now stream from our cars, backyards or apartments. It is a streaming world. The CRTC needs to catch up. It needs the legislation to do it. We have to get this out and we have to get this bill passed.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, none of what the minister just said is accurate.

The Senate is not going to pass this bill before the end of June. We just heard that the committee has been considering this bill since the middle of May. I have been to that committee. What the cabinet is calling filibustering is what I call debate and raising the issues our constituents are raising.

Thousands of Canadians emailed us and said they did not want to see what was called Bill C-10. The government brought it back as Bill C-11. The bill has not been fixed. They have not fixed section 4.2, which does generate the ability of the government, through the CRTC, to moderate and censor the content uploaded by users.

This motion is truly a lack of confidence in the chair of the Canadian heritage committee. This is entirely of the government's making and entirely the government's fault. This legislation has not been reviewed or debated in 31 years. There is no reason to rush it through in the next few weeks. The government is being completely inaccurate in the way it is presenting it. It is a darn shame that we will not be able to review this bill as it deserves to be reviewed, because Canadians are interested to know if they will still be able to use the Internet, their YouTube channels, their Facebook and their TikTok in the ways that they have always been able to without the censorship of government and the CRTC.

• (1210)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, the member opposite knows that there has been hours and hours of debate at committee. He also knows that their side continues to filibuster. The conspiracy theories and nonsensical ideas of censorship are just beyond the pale.

Quite frankly, this is one in a list of examples of the Conservatives going past opposition to obstruction, whether it is Bill C-8, the budget implementation bill or Bill C-11, the Conservatives do not want to debate; they want to obstruct the work of this Parliament.

Canadians elected us to do good work, and they know that the CRTC is independent. They know there is nothing here that is going to affect Canadians' uploading material to the Internet. This is about making sure that the platforms contribute into the Canada Media Fund, that they develop more content here in Canada, and that we open up the platforms to racialized people, LGBTQ people, indigenous people and disabled people who are creating content for Canadians. This is about moving into the Internet age, not the past, where the Conservatives are stuck.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in my riding, the people who contact me about what is going on in Parliament are not particularly interested in the procedural games, the obstructionist tactics, the filibusters and the like. They are more interested in a thriving cultural sector for the creators we have in P.E.I., one that has been particularly hit during the pandemic and one that has great prospects looking forward.

What will it mean to the creative sector? What will it mean to the Confederation Centre of the Arts? What will it mean to our performers? That is what people want to know. I would like the minister to speak to that.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Charlottetown for his intervention and for sticking up for the creators in his constituency and his province, who have been unduly hit by the pandemic.

As we are coming out of the pandemic and as we are trying to modernize the act and as we are making sure that creators can be part of the 21st century, we are going to make sure that islanders have access to these platforms. We are going to make sure that LGBT, indigenous, people of colour and disabled creators on P.E.I. are going to be able to get paid what they are worth and make sure that the broadcasters making money off of these great creators in P.E.I. and across Canada are paying into the system so that we can experience more Canadian content.

We have shifted away from cable. We are now onto streaming. This bill, Bill C-11, helps us to make sure that the CRTC has the tools to make sure that Canadian content continues to thrive. It is a good thing for islanders. It is a good thing for Canadians. That is why we are here today.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I must have been naive and idealistic, to be honest, when I was first elected to Parliament. I thought we were here to make laws. I thought we were here to move Quebec and Canadian society forward. In the nine months since this new Parliament began, progress on legislation has been minimal. Between the Liberal government's closure motions and the Conservative government's filibusters, no progress has been made.

I heard a journalist on CBC radio this morning who was talking about how poor the Liberals' legislative record is. Even with an alliance with the NDP, they are not making any progress. They cannot move these bills forward.

The Bloc Québécois worked very hard on Bill C-11. The hon. member for Drummond and our party have been working on it for the past year. We were prepared to vote in favour of the bill to modernize the Broadcasting Act last year, before the election. We even tried to speed up the process, but the government called an election. Now it has cooked up a motion that is meant to get Bill C-11 passed. The motion before us today is really embarrassing.

Is my hon. colleague not a little embarrassed by his government's limited legislative results since the election?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, as a proud Franco-Albertan, the first to be a member of the federal cabinet here in Canada, I am embarrassed that only 5% of content in Canada is in French.

What we are trying to do with this bill is boost content from francophone creators, have content from people who are francophone, franco-queer or franco-curious, hear the voices of first nations people who are also francophone, and have francophone people with disabilities create shows we can watch, while having broadcasters pay for all the good work of these creators.

We had this debate in committee. It is time to move this bill forward.

• (1215)

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, fact: We have had Conservatives in this House who obviously have not even read the bill, as they are comparing it to things like the government following people on cellphones. The disinformation has been unbelievable.

Fact: We had witnesses before the committee, including the chair of the CRTC, who were filibustered by Conservatives so they could not come to testify.

Fact: The majority of witnesses overwhelmingly want to see Bill C-11 pass, but want to see improvements. They want the committee to do its work.

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Fact: As we found out last Friday, even the Conservatives have submitted amendments, and the NDP, Liberals and Bloc Québécois submitted their amendments a week and a half ago. The committee should be getting to work.

What I do not understand is that we have two block parties in this House: the Bloc Québécois and the block-everything party. The Conservatives are blocking everything that comes forward.

Why are they doing that when the vast majority of witnesses want to see this bill improved?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I think there is a simple answer to my hon. member's question. While those on the other side pedal disinformation and conspiracy theories, they make a lot of money fundraising off of it. They are not advancing the project of the country. They are not advancing making sure we have a bill that is going to meet the expectations of Canadians.

There is a genuine problem with where the Conservatives are heading. They go down these rabbit holes of disinformation, misinformation and conspiracy theories and lose sight of what Canadians have asked us to do, which is to modernize the CRTC; make sure the broadcasting platforms are paying into the Canada Media Fund; and make sure that, as we stand next to the juggernaut of culture that is the United States, we can have our own Canadian voice on the international stage. When that voice is heard, co-productions with Ireland and other countries in the world will get our Canadian voice out there.

That is what this bill is about. The Conservatives can stay in their rabbit holes. We are here to advance for Canadians.

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, this afternoon the minister is trying to defend the indefensible from coast to coast. Bill C-11 is a disaster, as was Bill C-10, and it is being shut down once again. We had 20 written submissions handed to us last Wednesday at committee from people who wanted to come to committee. The member talks about LGBTQ and indigenous issues. We have not heard from APTN, which was one of the guests the NDP wanted to bring to the committee. It has yet to come to talk to us.

This is a disaster waiting to happen. Why do the Liberals want to shut the bill down in the House of Commons, do nothing over the summer and hand it over to the Senate? We have time to bring other issues forward. Proposed subsection 4.1(2) has always been an issue. It was an issue a year ago when we debated Bill C-10 in the House, which they rammed through and then called the unnecessary election. This is the same situation we are seeing today with Bill C-11.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Saskatoon—Grasswood. I sat on the heritage committee with him. My question for him is this: What does he have against *Cornier Gas* and the fantastic content coming out of not just Saskatchewan, but from across the Prairies and this country? We want more of that.

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I do not know what is happening on that side. Maybe there is a leadership issue, or the party is in disarray until it has a new leader, but the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, who ran for the highest office in the land, went on Twitter and compared the independent CRTC to the Orwellian ministry of truth. The member for Thornhill said this bill would put Canada in “good company with dictators from countries like Iran, Turkey and North Korea”.

Canadians have asked us to move. They have asked us to do this work. The other side is quite frankly beyond the pale.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to hear from the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance and to see how passionate he is about Bill C-11. I completely agree. Canadian content has not been promoted like this in years, and our neighbour to the south is a threat.

I would like to ask the minister if Bill C-11 will help creators, especially francophones in Quebec. We know there is a lot of talent there and that they need to be encouraged. Will the bill help our creative industry in Quebec?

• (1220)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her very good question.

With only 5% of content coming from francophone creators, we have work to do and progress to make. With Bill C-11, we are updating the CRTC program and focusing on racialized people, members of the LGBTQ+ community, indigenous peoples, francophone creators and people with disabilities. This bill will open up the CRTC to accommodate more people.

The act has not been updated since 1991. I had hair back then. That is an indication of how old the framework under which the CRTC operates is. It is time to update it in order to help francophones, francophiles, the franco-curious, anglophones and people across the country who simply want to create good content, and to ensure that the platforms pay their fair share.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I would like the minister to comment on the Conservative strategy at committee, which has been bizarre beyond belief, including filibustering so witnesses such as the chair of the CRTC could not testify. All the other parties submitted their amendments a week and a half ago, and the Conservatives pretended that the dog ate their homework. They then finally admitted last Friday that they had submitted their amendments, but are still refusing to have clause-by-clause consideration. I tabled a very important motion regarding a subamendment to have hearings into the horrific allegations of sexual assault with respect to Hockey Canada. Had the Conservatives not refused to allow a vote on it, we would be starting the hearings into that important issue today.

I want to ask the minister this: What does he think the Conservative strategy is? What does he think the Conservatives hope to gain by all of the obstruction and chaos they are causing?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I think their number one goal is money. They are fundraising off of their misinformation and disinformation. It is objectionable, but that is what they are doing in the midst of a leadership race, which has ripped their party into many factions. Quite frankly, I would like to look, in the face of truth, at what the Conservatives have been doing.

Earlier this year, the chair of the CRTC said that it would never regulate user-generated content as it is not interested in that. There are hundreds and millions of hours of content uploaded every day, and the CRTC is not only not interested in doing that, it would not be able to do that. This is why we are focused on these platforms: creators will create; the platforms will pay; and Canadian society will benefit. I do not know what the Conservatives are up to. Maybe they can tell us.

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have to admit, the twist and spin the member for Edmonton Centre can put on anything is just astounding, and I appreciate that he is able to do that, although I question whether or not it is valid.

My concern is that, if one does not agree with something and questions something in the House, then they hear: “Oh, how dare you. You are now extremist and trying to censor things.”

That is not what I am hearing from my residents. My residents are asking me what this bill is going to do for them, how they are going to be censored, and if there is potential of being censored. I tell them there absolutely is because, when we take a look at other governments around the world that have implemented something like this, 80% to 85% of what was censored should never have been censored. This is because of the algorithms the CRTC would be using.

Therefore, my question is this: How can we debate this properly through proper procedure when, if one does not agree with it, closure is the only option they have? That is censorship once again in the House, and it is shameful from this government.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, these are just more conspiracy theories and more arguments that simply do not hold water.

I sat at committee for four years, from the first time I was in this place, and I understand robust debate. I understand trade-offs, and I understand voting at committee and making sure that we can make bills better. However, the Conservative Party, Her Majesty's loyal opposition, has become Her Majesty's loyal obstructionists. They do not want to debate. They want to oppose, and they do not want to move this bill forward because it helps them raise too much money.

Let us just look at the stuff that is being put out on the Internet. We have members saying that this bill is about controlling what Canadians think and manufacturing group think, which is not the case. The CRTC has said very clearly that it cannot regulate algorithms, nor will it.

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Quite frankly, this bill is about who we are as individuals. The Conservatives are heading to a dark space. We are going to do this work because Canadians asked us to.

• (1225)

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, I wonder if we could turn the temperature down a little bit. Listening to the debate today, one might believe that this is about censorship on one side or how much one loves *Corner Gas* on the other. The fact is that it is neither. This is about closing debate on a motion that would fast-track amendments at committee tomorrow at 9 p.m. for a really important bill.

I wonder if the minister can share a more nuanced perspective of the reality of what is happening in this place and why he believes this is the only option available.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his observation.

Quite frankly, I would love to see this place work, but it requires the participation of the Conservative Party of Canada, the loyal opposition, to do its job and actually come to the table to debate amendments, and to lose those amendments if they do not have the majority of the committee. However, they are not doing that. They are filibustering, and it is so absurd, but they are filibustering their own motions. I have never seen that in my time here in this place.

Quite frankly, the committee needs to get back to work, and Canadians want us to get back to work. That is what they sent us here for.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, there are good members in the Conservative Party. The member for Perth—Wellington is somebody I respect a great deal. However, the reality is that the Conservatives have been blocking absolutely everything coming through the House, and in committee, they have turned it into bedlam.

The fact is that we could not have the CRTC chair come forward to testify when it was the allotted time for the CRTC to testify because the Conservatives blocked that, as they blocked other witnesses, such as the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The fact is Conservatives are blocking presenting amendments, which are vitally important. That is our job. We take a bill and we make it better. We can vote it down, of course. The House has the ability to vote down legislation, but the majority of the House decided that this legislation was important. The majority of the witnesses very clearly, in an overwhelming majority, have said the same thing, so it is our job to now improve the legislation.

For the life of me I just cannot understand, and maybe my colleague can give me some enlightenment, why the Conservatives are not doing the right thing.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, I think we have to go back to the numbers. There have been 15 hours of debate at second reading, 21 hours of debate at committee, with seven hours of filibustering, including the Conservatives filibustering their own motion.

To the hon. member's question, what is at stake here and what is important is that the whole thrust of Bill C-11 is to showcase Canadian creators and to make sure that Canadians can discover more of

the great stories that Canada has to offer. We will always, as Canadians, have the choice to watch and listen to whatever we want. Bill C-11 just asks platforms to showcase more Canadian stories. What could be nefarious about that? Absolutely nothing about that is nefarious.

This will make it easier for Canadians to discover up-and-coming homegrown talent. Quite frankly, I grew up and discovered The Tragically Hip. I fell in love with *Corner Gas*, *Kim's Convenience* and *Schitt's Creek*. I can go through the list.

[Translation]

I also discovered *Mensonges* and *Tout le monde en parle*. Everything we have in Canada is worth broadcasting around the world.

[English]

That is what this is about.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, the motion we are speaking to here, Motion No. 16, is a limiting fact. We have had closure in the House many times on bills, but for the government to put forward Motion No. 16 for committee work is restrictive in the utmost. It is no wonder there is a majority over there with the Liberals and NDP getting together to try to push this through the way they want to.

My colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood has made many comments here in the House about the amount of witnesses who have not been heard from yet. He made that point particularly about APTN. I think it is very unconscionable of the government to be putting this motion forward at this time when there is no rush. They have even said it will not pass the Senate before the summer recess. We could still debate this and make sure that all of the witnesses were heard.

I cannot understand it when the minister talks about raising funds. The only way that can be done is if the people of Canada are not happy with it.

• (1230)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, exceptional disruption requires exceptional measures. That is why we are here today. We have had dozens of hours of debate on this bill. The Conservatives continue to decide that they do not want to move forward. They will not even let the bill get to clause-by-clause. This is something we almost never see in this place. They will not do the work at committee. It is what their constituents sent them here to do, which is to debate, improve and move forward.

They simply will not let the CRTC go from 1991 to 2022. It is beyond the pale. It is unparliamentary. They are simply obstructing the work of Parliament. That is why we are here.

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Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member opposite earlier said that the people in his community were curious about what the impact of this bill would be. I can say that in my community, with so many people who work in the arts, they are very concerned about our making sure that web giants contribute back into the system that creates such an important economic sector right here in our country. This includes, for example, High River with *Heartland* being filmed right there. It is a great series. I believe it is in its 16th season.

I was wondering if the minister could comment on the economic opportunity.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault: Madam Speaker, from Alberta to Toronto and from St. John's to Yukon, this vast country has stories that deserve to be told. Platforms need to pay their fair share. That is what this is about.

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

The question is on the motion.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, we would request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 146*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)

Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsasi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Miao
Miller	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Sorbara	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 174

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Members

Aitchison

Albas
 Arnold
 Barlow
 Barsalou-Duval
 Benzen
 Berthold
 Bezan
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Brassard
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Caputo
 Chabot
 Champoux
 Cooper
 Davidson
 Deltell
 Desbiens
 Doherty
 Dreeschen
 Ellis
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
 Fast
 Findlay
 Gallant
 Gaudreau
 Genuis
 Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gray
 Jeneroux
 Kitchen
 Kram
 Kurek
 Lantsman
 Lawrence
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lobb
 Maguire
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Melillo
 Moore
 Morrice
 Motz
 Nater
 O'Toole
 Pausé
 Perron
 Rayes
 Reid
 Richards
 Rood
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schmale
 Shields
 Simard
 Small
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Therrien
 Tochor
 Trudel
 Van Popta
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Villemure
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Williamson

Allison
 Baldinelli
 Barrett
 Beaulieu
 Bergen
 Bérubé
 Blanchet
 Block
 Brock
 Calkins
 Carrie
 Chambers
 Chong
 Dalton
 DeBellefeuille
 d'Entremont
 Desilets
 Dowdall
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Epp
 Falk (Provencher)
 Ferreri
 Fortin
 Garon
 Généreux
 Gill
 Godin
 Gourde
 Hallan
 Kelly
 Kmiec
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Larouche
 Lehoux
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lloyd
 MacKenzie
 Martel
 Mazier
 McLean
 Michaud
 Morantz
 Morrison
 Muys
 Normandin
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Poilievre
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Ruff
 Scheer
 Seeback
 Shipley
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Soroka
 Ste-Marie
 Strahl
 Thériault
 Thomas
 Tolmie
 Uppal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Williams
 Zimmer— 146

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PAIRED

Members

Hoback Lake
 Ng Qualtrough— 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 16—PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-11

The House resumed from June 10 consideration of the motion.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, here we are with a closure motion on a motion to time-allocate this bill. The closure motion on Motion No. 16 is a guillotine motion on a guillotine motion.

We are debating today a motion that would constrain debate at committee stage. It is a motion that would force us through clause-by-clause study and amendments without a word of debate on a bill to amend the Broadcasting Act for the first time in three decades. We are debating a motion that would also limit debate in the House at report stage to a single day and would limit it again at third reading.

All of this is in one single government motion, and just moments ago the government voted for closure. It invoked closure to cut off debate on this motion, to cut off debate on a motion that would limit debate. I could not make this up if I tried, yet this is what the government is doing.

I am sure folks at home are wondering, after reading *The Globe and Mail* over the weekend, why there is a rush. Why is the government—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I ask members making their way out to please do it quietly and ask members who wish to have conversations to please take them out into the lobby to allow the hon. member to be heard. I would also remind members who want to be the cheering section for the member speaking to please not do that.

The hon. member for Perth—Wellington.

● (1320)

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, there is a dull rumble in the room because everyone is so outraged about this motion that they cannot constrain themselves, given the concern they have.

Folks at home might have read the newspaper over the weekend and wondered why there is a rush with this programming motion. The Minister of Canadian Heritage himself said that he was not going to force it through the Senate and that it is not going to become law before the summer, so why the rush to force it through the House? In fact, in *The Globe and Mail* this week, an article by Bill Curry and Michelle Carbert said this:

The Liberal government says it will not press the Senate to rush the Online Streaming Act into law before the summer recess, even though it moved Friday to shut down debate on the bill in the House of Commons.

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In a statement to *The Globe and Mail*, Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez said the government does not expect the Senate to rubber stamp the bill after it receives final approval in the Commons.

He does not expect a rubber stamp in the Senate, but here in the elected House of Commons, where each of the 338 of us was elected by 100,000-plus constituents to represent 100,000-plus constituents, we are expected to rubber-stamp this piece of legislation. We are expected to rubber-stamp the largest change to the Broadcasting Act in over three decades.

The government wants to say that the bill has had plenty of debate, that it has had tons of time for debate. Do members know when the bill first came before the heritage committee? The first day of meetings on Bill C-11 at the heritage committee was May 24, less than three weeks ago. We have had less than three weeks to hear from parliamentarians and hear from witnesses across the country.

After that, we were still receiving requests to appear before committee, requests from concerned stakeholders across the country who were not able to testify before the committee. These are Canadians and owners of small businesses who will be personally and directly affected by this piece of legislation, but Parliament and its committee could not hear from them. That is what has brought us to this programming motion to force the bill through the House without meaningful debate.

We as parliamentarians have a duty. We as opposition parliamentarians have an exceptional duty and a role to play. I would like to draw the House's attention to one of the great former leaders of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, the right hon. Bob Stanfield. In a memo to his caucus, he said this: "Not only is it unnecessary for political parties to disagree about everything, but some acceptance of common ground among the major parties is essential to an effective and stable democracy. For example, it is important to stability that all major parties agree on such matters as parliamentary responsible government and major aspects of our Constitution."

Like the great Bob Stanfield before us, we agree on the importance of parliamentary responsible government, whereby Her Majesty's loyal opposition holds the government to account. When certain parties decide that this is no longer necessary and we are derelict in our duties as opposition parliamentarians, we get a motion like this.

I always like to use a thought exercise. What would members of the House, members of the Liberal government and members of the New Democrats say if Stephen Harper had brought forward a motion as draconian as this one? They would be up in arms. They would be up in question period. They would be up in the House complaining about the draconian measures. However, members of the Liberal government, who for years ridiculed and raised the alarm on closure and time allocation, are the worst perpetrators.

As I mentioned, the bill did not come before the heritage committee until May 24, yet here we are. This is not the first time, either. We will recall that this is the same playbook the Liberals used for Bill C-10, the predecessor to this piece of legislation. They used Motion No. 10 to force Bill C-10 out of committee and into the House.

• (1325)

The government wants to say that we need to get this bill through immediately, but what happened with Bill C-10? The government called a summer election and killed its own legislation. It is awfully rich today to hear the Liberals say that we need to act with great haste to pass this piece of legislation when it is just going to sit in the Senate all summer long.

Many of my colleagues have not yet had a chance to speak to this bill, and will not have a chance to speak to it because of the government using time allocation. This is a piece of legislation that will not only impact the entire broadcasting industry, but also every Canadian who listens to music or watches videos online. This motion is being rushed through to meet an arbitrary deadline.

Last week, on Tuesday, the clerk of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage sent to members 20 different submissions. Among them were submissions from the Broadcasting Accessibility Fund, the Canadian Association of Film Distributors and Exporters, the Canadian Ethnocultural Media Coalition, Blue Ant Media and Spotify, all of which have been denied a chance to appear before the committee by the government. Now, the government House leader has decided they do not deserve an opportunity to speak before the committee.

There are, in fact, many witnesses who have yet to be heard despite the fact that Bill C-11 would have detrimental impacts on their businesses. These include Anthem Sports and Entertainment, the Consumer Technology Association, the Ontario Association of Broadcasters, which represents radio stations, Blue Ant Media, which I mentioned earlier, the Canadian Communication Systems Alliance, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and Ethnic Channels Group.

The government could have taken a different approach to how to modernize the Broadcasting Act that meets both the needs and technological realities of today, but does so without impacting digital-first creators and new technologies moving forward. Unfortunately, instead of modernization, it is forcing a 30-year-old regulatory system onto Canadians using new technology that old rules are not compatible with. Perhaps most disappointingly, the government ignored those in the digital media sector and went so far as to accuse them of spreading misinformation.

The tactics the Liberal government has used have been an attempt to discredit anyone who has raised legitimate concerns about the implications of this bill. It has been shameful, and it is not up to the standards of decency Canadians expect from their government.

There are obviously several crucial flaws with this bill that need to be fixed. First and foremost is section 4.2. It is a legislative pretzel: an exception to an exception, and a clause in the bill that leaves open to regulation content that indirectly or directly generates revenue. It seems the government does not even understand how the Internet works or how indirectly gaining revenue works.

I draw the House's attention to an expert, Morghan Fortier, who runs the largest YouTube channel in our country and has found great success globally by using new technology. She says the following when referring to the bill:

It's been written by those who don't understand the industry they're attempting to regulate, and because of that, they've made it incredibly broad. It mistakes platforms like YouTube, TikTok and Facebook for broadcasters like the CBC, Netflix and Amazon Prime. It doesn't understand how those platforms operate, and it ignores the fundamental importance of global discoverability. Worst of all, proposed section 4.2 hands sweeping power to the CRTC to regulate...small businesses like mine that are not even associated with broadcasters.

This is from the person who has Canada's most successful YouTube channel. She has found success globally, yet this piece of legislation would constrain and restrain that success globally.

● (1330)

They have said time and again that the CRTC will not regulate user-generated content, but the bill, in black and white, gives it the power. Worse yet, despite repeated requests, the government has refused to release its policy directive to the CRTC that would provide the interpretation of how this bill would be implemented. This “just trust us” approach that the Liberals are following does not inspire confidence.

In fact, just last week, the Minister of Canadian Heritage appeared before committee and told us outright that he would not provide the policy directive until after the bill had received royal assent. After the legislation has been passed, after parliamentarians have passed the legislation, only then will the government tell us how it will be interpreted and how the CRTC will do so.

What is more is that during the minister's appearance at committee, he refused to offer a definition of discoverability. In fact, discoverability is mentioned in the piece of legislation. It is mentioned in Bill C-11, but it is never defined. Until we see the policy directive, we do not know how the CRTC will be directed to implement discoverability.

It comes back to what the Liberals said they would never do. In their 2015 election platform, the Liberals said, “We will also change the rules so that Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries no longer have a vote on committees.” That did not last very long, because now parliamentary secretaries not only sit on committees, but they also have votes and are directing the work of committees.

In fact, last week in the House of Commons, the government House leader said, “let us talk about some of the things we do not do. What we do not do is use parliamentary secretaries in committee to control committees and not allow members to ask questions.”

A little more than one hour after the government House leader said this, it was none other than the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage who, at the beginning of questioning witnesses, filibustered witness testimony to try to move a motion without debate and to move to clause-by-clause. This not only pre-

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vented members from questioning witnesses, including the Minister of Canadian Heritage himself, but it also would have had the effect of preventing dozens of other witnesses who wished to testify from testifying.

On Monday and Wednesday of last week, it was again the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage who introduced motions to end study and proceed to clause-by-clause, while dozens of witnesses who wished to appear had been prevented from appearing.

Perhaps what is most concerning is that last week, the Liberal chair of a committee accidentally let it slip that the Liberals had been instructed by their party leadership to have the bill sent back to the House quickly. The member for Vancouver Centre said, “we do not have a lot of time to stretch anything out, because this bill is supposed to be reported back to the House before June 23”. It is supposed to be by who? It is by the Liberals.

The Liberals are directing the chair of a committee to report a bill back. It is shameful. In fact, this closure motion, Motion No. 16, I would dare say is a vote of non-confidence in the Liberal chair of the committee: the member for Vancouver Centre.

I also want to share the words of a digital-first creator, Oorbee Roy, one of the very few digital-first creators who had the opportunity to appear before our committee. She said, “I literally have never gotten a seat at the table—except now, as a digital creator, I'm getting a seat at the table. Representation matters.... Please don't suppress my voice.” Again, that is from Oorbee Roy who found success online as a digital-first creator. As a skateboarding mother, she found success in that market globally. Under this bill, the Liberals are trying to prevent that success.

We in Her Majesty's loyal opposition want to see Canadian creators succeed here in Canada and around the world. We want to see them be able to access and use the tools available to them through the Internet to find that success globally so that Canadian stories, Canadian voices, Canadian music, Canadian television and Canadian film can be enjoyed around the world. Is that not what it is about? It is about sharing the talents of Canadians globally.

● (1335)

I have been very clear that we support making sure that the major streamers, the international foreign streamers, contribute to Canadian productions. We want to see that happen more, and we applaud those companies that are already doing it. We applaud the billions of dollars that Netflix and Disney are investing in Canada and in Canadian-made productions. We want to see more of that. We want to encourage more of that. What we do not want to see happen is Canadian creators being hampered by their ability to export.

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We have made some clear commitments about what we want to see changed with Bill C-11. We want to see the removal of section 4.2 to ensure that user-generated content is not subject to CRTC regulation. We want to see a clear definition of discoverability, so we can ensure that one Canadian performer is not lower down to another. We want to see an equality on the Internet to ensure that Canadian arts and Canadian programming are able to excel. We want to see a threshold so that small, independent creators are not captured in a large, cumbersome bureaucratic process.

We want to see updates to the Canadian content definition so that Canadian stories are being told by Canadians. The current definition often sees Canadian stories not being considered Canadian. A perfect example is *The Handmaid's Tale*. It was written by the great Margaret Atwood and filmed in Ontario, but is not Canadian.

Before we move forward with Bill C-11, we have to get the definition of Canadian content right. Finally, we need to see the policy directive. We need to see the government's instructions to the CRTC of how it will interpret Bill C-11. In the former Bill C-10, the government did that. It released its draft directive before debate in the House of Commons. This time, it refuses to do that.

Bearing in mind these important things and the lack of witnesses we have yet to hear from, I move, second by the hon. member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington:

That the motion be amended:

(a) in paragraph (a),

(i) by substituting subparagraph (i) with the following:

“(i) the committee be instructed to continue hearing from witnesses, including especially Canadian content creators, this month and through the summer adjournment,”,

(ii) by substituting, subparagraph (ii), all the words after the words “11:59 p.m.” with the following: “on Monday, September 19, 2022”,

(iii) by substituting, in subparagraph (iii), all the words after the words “no later than” with the following: “Tuesday, September 27, 2022, provided that the committee has reported back to the House in relation to its order of reference of Thursday, June 2, 2022, in relation to Hockey Canada”,

(iv) by deleting subparagraph (iv) and (v); and

(b) by deleting paragraphs (b) and (c).

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The amendment is in order.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, it is a rare privilege to have the first question off the top to the hon. member for Perth—Wellington.

As he was reflecting on the history, and I have been doing this myself and have not yet had time to dive into Hansard to double-check, he asked members to cast our minds back and ask how this place would react to a motion like this had it been brought forward in the period of time when there was a Harper majority government. I cannot think of a time that a motion this egregious was put forward in that era. I know that when we speak to someone like the hon. member for Perth—Wellington, who got a Ph.D. in the Thursday question, one knows they are going to a source with some knowledge. Could he enlighten me? Did I miss one, or is this in fact the worst we have ever seen?

• (1340)

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, in fact I cannot find another example in recent memory when a bill of this magnitude and of such consequence was pushed through at committee stage, through clause-by-clause consideration, through amendments, through report stage and through third reading, all on time allocation at each and every stage.

In fact, I would note that in the motion, any amendments brought by that member or by her colleague from Kitchener Centre would be deemed to have been moved, and the member would not even have an opportunity to appear before committee to present the amendments. This is what we are talking about with a motion such as this, which prevents parliamentarians from doing our job by debating the amendments necessary and forces them through without debate and without the opportunity to have that meaningful dialogue.

I think it is unfortunate. I appreciate the hon. member's question, because this is without precedent in the modern history of this place.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I heard the member opposite mention certain shows, like *The Handmaid's Tale*, but what he did not include in his question and what I would be really curious to hear more about is how many of the people working on that show were Canadian: the actors, directors and the writers for the actual shows.

How much of that intellectual property remains in Canada? How much of that supports our Canadian talent right here in our country? Does he actually believe it is more important to give away the power over the discovery of our shows and to decide that the money goes to web giants that have no connection to our country than it is to see us empower Canadian creators for our productions?

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, I encourage the member to join us at the heritage committee so she could hear from different members of the creative industry and from different representatives, such as IATSE, who have strongly talked about changing the rules so that more Canadian production can occur here in Canada.

We mentioned *The Handmaid's Tale*, but let us talk about *The Umbrella Academy* with the great Colm Feore from Stratford, Ontario, which was filmed in Ontario, but is not considered Canadian content for the purposes of CanCon regulation.

This is the type of thing we need to see changed. We want to see more and more production in Canada. Whether it is in Vancouver or the greater Toronto area, we want to see that talent come here to Canada, using Canadian voices, Canadian actors, Canadian writers, Canadian producers and Canadian media consultants. We want to see that here in Canada, yet the definitions included in the current way of defining Canadian content mean that none of these would be considered Canadian, and that has to change.

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Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find it so ironic that a bill about communication, about streaming, about communicating with each other is not allowed the proper time for communication in this chamber and at committee.

Why does my colleague suppose that the government would release a policy directive in the previous iteration, Bill C-10 in the previous Parliament, and refuse to do so at this point?

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, that is the question: why? Why would the government not just be open and transparent and release the policy directive?

Bill C-11 would provide the CRTC with a significant of regulatory authority, but without the direction from the government, we do not know how the CRTC will interpret that regulatory authority, and we will not know until after we have already been forced to vote on this bill. That is the issue.

If the government wanted to be open and transparent, it would table that document today, as it did with Bill C-10. The question is, what is the government trying to hide?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am so tired of hearing the Conservatives spout lies about Canada's arts industry. I cannot take it any more. I have spent so many nights here working on Bill C-11 until midnight and listening to the same speeches about censorship and freedom of expression, speeches about things that have never been proven, that do not exist. The only place those things exist is in the Conservatives' parallel universe.

This nonsense needs to stop. We need to help Canada's arts community. Everyone agrees.

If we accept the Conservatives' premise and do not pass Bill C-11, what is the Conservatives' solution? What will they do?

We are not saying that it is perfect. However, if we do not go ahead with Bill C-11, what will the Conservatives do to help our artists in Quebec and Canada?

• (1345)

[*English*]

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, let me say what the Conservatives would have done. We would have done what we promised in our election platform. We would have updated the Broadcasting Act, while also respecting digital-first creators and those Canadians who want to excel here at home and around the world. We would have worked with the creative industry, including and especially those who are using new technologies. We would have worked with them to ensure that the major foreign streamers invest in Canada and pay their fair share, but we would have done it in consultation and co-operation with the industry to ensure that users who upload user-generated content are not subject to CRTC rules.

That is what we would have done, and I am proud to say that is what we are fighting for at committee on this bill.

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Madam Speaker, I have been hearing from my constituents, who are digital creators. They have been asking me specifically about section 4.2, and

I am very curious to hear from my hon. colleague about his views, because my constituents talk about how they are worried that the online content rules would apply to individual users. I would be very curious to hear my hon. colleague's views on that.

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, the fact is that section 4.2 is a legislative pretzel. It is an exception to the exception.

What we want to see is a clear prohibition on regulating user-generated content with respect to those digital-first creators who want to exceed and excel. Therefore, when we get to committee—and obviously the government is going to try to force that—we will be looking for clarification and for amendments to ensure that it does not capture the work of digital-first creators, the content that the member's constituents and my constituents are concerned about in Stratford and the surrounding areas, where they are finding success online in the digital world.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, my question for the member is around this issue of whether or not something gets captured by the CRTC.

I understand it states in the bill that anything that generates direct and indirect revenue would now be regulated by the CRTC. Pretty much every piece of content that is put up on the Internet has an advertisement beside it. That advertising generates revenue based on the content. The government claims user-generated content is not included in the regulation, but it is hard to see how it is not when it is generating revenue through advertising. I wonder if the member could comment on that.

Mr. John Nater: Madam Speaker, the member for South Shore—St. Margarets is absolutely right. Right there in black and white, it states that direct or indirect revenue could be captured by the CRTC. When we are talking about indirect revenue, it encompasses all of those aspects, whether it is a brand deal with a supplier, direct advertising on the video itself or indirect advertising by the site itself. That has the potential to capture everything. In fact, the chair of the CRTC himself mentioned to the committee that yes, there was a possibility for the government to regulate the content that is uploaded by users. It is clear. It is there in black and white.

We as Conservatives are going to work hard, as we always do, on making sure the amendments are there to protect those creators and those users who want to upload their creative talents onto the different platforms so they can share their talents globally.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, first of all, I am going to share my time with one of my Bloc Québécois colleagues.

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It is a pleasure to speak to Government Business No. 16, which is for Bill C-11. Unfortunately, it is not exactly a great pleasure because it feels like Groundhog Day. We went through essentially the same thing with Bill C-10, which was introduced in the previous Parliament and was kind of hit or miss as far as the wording went. A lot of work was done. A year on, I feel like we are still bogged down for various reasons that are not necessarily the fault of a single person. All parties contributed to the delays in modernizing the Broadcasting Act. The problem is that, in the meantime, artists and small radio stations and media outlets are suffering and struggling to survive in this high-tech world.

I would like to begin my speech with a look at the current situation. A year has passed and, not surprisingly, the situation is no less urgent. In an article in *La Presse* just this morning, Alexandre Sirois wrote about the “digital barbarians” that have to be reined in. Here is what he said:

A bill like this to rein in the “digital barbarians” is long overdue. Alain Saulnier uses that colourful expression as the title of a very relevant essay in which he explains the massive devastation caused by companies like Netflix, Amazon, Apple and Google.

The journalist explains that the fate of local culture on the web giants' platforms is quite similar to that of the soft drinks that are relegated to the bottom shelves in grocery stores because the big brands monopolize the best spots.

“That is why access to our content, its discoverability, is the most important issue for the future of all non-U.S. cultures.”

Discoverability is at the heart of this matter. It reminds me of a little anecdote. I was fortunate enough to be part of a delegation abroad recently, along with some of my colleagues from English Canada. Something really struck me. When we were talking about culture and what we watch on TV and listen to on the radio, I noticed that there were almost no common references between Quebec culture and English Canadian culture. Our common references are to American culture. This illustrates how global U.S. culture has become and what a strong impact it has on other cultures, to the detriment of our local culture.

We need to urgently legislate the broadcasting situation because of the repercussions it is having on small players in a context of globalization and the Internet, which is an ever-growing presence in our lives.

Some reports published in 2020, including one by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, or CAB, projected losses for radio and television broadcasters to the tune of \$1.6 billion between 2020 and 2022. That is major. CAB also mentioned that, in the six months following the 2020 report, there could potentially be 50 radio stations at risk of closing and no fewer than 150 more in the next 18 months. That represents a potential loss of 2,000 jobs, or the equivalent of roughly 24% of the jobs that existed in 2019.

Revenues are down across the board. Roughly 40% of private stations have posted a negative net income over the past few years. It is a disaster. This is a huge loss of \$336 million between 2010 and 2020 for general television networks. Things are not going very well at all. We also know that this erosion is having an impact on local content in traditional media to the benefit of everything that is on the Internet. Roughly 52% of audiovisual content produced in Canada is not Canadian content. We import a tremendous amount of products because our products are less discoverable.

• (1350)

In this context, production by francophone minority communities is only 4%. Meanwhile, the digital platforms are thriving, but our local content is not on those platforms because of the discoverability issue. Only 2.7% of the 10,000 most popular songs on digital platforms are French songs, so there is also a linguistic aspect that is worrisome here.

I am not saying that Bill C-11 is perfect. Some parts could be improved, or have been improved compared to Bill C-10. One of the issues that the Conservatives were particularly concerned about was algorithms, and that has been addressed. With the first version of Bill C-10, the CRTC would have been able to intervene and require businesses to change their algorithms to improve discoverability. That was taken out of Bill C-11. I would say that may be a good thing because, at this time, we may have a tendency of being more preoccupied with the letter of the bill than the spirit. The bill now better reflects the spirit. We want local content to be more discoverable, but we will let the companies determine how to achieve that through advertising, suggestions or other means.

People have mentioned and are still mentioning that there are concerns about the platforms that could be included. The bill does not set out which platforms are included and which are not. Things are being left open so that more platforms could be added in the future. I tend to think that might be a good thing because the bill needs to be adaptable, given how quickly things change in the online realm.

Finally, some definitions may not be clear. The bill is perhaps not perfect, which is why it would be a good idea to give members more time to work on amendments in committee. However, I understand that the Conservatives have been filibustering and putting up roadblocks. I would have liked to talk more about this, but I do not have much time left.

I do want to say, however, that what the Conservatives are unfortunately doing to interfere in this file is a tremendous act of bad faith. The Bloc Québécois recently moved a motion on what happened at Hockey Canada, and the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage must be the one to look into these allegations of assault. The committee members proposed adding hours so that we could deal with both issues at the same time, but the Conservatives refused. This shows that they are more interested in wasting time than anything else.

Statements by Members

There was also a motion to allow the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to travel. At the same time, the Conservatives denied approval for the foreign affairs committee to travel, showing once again that this is a tactic to waste the House's time. Conservative members claim that there is not enough time to hear from witnesses, but when asked how many witnesses would be enough, they are unable to provide a number. This, even after the committee already heard from a number of witnesses, including some YouTubeers who came to testify in committee not once, but twice.

That said, the Liberals are not beyond reproach either. The time that was allocated to debating Bill C-11 in committee could have taken place between June 2021 and February 2022. Last June, we knew that we were on the verge of an election, which is why the Bloc Québécois supported a closure motion that was much more restrictive than this one. The super-closure motion we are debating today makes the seven other motions recently voted on in this place look like mere technicalities.

If the House had not shut down for an election, we probably would have been able to get Bill C-11 through third reading, get it through the Senate and get it passed. All of the time we lost from June to February is much longer than the time that the Conservatives have wasted here in the House.

No one is without blame here. One side is unfortunately systematically obstructing our work. I can understand, to a certain extent, the use of some form of closure on this matter. This is why the Bloc Québécois voted in favour of closure on Bill C-10 the last time, in a completely different context, because we knew that we were headed into an election.

That does not justify this closure motion, which is much broader and less appropriate given the urgency. In fact, we know that even if we vote in favour of closure now, the bill will not make it through the Senate in time, since there will only be a few days left for the Senate to sit after the motion has been passed in the House, most likely around June 20, 21 or 22, depending on how things are going, and if there is another filibuster.

Unfortunately, no one is without blame here. As I said at the outset, the two main parties in the House keep this going like Groundhog Day. Sadly, the ones who are paying the price are our small traditional media.

• (1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will have five minutes for questions and comments after question period.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

NEWFOUNDLAND TOWNS' ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate two towns in my riding on upcoming milestone anniversaries. Heart's Delight-Islington is celebrating its 50th anniversary of amalgamation, with celebration events happening between July 29 and August 7. Nearby Heart's

Content is celebrating 55 years of incorporation, from August 1 to August 7.

Members can find these two towns on Route 80 on the west coast of the Bay de Verde Peninsula. Both are coastal communities, and while they may be small, both are full of heart, no pun intended. The people are friendly and hard-working. They always welcome visitors with open arms. While visiting, people can see beautiful sunsets and lighthouses and eat fresh seafood any day.

I want to congratulate both towns on their magnificent milestones. I look forward to visiting later this summer.

* * *

• (1400)

YOUTH IN BRANTFORD—BRANT

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Madam Speaker, the youth in Brantford—Brant are keen, motivated and eager to have a say in the future of our country.

Last month, I asked students in my riding to come up with ideas to reduce crime in our community. From increasing community engagement, outreach and resources, to ways to deter incidents of dangerous driving and increasing opportunities for young people, the ideas they came up with were both innovative and creative.

I would like to congratulate Katrina Davis, recipient of the essay contest award, and finalists Tanner Dickie, Giulia Di Lollo and Owen Portelli. These students will be the first members of my youth advisory council, set to begin in the fall, when I begin to look forward to getting their non-partisan advice on a variety of pressing issues.

Our young people are our future, and I can confidently say that our future is bright. They provide invaluable knowledge, and I am excited to continue to engage and hear their opinions and perspective.

* * *

HUMBER RIVER HOSPITAL

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the past two years have been difficult, fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, but none more so than for our health care professionals, who have been challenged both personally and professionally.

Statements by Members

Situated in the traditional lands of the Anishinabe, Humber River Hospital has cared for more COVID patients than many other hospitals in Toronto. It played a key role in keeping the northwest community safe and healthy, delivering close to 400,000 vaccines at the clinic and raising over \$2 million for local COVID response. With a greater mission in mind, Humber River Hospital continued to save lives, improve patients' journeys and foster innovations, while nurturing the culture of philanthropy and playing an important role in bettering the community.

The pandemic has been tough, but Humber River Hospital employees were up to the fight to protect residents of Humber River—Black Creek, showing further leadership on how to foster a positive work environment, something that was vital for our health care professionals.

To the CEO and president, as well as every employee and volunteer at Humber River Hospital, our community thanks them. We are forever grateful.

* * *

[Translation]

BEAUHARNOIS-SALABERRY SENIORS' ROUND TABLE

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to rise in the House today to mark the 30th anniversary of the Table de concertation des aînés de Beauharnois-Salaberry, a round table on seniors' issues in Beauharnois-Salaberry.

I applaud the work done by all of the partners to highlight the reality of seniors in the Beauharnois-Salaberry RCM. Together, community organizations and the health care system fought hard to address shocking cases of elder abuse and neglect.

The partners' involvement has led to all sorts of initiatives to protect seniors from financial abuse. More recently, the round table raised the awareness of elected officials and the community regarding population aging and how long-term improvements can be made to our communities when the public is involved in developing projects.

The longevity of the Table de concertation des aînés de Beauharnois-Salaberry shows just how important the community and the public believe that consultation, teamwork and community participation are in addressing social issues. We wish all of the partners a happy 30th anniversary.

* * *

[English]

PRIDE MONTH IN THE YUKON

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Pride Month is well under way in the Yukon, and so is planning for Yukon's Pride celebrations this August. Like so many others, Queer Yukon Society has worked hard in the past two years to adapt to the needs of Yukon's LGBTQ2S+ community in response to public health guidelines.

We are all excited to gather in person and celebrate what has become one of the largest Pride celebrations north of 60 in the world.

[Translation]

Pride celebrations across Canada and around the world are essential opportunities for allies and members of the LGBTQ+ community to stand in solidarity and support a community that still faces discrimination on a regular basis.

As the member for Yukon, I am proud of the work our government has done to build a more inclusive and more tolerant Canada. I know there is still a long way to go.

[English]

I am honoured to be an ally to this community. I hope all of my colleagues will join me in celebrating Pride this month and in Pride celebrations across their communities this summer.

* * *

● (1405)

COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNITION

Mr. Gary Vidal (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the community of Dorintosh, the local Lions Club had a celebration to recognize the contributions of John Osborne. John Osborne is the definition of a “pillar of the community”. As a business owner, John was someone who valued an honest day's work. However, his work went well beyond his own business. Being involved in municipal politics for over three decades, including a long run as mayor, John was a “let's get the job done” type of leader who approached everything with an authentic kindness and integrity.

Beyond politics, some of John's other contributions included being a charter member of the Lions Club and an active member of the Ski-Doo club, and two decades on the Beaver River Community Futures board. He even taught old-time dance lessons to the kids at the school. It was mentioned last night that if John's years of service to his community were added together, it would be over 150 years or two lifetimes' worth.

I think all of us can agree that the world needs more John Osbornes.

* * *

WILMAR HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to join the congregation of Wilmar Heights Baptist Church for Sunday service and to take part in the celebration of its 70th anniversary of worship, fellowship and service in Scarborough. I thank Pastor Tai Adeboboye and his wife Marian for always making me feel welcome, and for their leadership in Scarborough's multi-faith community.

I would also like to congratulate Wilmar Heights Baptist Church on the opening of its new office and gym space, which will allow it to continue its many outreach activities and community services. From its regular services to its Camp Imani summer camps for youth, Wilmar Heights contributes every day to building a better Scarborough.

To all the members of the Wilmar Heights family, I say congratulations on their 70-year legacy of faithfulness. I wish them many years of faith and service to come.

* * *

WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Wellesley Township Community Health Centre will make its home in the new rec complex. The health centre will be a key component of the project, more visible and accessible to the public, and it will help provide primary care services to the people in our rural townships in Kitchener—Conestoga.

I want to thank Jeff and Julie Jones from Linwood, who recently donated \$500,000 to the construction of the new recreation centre. In recognition of their generous contribution, the health centre will now be called “The Jones Family Health and Wellness Centre”. This is not the first time Jeff and Julie Jones have made significant contributions to our community. They have supported community projects for the Linwood Community Centre, the construction of multiple baseball diamonds, walking trails and memorial forests.

On behalf of our grateful community, I want to thank the Jones family for their continued displays of generosity, making Kitchener—Conestoga an even better place to live.

* * *

MEN’S MENTAL HEALTH

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in just a few days, we are going to gather here on Parliament Hill in person for our fifth annual Father’s Day on Parliament Hill event. Our event has raised awareness and helps stimulate a conversation with some of the most important men in our lives ahead of this Sunday’s Father’s Day. It also presents an opportunity to discuss a topic that often gets ignored: men’s mental health. Men account for 75% of suicides in Canada. Men are three times more likely to experience addiction and substance abuse, and according to a survey in 2021, right now 17.6% of men are feeling depressed.

For five years, we have been able to bring together key stakeholders, members of Parliament, senators and other notable Canadians, including this year’s special guest speaker, HGTV star Bryan Baeumler, to help break down the stigma around mental health and continue the important conversations.

I invite all members of this House to attend this Wednesday. Let us continue to work together to break down these barriers and support men’s mental health.

Statements by Members

UKRAINE

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, as chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, I led a multi-party delegation to Lithuania for the spring session of the NATO parliamentary assembly. It was a super productive meeting focused on the current geopolitical crisis. We met with and heard from defence and security experts on the situation in Ukraine. We met on Russia and the eastern front, and also heard from Ukrainian parliamentarians about the situation on the ground.

After many excellent discussions, the NATO parliamentary assembly unanimously passed two declarations, the first reaffirming our unwavering support for Ukraine’s democracy, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the second condemning, in the strongest possible terms, Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine and the horrific war crimes for which it must be held accountable.

During the session, Ukrainian political leadership and parliamentarians expressed their heartfelt thanks to Canada for our significant contributions. Canada will be there to support Ukraine every step of the way until this war is won and over.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

● (1410)

NATIONAL BISON WEEK

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the history of the bison is woven into the fabric of our nation, but this year, the Canadian Bison Association is aiming to remind Canadians of the present and future of these great prairie animals.

At its international convention in Saskatoon next month, the CBA will be proclaiming an annual national bison week. This event brings together a diverse range of participants, from first nations to ranchers, restaurants to museums and researchers to national and provincial park officials. The contributions of first nations will be especially important as indigenous elders teach Canadians the historical importance of the bison: providing food, shelter and clothing, as well as being an essential part of indigenous spirituality and culture. It will also raise awareness of the growing economic benefits of bison, whose meat is increasingly viewed as a low-fat delicacy around the world.

Please join me in wishing the Canadian Bison Association every success in its launch of national bison week.

*Statements by Members***MARKUS HESS**

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sad to announce the passing on June 2 of Mr. Markus Hess. Markus is the founder of Black Ribbon Day, a global demonstration against human rights violations by the former Soviet Union. As a son of immigrant parents from Estonia and initially angered in the 1980s by Soviet occupation of his parents' homeland, Markus spent much of his life advocating for the rights and freedoms of individuals who suffered greatly at the hands of Communist dictators and bloodthirsty murderers.

He served his community from the Baltic and central European states as chairman and president of many organizations. As a board member for Tribute to Liberty, he was instrumental in constructing and erecting the memorial to victims of communism right here in Ottawa.

Markus received many recognitions for his contributions, including the Gold Cross from the Republic of Poland, and was named to the Order of the White Star by the Republic of Estonia. Because of his human rights advocacy, Markus was banned from Russia early this year. I hope he viewed this as a badge of honour for his life's work.

I offer my sincere condolences to Markus' wife Eha and their children and family. Markus' work inspires all of us. We will continue his legacy, because together, our democratic forces for freedom can overcome totalitarianism once and for all.

* * *

[Translation]

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, I know that mental health organizations are essential to helping the people of Sherbrooke get through tough times.

Today I want to talk about Secours-Amitié Estrie, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Secours-Amitié Estrie is a local organization dedicated to the mental health of the people of Sherbrooke. It is there to listen to people and help them deal with personal issues.

In 2021, the organization received almost 12,000 calls and spent over 7,400 hours listening to people. Every year, 66 volunteers answer the phones. I would like to thank them for making a difference in the lives of those who call.

I encourage everyone who needs help or wants to become a volunteer listener to contact Secours-Amitié. Let us work together to promote wellness and make sure people with mental health issues get the help they need.

* * *

[English]

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Charlie Pete Tashoots was taken from his home in 1944 at the age of six years old and sent to residential school. His time

there changed his life forever and it is told in the 2012 film *North Boys*.

I first met Charlie in 2019 when I visited the village of Lower Post, nestled on the B.C.-Yukon border. At 82 years old, he was still working full time as the village's maintenance supervisor. Last summer, I was back in Lower Post, but this time it was to witness the demolition, at long last, of the residential school there. Deputy Chief Harlan Schilling and the community are replacing it with a new, modern building, and that is wonderful to see.

I have many memories from that powerful day, but one that sticks out involves bumping into Charlie. He had woken up at 4 a.m., shot and butchered a moose and had it cooking over the fire in time for the hundreds of guests to arrive. Charlie is now 84, almost 85, and he just recently retired from full-time work with the village. I hope my colleagues will join me in wishing this remarkable man a happy retirement.

* * *

● (1415)

[Translation]

THREE 100TH BIRTHDAYS IN LAC-SAINT-JEAN

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my constituents would say that Lac-Saint-Jean is a great place to live. I am well aware of that. What I did not know, however, is that there is one town in the region that keeps people young. This year, not one, not two, but three residents of Normandin are celebrating their 100th birthday.

Lucien Cloutier, a former employee with Quebec's transportation and highways departments, is a tireless walker and has clearly found the secret to staying in shape.

Jeanette Baril, a talented gardener, seamstress and cook, is a dedicated mother to her family and to her community.

Last but not least is Jérémie Lévesque, who will blow out the candles for the 100th time on October 23. This farmer is still very active on the farm and is surprisingly energetic and jovial.

I cannot speak for my colleagues, but I have to think that the fountain of youth is in Normandin.

I want to wish Mr. Cloutier, Ms. Baril and Mr. Lévesque a very happy 100th birthday.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

RACHEL'S KIDS

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful community volunteer, Dr. Rachel Navaneelan, who is not only a well-respected dentist in our community, but founder of Rachel's Kids, a charity that provides supports to local children and those internationally as well.

The backyard of her Riverdale home was buzzing on the weekend with her 17th annual garden party, which is a fundraiser for the many causes that she supports. COVID has obviously been very difficult for charities, so it is great to see people bidding on auction items and raising funds for a great cause. Whether it is their small moments of joy program, helping hands program or Tech for Talk program locally, or one of their many trips to Sri Lanka helping thousands of children over the years, Dr. Rachel and her team are leading with kindness and support for our most precious resource: our children.

I ask all colleagues to join me in thanking Dr. Rachel and all the volunteers for the difference they are making in our community and around the world.

* * *

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL TRIBUTE

Mr. Adam van Koevreden (Milton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, Milton's orange crosswalk was unveiled. This important visual tribute and landmark was created to symbolize the strength and courage of residential school survivors and commemorate the victims, their families and their communities.

[Translation]

This is a positive step forward in the path to reconciliation in Milton. This crosswalk is an opportunity for the people of Milton to learn more about indigenous history and culture in our community.

[English]

My friends at Grandmother's Voice, Sherry Saevil and Jody Harbour, and many others, have helped bring this together. I cannot thank them enough for all the incredible work they have done to provide space, healing and knowledge, while amplifying indigenous voices in our community.

June marks National Indigenous History Month, and everyone has a role to play in dismantling the systemic racism, inequality and discrimination that indigenous people continue to face today.

[Translation]

I hope that this crosswalk will play a small part in the healing process.

[English]

I sincerely wish I could have been there in person today, but I am proud to know that our town of Milton is continuing along the path of reconciliation.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ministerial responsibility is a cornerstone of our political system. It means that ministers are accountable for their departments' actions. With the job comes huge responsibility.

Does this principle, which is what gives people confidence in their government, mean anything to the Prime Minister and his cabinet?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): We shall see, Mr. Speaker.

On April 28, the Minister of Public Safety said, and I quote, "the invocation of the Emergencies Act...was only put forward after police officials told us they needed this special power".

No police service acknowledges having asked for the Emergencies Act. Are the minister and the Prime Minister both insisting that police asked the government to invoke the Emergencies Act?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we invoked the Emergencies Act to keep Canadians safe. It was the right thing to do. Commissioner Lucki herself testified that the Emergencies Act gave them the tools they needed to get the job done fast.

Let us be clear. The government decided to invoke the Emergencies Act. That decision was informed by advice we got. We consulted police forces on various issues, including, as Commissioner Lucki said, on the powers in the Emergencies Act that were necessary.

● (1420)

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is what Commissioner Lucki said after the act was invoked, not before.

However, on April 28, the Minister of Public Safety stated, "It was on the advice of [the police] that we invoked the Emergencies Act". The whole story told by the Prime Minister to justify invoking the Emergencies Act was farfetched, and all the police forces have denied asking the federal government to invoke it. The minister's remarks were clear and unequivocal. He cannot deny having said them.

Oral Questions

Was it the Prime Minister himself or someone in his cabinet who asked the Minister of Public Safety to use the police to justify invoking the Emergencies Act?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House fully understand what is needed to protect the health and safety of Canadians, which is precisely why we invoked the Emergencies Act.

I want to know when the Conservatives are going to offer to cover the expenses for all the disruption that encouraged the illegal blockade during the protests. It was terrible.

[*English*]

The Speaker: I want to remind the hon. members that when they shout out words that cannot be said while questioning or answering questions, they are just as guilty, and if the words get picked up, individual members could get in trouble. Even if they are wearing a mask, I can tell who they are.

The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the public safety minister has been studying Vladimir Putin's theory of revisionist history.

The public safety minister is misleading Canadians about why he took the unprecedented step of using the Emergencies Act to implement martial law. To quote the minister, he said, "we invoked the Emergencies Act on advice from the police." Well, it turns out the Ottawa city police said they did not ask for it, the RCMP said they did not ask for it and the OPP said they did not ask for it.

Did the minister invent these facts to support his Liberal power grab?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am going to come to that, but before I do, I want to call out the hon. member for using Mr. Putin in this chamber regarding the decision to invoke the Emergencies Act. It debases this place, it debases what is going on in Ukraine and it is absolutely wrong. He should be admonished for it. He should take back that comment. That is not what this chamber stands for.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the minister has to stand here and continue to deny that he is revising the history of the Emergencies Act, then he has to wear it.

The minister is refusing to answer a simple question. Either the police asked for the Emergencies Act or they did not. Again, I will quote the minister's own words back to him: "At the recommendation of police, we invoked the Emergencies Act". The minister is refusing to repeat his own words in this chamber because he knows he misled the country, and Canadians do not trust him.

What is the new, unbelievable excuse the minister will be using today?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to be absolutely clear that we invoked the Emergencies Act because it was necessary to protect the health and safety of Canadians. As we heard from Commissioner Lucki herself during her testimony before the committee, the Emergencies Act was necessary.

I wonder when the Conservatives are going to finally offer their sincere apologies to the residents of Ottawa, who, during the protest, were encouraged to stay by the interim leader of the Conservative Party of Canada. It was wrong, wrong, wrong.

* * *

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Quebec Liberal lieutenant was right on Friday when he told journalists that "there is only one endangered [official] language in North America and that's French".

That could not be any clearer and that is why we are calling out Bill C-13 on official languages for not protecting French in Quebec, even though it is the only endangered official language.

Will the government finally understand that the threat to French in Quebec is English and that Bill C-13 in Quebec protects English, not the endangered language, French? It makes no sense.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

We agree that French is in decline in North America and, indeed, in Canada. We also agree that the French language is the only minority language in the country. That is why we are moving forward with an ambitious bill to do everything we can to protect and promote our two beautiful languages.

I hope that the Bloc Québécois and the opposition members will work with us to ensure that this bill is passed as soon as possible. It is urgent.

• (1425)

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, once it becomes clear that French is the only official language that is in jeopardy, then the next logical step is to let Quebec manage its French language itself. Instead, the federal government is giving priority to Bill C-13 to promote an institutional bilingualism that makes French optional.

This is a direct attack on the only official language in jeopardy: French. That is why the Government of Quebec proposed amendments to Bill C-13 to protect French in Quebec, as Quebecers are calling for.

Will the government amend Bill C-13 so that Quebecers can finally manage their own affairs and protect their language where they live?

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. We are the first government to recognize that French is in decline in Canada. That is why we are moving forward with an ambitious bill that will actually resolve this situation.

Once again, I would really like it if the Bloc Québécois and all the opposition members would work with us and stop playing games. This is a very important bill for all Canadians. I hope that it will be given royal assent as soon as possible.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, times are tough for a lot of people.

Today we learned that one in four homeowners will have to sell their home if interest rates go up. Yes, I said one in four. People are in debt. They are struggling to pay for rent, food and gas. Meanwhile, as oil companies, banks and grocery stores rake in massive profits, the Liberals are cutting assistance measures. They are making cuts to EI for workers and are cutting child benefits.

When will the Liberals go after the ultrarich and stop making life harder for families that are already struggling to get by?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has committed to making sure that everyone pays their fair share.

We have taken measures by permanently increasing the income tax rate by 1.5% for corporations, banks and insurance groups, and by introducing the Canada recovery dividend, a 15% tax on banks and insurance groups, to help cover the cost of combatting COVID-19. We have also introduced a luxury tax on very expensive vehicles, planes and boats.

[English]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one in four homeowners believes they will lose their house because they cannot keep up with the rising interest rates. The Liberals' failure to help struggling Canadians is going to result in people being homeless, and no doubt corporate landlords are rubbing their hands together at the prospect of being able to sweep up these distressed properties. The Liberals cannot just stand by and do nothing.

Instead of cutting funding, will the government put more money in families' pockets by increasing the Canada child benefit by \$500 and doubling the GST rebate?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand affordability matters to Canadians, and that is why we have already taken action and taken measures that are putting additional money in the pockets of Canadians who need it most this year.

This year the Canada workers benefit has gone up, so now a family of three is getting up to \$2,300 more. This year the OAS is going up by 10%, so a senior is going to get \$815 more. This year, people facing housing affordability challenges are getting \$500.

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety has repeatedly claimed, "At the recommendation of police, we invoked the Emergencies Act".

I know he likes to quote RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki, so I will try this one on for size. She said, "No, there was never a question of requesting the Emergencies Act". Clearly, it was not an option considered by police.

Now the minister is saying what he really meant to say is that they consulted with police. His story is changing so often that it is no surprise his deputy minister is saying he was misunderstood. How can Canadians trust this minister?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a prime example of cherry-picking from the commissioner's testimony. If he went on to read, he would see that the commissioner said, in her own words, that the Emergencies Act was needed to restore public safety.

While he continues to bury his head in the sand on the material facts, and while he continues to bury his head on the conduct of the interim leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, who egged on the illegal blockades long after they became a threat to public safety, we were working 24-7 with law enforcement to restore public safety. We will never apologize for that.

• (1430)

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, without parliamentary accountability, Canadians would never know the truth about how the Liberal government invoked the Emergencies Act. We were led to believe that protesters tried to burn down a building, which was false. We were led to believe that they were being funded with dark money, which was false. We were led to believe that they were planning to violently overthrow the government, which was false. The Minister of Public Safety even claimed that police asked for extraordinary powers to deal with the situation, which was false.

With this much misinformation, it is no wonder Canadians' trust in government is at an all-time low. Will the minister take the first step in rebuilding this trust and apologize for misleading Canadians?

Oral Questions

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talks about parliamentary accountability. I wonder whether it is true or false that it was parliamentarily reckless to say the following in the middle of the illegal occupation.

In an email sent from the interim Conservative Party leader to her caucus, “I don’t think we should be asking them to go home. I understand the mood may shift soon. So we need to turn this into the PM’s problem.” In other words, that would be a political problem. True or false, was that parliamentarily responsible? I do not think so.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety keeps telling us that the government only invoked the Emergencies Act after it was requested by police. We know from testimony that the police never requested the Emergencies Act, just as we know the government has not been transparent on the special forces spy flight over the protest. None of this was necessary.

How does the minister explain away his story being so different from those of senior police officials and his own deputy minister?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the illegal occupation and blockades of last winter, we saw Canadians put out of work. We saw families unable to take their children to school. We saw seniors unable to get around as a result of the illegal blockades—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to have to interrupt.

I will let the minister start from the top.

Hon. Marco Mendicino: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, in the middle of the illegal occupation, we saw Canadians put out of work. We saw families who were unable to take their kids to child care. We saw the entire town of Ottawa under siege. That is why we invoked the Emergencies Act. Of course we consulted. Of course we sought the advice of police and law enforcement because we understood that was the best way to inform that decision.

I wonder why the Conservative Party does not just stand up and accept its share of the responsibility for prolonging that illegal occupation as a result of the reckless abandon that it showed throughout.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the government, the special forces spy flight over the Ottawa protest was just training. I wonder where that data went. The minister said the Emergencies Act was justified because of an attempt at arson, which was not so, and because the protest was significantly foreign funded, which was also not so. As well, police never asked for the invocation of the act.

When will the government admit that the Emergencies Act was a power grab overreach to stifle legitimate, democratic dissent?

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Speaker, as we have told this House many times, the flight in question was part of a Canadian Armed Forces training exercise that was planned prior to and unrelated to the convoy protest. This training had nothing to do with the illegal blockade.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Emergencies Act can only be invoked when there is no other law to deal with the situation. It is not clear that this threshold was met. Members of the law enforcement community have said that the threshold was not met, including Chris Lewis, former commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police, Ontario’s largest police force.

When the public safety minister says that an unnamed police enforcement official made the request to invoke these powers, it is material. I have a very simple question: Who is this unnamed police enforcement official?

• (1435)

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member wants to quote law enforcement. Let me cite from the letter from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, which characterized the illegal blockades, and I am saying it right here from the language, were “unprecedented demonstrations, protests, occupations, and acts of civil disobedience”. In other words, they were the likes of which we have never seen before.

I will again quote from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, which said, “The Emergency Economic Measures Order is critical to assisting law enforcement in addressing the mass national and international organization of the Freedom Convoy 2022.” How is that for law enforcement?

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question.

Suspending civil liberties is serious. That is why the act can only be invoked when there is no law in Canada to deal with the situation. That is why a committee of Parliament and a public inquiry must be established to determine whether or not the threshold for invocation was met.

For the committee and the inquiry to do its work, the government must be honest and forthright with its answers. The minister’s answers are anything but. Again, I have a very simple question. The government came to office with a great deal of idealism. Does any remain?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no more paramount ideal than protecting Canadians’ safety, and that is why we invoked the Emergencies Act.

Oral Questions

We will always stand up for that decision. We will never apologize for doing what was necessary to protect Canadians who were besieged by, in the words of the most senior officials of law enforcement in this country, “unprecedented...acts of civil disobedience”.

Of course we will co-operate with the parliamentary committee. Of course we will co-operate with Judge Rouleau. That too is an ideal. I wonder when his party will accept its share of the responsibility for contributing to that illegal occupation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, Quebec gave \$6.2 million to help Akwesasne patrol its territory 24 hours a day against gun trafficking. Quebec was there, Akwesasne was there, but where was the federal government?

How is it possible that this border is not already monitored on a full-time basis? Borders are a federal responsibility. After a year and a half of non-stop shootings in Montreal, it is infuriating to see that the government has not yet deployed all possible resources.

What is stopping the federal government from addressing the problem of gun trafficking?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and his leadership.

I share his concerns about the firearms file. That is exactly why we are continuing to work closely with the Government of Quebec, indigenous peoples and Akwesasne and to provide additional resources to stop the illegal trafficking of firearms at the border. We will continue to work with them to protect our communities.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, despite everything the minister mentioned, Montreal is coming off another weekend of violence. More shots were fired in Rivière-des-Prairies and Villeray.

We still want to know how our neighbourhoods are still being flooded with all these weapons. We still want to know where the federal government is. The federal government is responsible for controlling our borders to ensure that traffickers are stopped before they have the chance to arm criminal groups.

Last year, there was a shooting every two and a half days in Montreal. What is the minister waiting for, a shooting every two hours? When will he take action?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we will work 24/7 to protect our communities, and that includes controlling the border to stop the illegal gun trade.

That is precisely why we have already transferred \$46 million to the Quebec government. That is precisely why we are in a renewal process with our indigenous communities to protect our communities.

Bill C-21 is currently before the House. I hope that the Bloc Québécois will support this very important bill to protect our communities.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I hear the member saying that the government is going to do everything it can, but that means that it has not done anything yet.

Nothing has been done to combat gun trafficking at the border. It has gotten to the point where Quebec and the indigenous police have had to step up their own patrols, without any help from the federal government. Nothing has been done in the House either. Bill C-21 does not propose anything at all to crack down on gun trafficking and organized crime.

The federal government is offering half measures at the border and half measures in the House, but Montreal has an actual problem with illegal gun trafficking and organized crime, not half a problem. When will the federal government crack down on illegal gun trafficking and organized crime?

● (1440)

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague that the situation at the border is worrisome. That is why we will continue to give the Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP more resources at the border.

We are making progress. Last year, we seized a record number of guns. However, I agree that more needs to be done. That is why I hope that the Bloc Québécois will support Bill C-21.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety seems to have a new nickname: Pinocchio. In recent months, he told the House something that is absolutely false. He said, “It was on the advice of law enforcement that we invoked the Emergencies Act.”

However, federal and municipal law enforcement agencies have confirmed that they never made any such recommendations. Now, the minister is saying any old thing in hopes that Canadians will forget all about this. Did the minister act on his own initiative, or was he following the Prime Minister's orders?

The Speaker: I would like to remind the member that we cannot do indirectly what we cannot do directly. As I said before, when members do things indirectly that are not really acceptable, it leads to trouble. If someone is getting called out, it is justified.

The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. The Emergencies Act restored public safety and we will never apologize for doing what was necessary to protect Canadians.

We did it for everyone who wanted to get to work or take their kids to day care. We invoked the act for those Canadians who unwillingly found themselves in the middle of this occupation.

Oral Questions

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems the minister has memory issues because on April 28, 2022, he said, “I remember my hon. colleague and I having an exchange during the debate of the invocation of the Emergencies Act, which was only put forward after police officials told us they needed this special power to ensure they could restore public safety.”

The RCMP says it never made such a request. The Minister of Public Safety deliberately misled Canadians. Was he following the Prime Minister's orders to avoid losing his cabinet position?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, we invoked the Emergencies Act to protect Canadians. It was a necessary decision, which is exactly what the RCMP commissioner told the committee.

I would also like to ask my colleague when the Conservatives are going to offer to reimburse the communities here in Ottawa for the expenses incurred, given that his party bears some responsibility after the interim leader of the Conservative Party encouraged the blockade and illegal occupation. That was wrong, and the Conservatives should offer to reimburse the costs.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us continue with the history lesson. On May 2, the Minister of Public Safety said that the government invoked the Emergencies Act on the recommendation of the police. I congratulate him.

During the parliamentary committee hearings, he said that it was the RCMP that requested it because they needed that tool to do their job. The minister has repeated this many times in recent months.

Now, to add insult to injury, he has the audacity to say that the whole thing is a simple misunderstanding. When will the Minister of Public Safety admit the truth?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have sent a clear message that it was a necessary decision.

Yes, we consulted police forces before invoking that act. Yes, we sought the advice of police forces before invoking the act. We will continue to work closely with police forces to protect our communities.

The Conservatives actually encouraged the illegal blockade. That was very wrong, and they need to offer to reimburse the residents of Ottawa and people across the country for their expenses.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the foreign affairs minister blamed Global Affairs staff for attending a party at the Russian embassy. She will not even admit whether she knew if they were going. The government is failing on sanctions and on immigration, and is now literally attending parties at the Russian embassy. There is a genocide happening in Ukraine. This is a pattern of behaviour that is not helping Ukrainians.

Instead of apologizing after the fact, why did the minister not tell her staff not to attend events at the Russian embassy?

• (1445)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague, and I am as mad as she is, because this should never have happened. Of course, this will not happen again. I am the minister and the buck stops here, but what I can tell members is that we have been showing leadership on the question of Ukraine. Our intent has been the same since before February 24. We need to make sure to send a strong message to Vladimir Putin's regime. We need to suffocate it diplomatically, economically and politically.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for nearly seven years New Democrats have been calling for the creation of a clear path to safety for LGBTQI+ refugees whose lives are at imminent risk. Currently, Rainbow Railroad has identified and fully verified 300 Afghans at high risk of immediate life-threatening violence simply for being who they are. Despite the failure of the Liberals to create a path to safety in Canada for queer refugees at risk, Canada can help rescue these Afghan refugees right now.

Will the government immediately partner with Rainbow Railroad to evacuate and resettle these 300 high-risk LGBTQI+ Afghans?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our doors are always open for people who identify as LGBTQ escaping from violence and persecution in their country. We work closely with organizations such as the Rainbow Refugee society, the UNHCR and others to help sponsor LGBTQ refugees from abroad. We are supporting at least 55 service providers to make them feel at home. We have a role to play to make sure LGBTQ people feel safe and supported, so they can participate fully in society.

*Oral Questions***REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the past two years have shown us the importance of reliable high-speed Internet for everything from work to school, the digital economy, connecting with loved ones and much more. The importance of rural connectivity was recently highlighted as an economic driver in the five-year economic plan outlined by the Partnership for Growth of Prince Edward Island. It is a group that represents over 200 island businesses. Our government has made \$7.2 billion available to achieve the goal of connecting 98% of Canadians by 2026.

Can the Minister of Rural Economic Development update the House on what is being done to achieve this goal in communities across my riding of Malpeque and in all of Prince Edward Island?

Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague for Malpeque for the warm welcome I received when I was in his riding recently, and I am so proud that while I was there we announced a historic agreement with the Government of Prince Edward Island to be the sixth province to partner with us to get the remaining communities in its province connected.

It is a historic investment of \$20 million to connect the remaining homes. That brings us closer to our commitment of 98% of Canadians by 2026, and 100% by 2030, being connected with affordable and reliable high-speed Internet.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals insist the police asked them to invoke the Emergencies Act. Police forces say they never asked. The Liberals insist the Act was needed in order to tow the trucks away, which is not the case, as all border blockades were resolved beforehand and it was the province that leveraged the licences of tow truck owners to get their co-operation. The allegations about Russian and foreign funding were false, and the accusations of arson were also false.

Will the Prime Minister admit that invoking the Emergencies Act was just to punish those who do not agree with him?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question allows me to highlight again that Commissioner Lucki testified before committee that there was a problem procuring tow trucks in the midst of the illegal occupation, which is one of the reasons why we included that power in the Emergencies Act. We sought that advice prior to its invocation. We took the decision informed by our consultations, and we did it because it was necessary. We will never apologize for doing what is necessary to protect the health and safety of all Canadians.

• (1450)

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety has repeatedly stated that the Emergencies Act was invoked at the recommendation of police. However, police officials have testified that they, in fact, did not ask for the invocation, and the minister has not been able to identify any police agency that specifically asked for the Act's invocation, as he states. Canadians do not know what to believe any

more and do not trust this misunderstood minister and the government.

Will the minister do the right thing and just admit he made it up, or will he continue to double down and lose what little credibility he has left?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague well knows, and as I have said on a number of occasions, we invoked the Emergencies Act because it was necessary. We consulted with law enforcement. We sought their advice prior to its invocation, and that advice obviously informed the decision to invoke. We did it because Canadians were hurting and because, as they were trying to get to work and trying to go about their daily lives, Conservatives were encouraging them to stay. That was wrong.

Just once, it would be nice to hear Conservatives stand up and apologize for their improper, reckless role in extending the illegal blockades. While they were undermining public safety, we were defending it.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister said nine times that he invoked the freeze and seize Emergencies Act at the request of the police. The RCMP denied this, the acting Ottawa police chief denied this and even the former Ottawa police chief denied this.

How can Canadians trust the minister or his government?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians will trust a government that will do what is necessary to protect their health and safety. Members can contrast what we did, which was to invoke the Emergencies Act only after it was clear that existing authorities were ineffective at restoring public safety, with the role of the Conservatives, who encouraged and egged the protesters on, who were taking selfies with them, who were doing whatever it took to make it a political problem for the Prime Minister. That was wrong. They should know better.

Canadians will never forget the role that Conservatives played during the illegal blockades, but they will remember what we did, which was to protect them.

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised Canadians they would expect openness and transparency, but it appears this is not the case with our public safety minister. Words matter. Clarity matters. Repeating extensively inside and outside of the House that law enforcement asked for the act is categorically opposed to the narrative that they asked for the measures contained in the act.

Oral Questions

How can Canadians trust the minister when he has repeatedly misled them?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague sets a very high threshold for openness and transparency. When is he going to shine a light on the statements that were made by his interim leader during the illegal occupation, who wanted to make it a political problem, while frontline officers were trying to restore public safety? That party—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: With all the shouting, I was not able to hear half that answer. I am going to have to ask the minister to start over again.

Hon. Marco Mendicino: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, my hon. colleague across the aisle sets a very high threshold for openness and transparency, and I wonder when he is going to shine a light on the conduct of his own caucus colleagues, including the interim Conservative Party of Canada's leader, who was egging on the illegal occupation long after it had become dangerous. Not only did those statements put at jeopardy the lives and health and safety of Ottawa residents, but they also put in danger the lives and safety of our frontline police officers. It was wrong. They should apologize.

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[Translation]

PASSPORTS

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the passport fiasco continues. The only solution for those who have to travel within 48 hours is to wait in line at a passport office for a full day.

Even then they have to choose their day because despite all the unprecedented delays, the passport offices continue to be open only from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A crisis does not get resolved during business hours.

Will the government finally open its offices on weekends for worried travellers?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand that this is a frustrating situation for Canadians in Quebec and across the country. We are responding to it.

We know that after two years of restrictions, Canadians want to travel. We have hired more than 600 people and we are in the process of hiring 600 more.

Service Canada employees are working days, evenings and weekends. We will try to do our best because Canadians want to receive their documents on time.

• (1455)

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is a whole world of difference between the official message and the actual situation at passport offices.

We know that contrary to what is on the website, only people travelling within 48 hours are being served. We know that wait times on the site are unrealistic. We also know that, despite what is indicated, many people have had to pay extra fees.

Can the minister finally clearly explain who can go to a passport office and when, what people should do, and if extra fees are being charged?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned several times in the House, there is an unprecedented number of passport applications.

People can go to a passport office 45 days before travelling. I am checking with Service Canada to see how it is responding to this directive on the ground.

We will reassure Canadians and ensure that the right information is posted on the website. We will continue to ensure that Canadians can access passport services.

* * *

[English]

SMALL BUSINESS

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are in a labour crisis, and small businesses are the most affected. A follow-up submission to the industry committee from the Department of Employment and Social Development states that they were “not aware of any Canadian studies that estimate the overall economic costs of labour shortages”, and estimates from the Statistics Canada job vacancy and wage survey show 826,000 job vacancies in February, which is double the prepandemic trend.

Why is this government doing nothing to analyze how federal vaccine mandate firings are affecting the labour shortage in Canada?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I would just point out to her that what we are doing and what we have done throughout the pandemic, and afterward as we exit this pandemic, is supporting Canadian small businesses.

We have recovered over 115% of the jobs lost prior to the pandemic, which is point number one. Point number two is that budget 2022, which I am sure the member opposite has perused carefully, actually shows significant supports for small businesses, such as the phase-out of the small business tax rate, \$15 billion invested in the Canada growth fund to scale up and \$97 million to secure Canadian IP.

We will continue to work hard for Canadian small businesses because we know that they are the backbone of our economy.

HEALTH

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will not listen to Canadians, he will not listen to the opposition and he will not even listen to the doctors in his own caucus. It took American hockey player Ryan Whitney, of Spittin' Chiclets fame, to light up Twitter to make the government react in classic Liberal big-announcement, little-action fashion. They listened to him once, so maybe they will do it again. Will the Prime Minister listen to Whit and end the mandates?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government's priority has been and will always be the safety and protection of Canadians' health.

Our government announced that mandatory randomized testing will be temporarily suspended at all airports from June 11 to June 30. Unvaccinated travellers will still be tested on site. Starting July 1, all testing, including unvaccinated travellers, will be performed off-site. We will continue to stand up for our constituents and their health and safety.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are in fine form. They made a big announcement on Friday. Did they end mandates allowing people to return to work? No. Did they end mandates allowing all Canadians to travel by rail and air? No. Their solution was to pause random COVID testing for a couple of weeks. It was a joke.

Will the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health give us a date on when he will end the mandates, or will he tell me to eff off, like he did to one of his constituents?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week I responded in an unacceptable way to a message on social media, and I deeply regret it. I want to apologize to the person I offended and anybody else I let down. I realize that the past two years have been really difficult for a lot of people, but my conduct was unacceptable. We have an obligation to disagree without being disagreeable, and in that regard I failed.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Before going on to the next question, I am not going to ask the hon. member to withdraw it, but I want to remind all members that they cannot do indirectly what they cannot do directly, and referring to something like what was said is not acceptable.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

* * *

• (1500)

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government made the modernization of the Official Languages Act one of its top priorities.

Oral Questions

We need to protect and promote French all across the country, yet the opposition parties are preventing our bill to modernize the act from going forward.

Could the Minister of Official Languages explain to Canadians what Bill C-13 means for official language minority communities across Canada?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Etobicoke Centre for his important question and for all of the work he does on official languages.

I was in Toronto last week for consultations on the action plan for official languages. Members of official language minority communities told us that reforms are urgently needed and spoke about how Bill C-13 is the cornerstone of an action plan that strengthens the institutions that these communities rely on.

Our government is committed to protecting and promoting French across the country. I hope that the opposition will stop obstructing and will work with us to get the bill passed as soon as possible.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, normally the Department of Foreign Affairs has a list of countries whose national days Canadian officials are not to attend. The list is compiled by departmental officials, but the final decision rests with the minister.

Last week, Friday, a Canadian official attended the Russian embassy's celebration. On Friday night, the minister's office concurred with the department, but yesterday the minister reversed course and blamed officials.

Instead of blaming officials, will the minister accept that the list is her responsibility and will the minister accept ministerial accountability?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as mentioned earlier today, I am as angry and frustrated as Canadians and members of this House regarding the fact that a Canadian official was at the Russian embassy. This should not have happened, and of course it will not happen again.

That being said, I am the minister, so the buck stops here.

Oral Questions

I must say we can collectively be proud of what we have done in supporting Ukraine since the invasion. Just last week, we announced 28 new sanctions, and more will come.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week the minister announced yet another delay in the government's Indo-Pacific strategy, announcing the committee to craft this strategy and bypassing the department. Clearly, the government does not think officials are capable of doing this work.

Since the department has been cut out of crafting this strategy, which is now in the hands of the government's hand-picked committee, will the minister at the very least tell us when this strategy will be complete and made public?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I value my colleague's input regarding the Indo-Pacific strategy. As a country, we obviously need to assert ourselves much more as a Pacific nation and we need to make sure we react to a more assertive China. Based on that, we will draw on the expertise of many people from all walks of life and different parts of the country, including people with different political backgrounds, to make sure we have a strong strategy coming ahead.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government claims to care about refugees, but again it is just lip service. Comlux Aviation has offered a commercial airline to provide humanitarian flights to Ukraine for free. There is just one problem: It keeps running into red tape from the Liberal government. Ukrainians are desperate both for aid and for safe haven here in Canada.

Will the minister commit right now to provide intervention to allow this airline to provide aid for Ukrainians in their hour of need?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me remind this House that since January Canada has welcomed over 43,500 Ukrainians. We have launched the Ukrainian authorization for emergency travel, which made it easier, faster and safer for Ukrainians to come. We secured three targeted flights to get Ukrainians to safety and we are also providing a one-time direct payment of \$3,000 per adult and \$1,500 per child to them.

We stand with Ukraine and we are going to continue to help our Ukrainian community.

* * *

● (1505)

LABOUR

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of standing up for workers, and especially gig and online workers. As emerging forms of labour and new industries grow in the economy of tomorrow, it is important that our government be there for all Canadian workers.

I have heard from my constituents that employees who work as truck drivers are being misclassified as independent contractors

even though they do not own their own trucks because of Driver Inc. schemes.

Can the minister tell the House and Canadians what he and the government are doing to address this issue?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Driver Inc. model deprives workers of their basic rights. We amended the code by prohibiting the misclassification of workers and we have been inspecting work sites since then. Where we find people guilty of non-compliance, we will take action through orders, fines and prosecutions. We expect all employers to treat their employees fairly, and those who fail to do so will face the consequences. We committed to protecting workers. We will continue to work with the sector to crack down on Driver Inc.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last year saw the lowest return of Skeena River steelhead on record. The vibrant steelhead industry supports dozens of family-owned tourism businesses, which were hard hit by the pandemic.

Livelihoods are on the line, but I am not sure that the government cares, and the shared jurisdiction with the province means that too often the Liberals think they are off the hook. We need urgent action, but instead the minister seems content with business as usual.

Can she share with the House how her approach to Skeena River steelhead this year is going to be different from the failed approach of previous seasons?

Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the conservation of our fish stocks is in everyone's interest and is a high priority for me, and so is the ability of recreational and commercial fishers to fish. That is why we make our decisions based on science. Virtually every year, we go back out and test and find what the abundance of the fisheries is. We make our decisions based on that.

I will just assure the member that the interests of the harvesters are ones I hold at heart, as well as the need to conserve and rebuild the abundance of diverse fish stocks.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians with disabilities continue to disproportionately live in poverty across the country. Earlier this month, the government finally reintroduced the Canada disability benefit, but it has not allocated any time to debate it, nor has it introduced any emergency supports.

We have been here before. The same bill was introduced last June and died when the election was called within months. We now have eight sitting days left before we rise for the summer, while those living in legislative poverty will not get any break.

Will the governing party demonstrate that it is not playing games with the disability community and prioritize Bill C-22?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure everyone in the House that nobody is playing games, and the unacceptable levels of poverty among our citizens with disabilities are shameful. We are taking action. Starting with the Accessible Canada Act and most recently by introducing the Canada disability legislation, we are improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

Yes, there is more to do, and I encourage all of us to work together in the House to pass that legislation so that we can lift hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I am afraid that is all the time we have today, but I wish to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Augusto Santos Silva, the President of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from June 9 consideration of Bill C-5, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: It being 3:10 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motions at the report stage of Bill C-5.

● (1510)

The question is on Motion No. 2.

[English]

A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 3 to 5.

● (1520)

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 147)

YEAS

Members

Aboultarif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Gallant
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 114

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya

Government Orders

Ashton
 Bachrach
 Bains
 Barron
 Battiste
 Beech
 Bennett
 Bibeau
 Blaikie
 Blanchet
 Blaney
 Boissonnault
 Bradford
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Casey
 Chagger
 Champagne
 Chatel
 Chiang
 Collins (Victoria)
 Coteau
 Damoff
 DeBellefeuille
 Desilets
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fillmore
 Fonseca
 Fortin
 Fraser
 Fry
 Garneau
 Garrison
 Gazan
 Gill
 Green
 Hajdu
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Idlout
 Jaczek
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Kayabaga
 Khalid
 Koutrakis
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Larouche
 Lauzon
 Lebouthillier
 Lightbound
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 Maloney
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 MacDonald (Avalon)
 McKay
 McLeod
 Mendès
 Miao
 Miller
 Morrissey

Atwin
 Badawey
 Baker
 Barsalou-Duval
 Beaulieu
 Bendayan
 Bérubé
 Bittle
 Blair
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Blois
 Boulerville
 Brière
 Cannings
 Chabot
 Chahal
 Champoux
 Chen
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Davies
 Desbiens
 Desjarlais
 Dhillon
 Dong
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Fergus
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Gaheer
 Garon
 Gaudreau
 Gerretsen
 Gould
 Guilbeault
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Ien
 Johns
 Jones
 Julian
 Kelloway
 Khera
 Kusmierczyk
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 LeBlanc
 Lemire
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McPherson
 Mendicino
 Michaud
 Morrice
 Murray

Naqvi
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 Pauzé
 Petitpas Taylor
 Powlowski
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Sajjan
 Samson
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schiefke
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Sorbara
 St-Onge
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thompson
 Trudel
 Valdez
 van Koevorden
 Vandenbeld
 Villemure
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zarrillo

Noormohamed
 O'Connell
 O'Regan
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Sahota
 Saks
 Sarai
 Scarpaleggia
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Simard
 Singh
 Ste-Marie
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Trudeau
 Turnbull
 Van Bynen
 Vandal
 Vignola
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Zahid
 Zuberi — 212

PAIRED

Members

Hoback
 Ng

Lake
 Qualtrough — 4

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 2 defeated.

I therefore declare Motions Nos. 3 to 5 defeated as well.

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.) moved that Bill C-5, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, as amended, be concurred in at report stage.

The Speaker: If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 148*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
 Ali
 Anandasangaree
 Arseneault
 Atwin
 Badawey
 Baker

Alghabra
 Anand
 Angus
 Arya
 Bachrach
 Bains
 Barron

Government Orders

Barsalou-Duval	Battiste	Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Beaulieu	Beech	Powlowski	Robillard
Bendayan	Bennett	Rodriguez	Rogers
Bérubé	Bibeau	Romanado	Sahota
Bittle	Blaikie	Sajjan	Saks
Blair	Blanchet	Samson	Sarai
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Blois	Boissonnault	Schiefke	Serré
Boulerice	Bradford	Sgro	Shanahan
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe	Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Cannings	Carr	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Casey	Chabot	Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Chagger	Chahal	Sorbara	Ste-Marie
Champagne	Champoux	St-Onge	Sudds
Chatel	Chen	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Thériault	Therrien
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier	Thompson	Trudeau
Coteau	Dabrusin	Trudel	Turnbull
Damoff	Davies	Valdez	Van Bynen
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens	van Koeverden	Vandal
Desilets	Desjarlais	Vandenbeld	Vignola
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Villemure	Virani
Diab	Dong	Weiler	Wilkinson
Drouin	Dubourg	Yip	Zahid
Duclos	Duguid	Zarrillo	Zuberi— 210
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz		
Ehsassi	El-Khoury		
Erskine-Smith	Fergus		
Fillmore	Fisher		
Fonseca	Fortier	Aboutaif	Aitchison
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Albas	Allison
Fraser	Freeland	Arnold	Baldinelli
Fry	Gaheer	Barlow	Barrett
Garneau	Garon	Benzen	Bergen
Garrison	Gaudreau	Berthold	Bezan
Gerretsen	Gill	Block	Bragdon
Gould	Green	Brassard	Brock
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Calkins	Caputo
Hanley	Hardie	Carrie	Chambers
Hepfner	Holland	Chong	Cooper
Housefather	Hughes	Dalton	Dancho
Hussen	Hutchings	Davidson	Deltell
Iacono	Ien	d'Entremont	Doherty
Jaczek	Johns	Dowdall	Dreshen
Joly	Jones	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Jowhari	Julian	Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Khalid	Khera	Ferreri	Findlay
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Gallant	Généreux
Kwan	Lalonde	Genuis	Gladu
Lambropoulos	Lametti	Godin	Goodridge
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Gourde	Gray
Larouche	Lattanzio	Hallan	Jeneroux
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Kelly	Kitchen
Lebouthillier	Lemire	Kmiec	Kram
Lightbound	Long	Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Lantsman	Lawrence
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada	Lloyd	Lobb
Masse	Mathysen	MacKenzie	Maguire
May (Cambridge)	May (Saainch—Gulf Islands)	Martel	Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Melillo	Moore
McLeod	McPherson	Morantz	Morrison
Mendès	Mendicino	Motz	Muys
Miao	Michaud	Nater	O'Toole
Miller	Morrice	Paul-Hus	Perkins
Morrissey	Murray	Poilievre	Rayes
Naqvi	Noormohamed	Redekopp	Reid
Normandin	O'Connell	Rempel Garner	Richards
Oliphant	O'Regan	Roberts	Rood
Pauzé	Perron	Ruff	Scheer

NAYS**Members**

Routine Proceedings

Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shipley
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Wagh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 116

PAIRED

Members

Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough— 4

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the great honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to three petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. Marc Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, entitled “The Effects of the Housing Shortage on Indigenous Peoples in Canada”.

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

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, entitled “Taiwan's Participation in the International Civil Aviation Organization”.

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

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, entitled “The Protection of Monuments Dedicated to Canadian Veterans”.

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

[*English*]

HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, entitled, “The Impacts of COVID-19 on Seniors”.

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

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, entitled “Certificate of Nomination of Philippe Dufresne to the Position of Privacy Commissioner”.

While I have the floor, I would like to take one brief moment to thank Mr. Dufresne for his outstanding service to parliamentarians in his previous role as parliamentary law clerk and wish him the best. I hope we quickly see his appointment to Privacy Commissioner.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-281, an act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), the Broadcasting Act and the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act.

He said: Madam Speaker, to thunderous applause, I may say, it is a privilege and an honour to rise in the House to introduce my private member's bill, the international human rights act.

I would like to start by thanking the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, our shadow minister for international development, for his support in creating, drafting and seconding this important piece of legislation.

The legislation would accomplish four key objectives.

First, it would impose certain reporting requirements on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, including to produce a list of prisoners of conscience whose behalf the government is working on.

Second, it would impose a requirement on the Minister of Foreign Affairs to respond within 40 days to a report submitted by a parliamentary committee that recommends the imposition of Magnitsky sanctions.

Third, it would make amendments to the Broadcasting Act that prohibit the issue, amendment or renewal of a licence to a broadcaster that may be vulnerable to a foreign national or entity declared of committing genocide or subject to sanctions under Sergei Magnitsky Law.

Fourth, it would create a prohibition against investments into companies that construct, develop or transport cluster munitions as defined by the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act.

I would like to thank the members of the House in advance for their support and for making the world a bit of a better place.

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

* * *

[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management).

He said: Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to introduce, seconded by my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé, a bill whose purpose is to take the symbolic support of the majority of MPs in the House and make it tangible to protect supply management from further dilution in future international trade negotiations.

With the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with Europe, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, the government really did a number on this agricultural system. Food producers and processors are still assessing the scale of the damage caused by the implementation of these three trade agreements.

Very simply, this bill would amend section 10 of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act by adding provisions to exclude supply management from negotiations.

I hope a majority of members will once again vote in favour of this bill, which our agriculture and agri-food sector is eagerly awaiting.

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

Routine Proceedings

• (1545)

[English]

NATIONAL RIBBON SKIRT DAY ACT

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill S-219, an act respecting a National Ribbon Skirt Day.

She said: Madam Speaker, I rise today for the first reading of Senate bill, Bill S-219, which would establish January 4 of every year as national ribbon skirt day. Through this bill, Canada would have the opportunity to further its understanding and education of indigenous culture and heritage, specifically the ribbon skirt, which is a symbolic piece of clothing used in indigenous tradition and ceremony across the country.

In my riding of Fredericton, an unceded Wolastoqiyik territory, we have Wolastoq Wednesdays, where indigenous women, girls and two-spirited peoples wear ribbon skirts with pride and reclaim spaces with meaningful cultural representation. This bill would give us an opportunity to celebrate and stand with indigenous women and girls and two-spirited peoples to honour them in such a positive way and truly walk in the path of reconciliation.

I wish to sincerely thank the amazing Senator McCallum for her work and dedication to uplifting the voices of indigenous peoples in Canada, and for the immense honour she has given me to sponsor this bill in the House.

I also want to thank Chief George Cote of the Cote First Nation, Saskatchewan, as well as Isabella Kulak and her family for giving us all the opportunity to learn and grow together.

Meegwetch. Woliwon.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

PETITIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a huge honour to present this petition today on behalf of constituents who are calling on the government to address the climate emergency.

Routine Proceedings

They are calling on the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada to enact just transition legislation that would reduce emissions by at least 60% below 2005 levels and make significant contributions to emissions reductions in countries in the global south. They want to see the wind-down of the fossil fuel industry and related infrastructure, an end to fossil fuel subsidies, and a transition to a decarbonized economy.

They cite that this would create good green jobs, drive inclusive workforce development and expand the social safety net through new income supports. It would pay for the transition by increasing taxes on the wealthiest and corporations, and financing through our public national bank. It would protect and strengthen human rights, worker rights and respect for indigenous rights, sovereignty and knowledge, by including them in creating and implementing this legislation. It would ensure migrant justice and emphasize support for historically marginalized communities.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a petition here signed by 59 individuals. It is aimed at Canadian companies that operate abroad. The petitioners are calling for the House of Commons to adopt human rights and environmental due diligence legislation that would require companies to prevent adverse human rights impacts and environmental damage throughout their global operations and supply chains, and establish a legal right for people who have been harmed to seek justice in Canadian courts, among other things.

OKANAGAN RAIL TRAIL

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents from Kelowna—Lake Country and the surrounding area.

The Okanagan Rail Trail serves as an important recreational and commuter path for pedestrians and cyclists across the region. Seven kilometres of the trail remain incomplete, which poses a safety risk as users have no option other than to divert onto a busy highway. The completion of the Okanagan Rail Trail would be an important link to provide more healthy activity space for residents and visitors in the Okanagan.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to expeditiously complete the federal commitments to the Okanagan Indian Band and Duck Lake Indian Reserve 7 to complete the Okanagan Rail Trail.

● (1550)

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to present today.

In the first one, the petitioners note that applicants for many processes and documents at IRCC, including citizenship applications and PR cards, face prolonged delays in processing. Many have received no response or details from IRCC on the status of their application or expected timelines, which prevents them from being able to plan important and critical life decisions. Many applicants have missed or are missing important family events because they are at some stage of citizenship application and the email for the next step can come at any time.

They are therefore calling on the government to increase staffing and resources at IRCC in order to address the backlog of outstanding applications for citizenship that were submitted in 2019 and 2020, and provide clear status and concise expected timelines to applicants so that they can make decisions and plan accordingly, in order to address the ambiguity of getting an email for a test or an oath ceremony at any time. Finally, in a case of unreasonable delay, they are calling for IRCC to provide the reason to the applicant and clear steps to mitigate the delay and ensure that the applicant's PR card can be received promptly.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, in the second petition, the petitioners are noting the Government of Israel's designation of six prominent Palestinian human rights and civil society groups as terrorist organizations on October 19, 2021. They are concerned that the six prominent Palestinian human rights and civil society organizations in question are being criminalized for critical human rights work. They point to Canada's own guidelines on supporting human rights defenders, which state that the commitment of Canada and Canada's diplomatic mission is to advocate for human rights defenders and protect them from harm.

They are therefore calling on the government to take concrete action against the Israeli occupation authorities' continued harassment and criminalization of Palestinian human rights defenders and civil society organizations, by calling for full revocation of the designation and publicly calling on Israeli authorities to immediately end efforts aimed at prosecuting, delegitimizing and criminalizing Palestinian human rights defenders and civil society organizations. Finally, they call on relevant cabinet ministers, policy-makers and members of Parliament to meet with the six Palestinian organizations.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, in the last petition, my constituents are noting that persons with psychosocial and other disabilities continue to be at grave risk of being detained in facilities and/or otherwise subjected to limitations on freedom of movement, including the use of physical restraints, chemical restraints and isolation, and being forcibly administered drugs, which frequently cause toxic and damaging effects, such as reduced mobility and constrained cognition, reducing life expectancy and inducing dependency, notwithstanding that some people take these drugs voluntarily.

They are calling on the government to enact article 14 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and prohibit civil commitments, psychiatric assessments and all related interventions for psychosocial disabilities, repealing laws and provisions that violate the CRPD by permitting detentions, restraints, seclusion, community treatment orders, forced drugging, electrical shock, sterilization and similar impositions, and rescind all—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that we are meant to provide very short summaries of the petitions. There are quite a few other members who would like to present petitions.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I am here to present a petition on behalf of many Canadians across the whole country who are very concerned about the fact that Canada is still implementing the “gold-digger clause” that was put in place in the early 1900s. We know that so many veterans, RCMP and public servants who marry after 60 do not qualify for survivor pensions for their loved ones when they pass on. The National Council of Veteran Associations, the RCMP Veterans' Association and the Armed Forces Pensioners' Association of Canada are all in support of this. We believe it is important not to punish veterans for finding love after 60.

• (1555)

INSECTICIDES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to present today. These are very pressing and important issues that I am putting forward and I will summarize.

The first petition deals with the threat to pollinators. It is a global threat and it is largely due, as we understand it, to neonicotinoid insecticides, which have been restricted from use in the European Union. Petitioners call on the Government of Canada, for the sake of our bees and food security, to take steps and follow Europe's lead.

OPIOIDS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, the second petition refers to an urgent issue we often discuss in this place, and that is the opioid crisis. These petitioners point out that the public health emergency constituted by poisoning the drug supply is a public health emergency and that the solution is to decriminalize the drug supply, to reframe the overdose crisis as a health issue rather than one of criminal justice, and to take a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to dealing with the opioid crisis once and for all.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, my last petition, I have to say, is certainly one of the ones that had great support online, with over 5,653 petitioners.

The petitioners point out that the government had promised in the last election to place a ban on the export of thermal coal from ports. Members in this place may not know that we export thermal coal that comes into Canada from the U.S., because U.S. ports are

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already refusing to export thermal coal for reasons of climate. The petitioners point out that thermal coal creates about half of the world's carbon emissions and that the phase-out that the government has planned should be expedited and moved more rapidly.

I also want to thank the citizens who worked on this petition, particularly a retired justice department lawyer who did a lot of work at Environment Canada, Beverly Pixie Hobby from White Rock. I also want to thank constituents of my own riding from the South Coast Ship Watch Alliance, because much of the contamination of our waterways in the Gulf Islands is due to anchorages for ships that cannot be loaded with products in bulk, due to inefficiencies at the port of Vancouver. This would expedite environmental protection in the Gulf Islands and also be an action for climate change.

The petitioners ask for the priority substances list within the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, as soon as possible, to list thermal coal and then to regulate the mining and export of thermal coal, in accordance with our international commitments.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am happy today to rise and present a petition on behalf of constituents in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith. The constituents are calling on the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada to enact just transition legislation that, among other things, reduces emissions by at least 60% below 2005 levels by 2030; winds down the fossil fuel industry and related infrastructure; creates good green jobs; promotes and strengthens human rights and workers' rights; respects indigenous rights, sovereignty and knowledge; expands the social safety net through new income supports; and pays for the transition by increasing taxes on the wealthiest and corporations, and financing through a public national bank.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of petitioners who are calling on the government to enact a just transition that would see the reduction of emissions. It would also see the support for public institutions, ensure that we create good green jobs across Canada, and protect workers' rights, including the rights of indigenous nations.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I also have another petition, which calls on the government to protect and make enforceable actions related to companies that are operating overseas and contributing to human rights abuses and environmental damages.

*Routine Proceedings***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 500, 508, 513, 514 and 519.

[Text]

Question No. 500—**Mr. Dan Albas:**

With regard to the 2022 budget not including the commitment by the Prime Minister on page 69 of the 2021 Liberal election platform to “Introduce a Veterans stream to the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)”: (a) why was this specific commitment not included in the 2022 budget; (b) has the government developed a specific timeline for when the veterans stream will be added to the RHI, and if so, what is it; and (c) what are the specific details, including dates of any action taken to date by the government, to introduce a veterans stream to the RHI?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2022 announced a proposed investment of \$1.5 billion over two years to extend the rapid housing initiative. This funding is expected to create at least 6,000 new affordable housing units.

Veterans have been a priority group since our government launched the national housing strategy. Veterans continue to be a priority population for the national housing strategy, of which the rapid housing initiative is a constituent element.

The government remains committed to addressing the issue of veteran homelessness. Budget 2021 announced \$45 million for a pilot program aimed at reducing veteran homelessness. Budget 2022 proposes an additional \$62.2 million over three years toward a new veteran homelessness program that will provide services and rent supplements to veterans experiencing homelessness in partnership with community organizations until 2027.

Question No. 508—**Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to Bell Island in the Bahamas: (a) did the Prime Minister sign any document that gave him permission to accept the trip, and, if so, what are the details of the document, including the date on which it was signed; and (b) if the response to (a) is affirmative, on what date did the Clerk of the Privy Council become aware that the Prime Minister signed the document?

Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this matter has been addressed in the House of Commons. For further context, please visit <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/house/sitting-58/hansard#Int-11636457>.

Question No. 513—**Ms. Elizabeth May:**

With regard to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance announcing on February 18, 2022, that the government will spend no additional public money on the Trans Mountain Expansion Project: does the commitment to spend no additional public money extend to (i) loan guarantees, (ii) placing creditor priorities ahead of government debts, (iii) providing write-downs to potential investors?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on February 18, 2022, the Government of Canada provided an update on the Trans Mountain expansion project. With 50% of the pipeline already built and the project significantly de-risked, the government announced that no additional public money will be spent on the project and that Trans Mountain Corporation would secure the funding necessary to complete the project with third party financing.

The corporation has now secured up to \$10 billion in third party financing with a group of Canadian financial institutions. These

monies will be used to fund the project's construction costs. The financing will not change the cost estimate and 2023 completion date outlined in February 2022.

As part of this process, the Government of Canada is providing a loan guarantee on behalf of the corporation. This is a common practice that puts in place an insurance policy for the institutions that have invested in the project. It does not reflect any new public spending. The corporation will pay a fee to the government for this guarantee. The Government of Canada has not spent any money to put this guarantee in place.

This project is in the national interest and will make Canada and the Canadian economy more sovereign and more resilient. The Government of Canada intends to launch a divestment process after the expansion project is further de-risked and after further consultation with Indigenous groups about economic participation has progressed.

Question No. 514—**Ms. Elizabeth May:**

With regard to the government's engagement with BMO Capital Markets and TD Securities on the financial aspects of the Trans Mountain Expansion project, as noted in the response by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to petition No. 441-00120: (a) what are the details of the public financing options that were analyzed, including the (i) type of financing, (ii) level of financing, (iii) reported feasibility of the financing; and (b) is the government currently considering public financing options for the project, and, if so, what are the details, including the (i) type of financing, (ii) level of financing, (iii) results of any further analysis the government has completed?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the analyses undertaken by BMO and TD of the Trans Mountain expansion project confirmed that despite the increased cost estimate and completion timeline, the project is financially sound and commercially viable. These analyses are subject to commercial confidentiality.

On April 29, 2022, Trans Mountain Corporation completed third party financing consisting of a \$10-billion credit facility with a syndicate of Canadian financial institutions. The financing is supported by a guarantee provided by the Canada Account administered by Export Development Canada.

More information can be found at www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2022/05/update-on-trans-mountain-expansion-project.html.

Question No. 519—**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:**

With regard to the Memorial to the Victims of Communism: on what date is the project expected to be completed?

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Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, due to the disruption that the pandemic created in the construction sector, the timelines for the Memorial to the Victims of Communism—Canada, a Land of Refuge, had to be adjusted. The government understands the importance of this project and is making every effort to conclude this project in a timely manner. Construction is under way, and 2023 is targeted for the monument's successful delivery.

* * *

• (1600)

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the government's response to Questions Nos. 501 to 507, 509 to 512, 515 to 518, and 520 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is that agreed?

Some hon members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 501—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to concessional investments, grants, or other financing provided by the government since November 4, 2015: (a) what is the total value of such financing, broken down by (i) year, (ii) government program which provided the funding; and (b) what are the details of each project that received concessional financing, including for each the (i) date of the announcement, (ii) date of financing, (iii) amount of financing, (iv) vendor or project owner, (v) location, (vi) description of the project, (vii) type of financing (repayable loan, grant, etc.), (viii) summary of terms and timeline of the financing, including the payback period and amounts, if applicable, (ix) government's rationale for providing the financing, (x) internal tracking or file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 502—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the federal government financial participation in the Joint Federal/Provincial Commission into the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty: (a) what are the total expenditures to date by the commission; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by type of expenditure; (c) what are the specific details of the expenditures related to the glossy mailer that was sent out, including the total expenditures and breakdown of the amount spent on (i) printing, (ii) design, (iii) mailing, (iv) other costs; and (d) what are the details of all contracts signed by the commission with a value over \$1,000 including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 503—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to stomach sampling of all species of seals conducted by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in Atlantic Canada since 2017: what are the details of all sampling done by the DFO, including, for each sampling, the (i) species, (ii) gender, (iii) location, (iv) dates, (v) elapsed time between the harvest and sampling, (vi) findings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 504—Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to Health Canada's application process for medical devices under the Interim Order No. 3 Respecting Importation and Sale of Medical Devices for Use in Relation to COVID-19: (a) what are the different stages each application must go through; (b) for each stage in (a), what are the (i) stated service standards, (ii) processes, if any, in place to measure and report on the department's performance as measured by the relevant service standard, (iii) the current average perfor-

mance or length of time; (c) for each application for COVID-19 testing devices received but not yet authorized, what are the details, including the (i) applicant, (ii) description of the device, (iii) reference or file number, (iv) current stage, (v) timeline, including specific dates, of each stage of the application; and (d) for each application in (c) that was or still is at a stage for longer than the service standard, what is the reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 505—Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to ongoing or planned government IT projects with a budget over \$1 million: what are the details of each project, including the (i) project description and summary, (ii) total budget, (iii) estimated completion date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 506—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to fraud or attempted fraud being committed against the government by individuals or entities that are employed by or provide goods or services to the government, since 2017, broken down by year and department or agency, and excluding tax fraud: (a) how many instances of fraud or attempted fraud occurred; (b) what is the total financial value of the fraud; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by type of fraud (billing for services not provided, inappropriate expense claims, etc.); (d) how many instances of fraud were committed by (i) individuals employed by the government, (ii) individuals or entities contracted by the government, (iii) third parties; (e) of the individuals who were employed by the government at the time the fraud occurred, how many (i) were fired or otherwise terminated, (ii) faced discipline but were not terminated, (iii) did not face discipline; and (f) for the value of fraud that the government was a victim of, how much has been or is (i) recovered, (ii) written-off as a loss, (iii) still awaiting financial closure?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 507—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to applications received by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, since January 1, 2016, and broken down by type of application: (a) how many applicants were deemed inadmissible pursuant to (i) Section 34(1)(b), (ii) Section 34(1)(c), (iii) Section 34(1)(f) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (S.C. 2001, c. 27); and (b) broken down by each section of the act in (a), how many of the applicants who were deemed inadmissible were members of the (i) Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan or PDKI, (ii) Kurdistan Free Life Party or PJAC, (iii) Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 509—Mr. Gerald Soroka:

With regard to trips taken by ministers and their staff for government business since September 20, 2021: what are the details of each trip, including the (i) names and titles of the individuals on the trip, (ii) dates, (iii) origin, (iv) destination, (v) purpose of the trip, (vi) itinerary, including any meetings, announcements, or events attended, (vii) total travel and hospitality expenditures related to the trip, (viii) breakdown of expenditures, by type of expense (airfare, hotel, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 510—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to Environment and Climate Change Canada providing fines to companies that illegally shipped or transported waste overseas, since January 1, 2016, and broken down by year: (a) how many fines or other financial penalties were issued; and (b) what are the details of each fine or financial penalty, including for each the (i) date of the incident, (ii) date of the fine, (iii) amount of the fine, (iv) name of the company, (v) summary of the infraction, (vi) description of the illegally shipped waste, including volume?

(Return tabled)

Government Orders

Question No. 511—Mr. Michael Barrett:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since December 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 the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or estimate, (viii) amount spent on fuel?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 512—Mr. Michael Barrett:

With regard to usage of the government's Airbus CC-150 Polaris aircraft, since December 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 the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or estimate, (viii) amount spent of fuel?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 515—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to the government enforcement of measures related to commercial milk and dairy imports at land border crossings: (a) what specific training is provided to border agents to ensure milk and dairy imports crossing the border comply with trade agreements; (b) what is the estimated amount of milk and dairy products imported each year, broken down by point of entry where they come into Canada; (c) which points of entry have agents that specialize in milk and dairy imports; (d) for any points of entry that do not have agents who specialize in milk and dairy imports, what specific procedure is followed to ensure that any milk being imported is compliant with all trade agreements and import controls; (e) how many milk and dairy products have been imported since January 1, 2021, broken down by (i) month, (ii) program (Duty Relief Program, Import for Re-Export Program, etc.); (f) how many milk and dairy products which were not in compliance with our trade agreements, were attempted to be imported into Canada since January 1, 2021, broken down by (i) month, (ii) program; (g) of the products in (f), how many were (i) allowed into Canada, (ii) turned away at the border; (h) what is the total value of fines (i) issued, (ii) actually paid, related to commercial dairy importers arriving at land border crossings being in non-compliance; and (i) are there specific situations where border agents have been instructed to allow non-compliant milk and dairy to be allowed entry into Canada, and, if so, what were those situations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 516—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to the government enforcement of measures related to commercial poultry imports at land border crossings: (a) what specific training is provided to border agents to ensure poultry imports crossing the border comply with trade agreements and are labelled correctly; (b) what is the estimated amount of poultry products imported each year, broken down by type of product and point of entry where they come into Canada; (c) which points of entry have agents that specialize in poultry imports; (d) for any points of entry that do not have agents who specialize in poultry, what specific procedure is followed to ensure that any poultry being imported is compliant with all trade agreements and import controls; (e) how much of each type of poultry product has been imported since January 1, 2021, broken down by (i) month, (ii) program (Duty Relief Program, Import for Re-Export Program, etc.); (f) how much of each type of poultry product which were not in compliance with trade agreements, were attempted to be imported into Canada since January 1, 2021, broken down by (i) month, (ii) program; (g) of the products in (f), how many were (i) allowed into Canada, (ii) turned away at the border; (h) what is the total value of fines (i) issued, (ii) actually paid, related to poultry importers arriving at land border crossings being in non-compliance; and (i) are there specific situations where border agents have been instructed to allow non-compliant poultry products to be allowed entry into Canada, and, if so, what were those situations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 517—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to the current processing delays of passport applications: (a) what are the current service standards for processing times; (b) what is the government's target date for when the service standards will return to the previous acceptable processing times of five business days in person or 17 business days by mail; (c) how much did the government pay out in overtime to employees working on passport applications between March 1, 2022, and April 27, 2022; and (d) as of April 27, 2022, how many employees at each of the three departments that deal with pass-

ports (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, and Global Affairs Canada) are (i) on leave due to their status in relation to the vaccine attestation requirement, (ii) working from home?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 518—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to the consumption of alcohol on flights taken aboard government-owned Airbus and Challenger aircraft, since January 1, 2019, and broken down by each flight where alcohol was consumed: (a) what is the value of the alcohol consumed; (b) what was the origin and destination; (c) what was the flight date; (d) what is the breakdown of alcohol beverages consumed by specific beverage and quantity; and (e) what was the total number of passengers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 520—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to accountability measures to ensure that funding provided through any program which provides money to any businesses, organizations, corporations, or vendors is used appropriately, and broken down by funding stream or program: (a) what specific accountability measures are in place to ensure that funds were used appropriately and for the intended purpose; (b) were audits conducted to determine the level of misuse by funding recipient, and, if so, what are the details of each audit, including the findings and what was done to monitor the level of misuse of funds; (c) what is the government's estimate on how many entities (i) received funding, (ii) used the funding appropriately, (iii) misused the funding; (d) does the government allow entities that have been found to misuse funds to still apply for government funding, either through the initial funding stream or other funding streams, and, if so, why; (e) what specific process is conducted when the government receives information, including tips, that funding is being misused; (f) how many entities that were found to have misused government funds in the past have since received, funding since January 1, 2016; (g) what are the details of all such funding received including the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) program through which funding was received, (iv) amount, (v) purpose of funding; and (h) does the government keep a central record of entities which have misused government funding in the past, and, if so, what are the details, and, if not, why not?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Terry Duguid: Finally, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 16—PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-11

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Madam Speaker, I cannot believe that it is mid-June and we are still debating the long-awaited bill to reform the Broadcasting Act. We have been waiting for 30 years.

Government Orders

My colleague, the member for Drummond, and his colleagues at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage almost managed to pass Bill C-10, the first version of the current Bill C-11, in the last Parliament. Our democracy and our work are dependent on royal assent, which was refused. We had to start over.

I applaud the very useful work done during the 43rd Parliament on the former Bill C-10, which resulted in the current bill, Bill C-11, being more substantive. It has already been well-received by the creative industry. We therefore saved time.

However, today, I am getting the unpleasant impression that this is the same movie over again. All that does is fuel cynicism among Canadians. I wonder if those who are dragging this out by filibustering really care at all about culture itself, its creators, its broadcasters and its audience. The audience is worried there will be no new content. They are worried about losing their content creators, who are stretched thin. That would mean losing the thing that has been giving life to modern societies, all the way back into antiquity: culture.

For those watching our debates, I want to talk about the crucial steps involved in creating a finished work, or rather one that has been allowed to leave the nest. Indeed, a work is never really finished. It is a bit like raising children: We pour our love, values, time, energy and emotions into them, but there comes a time when we simply have to let them fly on their own, taking the best we have given them. A work of art is the same thing.

I could talk about creating a painting, a dance, a circus show or a sculpture, or writing a novel or a play, but my world is music. Music is what I know.

I know that all artistic endeavours go through essentially the same stages: research, development and creation of the idea through to final composition, preproduction, production, deciding where to release the work and how to promote it, marketing, and public performance. No matter the art or expression, there are many stages, all of them demanding.

It is important to remember that, for many singers and musicians, the creative process does not end with recording their music and songs.

Artists have to work on their instrument. Singers have to develop and refine their vocal technique. They have to pay a voice coach to help them manage their energy and polish their raw talent, just like professional athletes train to master their technique. It is hard work, and the best trainers are expensive.

Singers also have to develop their musical ability. Many accompany themselves on an instrument or two. Those musical instruments are pretty much essential tools for setting lyrics to music. The next step is a comprehensive creative process that unites words and music.

Some participate in workshops. Others are more self-taught. Still others call on the musical talents of veteran musicians. Eventually inspiration strikes. As if by magic, lyrics find their musical match, words weave their way in and out of chord progressions. That is the joy of creation.

Once the song is written, or rather, the songs are written, because it takes more than one to market an artist, some fine-tuning is needed. Artists have to surround themselves with good musicians and find a producer to finance the recording of the songs, since the basic vehicle for the art of songwriting is people hearing the songs. Some will invest the money and produce it themselves. Others, a very small percentage, might be able to access a few government incentives. Most—and I emphasize that word—are their own producers and will invest their own money, or worse, go into debt to try to break into a market that has become increasingly opaque.

● (1605)

Let us talk about the production stage. I will talk about my own experience, because it is mine, and it is the one I know best. I recorded one of my albums at my family's home in Isle-aux-Coudres. I wanted my collaborators and the musicians to be captivated by that majestic river, which I wanted to celebrate in song. I was hoping the setting would enrich their musical performance and therefore further enhance my songs.

My father, who had always been a bit skeptical about this whole singing business, and who thought, like many people, that it was easy, fun and simple to make music if you had a bit of talent, was genuinely amazed at the science behind the recording process and the amount of time it requires. When he saw that it took half a day just to balance the drum and bass levels, he could hardly believe it.

For a good week we worked on guitar, violin, the accordion, keyboards and vocals. We started the preproduction; we played all the songs to become familiar with them, to find the sounds and harmonies, to find the right instruments for each song. Then we were finally ready to record.

Each song has its own universe. We start by recording a guiding vocal track. It is not the final vocal track; it is just the one that will guide the musicians. Then we record one by one and we record the final vocals and the vocal harmonies that support and enhance the whole work. We do all that for the 10 or 12 songs that will be part of the album that we hope will be the best one of our lives.

Is that it? No, far from it. Then each song needs to be mixed, because all these sounds need to have a pleasant balance and appropriate audio to make it pleasing to the ear, which will drive the rest.

After the mixing, is it done? No, not at all; then comes the mastering, what we call *matrîçage* in French. We need a master in the art to ensure that every volume is appropriate for the different broadcasting forms, either the radio, headphones or outdoor broadcasts, at low decibel levels or high decibel levels. It is an art and it is expensive.

Government Orders

Is it done? No, not yet. The next step is to find a graphic artist who will be able to showcase the entire work and create an attractive presentation for a CD booklet, the cover for a vinyl record, which is my favourite medium, or the visual accompaniment for the music on streaming platforms.

Now is it done? No, not yet. The artist still has to get their music out there by hiring a manager or an agent, as the case may be, to promote the album to various broadcasters and promoters. It is of course imperative to create a show in order to bring the work to life. Then the process starts all over again: looking for a venue, a sound technician, a lighting technician and a stage manager, finding some available musicians and putting on a show. If, and only if, the work is a success with the public will the artist earn a little income from the process.

I have to emphasize that regardless of the artist's popularity, it is only if streaming platforms have copyright and reproduction rights obligations that all these efforts and the financial risk taking will be compensated with a small amount of royalties.

That is what creating involves. Creators are resilient, patient and firmly convinced that their works play an important, not to say fundamental, role in the social universe of the community.

The last time that I rose in the House to speak to Bill C-11 was 34 days ago.

According to the former minister of Canadian heritage and current Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, for every month that goes by without passing this bill, creators lose roughly \$70 million. Using cross-multiplication, we can calculate that the creative industry has lost a little over \$78 million since my last speech. Since the beginning of this Parliament, our culture and its content creators have been deprived of \$1.33 billion.

We cannot wait any longer to pass Bill C-11. The survival of our artists, the very essence of our cultural past and future, has been hijacked by these political squabbles. We need to stop treating creators like drones that create art to entertain us. Yes, they do entertain us, but that is their job. It is a demanding job that requires a lot of discipline and courage. It is also, above all, how they earn their living.

● (1610)

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague made a very impassioned speech. The artist and creator within her truly shone through.

Just today, newspapers reported that artists and creators are still calling for this bill to be passed urgently. I would like to hear my colleague speak to this again to explain to some of our colleagues why this bill is so urgently needed.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Madam Speaker, it is the same sense of urgency that would be felt by anyone who is invested in a project and is desperately waiting to reap the rewards. I believe that every economic exercise requires a return on investment. What content creators are hoping for with this law is a fair return on their investment. They are not getting one at the moment, but many countries around the world have implemented a revenue requirement for content creators on digital platforms.

[English]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to thank the member for her passionate statement as well. Does the member think this bill does enough to support indigenous issues?

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Madam Speaker, absolutely, there is plenty of consideration for first nations' works in this legislation. This is about broadcasting content via television and radio. The Bloc Québécois, through my colleague from Drummond, has worked very hard to ensure that French-language content and first nations' works are protected.

[English]

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, could my hon. colleague comment on some of the rhetoric we are hearing from the Conservative bench with regard to censorship and the fear being imposed on Canadians? Could the member comment on that?

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for her constructive question, which gives me an opportunity to speak to this point. Witnesses in committee demonstrated that there is no risk of censorship in this bill. These are just political tactics to slow down our work in the House, and I find that fundamentally unacceptable. I sincerely hope that creators will finally have access to a decent income.

That is an important part of this legislation and something I hope we will obtain as soon as possible.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague that this is an urgent matter for actors, creators, producers, and film and theatre directors, but I have a problem with one section of Bill C-11 that I would like to change at committee. I think it would be better to have more days in July so we have enough time to do a proper study and give the creative sector what it needs as soon as possible.

What does my colleague think about putting in some more time here so we can do a good job on Bill C-11?

● (1615)

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. We worked on Bill C-10. We consulted the entire creative industry, all the groups, all the associations. In the end, we failed because the Senate blocked it. We started over with Bill C-11, which is more fleshed out. We tweaked a few details to keep everyone happy. We have been working on this for two years. An extra month will not change anything. Everyone has been consulted, everyone agrees and everyone is eagerly awaiting this. Everyone in the creative industry is waiting.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is the second time I am rising in the House to speak to this bill. I also spoke when Bill C-10 was introduced and first debated. I have been very interested in this subject for many years.

I would like to share an experience I had before I was elected. I was a legislative assistant to my predecessor, the well-known Quebec and Canadian politician Clifford Lincoln, who, at the time I worked for him, was the chair of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in the 1990s. Mr. Lincoln is a visionary. He wanted the committee to undertake a fairly thorough, wide-ranging study of the Canadian broadcasting system. The study was spread over several meetings, over several weeks and months. In the end, the committee produced a huge document, an extraordinary tome, on Canada's broadcasting system. I think it was even used in some post-secondary courses, because it essentially became the bible on our broadcasting system.

We realized, even then, that the system was changing very quickly with the new technologies. The committee hired two researchers on contract for the adviser: an academic from the Université de Montréal and an academic from the University of Calgary. I remember that one of the academics, who was an expert, said that in a few years, everyone would be their own documentary filmmaker. He said we would have a device that we could use to film all sorts of things and create our own videos and our own high-quality films, real documentaries of everyday life. In fact, that is where we are now. The broadcasting system has changed extremely quickly.

This bill is essential if we want to adapt to new realities, and we need to adapt urgently. Franco-Canadian and Quebec culture are under constant pressure—obviously we all know that, it has been said in the House—by the cultural machine that exists for the most part in the United States. It is well funded, very powerful and it attracts a wide audience on a regular basis. That means there is enormous pressure on Canadian culture, including Quebec culture.

When the Conservatives constantly challenge this bill and, before that, Bill C-10, they are not doing any favours to those who want to protect and promote Canadian and Quebec culture. By dragging their feet, the Conservatives, in my opinion, are harming our Canadian creators, including our Quebec creators.

● (1620)

[English]

We keep hearing from the Conservative opposition that Bill C-11 is a form of censorship and citizen control by the government, and that Canadians will somehow have their freedom of thought limited by seeing a streaming service menu with a smattering of Canadian works visible on it. I ask members to think back to the 1970s, when the federal government created the MAPL system for radio. Suddenly, we had to listen to a minimum percentage of Canadian music on the radio. Imagine: a kind of music dictatorship.

The boost to Canadian musical performances was significant after the MAPL system was instituted. By the 1990s, Canadian music artists dominated the charts around the world in multiple categories. Actually, by the 1990s, Canadian women music artists dominated the global market. Alanis Morissette, Shania Twain and Diana Krall come to mind.

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We do not hear the Conservatives referring to the introduction of the MAPL system as the dark age of radio censorship by the Liberal Pierre Trudeau government. After all, unlike today, there was a limited number of musical outlets available to access music then. There were no Internet-based music platforms, only a finite number of radio stations owned by corporations, not listeners.

Why did the Conservatives at the time not cry “censorship” or “lack of free choice”? Why did they not say, “We cannot choose what we want to listen to”, “There are no alternative sources”, “There is a limited number of radio stations”, or “If we want to listen to something else, we have to pay at the music store, which is a form of taxation”?

Why did the Conservatives not say, “Stop telling us what to listen to on the radio”? They never asked, “Why will these Liberals in Ottawa not let us listen to what we want?”, or “Why do we have to listen to The Band, The Guess Who, Susan Jacks, Robert Charlebois, Ian and Sylvia, and Michel Pagliaro, alongside the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Bob Dylan and so on?”

Do members know why? It is because the Conservatives had moderate and reasonable leaders in those days, such as Robert Stanfield, Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney. Do members know why the Conservatives do not object to CanCon in radio today? It is because they know Canadians love their Canadian music and Canadian music artists, and to attack Canadian music would be unpopular, even among the members of their base.

To say the government would be censoring the Internet through Bill C-11 is laughable. No, it is actually preposterous. Such talk creates unfounded fears, and it alarms Canadians for no reason. To say one can censor the Internet today is akin to standing next to Niagara Falls and saying that one can stop the massive and endless flow of cascading water. There is as much chance of the government being able to censor the Internet as there is of me capturing air with my hand, so let us stop the hyperbole and let us stop the antics. They are not worthy of this place.

I received an email from a constituent the other day who strongly opposes Bill C-11. They were obviously on the Conservative Party blast email list. I could tell by some of the themes that kept coming up. I wrote back to explain the facts about the bill, including the reference to charter guarantees in the body of the bill, so I think I will take a moment to read some of these charter guarantees.

It says this quite clearly in the bill:

10.1 For greater certainty, the Commission shall make orders under subsection 9.1(1) and regulations under subsection 10(1) in a manner that is consistent with the freedom of expression enjoyed by users of social media services that are provided by online undertakings.

It is here in black and white. It is in the law.

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We can tell the opposition not to worry about it, that it is in the law and that all these guarantees are laid down in the law, but they will not believe it. They still send those emails to their supporters saying the Liberal government is trying to censor their thoughts and trying to influence the way they think for political purposes. It is in the law.

It says this as well, in proposed subsection 2(3), under “Interpretation”:

(3) This Act shall be construed and applied in a manner that is consistent with

(a) the freedom of expression and journalistic, creative and programming independence enjoyed by broadcasting undertakings

• (1625)

It is not even legalese. It is extremely clear, and even a non-lawyer like me can understand it.

When I wrote back to this individual, I also referenced the mandatory charter statement that accompanies all bills tabled by the government, a requirement, as members know, that was instituted by our Liberal government. This was not a requirement before 2015. At that time, when the government introduced a bill, there was no independent charter statement by Department of Justice lawyers, who have the professional responsibilities of integrity and calling it like it is. There was no independent charter statement on a bill, so we saw a lot of bills being introduced by the Harper government that really pushed the limits of charter rights.

I told the individual who wrote to me that the bill is an extension of the decades-old policy of taking measures to ensure Canadian culture is supported in a cultural marketplace dominated by a powerful cultural industry centred outside of Canada and whose priority is not, understandably, Canadian cultural content, to be honest. The person wrote back and said that if Canadian cultural products cannot stand on their own and if they cannot compete in the Canadian cultural marketplace, those products should be left to wither. I thought deep down that this is exactly the Conservative mindset when it comes to culture.

The problem with this view is that it is based on a naive conception of the marketplace and on how the marketplace works in today's reality. It is the ideological belief that today's marketplace is Adam Smith's marketplace: a small town square market where there are no power imbalances between buyers and sellers, and no one buyer, seller or small group of these distorts transactions and bends them to their financial interests. However, that is not an accurate description of the modern marketplace, and I think members will agree.

The fact is that whoever controls distribution controls the market. They control what the market has the opportunity to choose from and consume. This is true in the market for goods and services, which is why, as we know, the banks want to get their hands on insurance. They want to monopolize that market and make sure we buy insurance from them in addition to everything else. This is a normal impulse on the part of market actors, but it is the job of the government to make sure that there are measures in place to prevent this natural tendency toward market dominance from taking place.

In the cultural marketplace, the distributor decides what the audience will see. That is why we have worked so hard to maintain a Canadian-owned broadcasting system in Canada. It is about maintaining an independent distribution system for programming, domestic homegrown programming. If we did not have CTV, Global, CBC/Radio Canada and Télé-Québec, and only had ABC, CBS and NBC in the Canadian broadcasting space, none of the popular Canadian programs we have come to know and love over the years would ever have seen the day. It is that simple.

It is important to mention that streaming services are both distributors and producers. They therefore have an interest in showcasing their own content. The Internet and streaming services are, by definition, not traditional broadcasters, but they are distributors of cultural products nonetheless, and powerful and ubiquitous ones. There is no reason they should not contribute financially to the creation of Canadian cultural products. There is no reason they should not pay their fair share like everybody else.

• (1630)

It is time for the Conservatives to get on board, stand up for Canadian culture and creators and stop telling Canadians that there is a conspiracy to control what they see, think and feel. Such persistent efforts, in my opinion, are a nefarious form of disinformation, and that is why we are at this point here today where we have to get on with the bill. It is a bill that has covered two legislatures and time is pressing. The cultural sphere is galloping ahead with new technologies and new streaming services surrounding us and, of course, providing cultural content that we like to consume. It is not all going to be Canadian, but we should be able to see what the Canadian offerings are.

Somebody asked me the other day if I guessed this means that the CRTC, that great force of evil in the Conservative mind, is going to be writing algorithms for Netflix and Crave TV and whatever other streaming services that we have. The bill says, in black and white, on page 14 of the bill, “The Commission shall not make an order under paragraph (1)(e) that would require the use of a specific computer algorithm or source code.”

Why does the opposition not come clean and mention this in its speeches? It is here in black and white in the bill. The opposition does not care. Even if it is in the legislation, somehow it does not exist. Let us keep going with the talking points that we probably see, I do not know as I do not subscribe, in those blast emails that are moving around the cybersphere as part of the Conservative leadership campaign.

It is here in black and white in the bill. It is also in black and white that the bill does not apply to users of social media. I think it is time to move on. Canadian culture needs the support. It needed the support yesterday. It certainly needs it now. It is time.

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[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague. I really agree with the last thing he said, namely that culture needs the support.

I have had a concern about this bill from the outset, and I would like my colleague to comment on this. It concerns community media.

We have been hearing that regional media could come together to negotiate. However, I am worried that there are not enough revenue sources for community media, which are fundamental to having very local information.

I would like my colleague to comment on that.

• (1635)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I am trying to get a better grasp of the question. It seems to relate to Bill C-18 on news content, the bill that will force web giants and traditional media to negotiate together and ensure that compensation is provided for the content used and paid for by traditional media.

I saw somewhere in Bill C-11 that schools, for example, do not have to worry because they are exempt. I believe, although I am not certain, that this does not really have to do with community media.

Another clause in the bill states that it will not apply to a service that is too small. The CRTC will not have time to regulate the thousands of websites belonging to creators. Let us face it, the CRTC does not have the capacity to regulate all of that.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genus (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I wanted to ask the hon. member a fairly specific question about the content of his speech. He spoke about charter statements and the importance the government attaches to charter statements. We have seen multiple cases in which the government has table-dropped amendments to its own legislation and it has not offered a revised charter statement to line up with that change in policy.

We saw that in another case with Bill C-7, where the government changed its policy in response to a Senate amendment but did not offer a revised charter statement. On the previous version of this bill, Bill C-10, we saw the government adopting changes from government members in committee without revised charter statements. This is a government that, through the Emergencies Act, has suspended the charter and then we have had contradictory stories told by the minister.

I am very suspicious of the stated commitment to the charter. It seems increasingly like these charter statements are then subsequently ignored through amendments and not updated. It suggests that this is just an effort by the government to whitewash an attack on human rights.

Most specifically, why does the government not have a practice of offering updated charter statements when bills are amended as a result of the amendments government members have put forward when they come out of committee?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, the member has mixed in the Emergencies Act with this. The Emergencies Act did not suspend the Charter of Rights. This is another falsehood that is being peddled by the opposition.

I do not think one should take charter statements lightly. The member has essentially impugned the professional integrity of the lawyers at the Department of Justice, who are not just parroting government lines; they analyze a bill based on their own professional expertise and knowledge and they produce a charter statement that they feel is accurate. I do not think we should take charter statements lightly.

In terms of Bill C-7, the government was responding to court decisions. I think they are a very credible form of input.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is very important for us to look back on the Canadian content requirements from the past and realize they offered the chance to have conversations with each other as Canadians and not some form of tyranny.

Is the hon. member, like me, puzzled about why the Conservatives seem to prefer letting the web giants and the streaming services determine what we watch, instead of supporting a bill such as this that would make room for indigenous people, Quebec content and the diversity that is Canada? I fail to understand why Conservatives prefer to let the big web giants and streaming services determine what we see.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I think the Conservatives see some political upside in arguing and feeding into this idea that the government is trying to get people all the time. This has been their narrative for a long time. It is the populist narrative. It is the populist narrative of conspiracy theorists.

I believe, and I think they are wrong in believing this, and time will show this but they will make their own decisions at that time, they seem to think this conspiratorial narrative is going to pay off in the long term. I do not think it will.

• (1640)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I support so much of Bill C-11, but I am very troubled by the sections that I think need more work. I hate to see anything rushed through this place, and my friend from Lac-Saint-Louis will know that is my view.

In the past number of years, I have been so blissfully happy since I got married to John Kidder. I am suddenly related to Eric Peterson, who is my brother-in-law. My stepdaughter, Janet Kidder, is a serious actor who has been successful. There are parts of Bill C-11 that work for them.

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The other day on a flight, just by coincidence, my colleague, the hon. member for Kitchener Centre ended up sitting next to the fantastic Stewart Reynolds, the comedian who goes by the name Britlestar. He said to him, “I don’t think the people who drafted Bill C-11 understand our industry of content created YouTubers. I don’t think the bill has it right yet.”

I would do anything to see us get help to Canadian culture, to Canadian content and to our brilliant actors, directors and all the people who need to do the work for production without getting it wrong for the new and emerging sector that I have to admit I do not understand the way I understood Canadian content, as my friend talked about, when we started making sure radio had Canadian content.

The bill is not perfect. Why do we not work on it more?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, first of all, I am extremely impressed that the member has a connection to Eric Peterson. I used to watch him on *Street Legal* back in the day. He is a great Canadian actor. I believe I have seen him on stage as well.

There will be opportunities for amendments at report stage. The fact of the matter is there is obstructionism taking place. Perhaps we could have more input, but then we would not get the bill. We could sit on this bill until the next election, because that is what the Conservatives would do. They would obstruct and obstruct.

There would be guidelines coming out from the CRTC. There would be consultation around those guidelines. There would be ample opportunities for creators and the performing arts community to have input into that process, because that would feed into the kinds of regulations we have.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I salute my colleague from Lac-Saint-Louis, who is also the chair of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, of which I am a member.

Alain Saulnier, a former journalist and news director at Radio-Canada, just released a book entitled *Les barbares numériques* about what he refers to as digital barbarians.

Could my colleague explain why the official opposition seems so cozy with the digital barbarians?

That is what the Bloc Québécois does not understand. All artists and creators want us to act quickly, but the bill continues to be disrupted and delayed. Why are they on the side of these digital barbarians?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, this question is in keeping with the one asked by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan or yet another member. I think it is a Conservative political strategy.

People obviously like Netflix and Crave, and I am no different. I watch good shows that are obviously not all from Canada or Quebec. People like the content, and the Conservatives are trying to take advantage of that.

Moreover, people can sometimes be suspicious of the government, and the Conservatives think that the magic political potion is

to play into those suspicions, stirring in the fact that consumers like their online services. Well, I think the Conservatives are wrong.

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, it is a pleasure, as always, to stand to represent my riding of Nunavut. I always appreciate my constituents’ ongoing support and the feedback that they provide to me.

I will share my time with the member for Edmonton Griesbach. I always appreciate his great interventions in the House. He is such a great role model for young indigenous men and for all those who identify as two-spirit.

I am pleased to stand to debate Bill C-11, An Act to amend the Broadcasting Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts. I have debated this bill and I am pleased that the New Democrats support this important bill. Having heard the debates since the bill was first introduced in February, I have maintained that it is an important bill that supports the broadcasting of indigenous content.

In Canada, the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation has been a leader in broadcasting Inuit content on television. It has broadcasted a lot of Inuit cultural content, as well as content in Inuktitut; by Inuit, for Inuit.

I think that this bill has the potential to ensure great Inuit content by online streaming providers like Uvavut TV and Isuma TV. Both of these online providers have already made a huge dent in information that is already available online. I am sure that Inuit TV, which will be a new broadcasting streaming provider, will also be able to share some great Inuit content, hopefully with a huge audience as well, especially if this bill is allowed to pass.

There are specific sections in this bill that directly lead to the support of indigenous programming. Without this bill, these important broadcasting and programming providers will continue to struggle with competing against web giants like Netflix. I appreciate the space provided in this bill to improve and update the Canadian broadcasting policy by clarifying that the system needs to respond to the needs of Canadians, and specifically to the needs of racialized communities and those who represent the diversity that Canada enjoys, including indigenous peoples.

What I would like to see discussed by committee are assurances that require broadcasters to broadcast indigenous languages, as this bill has a gap that needs to be filled to ensure that indigenous languages are also included.

I had the pleasure of sitting at PROC when it was studying the Elections Act. It was talking about the study on indigenous languages in Canada. We learned some interesting statistics about indigenous languages.

For example, there are 175,825 people who speak Algonquian languages. Manitoba has 21.7%, Quebec has 21.2%, Ontario has 7.2%, Alberta has 16.7% and Saskatchewan has 16%. As for Inuit languages, there are 42,065 people who speak Inuktitut in Nunavut and Quebec. There are 23,455 people who speak Athabaskan languages, with Saskatchewan at 38%, the Northwest Territories at 22% and British Columbia at 18%.

I am not going to go through this whole list, but I do want to highlight that there are hundreds of thousands of indigenous languages, and we need to do our part to make sure that we can help promote, preserve and revitalize them as Canadians. If we are to remain true to reconciliation, we have to ensure that we practise that in any bill that has an impact on all indigenous peoples.

• (1645)

I appreciate in addition that this act does address the concerns related to freedom of expression by stating that this act would be directly guided by ensuring that freedom of expression is understood and used in this bill. I have been surprised in past debates by concerns that freedom of expression would be restricted through this bill. I have stated that I do not think the bill would do that, given that it would promote and ensure that content that is important to Canadians, especially indigenous content, is allowed to be supported. We all know that in online streaming there is huge competition in mainstream Canada that does not create enough space for indigenous content to be incorporated into any of the airwaves that we are talking about.

Finally, I have very much appreciated the priority in ensuring that we all work together to make sure that we are doing what we can for all indigenous peoples, including first nations, Métis and Inuit, and specifically in this bill's support it so that not only are we ensuring well-being for our current indigenous peoples but are also focusing on protecting our indigenous cultures, including first nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, for the future.

• (1650)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for the excellent, unique and necessary perspective that she just brought forward into this debate on this important bill.

What would happen to indigenous artists and content creators, and also indigenous languages, if this bill were delayed or deferred or even defeated in this House?

Ms. Lori Idlout: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. I think there would continue to be unfair competition. It is just too difficult for indigenous providers to be on the same level of competition against mainstream providers like Netflix, which have millions in revenue that these indigenous providers do not have access to. I hope that answers your question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I hope it answers the hon. member's question.

The hon. member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's insights. I want to add to

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the comment from my hon. colleague across the way that the other option would be that the bill could also be improved.

My hon. colleague from the NDP referenced the fact that she was looking for some changes at committee to incorporate some of these indigenous languages. What is her perspective on this very motion that we are dealing with, which is actually trying to reduce the opportunity for improvements to the bill and testimony at committee?

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, doing everything that we can to ensure that we are all contributing to the protection and promotion of indigenous languages is paramount, and we need to do what we can. This could mean levelling the playing field for competition in the online streaming act, but definitely also referencing more in relation to indigenous languages. The indigenous languages have been at risk for far too long, and we need more of our bills to address protecting indigenous languages. I hope that answers the member's question as well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for such an important speech. I appreciate her efforts to promote indigenous and minority languages. It is important.

I have some concerns about the bill, especially for very small media outlets, such as community media. The question was asked earlier: Will they be able to get their share of the pie?

A lot of things have yet to be determined. The details will be worked out through negotiations. That means there is some uncertainty. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on this.

• (1655)

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, I have been very much focused on making sure that we can do better to level the playing field against the online streaming providers, the giants like Netflix. That is what this bill tries to do, and that will flow to ensuring that the regional and community-level providers are getting the supports that they need, because the legislation speaks not only to broadcasting providers but also to supports for individuals in racialized and indigenous communities. I am guessing there would be some work required, but having the discussion here helps to make sure that those kinds of supports would go to the regional and community-level providers.

Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, because of the history of colonial racism, we know that many indigenous people have been stripped of their languages. I am wondering if the member could share some of her thoughts around the importance of online broadcasters having an obligation to promote indigenous languages and devote the necessary resources to ensure their visibility and how this might impact future generations of indigenous people to feel heard and visible and be exposed to their traditional language.

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Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, I did allude to it in my presentation. Great places like the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation have been able to televise Inuit content. The online streaming act is the next step to ensuring that we do the same for online streaming providers. It is just as important. It is the next logical step that we need to do to ensure that indigenous languages and cultural content are provided by Inuit people.

Qujannamiik.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague from Nunavut spoke so eloquently to the importance of making sure we address the long-standing issues that have been relevant to indigenous peoples' success in retaining their language, their stories and their culture. It is important that we understand the real impacts that have resulted in the dispossession of these things from indigenous people.

Oftentimes, what we have seen in the last many decades is a rejection of indigenous peoples' own solutions as to how we teach young people the language, demonstrate the modernity of our culture and continue to find ways to have our culture survive. One of the emerging, and I think strongest, ways of encouraging these solutions is by making sure that artists of all cultures have an opportunity not only to speak directly to those persons and communities, but to also represent those communities.

I am one of the younger members of this Parliament and growing up, in my short lifetime, there has been a huge gap in media, the arts and television shows. I have heard many members today speak about how important certain programs, such as *Corner Gas*, are in their homes and their living rooms, but this was not there for indigenous people when they turned on the TV. My parents would never watch TV because they felt as though it never represented them.

However, young people take in media, language, culture and items that make our country better. They take in items and information that formulates who they are, and that is a simple kind of justice that every indigenous person needs.

Here in the 21st century, as modernity has continued, we have seen these large Internet platforms often take up and suck up so much of the space that indigenous people require to make sure young people have access to these things. In the absence of legislation, such as what Bill C-11 would provide, indigenous content providers and existing indigenous producers are being forced to find other ways to finance their means. They are being forced to look at cutting wages for certain folks. They are also being forced to look at the arts as not a viable economy for indigenous people. This hurts indigenous people's culture and language, which is so valuable and important, particularly now in the age of truth and reconciliation.

What I would like to see for my niece and nephew, and for the next generation of those who are growing up indigenous across Alberta, is for them to not only have a chance to be able to tell the stories of our people, the stories of this land, or even the story of treaty, but also be able to have the support, space and financial resiliency to get that done.

We are remarkable in our country in highlighting so many of these artists, but what we are often not good at is supporting them. The bill before us would directly do that. Bill C-11 would ensure that Canadian content is visible and protected on online platforms, which is important. Another really important piece is that freedom of expression is explicitly protected within this process, which means that individuals who are participating in online streams would not be subject to the kinds of things that the platform itself would be, and some of that includes the platforms paying their fair share.

When it comes to supporting our arts industry in Canada, the existing laws look at radio and television. They require that those providers pay to ensure Canadian content is present and protected, and that Canadians have the opportunity to access it. This is vitally important when thinking about the 21st century and how our next generation will continue to absorb content and share that with the rest of Canadians.

When I look at, for example, some of the remarkable art happening in Edmonton and across Alberta, I see passionate, strong, well-deserving people who are doing their level best to make sure they have an opportunity to share what is so awesome about our province with the rest of the world. We see across the country, further east, indigenous nations taking a bold stance and furthering their productions by supporting them through great initiatives, including the current funds that are available through the National Film Board.

● (1700)

One of those films I had an opportunity to watch not long ago is a film called *Wildhood*. For those who do not know it, it is a Canadian-made film about two-spirit folks within indigenous communities, two-spirit youth. What a remarkable contribution it is for indigenous people, particularly for young people as they navigate so many questions about their identity and who they are. Oftentimes, they look to media. It may not be the best form of information, but it is a form of information people are absorbing. It is incumbent on all of us as members of Parliament to make sure we can guarantee to Canadians that what we produce here, what we learn here and what we show folks will be given to Canadians in a responsible way.

I think about the economy and what this means for artists. We looked at, for example, the pandemic. It was a devastating time for our arts producers. We saw a massive vacuum of finances that had been, at that time, supporting artists. This was prior to the pandemic. When the pandemic hit, we saw an evaporation of their revenues, which was \$233 million. That was money that was supporting artists, storytellers and those who were working with communities to tell the story about who they are. Especially for a country as young as ours, we are trying to understand who was here, what we are here for and what we would like to be. Those are important questions that our country must be able to have the courage to lay a strong foundation for.

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When it comes to levelling the playing field, it is really important that we understand that Canadians deserve a chance. I think every single member of Parliament today supports that. They support the fact that all Canadians deserve an opportunity to share their stories, share who they are and share that with the world.

However, it is troubling to me to know that members of the Conservative caucus want to withhold this bill and slow it down after so long. This bill was introduced in the last Parliament, albeit it has absorbed some good changes. There are still some changes, I think, that the committee responsible will definitely delve into, but it is important that we actually get to discuss this at committee.

I am really excited for the opportunity this will provide indigenous peoples, the francophone community, persons with disabilities and all marginalized groups in Canada. It is going to guarantee them access to something they have been rejected from for so long, whether it is because of finances or not having the ability to organize properly. What we have now is the chance to actually create that revenue and create that model so they would actually have an opportunity to share it and be a part of the mosaic that is Canada.

It is important that we look at some of the folks who are validating this. There are people in Canada who need this. The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists said, "Other countries are taking measures to protect their economy and their cultural sovereignty. Canada must not fall behind. Sovereign countries must have the...tools to tell their own stories in the 21st century." That is us. They are speaking directly to us.

The Canadian Independent Music Association said:

While most [companies] operating in Canada are subject to some form of regulation, U.S. and international online streaming services that distribute audio and audio-visual content are currently exempt from Canada's regulatory system. This means, for example, that unlike commercial radio stations, these services are not required to [contribute financially] towards Canadian Content Development or to showcase Canadian content on their platforms.

This must change. I am so proud to represent the folks of Edmonton Griesbach, who are continuing to ensure that our city and our province can contribute across the country in ways and means that are going to protect their story, but also make sure that they level the playing field and get financially supported for it.

• (1705)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to engage with the member. I work with him on the public accounts committee. I enjoyed his speech, particularly when he said that cultural producers should enjoy the space and security to tell Canadian stories. His focus was on indigenous stories.

I wonder what he thinks of a point of view that we often hear from the opposition side, including today. I think it is our friends in the Conservative Party who put forward that we should leave cultural production to the free market, saying that legislation and government have no place in assisting cultural production. What would the member's view on that be?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague, who I work with on the public accounts committee. We do a lot of good work there, and I am really happy to take this question.

When it comes to making sure there is space and security for producers, it is important to know that the economy is a very different tool, and the free market in particular is very different in how it protects or creates space for what is important to it. Oftentimes, it resolves into big corporations, such as Netflix and giant multimedia firms, which suck up what they know by way of a profitable consumable, but that is in no way the same as making sure that Canadian content and the things we need to ensure Canadians have access to, such as language and cultural revitalization, are in fact imbued in that media, so they are very different. The private market has a very different outcome than what would result from the requirement to protect Canadian and indigenous content.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague about the importance of small local media, local news.

The disappearance of small local media means that events taking place at the village school are no longer advertised to local residents. It means that local sporting events are no longer covered. What does my colleague think about the importance of small local media?

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, the member's question touches on a very important point, which is the fact that small tight-knit towns and communities, and we all know communities like that, are going to be crushed by the weight of large corporations that continue to derive what is important to them from the economy. What is very different in small communities, whether in rural Quebec or rural Alberta, is that they value the members of their community. They value the things they do. They value what is happening around them.

It is so important that we make sure there are financial resources to support small communities. Bill C-11, by way of making sure that we force those large industries, those large multimedia Netflixes of the world, to pay their fair share would mean that small communities can continue to do that work, but we need to pass this bill first.

• (1710)

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I always appreciate the vibrancy of the member for Edmonton Griesbach.

He expressed today the urgency of this bill to many people in his community. He talked about those who need it, those who support it and those who want it to move forward quicker. My question for the member is this: Are we falling behind here in the House, and if we are, why does he think that is?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for that question. It is such a distinct pleasure to work with her in my caucus. She does fantastic work.

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In relation to why this bill is important and the parts I spoke to, one really critical part is the fact that right now, as we speak, companies are generating income and not paying their fair share. As time goes on, Canadians continue to lose that opportunity that should be present for them now, which is terrible, when we need to ensure that we protect these communities now more than ever.

When I think about what is slowing us down, we are looking at a Parliament that is hobbling along. We are trying our hardest to make sure that important legislation hits the floor for a vote, whether at committee or here, but we are seeing long debates and filibustering at committee, which is slowing down this work for reasons I think my colleagues from the governing bench have commented on.

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, before I get under way here this afternoon, I just wish to tell everyone that I am going to split my time with the member for Langley—Aldergrove. We get the good 10 minutes at the later part of the speeches, so I will set him up for it.

I am very thankful to speak to the bill today, Bill C-11. It is the programming motion regarding the online streaming act: the successor to, or should I say the copy of, Bill C-10, which we debated here in the House of Commons. Let us step back. We really did not have any debates last June on Bill C-10. It was pushed through the House with no amendments to it.

I am really desperate on this one because I thought the government learned last June about Bill C-10 and the flaws that we moved forward now on Bill C-11. As most remember, the Liberals tried the same tactics here in the House with the deeply flawed Bill C-10. It was wrong and undemocratic then. Nothing has changed. It is still wrong and mostly undemocratic now. The Senate is not even going to deal with the bill. To say that we need to pass it in the House today is ridiculous because the Senate, at best, will not see the bill until October.

Bill C-10 drew much controversy in the previous Parliament, and I talked about that, due to the proposed infringements on free expression, and massive granting of powers to the CRTC. I have talked for over a year and a half on the CRTC, and I will have more to say on that body and the potential to open up the Internet to broader regulations in a moment, among other serious concerns that I have.

Bill C-11 is the same flawed Liberal bill that could have potentially disastrous consequences for Canadian content creators, and most importantly for consumers. Conservatives said then that Bill C-10 needed more study, and we continue to say that today with this bill, Bill C-11.

As a former broadcaster, members can believe that I completely understand how desperately the Broadcasting Act needs to be upgraded. It has been 31 years since we started. The act is indeed badly outdated. It does not address the realities of modern broadcasting and content creation, and Canadian broadcasters and creators today are struggling because of that.

We absolutely need to put foreign streaming services and Canadian broadcasters on a level playing field, whatever that looks like. However, the solution, I feel, is not simply to force new realities in-

to this old and outdated structure, or to have the CRTC regulate to its heart's desire.

The CRTC is in charge of broadcasting. Seventeen months later, it still has not updated the licence of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It has been 17 months, and we have heard nothing. That is the CRTC's responsibility today: local licensing. We have heard nothing from chairman Ian Scott on CBC, saying, "We are busy. We are going through it."

Seventeen months later, the public broadcaster still does not have a licence, because the CRTC is looking at it. I do not have to tell everyone in the House, all 338 of us, that we desperately want a three-digit suicide line. As of the month of June the request is a year old. We still have not got it. Why? It is because of the CRTC.

Do we see where I am going on this? It is not capable today of doing anything. As for its chairman, Ian Scott, his five-year term is up and he is leaving in September. We are going to have a new chair. He or she will get a five-year term and they will have to be re-educated on what the CRTC actually delivers to the citizens of the country.

Regulating the Internet, the Pandora's box that is being opened up in this legislation, is also simply not in the best interests of Canadians. We need to make sure that we are protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of Canadians. Ensuring those protections cannot start by regulating the Internet and restricting the free speech that we have in the country today.

These are issues that need further study at committee. There are dozens of important witnesses that still wish to be heard. As for one of those witnesses, it is kind of interesting to listen to everyone talking about indigenous voices, because we have not heard from the indigenous peoples television network, APTN. We have not heard from it.

• (1715)

The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network has not come to committee to speak about what Bill C-11 would do for that network, which was started years ago because the public broadcaster did little with indigenous programming. That is why APTN started: it heard voices. In fact, I was at an event on Saturday in Saskatoon, and the Filipino community is asking about Bill C-11. The Filipino community does a half-hour televised tape show in Saskatoon on cable, and they have asked about whether they can continue if this bill passes. I had no answers for them.

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This is the diversity we are hearing in our country that Bill C-11 has not answered in committee. We have not had a chance to even slice through the first level of onion to get to this bill, and now the Liberal government, as it did last year with Bill C-10, is pushing it through the House, but this time there is no excuse for it. The Senate will not even look at this bill until maybe late in September or early in October. We have all summer to deal with Bill C-11.

I remember when the government came into power, and we all remember when it came into power in 2015. It promised sunny ways and made a commitment not to use closure and time allocation as the Conservatives did in the previous government. They have forgotten that in six and a half short years. All I have heard is “Harper this,” and “Harper that”. Now, I am going to suggest that it is the member for Papineau who is shutting everything down in the House of Commons.

Now, whenever there is the slickest push-back against the Liberals' agenda, they go straight to time allocation and, today, the programming motion. I participated in the study on Bill C-10 in the previous Parliament, when the government passed a similar programming motion. Several legal and industry experts came before the committee and raised concerns about the legislation. They were the same concerns from 2021 that have come in 2022. As legislators, have we looked at this bill and said we have done the best we can with it? That is our job. We 338 are elected to get the best bills coming out of the House. Have we done that? We have not done that at all, and the Liberals agree with that, yet they are moving forward today.

Tomorrow we will have a full day, going through from noon to nine o'clock, with amendments, then we will push the amendments through from nine until midnight without a word we can say or object to. We proposed further witnesses and debate in the last Parliament, and Canadians deserve better on this bill. The government, however, is clearly sick of hearing about the problems with the legislation. We have gone through two heritage ministers already, and probably will a third when we come back in the fall, and shut down Bill C-11. Thankfully, Bill C-10 did not complete the legislative process because of a useless election. What is it going to be this summer?

Now, the chamber has a second chance to get this bill, Bill C-11, right. This time we have the opportunity, as members of Parliament, to give Canadians what they want out of this bill, Bill C-11.

First of all, despite claims to the contrary by the minister, Bill C-11 absolutely would leave the door open to the CRTC regulating user-generated content online. In other words, the CRTC could still, under Bill C-11, decide what Canadians can and cannot see. These powers pose a clear threat for free expression in this country, which is the most fundamental right in a democratic country. Under Bill C-11, the CRTC could regulate away free expression online.

Second is the fact that the powers the bill grants to the CRTC are so broad and wide-ranging that they empower the commission to essentially regulate any content in a manner it sees fit, and I have talked enough about the CRTC, but that second bullet should be a concern to everyone in the House of Commons.

What will happen to the foreign services that are small players in this Canadian market? Where did the Canadian market go? In a small part of the user base, we have new regulations and requirements that we can thrust upon them.

• (1720)

Third, the government is asking us to vote on legislation that we do not have all the pieces to. The government says it will address the problems through ministerial order, but it has not shown us what the orders will be. Bill C-11 is a flawed bill.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I always enjoy listening to the member's speeches. He has that marvellous mellifluous form of delivery and he is very engaging, but I found a big contradiction in what he said today. He talked about how the CRTC cannot seem to get anything done, yet in the same breath he said the CRTC will regulate everything in our lives.

It sounds to me as though there is a lack of coherence in the Conservative message, and I would like a comment from the member on that.

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, it is interesting about the CRTC. I asked a question of Bell, the owners of CTV. I asked how much it pays for American programming, because every night on television from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. there is American programming and very little Canadian content. It did not answer how much it spent on American content, although it said that when it goes to Hollywood to bid on programming in the fall, it is being challenged now by Netflix, Amazon and others. How could it be challenged in the United States by these streamers when we, all along, have gone there, filled our American basket and brought things up to Canada to produce no Canadian content?

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood for his speech.

I heard a number of arguments there, and I am left puzzled by one thing.

He bases his first argument on freedom of expression. I am not sure that this is really about freedom of expression, but I would like my colleague to give the House a definition of freedom of expression.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, all of us know of discoverability. Where do we find things when we are on Facebook? What do I like, what do others like or what does the member from the Bloc like to see? Where will it be the next time we open Facebook? There are algorithms. Who is in charge of determining what we see and where it comes up? If it is Canadian content, will it automatically be in the first 10 things we look at, or will it be down in the 500?

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We have issues with section 4.2. We have talked about it in the House. We also have a lot of issues with discoverability. There are many Canadians producing fabulous stuff today on YouTube, TikTok and so on. They are more than worried about where this legislation goes when it does become law, next year maybe, because a lot of the creators in this country are making a pretty good living promoting Canadian content.

• (1725)

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, as much as I enjoy his voice and how he delivers so eloquently the point he is trying to make, I do disagree with the member. He speaks of witnesses not being able to be heard in committee. I hope the member does not intend to mislead Canadians. Let me remind the member that it is actually members of his party, the Conservatives, who filibustered at committee for the past 29 hours straight and prevented witnesses such as APTN, which the member mentioned, from actually giving testimony.

Will the member let the committee do its work and stop the filibuster?

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, that is interesting because last week in committee, on Wednesday, the clerk gave me 20 printed submissions that we had to deal with. That tells me that as a committee we are not doing our job because these are submissions that have come through the clerk to the committee from people and organizations wanting to speak to this.

I want APTN there. I have been requesting that APTN come to committee. We need the indigenous voice on Bill C-11. We have not heard it. That is one of the flaws with this bill. We need APTN to see its future and how Bill C-11 would affect that network.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I heard a lot of things in the member's speech that I want to comment on really quickly. I heard the words "agenda", "tactics", "undemocratic", Pandora's box would be opened up and there are "disastrous consequences" for consumers and creators. It seems that this is a doomsday bill.

I wonder if the member could comment on that language maybe being what is actually dangerous, and that we have a responsibility to deal in facts and reason in the House.

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, while I want to thank the member for her concerns, they are not valid. We have seen in committee people like Dr. Michael Geist and former commissioners of the CRTC. They know this is a flawed bill and they are upset that it is progressing the way it has.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Madam Speaker, it should not come as a total surprise that the Liberal government would make strategic moves to limit my freedom of speech as a member of Parliament who wishes to speak to the topic of freedom of speech. It seems very ironic.

Today, we are talking about a programming motion that would cut off debate on the substance of a very important piece of legislation: Bill C-11. I am hearing from so many constituents who are deeply concerned that their freedom of expression on the Internet would be impaired by this legislation. People want the Internet to remain free. It is the new marketplace for the exchange of ideas,

and people are starting to wake up to the thought that their government wants to regulate this forum, this new public square.

What is the big holdup? What is the big rush? Why, in this last week of Parliament, does the government feel that it has to push this legislation through? The big open question hovering over this legislation is whether Bill C-11 would regulate online audiovisual material uploaded to sites such as YouTube and TikTok, which is user-generated content. That is the big question that needs to be answered.

An earlier draft of this legislation, because this is the second time it is before the House, was Bill C-10 from the last Parliament. It was clearly offside, flawed legislation, although the minister at that time said he wanted to make it crystal clear that the "content that people upload on social media won't be considered as programming under the Act". That is as clear as the minister had wanted it to be, or thought it was, and this legislation, I am sure, would have proceeded through the normal debate and legislative process, would have passed both Houses of Parliament and today would be law. However, it was flawed, it was poorly thought out and it got bogged down in the Senate. The backlash from social media users, amateur content producers and social media sites was swift and very harsh.

As an aside, I feel compelled to note, as we are thinking about why there is a big rush, that a year ago this could have been put through the House, but the Prime Minister saw that his popularity numbers were up a bit in the middle of a pandemic and decided to call an election. Then everything fell off the table. This very important piece of legislation fell off the order table and was basically put right back to square one. However, there was one positive outcome from the election that nobody wanted and was a waste of \$610 million, and it is this: Bill C-10 fell off the order table.

We were optimistic that with a new minister, new Parliament and an opportunity to start afresh, we would see a substantially revised and improved piece of legislation, but bad ideas rarely die in the Liberal Party. The bill came back pretty much the way it was before, and things are getting bogged down again. Now the Liberals are saying that it is all the fault of the official opposition; we are obstructing the bill. Well, if they come here with good legislation, we will help them pass it through the House. Now, instead, they have to rush it through.

This is the biggest revision to the Broadcasting Act in 30 years. Many voices need to be heard. Many people have expressed themselves publicly. They need to come to committee and we need to listen to what they have to say, but sadly that is not going to happen because of this programming motion.

I do want to give credit where credit is due, and there are some good pieces in this bill. The government says that it wants to level the playing field and we the Conservatives support that. As the member of Parliament for Langley, where there is a big and burgeoning movie industry, I have heard from a lot of stakeholders, and they are telling me that there are good pieces to this legislation.

I have a quote from somebody who wrote to my office just the other day. He is a producer in the movie industry. He said:

Please pass on to Tako my sincerest thanks for making the time and listening to my feedback related to building a strong film industry in Langley and Canada. It was a great meeting. I appreciate Tako's thoughtful commitment to the modernization of the Broadcasting Act, and to the benefits such work will have for Canada's film workers and production companies.

• (1730)

That is positive. They are positive comments. He goes on to say, "I am concerned about unintended consequences and protecting the freedom of expression within user generated content." Even from somebody who is generally supportive of Bill C-11, these concerns are being expressed, and they need to be listened to.

I will concede this: The government's intentions were good, namely to promote Canadian content on the Internet, as we have grown accustomed to on legacy media platforms. It was good for them, so why is it not good for the Internet? That is a very important question to ask. However, I am reminded of Napoleon's famous quote: Never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence. I think that is what we have today. We have legislation that is written incompetently.

This is what Ms. Morghan Fortier, CEO of Skyship Entertainment, told the heritage committee on May 24: "Bill C-11 is not an ill-intentioned piece of legislation, but it is a bad piece of legislation. It's been written by those who don't understand the industry they're attempting to regulate". She is one of Canada's leading experts in the field.

Matt Hatfield, the campaign manager of OpenMedia, at the same meeting of the heritage committee, said this: "We would never tolerate the government setting rules specifying which books must be placed at the front of our bookstores, but that's exactly what the discoverability provision...of Bill C-11 is currently doing." He calls that unacceptable.

The minister says they are all wrong, they are misreading Bill C-11 and they are misunderstanding it. He says that is not what the intention is. Law professor Michael Geist, who has been quoted here a few times, is trying to reconcile the difference of opinion between what the minister thinks Bill C-11 means and what many other experts think it means or what the consequences of it are going to be. In response to the minister's comments, Professor Geist said this: "While this is true in the sense that users are not regulated like platforms due to an exception in the bill, the truth is the bill regulates indirectly what it cannot do directly." Therein lies the problem.

The minister further tries to explain or attempts to clarify what this bill means. I was not at the meeting, but I did read about it. He said he is focusing now on commercial user content. That is what will be regulated. When he was pressed on what "commercial"

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means, as there is no definition, he said it is tied to whether the person uploading to social media is earning revenues.

When he was grilled on how much revenue that is, he was not answering. Either he does not know or he has not thought about it yet. Better yet, I think he is going to delegate that to the CRTC to decide, so he can let someone else decide and let someone else take the heat. That is unacceptable. The Liberals are in government. They need to write laws that are going to make sense, that are going to work and that are based on what experts are telling us.

Here is where we are. We have poorly thought-out legislation, objections from many stakeholders, a summer recess looming and the government wanting to rush things through so it can say it has accomplished something. We also have a programming motion that is going to cut off further debate. We have today for all amendments to be submitted by midnight and have one day for clause-by-clause scrutiny. Then June 14 is for voting on all amendments and we will have a final vote by the end of the week.

This is important legislation and there are voices that still need to be heard. We need to hear them. This needs to go back to committee for further study.

• (1735)

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have heard the member, and his colleague previously as well, reference why we should be concerned. He says this is about content on the Internet and that there are concerns about regulating content on the Internet. My comment is that if everything we once viewed on traditional television and heard on the radio is now moving to being heard and watched on the Internet, we need to apply the same rules to those platforms. They should not be able to get away with doing whatever they like. They should contribute to our content creators.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, that is a really good question and I am grateful to have received it.

Many experts are saying that the Internet is different and that the people who wrote this legislation clearly do not understand how the Internet works. I have a further quote from Michael Geist. He says:

...regulating user-generated content in this manner is entirely unworkable, a risk to net neutrality and a threat to freedom of expression. For example, the European Union...distinguishes between streaming services such as Netflix and video-sharing services such as TikTok or YouTube, with no equivalent regulations such as those found in Bill C-10 for user-generated content.

They are completely different platforms and that is not how the Internet works. This is what we are hearing from the experts.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech.

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The Conservatives are very concerned about freedom of expression on social media. The member also said in his speech that the bill is identical to the previous one. That is not true. Several improvements have been made, including to clause 4.1, which ensures that social media creators, users and influencers are exempt from the law, thereby alleviating the concern that was raised last time about freedom of expression.

I would like my colleague to comment on that. Why maintain that argument when the clause has been amended?

[*English*]

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, I will read another quote from Professor Geist about exactly that point on proposed section 4.1. I recognize that Bill C-11 is improved, at least to an extent, with the inclusion of the wording in proposed section 4.1, but this is what the professor says: “While this is true in the sense that users are not regulated like platforms due to an exception in the bill, the truth is the bill regulates indirectly what it cannot do directly.”

It has not really solved the problem. There is still something that needs to be addressed. I would again reflect on what the professor had to say about going to the European Union and taking a look at what it did. It did things right, at least in his eyes. Our committee needs to look at this further to make sure that it reflects the modern usage of Internet autonomy.

• (1740)

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, a constituent of mine, Alexis Utatnaq, wrote to me supporting the passing of Bill C-11. She said that it was long overdue and that an update needed to be made. She also said to me, “I am proud of our cultural productions and want to make sure Parliamentarians pass C-11”.

Does the member intend to put an end to this injustice, or rather protect the profits of web giants, which would ultimately lead to less cultural indigenous content if the bill is not passed?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives recognize that there is some good in this legislation. We would be happy to support that if the bill did not have these other problems, which are well known and the Liberals knew about. They had an opportunity to repair them properly, but they have not done that. They did half the job, not the whole job.

I have a burgeoning movie industry in my riding. People, particularly smaller producers, are saying they want to see the playing field levelled. They are dealing with big American producers, and they want to be in a better position to negotiate. I recognize that.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to speak tonight about Motion No. 16 in support of Bill C-11 and about the importance of getting this piece of legislation through the House as quickly as possible.

The online streaming act is a crucial step in fostering a more inclusive Canada. Online streaming is quickly becoming the most important way in which Canadians consume audio and audiovisual content. Media have a big impact on how we see the world and how we see each other.

Canadians, creators, producers and broadcasters have been waiting for this legislation for many years. The last major reform to this

legislation was in 1991, the year I graduated from high school, and as members can see from the colour of my hair, this was quite a while ago.

We have to act now. I urge all members of this House to focus on the important nature of this bill, which is to provide greater support to Canadian artists and creators from all communities and backgrounds. It is therefore essential that we move forward quickly with Bill C-11 so that our Canadian broadcasting system can thrive in the digital age.

It is great that many of my colleagues in the opposition understand the urgency of Bill C-11. Unfortunately, the Conservatives have taken every opportunity to delay and block us from moving forward on our study of the legislation, and I will speak more about that a little later in my speech.

Our objective is to have diverse and representative voices in the broadcasting sector, including in online streaming services. In this way, we create the space for Canadians from official language minority communities, racialized communities and Canadians of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, abilities and disabilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and ages to tell those stories.

[*Translation*]

Over the years, the Broadcasting Act and the regulatory system it created have helped ensure that stories created by and for Canadians continue to be created and appreciated by Canadians. That will remain its main objective.

Bill C-11 will put today's viewing and listening audiences, including the diverse and marginalized voices that have historically been under-represented in the broadcasting system, in the spotlight. Bill C-11 recognizes that some communities have had very little choice in terms of content, be it created by them or for them or in a way that accurately reflects their reality.

• (1745)

[*English*]

I am very pleased to have the opportunity today to talk about how the online streaming act would help ensure that Canada's broadcasting system will appropriately reflect and support diverse audiences, creators and artists, and this is to the benefit of all of us. Our broadcasting system has aspired to embody the important Canadian values of fairness, respect and inclusion. Canadian audiences have always been diverse, and we have seen the broadcasting system evolve to better serve their needs and represent all Canadians.

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[Translation]

It is because of these values that we have had broadcasting in French and English right from the start.

[English]

It is those same values that underpin the extension of television broadcasting services, first to underserved rural and remote communities, then to the north, and then through the introduction of closed-captioning in the 1980s.

[Translation]

The values of fairness, respect and inclusion are behind the move to offer broadcasting choices in languages other than French and English and to remove some barriers to broadcasting these services on radio and television.

[English]

These values have been the basis for creating a more representative and inclusive production sector through contributions from the Canada Media Fund. Public funds further support efforts to promote diverse Canadian creators, including spaces like the Vancouver Asian Film Festival and organizations like the Black Screen Office.

[Translation]

These values have made us leaders on the world stage with respect to children's programming focused on diversity and inclusion. Our children can watch the wonderful stories of *Teepee Time* on APTN or *Chevalier héroïque* on TFO.

[English]

However, as the world sees growing ignorance and racism, including the rise of xenophobia, we know that more needs to be done. There remains a gap. There is a gap between the reality of the Canada we live in and the diverse and inclusive Canada we strive for.

In 2020, approximately 63% of Canada's Black population reported experiencing discrimination five years prior to the beginning of the pandemic or during the pandemic, nearly double the proportion of the white population at 32%. Discrimination does harm. It is associated with adverse impacts on social and psychological outcomes, including less trust in public institutions such as Parliament, our justice system, police and schools.

I would like to share a quote from Joan Jenkinson, the executive director of the Black Screen Office, in her appearance at the heritage committee study of Bill C-11. It really captures exactly why this bill is so important.

She stated:

Canadians of all backgrounds have not had access to programming within the Canadian broadcasting system that authentically reflects the diversity of this country.

Through broadcasting we can make space for different stories to be told, and those stories need to be told. Representation matters. Canadians should be able to see more of themselves reflected in the media they stream in a way that honours their identities. Canadians

have the right to share these stories in a way that is culturally relevant and appropriate.

[Translation]

Our broadcasting system must continue to meet the needs of different groups and be inclusive for all Canadians. However, at a time when digital services have become more and more predominant, we must support the development of the work of these artists and creators. It is also extremely important that their projects receive fair contributions that take systemic barriers into account.

• (1750)

[English]

We want the future Atom Egoyans, Robert Lantos, Sandra Ohs, Xavier Dolans, Ivan Reitmans and Nia Vardalos of this world to find the support they need to tell their stories. To truly have the diversity and representation that we are proud of in Canada, it must be built into the broadcasting system.

What are we doing now? Broadcasting is about cultural policy. Canadian culture is not monotonous, static or monolithic; it is a living, breathing, dynamic element of who we are. We need an audiovisual sector that reflects that we are bold, dynamic and inclusive.

Our government's strong commitment to inclusivity is demonstrated through ongoing initiatives, including budget 2021, which provided \$60 million in new funding over three years specifically for the Canada Media Fund to increase support for people from equity-deserving groups working in the Canadian audiovisual industry. These resources help the CMF to realize its equity inclusion strategy and deliver on its mandate to enable a diversity of voices.

On top of this, the COVID-19 recovery fund extended the previous third-language COVID relief allocation through the CMF for another two years to provide further supports for independent television production in languages other than English and French.

[Translation]

Our budget commitments and mandate letters clearly show that our government continues to prioritize diversity and inclusion.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage is currently working with the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion to provide racialized artists and journalists the support needed for their productions, adequate investment to support local journalism in underserved communities, and new funding to provide diverse communities with the tools needed to tell their own stories and to promote the diversity of voices in the arts, culture and media.

With the growth of streaming services that provide unlimited content, we must ensure that the values of equity, respect and inclusion are given even more space in the regulation of the Canadian broadcasting system.

[English]

That is why Bill C-11 underscores the need for diversity, inclusion and representation.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

The online streaming act amends the Broadcasting Act to make the broadcasting sector more inclusive for all Canadians. It enhances the objective of the law whereby the broadcasting system should

serve the needs and interests of all Canadians — including Canadians from racialized communities and Canadians of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, abilities and disabilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and ages — and reflect their circumstances and aspirations, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of Indigenous peoples within that society

[English]

This objective will broaden access to the system and provide programming for these communities that speaks to their needs and interests regardless of their preferred broadcasting medium. As before, the government intends to direct the CRTC to support and promote programming and creators from diverse communities and backgrounds. Whether they stream programs over the Internet, over the airwaves or through a cable system, the CRTC will be equipped to ensure that Canada's broadcasting system provides programming for, about and by persons from diverse communities.

I want to reflect again on the importance of understanding this. Whether they stream programs over the Internet, over airwaves or through a cable system, the CRTC will be equipped. Essentially, we are making sure that the channel on which this content is sent to Canadians is equalized, because right now it is not.

I would like to speak a bit about Motion No. 16 and the procedures.

I get a lot of questions from citizens in my riding who say they do not understand, a vote came up, this happened or I heard this, and they ask why this is happening. I will be honest. I have been here almost seven years now and I am a bit of a procedural geek. I really like procedure, so I read the Standing Orders often. I have read Bosc and Gagnon and Beauchesne's. I like reading more and more about the procedures. When I explain to citizens who write to me how things work in the House procedurally, often at the end of the conversation people say they did not realize that. In a perfect world, these little procedural tactics, which I am assuming everyone uses when they are in opposition, would be known to people.

Let us think about procedure. This piece of legislation was introduced in early 2022. It was in a previous government and brought back. Members voted to send it to committee at second reading. The majority in the House agreed that it should go to committee. At committee, committee members agreed that they would allow 20 hours of witness testimony on this bill before reporting it back to the House. This was agreed upon by the members in the committee.

• (1755)

Seven hours of that time were then spent filibustering by the Conservatives. It is a procedural tactic that is used, I guess, by all opposition members at committee and so on. However, that prevented part of the CRTC from presenting. It also prevented the minister from testifying and answering questions. Right now, the committee cannot even get to clause-by-clause to bring forward amendments by the opposition.

[Translation]

I understand full well that the Conservatives, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP may want to propose amendments to the bill. However, we cannot even get to that stage because the Conservatives on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage are obstructing the process.

[English]

We cannot learn, talk or debate about these amendments or the concerns people say they have, because the reality is that they are being blocked by their own members. The Conservatives are actually blocking their own motions.

I have been listening to the debate in the House today and I have heard from my colleagues. I come from Quebec.

[Translation]

In Quebec, our artists are incredible. Artists want the bill to move forward. It is urgent.

[English]

What I heard today is people saying, "Look, we like it. We've heard. We know that this piece of legislation is important. We need it to move forward." On the other side, I heard the Conservatives saying that we need more time to debate it, but they had seven additional hours at committee with which they filibustered, when they could have been hearing from additional witnesses who they thought were necessary. It is kind of chicken-and-egg. Did they want to debate and hear from more witnesses, or did they want to filibuster?

We have a thing called parliamentary privilege here in the House, which means that I can stand up in the House and I can say whatever I want, because I have parliamentary privilege. I can say that this bill is doing x , y and z when I know it is not.

This bill is not about the users and the creators. This is about the platform. This is making sure that whatever platforms someone is using, whether it be YouTube, Amazon Prime or Netflix, they are following the same rules as the airwaves or television and they are contributing to Canadian content. This is not someone uploading a cat video. Trust me, I love cat videos. I can watch them all day. After a day here in the chamber, I love a good cat video. We are not going after the cat video creators. That is not what we are doing. What we are saying is that the big broadcasting companies that are using the Internet and livestreaming need to pay their fair share and they also need to contribute to our culture.

I know I have a few minutes left, but I have to get this in there. I have a couple of colleagues who know that I am a new grandma. I am a first-time grandmother and I got to see my grandson on the weekend. He is seven weeks old. Of course, I am asking them how to calm a crying baby. It has been a while since I had a crying baby in the house. They said he likes to listen to this music that is on YouTube, called *CoComelon*. Anyway, it is singing and it is on YouTube. It is funny, but to get the baby to stop crying I am playing *CoComelon* so that he can hear the music that he really likes. We sing along with it.

However, YouTube is not contributing to our cultural content or to our industry, and it needs to. I want to make sure that my grandchild can hear music and watch television and shows, whatever way he streams it, because I am assuming things will change in another 15 years when he is older, and that he will also be able to see Canadian content that is reflective of our Canada, with indigenous voices and racialized voices, the real reflection of Canada.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

For our two official languages, it is important to support our cultural industry in Quebec. For that reason, I urge all members of the House to vote in favour of Bill C-11.

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member on being a new grandmother.

However, I question some of the things the member was talking about, namely how important the bill has been for the government. Last time it was talked about was about a year ago, and it was so important that the Liberals had to have an election in the middle of it. Not only that, but from the time the election was concluded, on September 20, the government waited four months before it introduced this bill.

Remember, this is so important that we need to do it urgently. The bill is so important that the member is talking about Conservatives debating it for seven hours, yet the government could wait four months after the election before introducing it. It is sort of shameful on my side when you are saying how dare we put this through. When you say that we need to end this immediately and close all debate, I am sorry but I am a little miffed and kind of not believing everything that is going on. Please, could you address that for me?

The Deputy Speaker: I would remind members to bring everything through the Chair when asking questions of members.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that this piece of legislation was reintroduced in the 44th Parliament. Now, the election happened on September 20, and the House resumed in December. As the member opposite knows, the House also breaks for Christmas at the end of December until the end of January. The bill was then introduced in February, so it was actually reintroduced within the first six weeks of sitting of the new legislature, and it was brought forward because it is so important.

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Members across the aisle know how important the bill is, and many have said that they are going to support it. While the member mentions that he feels there was a delay of four months, when we look at the legislative calendar or the actual sitting calendar, it was actually reintroduced quite quickly.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague and congratulate her on becoming a grandmother. That is a joy and beautiful gift in life.

We can also collectively offer a beautiful gift by passing Bill C-11. There is certainly room for improvement. That said, it makes changes to the Broadcasting Act, which does not happen every year. This bill needs vision.

We could have used more time. I can understand moving motions to have time for a report. I think that will be done tomorrow, according to this morning's motion. It is not a lot of time. That said, sometimes perfect is the enemy of the good. In this case, I think that perfect is what should govern us.

My colleague wants the majority of the House to pass Bill C-11. If she had an argument to convince those who are hesitating, what would it be?

• (1805)

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question and her kind words.

It does not help the debate when members rise in the House and say that this bill is not going to let people create content for YouTube or other platforms, even though they know that is not true.

It is not true that creators and users will be penalized for creating their content. This bill targets every mechanism for communicating that content, including TV, radio, the Internet and big players like Netflix and Amazon. The bill aims to ensure that they all abide by the same laws and invest in our culture, our artists and our creators.

There is no reason to be wary of this bill. Its purpose is not to target individuals sharing their projects and demonstrating how to do things on Pinterest. Its purpose is to get the big players like Netflix and Amazon Prime to play by the same rules as TV and radio.

[*English*]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think the member will be learning a lot of new songs off YouTube.

The member mentioned that some of these platforms have not been contributing their fair share of taxes and contributing to the social safety net in that way. I was just wondering if there was any estimate of the loss of revenue, versus if they had been taxed back to 2015.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleague across the way is going to give me some good ideas for songs I could be singing to my grandson.

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I know that when we looked at this in a previous Parliament, in terms of the loss of revenue and loss of contribution, the amounts were in the millions and millions of dollars. I do not know whether the committee, in its study of this bill, has also looked at that. I would have to check that and get back to the member on whether there were actual updated figures from that, in terms of possible contributions to the fund from these web giants.

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of sitting on the heritage committee all through this study, and as an artist myself, I know that we, on this side of the House, are fighting for artists as hard as we can. We have met with almost every major stakeholder of arts groups in the country, and they all support this bill.

The opposition is talking about free speech. I would suggest that artists are on the forefront of defending free speech. Everything we do is to make sure we are defending free speech. That is what the arts are a big part of. Can my colleague explain how the opposition somehow thinks every arts organization in Canada is wrong yet the Conservatives are correct about this being an attack on free speech?

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I know that, as a member of the heritage committee, my colleague is doing great work there, and as he is a professional artist, I am incredibly honoured to serve with him.

That is how committees work. There is a piece of legislation, and members submit witnesses they want to hear from. The witnesses come and testify. Overwhelmingly, the artists across Canada and in the industry have said that this is important legislation and that it needs to be done. Do 100% of people say they are in support of this? No, but that is why it is at committee, and that is why, during the 20 hours of dedicated time that the committee members all agreed to, those questions and amendments could be brought forward, but that is not what is happening. If that were truly happening and they still felt they had concerns, that would be a different story and we would not be talking about Motion No. 16, but unfortunately that is not what is happening.

When I hear members across the way, during QP and Statements by Members, saying that all of a sudden people across Canada are not going to be able to upload their videos or their content, that is not correct; that is factually incorrect. Unfortunately, that is what gets people going, and then they write to us. When we correct the record, they say that now they get it.

The reality is that this is not what this bill is about; this bill is about making sure the platforms that are not currently covered under the same rules as radio and television are included. That is the purpose of this bill.

• (1810)

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the member for Peace River—Westlock.

I am rising today to speak on behalf of my constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country to this motion to close debate on Bill C-11. It is a bill that the government continues to insist should not be of concern to Canadians, yet barely allows it to be debated. The previous iteration, Bill C-10, had massive backlash last year, and

damning testimony and expert analysis of the Liberal bill, so we can see why the Liberals want to shut down scrutiny as quickly as possible this time around.

Bill C-11 is a piece of legislation that the government continues to insist is entirely different from last year's Bill C-10. After reviewing the legislation, I can confirm there is definitely an 11 and not a 10 in the title of the legislation. Unfortunately, the rest of the deeply flawed Bill C-10, which would limit what Canadians could see, share and view online, has been sadly left in place.

The government can say that it listened and that regulating user-generated content is off the table; however, legal experts and digital content producers can read, and what they are reading in this legislation is still deeply concerning.

The government is moving to shut down debate, shut down committee study and prevent dozens of witnesses from sharing their thoughts and concerns on this bill. Probably the most recent conflict comes between the heritage minister and comments from the current CRTC chair, Ian Scott. Mr. Scott confirmed that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, CRTC, would be able to regulate user-generated content under the current iteration of Bill C-11.

The government has stated that this legislation intends to support Canadian artists, promote the spread of Canadian content over that of international competition and update the Broadcasting Act to cover the rise of digital streaming content. None of these goals is wrong. Our Canadian arts and culture sector is flourishing and deserves our support. More Canadians than ever are making films about Canada. More Canadians are making music than ever in Canada. More video games are being made here in Canada, not to mention e-books, podcasts and YouTube content.

Canadians are producing and watching great Canadian content. Sometimes they will see it through Disney+, and occasionally getting that content made will involve international investment. Under the current rules, this may make it un-Canadian. It is not what the government would prefer for Canadians to watch.

A constituent of mine recently wrote to me with his concerns on Bill C-11 and the threat of censorship that is always present when a government looks to prefer one source of information over another. He told me the story of tenants of his who had grown up in the Soviet Union. He wrote:

Some time ago, a couple from Russia rented our basement suite. We got to know them well and had many discussions over how Russia-controlled media impacted them.... We asked, in your opinion, what was the biggest lie ever told to the Russian citizens. Slava didn't hesitate: "That Russia won the 72 Canada Russia hockey series!" We were astounded... how could they not know that Canada won? We had the videos. They said the government simply eliminated the last four minutes of the winning game and controlled the narrative.

They only saw what the government wanted them to see. Bill C-11 gives the Canadian government the powers to do this: it has broad powers that could be used to censor what Canadians can see and say online according to the government's preferences.

If the government is genuinely interested in updating the Broadcasting Act, let us work together to do that. If the government wants to ensure that Netflix, Spotify and YouTube are not playing by different rules than Canadian producers are, Conservatives are happy to help them in that. Canadians want to see digital platforms pay their fair share, but do not trust Bill C-11 to do it with all the extra censorship power.

To quote very specifically from the bill itself, Bill C-11 seeks to bring platforms like YouTube under the following content regulations. It says the CRTC:

May, in furtherance of its objects, make regulations

- (a) respecting the proportion of time that shall be devoted to the broadcasting of Canadian programs;
- (b) prescribing what constitutes a Canadian program for the purposes of this Act..

The government says it is looking to bring the Broadcasting Act into the 21st century, but applying those regulations to user-driven content platforms is trying to bring digital content into the 20th century. As my colleague for Calgary Nose Hill put it, "It is like playing an MP4 on a VHS machine: It is just not going to work."

• (1815)

Regulating digital platforms and social media is beyond the scope of the CRTC's mandate and abilities. Right now, Canadians are succeeding on digital platforms with the support of fellow Canadians. People of every background in this country are making their full-time living creating digital content while receiving billions of views. We know Canadians are succeeding in these spaces.

Social media platforms already have reach within Canada. Why would the Liberals fork over \$600,000 in taxpayer dollars in 2021 to pay for social media Internet influencers to sing the Liberals' messages if online platforms were so ineffective? This does not include the money the Liberals spent on the various digital platforms themselves, only to pay influencers. This was only discovered through investigations by Conservatives.

Governments should not look to discourage Canadians from watching Canadian YouTubers just because they make content abroad. We should not look to saddle the success of homegrown content makers with checklists to prove the Canadianness of their videos. Over-regulation is the swiftest eliminator of innovation. It benefits the previously established who may be too out of touch to keep up with the pace of change. Canadian digital content creators are on the cutting edge of new media. They do not need Bill C-11 to succeed, and they have proven that. Canadians are already watching what they are making. They do not need the federal government to tell them to, or to have the CRTC analyzing every online post to see if it is something that meets whatever rules it comes up with and is worthy of its view.

This is truly unbelievable. The Liberals are also refusing to release the policy directive they are giving the CRTC. The only ones who are seeking the government's assistance really are the legacy

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media companies that once enjoyed monopolies on television and radio. They did not innovate to the new media landscape, and are now looking for backdoor bailouts in partnership with a government seeking greater control of the lives of everyday people.

Any government looking to impose new regulations on a service so vital to everyday life as our digital devices would need to first demonstrate that its actions are not self-interested and that it would not choose to discriminate based on the viewpoints of those it is seeking to regulate.

The current government has proven that it cannot be trusted to be fair and equitable. In the past two years, we have seen two public protest movements that blocked public infrastructure get two entirely different responses from the same Liberal government. Of course, I am talking about the 2020 rail-line blockades, which brought pretty much all passenger and commercial rail, including from ports, to a dead stop for almost three weeks across the entire country and laid off 1,000 people. That is compared to the 2022 trucker convoy border closures at a handful of border crossings for a few days of that critical infrastructure.

Even though there was damage to infrastructure during the rail blockades, the Liberals worked with law enforcement and met with protesters. When the Liberals disagreed with trucker protests over mandates, they turned to the Emergencies Act to give themselves new powers, which were proven not to be necessary as our border crossings had already been reopened under our existing laws. The Liberals froze Canadian bank accounts without verification, which is something just admitted by the Department of Finance. The Liberals were called out by the Privacy Commissioner for failing to notify or ensure the privacy of Canadians whose cell phones were tracked by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Nothing can make the government's track record of secrecy, control and division clearer today than to repeat the same tactic of cutting short debate it used in the prior piece of legislation, Bill C-10, in the previous Parliament.

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This motion to impose an arbitrary deadline to send the bill back to the House does not help the Liberals' case. The House is not a short-order kitchen. There is no need to push on law-making, especially on a piece of legislation such as Bill C-11, which has so many holes of uncertainty that its symbol should be a piece of Swiss cheese. However, as the Prime Minister has constantly proven, the work of Parliament is secondary if he can move up his vacation plans in Tofino. As currently written, and with the government having no interest in hearing from witnesses or entertaining amendments, I cannot support stopping debate on this poorly thought-out, full of holes, overreaching piece of legislation.

• (1820)

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just want to share with Canadians what the CRTC does in its current mandate. As an administrative tribunal, it regulates and supervises broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest and focuses on achieving policy objectives established in the Broadcasting Act and the Telecommunications Act.

Based on the assumptions being shared with us today in this chamber, is it the position of the member that the CRTC is currently censoring Canadians? Is this fear to be followed through on if this bill were to pass?

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, we should look at how the CRTC is operating right now. I will give one example. There was a piece of legislation that passed in the House well over 500 days ago to create a suicide hotline: the 988 hotline. That has still not happened.

To give huge other priorities to the CRTC, when here is a prime example of something very simple that it has not been able to do, is really difficult to understand. It is going to take on this whole other huge objective.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her speech.

From what I understood from it, she is saying that Bill C-11 protects those who have yet to adapt to new approaches, the new digital reality.

Is my colleague aware that Quebec francophone culture, with 8.6 million people, must still have some sort of protection in this ocean of 350 million anglophones that is the Americas?

I would like to hear her thoughts on that.

[English]

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, we have digital creators who are online right now who are producing very successfully. We have heard from many of them at the committee. We have heard many of them talking about this. They are very successful in this space. This is without any kind of change to what people can search and view online. To go back to that, we already have a lot of Canadian experts, content producers and many witnesses who have said that they are extremely concerned with this regulation and that it could, potentially diminish their views for what people are seeing right now.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqqaqtittiji*, since the beginning of the pandemic, our cultural workers have been losing jobs and income. In 2020, one in four people working in the cultural sector lost their jobs. Netflix's revenue increased by over 22% in the same year, yet the Conservatives plan to stand in the way of cultural workers.

Does the member believe that Netflix is not making enough profit to pay its fair share to cultural workers?

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, I think that we have been really clear, on this side of the House, that it does make sense, and I did reference that in my intervention, for organizations like Netflix to pay their fair share in order to pay taxes. That is completely separate from being able to change the content people see online. They are completely separate things. This is one of the reasons why we, on this side of the House, have said from the very beginning that some of these issues should be separated. Charging GST for some type of service is very different from changing, or even defining, what discoverability is, with looking at what people are able to see online and actually changing the algorithms so that what we see is what the CRTC comes up with that one should be seeing. Those are completely separate issues.

• (1825)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in regard to the Liberals' efforts to fast-track a bill through Parliament that would allow the government to censor what Canadians post. The Trudeau Liberal government and its NDP allies are pushing through a motion in the House to curtail Parliament's responsibility to examine Internet regulation, Bill C-11—

The Deputy Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Fredericton is rising on a point of order.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Mr. Speaker, I just would like to point out that the member should not be using people's names in the House.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry. I should learn to pay attention in those first few seconds. I know that we cannot reference people's names in the House of Commons.

The hon. member for Peace River—Westlock.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, that is duly noted.

I would like to think that the Liberals would have learned their lesson after the debacle of Bill C-10 in the last Parliament, but only this government would be able to introduce a bill that is even worse than the original. The Liberals claim they are trying to level the playing field between traditional and online media. However, it is already incredibly difficult to start a radio station in this country, but it is very easy to start a podcast. Why would the government not make it easier for traditional media to operate instead of policing online content?

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In all of this, the Liberal-NDP coalition has refused to listen to Canadian experts, content producers and other witnesses at the heritage committee to fix this incredibly flawed bill. Today's motion only limits the ability of parliamentarians to hear from witnesses, and to debate and study the proposed amendments. Essentially, the Liberals and the NDP are censoring MPs from speaking on their censorship bill.

One of the greatest concerns is proposed section 4.2 of the act, which outlines what is considered a program for the purposes of regulation. In answer to this question at committee, the Minister of Canadian Heritage was adamant that social media posts would not fall under the definition of a program, yet the chair of the CRTC, Ian Scott, said the exact opposite when he testified, "Proposed section 4.2 allows the CRTC to prescribe by regulation user-uploaded content subject to very explicit criteria."

He, on another occasion, reassured Canadians they had nothing to worry about because the folks at the CRTC, "have lots of things to do. We don't need to start looking at user-generated content." How is it reassuring that they do not need to start looking at people's social media? In other words, they will eventually start looking at people's social media, but they are just too busy at the moment.

The Liberal government is telling Canadians to just trust it, except Canadians do not trust this government. They do not trust it when it comes to mandates. They do not trust it when it comes to protecting Canadians online. They certainly do not trust it when it comes to ethics. I think of the SNC-Lavalin and the WE Charity scandals. They do not trust the government at all.

Rather than policing Canadian social media, why would the government not tackle online sexual exploitation? I believe there are some areas where the Internet should have oversight. Porn companies should not have unlimited access to our children online, but they do, and there are no requirements to make sure that accessibility to their sites is for those over the age of 18. I also believe porn companies should not be able to post their content without verifying the age and consent of each person depicted therein.

Too many women and kids have been horrifically exploited online, and porn companies, such as Montreal-based MindGeek, have made billions of dollars from exploiting these women and children, but the Liberals' Bill C-11 does not tackle any of these important issues. The Liberals are more interested in policing our political, social and religious views online. Despite multiple calls for action by survivors, NGOs and parliamentarians, the Prime Minister and the Liberal government have done nothing to address companies like MindGeek, which have been publishing and profiting from online sexual exploitation for many years with impunity.

It has been over two years since nine parliamentarians wrote the Prime Minister to alert him to the fact that companies like MindGeek were profiting from child sexual abuse material, sex trafficking and rape in his home province. It has been a year and a half since 20 parliamentarians from four parties wrote the justice minister inquiring why Canada's laws have failed to hold online exploiters accountable, and it has been 18 months since the world has asked why Canada allows this company, MindGeek, to profit off of videos of exploitation and assault.

It has been over 70 weeks since the Canadian heritage minister promised legislation to fight online exploitation within three weeks. It has been 498 days since the survivor, Serena Fleites, shared her horrific story and called on parliamentarians to do something. It has been one year since the ethics committee tabled a report with 14 unanimously supported recommendations. There has been nothing, no action, from the government. Within three days, Mastercard and Visa were able to make findings and judgments that ended their relationships with MindGeek and Pornhub, yet the government has been unable to come up with anything to end this online harm.

• (1830)

To be clear, there have been multiple lawsuits from survivors in Canada and the United States against MindGeek, but zero government legislation to prevent companies from exploiting or profiting from the victimization of children, sex-trafficked victims or rape victims. There have been zero known investigations in Canada, zero charges laid in Canada, and zero justice for survivors. This government's priority is to police law-abiding Canadian citizens online and turn a blind eye to exploitation.

The government could have even used Bill C-11 to tackle online exploitation to protect minors, which is why I have provided some amendments to Bill C-11 that would do this. Specifically, I am proposing that Bill C-11 amend section 3 of the Broadcasting Act to set out policy objectives that the CRTC is mandated to implement to protect children from sexually explicit content and to prevent broadcasting of sexual violence. Specifically, I am proposing these policy objectives to seek to protect the health and well-being of children by preventing the broadcasting to children of programs that include sexually explicit content and to safeguard the human rights of women and marginalized people by preventing the broadcasting of programs that include pornographic material that is violent, sexist, racist or degrading or that is produced through sexual exploitation or coercion.

I have put forward these amendments at the committee, and I hope that the government will support them. These amendments are supported by child advocacy organizations and those fighting online exploitation.

In a brief submitted to the heritage committee, an organization called Defend Dignity highlights, "Children are spending more time online" than ever. It also notes, "Exposure to sexually explicit material is detrimental to children's [health and] well-being" and "The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child...recently adopted General Comment 25". It continues, "Sexually violent material perpetrates discrimination and abuse [with the] connection between sexually explicit material and sexual exploitation".

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Defending Dignity also wrote:

Protecting children from the harms of sexually explicit material and society from the dangerous impact of violent sexually explicit material must be a priority. As an organization working to end sexual exploitation in Canada, we call on all members of the committee to support [the member's] proposed amendment to section 3 of the Broadcasting Act.

There was also a joint submission to the Heritage committee from Timea's Cause and OneChild, two organizations with a combined 30 years' experience in combatting the sexual exploitation of children. They wrote:

Today, Canadian children's access to sexually explicit content and the broadcasting of sexual violence has gone far beyond the realm of television and radio. This content is broadcasted online through digital advertising to pornography. The Internet has unleashed a tsunami of content that is objectifying, violent, and misogynistic in nature, and those viewing this harmful content are getting younger and younger....

This content greatly informs our cultural norms, values and ideologies. In the case of children who are still navigating the world and are in the process of developing their sense of self and esteem and learning how they should treat others and how others should treat them—this kind of material is detrimental to their development. It warps their understanding of sex, consent, boundaries, healthy relationships, and gender roles. Moreover, viewing this kind of content online has frightening links to rape, 'sexortion', deviant and illegal types of pornography such as online child sexual abuse material, domestic violence, patronizing prostitution, and even involvement in sex trafficking.

That is why Timea's Cause and OneChild are urging the committee and this government to adopt these amendments to Bill C-11.

Conservatives will continue to defend the interests of Canadians. We will stand up to the exploitation, and those at risk of exploitation. We will stand up for those who are artists and creators, speaking out against this bill because it will harm their livelihoods. We will stand up for all Canadians.

• (1835)

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague put a lot of emphasis on women and children and their protection, and I really appreciate that. However, I would like to point out that he has given an example of a case where regulation is important, where we need to decide what is appropriate in some cases, and so would the member not agree that it is important that we do regulate online content?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what my whole speech was about. There is an area of the Internet that we need to work on to ensure that children are not gaining access to it and ensure that it is not ending up in front of the eyes of children. This is something that is going to be hard. It will be difficult, and it will take effort. However, one of the things that I have been frustrated with is that the government does not put in the effort to get pieces of legislation that we need across the finish line.

Bill C-11 would do nothing to prevent the exploitation of children online, and I am very disappointed to see that is not being addressed. I have moved amendments for Bill C-11 to work in this area, but as it stands, the bill would do nothing to prevent sexual exploitation online.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised—and that is putting it mildly—by the member's speech. As the saying goes, “give a dog a bad name and hang him”. His speech was a bit like that. He spoke about pornography and child exploitation, but that is not at all what Bill C-11 is about. I would invite him to introduce a different bill on that topic.

Bill C-11 is about forcing the web giants to make room for our creators, our artists. That is what we are talking about. Please do not tell me that we are rushing things. We have been working on this for two years, and artists and creators have been waiting 30 years for the act to be revised.

I just want to say to my colleague that I am really surprised by his speech. I do not think I really understood where he was going with it.

[*English*]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, the member talked about holding the web giants accountable. MindGeek and Pornhub claim to be one of the largest sites on the Internet with over 11 billion viewers every year. There is enough content on their website that, if someone had to watch it all, it would take them 572,000 years. MindGeek and Pornhub are a major part of the problem on the Internet. It is probably one of the biggest web giants, if there is such a thing, in the world.

I am very disappointed that Bill C-11, while attempting to tackle holding so-called web giants to account, does nothing of the sort when it comes to a company that is in our own backyard and based in Montreal. This bill does nothing to tackle the exploitation that this particular web giant has participated in.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite just mentioned in a response that he had amendments to this bill. During the seven hours of filibustering at the heritage committee, those amendments could have actually been brought forward when they got to clause-by-clause.

If he feels that he did not get to bring forward amendments, he might want to ask his colleagues on the heritage committee about it. They prevented it from getting to clause-by-clause, thus preventing amendments being brought forward.

• (1840)

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I am very excited about the amendments I have moved at committee. However, I would just generally say that I am not supportive of the bill in its entirety. Even if those amendments were to pass, I would not be voting for this particular bill. I think that those amendments would improve the bill. It would allow the CRTC to focus on that. However, I am looking for the government to take action on fighting online sexual exploitation. This bill is not the bill that would do that.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Drummond.

The government is committed to implementing a digital and cultural policy agenda that will serve Canadians' interests not just today but well into the future. It will support our cultural and artistic ecosystems, including our many talented creative sector workers. This is urgently needed.

Today, I am pleased to speak to the important elements of the online streaming act. First, I will have the pleasure of talking about Canadian independent producers and the important role they play. Second, I want to talk about the importance of ensuring that Canadians can find and access Canadian stories and music.

Delaying Bill C-11 would do harm to our production industry. It would leave the creative ecosystem in a very uncertain and difficult place, without support and predictable funding for Canadian programs. Ultimately, the online streaming act aims to foster an environment where Canadian music and stories can thrive and be discovered. The time to act is now. There is a lot at stake.

However, just like last time, the Conservatives have proven that they have no interest in making our broadcasting system fairer by levelling the playing field between tech giants and Canadian broadcasters. They have decided to use every tactic in their tool box to delay and block our study on Bill C-11. It is disappointing but not surprising. On this side of the House, we are committed to supporting the incredible creators across our country, telling stories that reflect our diverse experiences and building cultural bridges that bring us together.

Turning an idea into a cultural product is no simple task. From coast to coast to coast, our creatives have undeniable talent and an unparalleled work ethic. Canada's independent producers are an example of this.

A Canadian independent producer is a Canadian person or entity, usually a corporation, that creates an audiovisual media project that is not owned or controlled by the broadcaster or distributor. In other words, independent producers make movies, TV shows and documentaries that are not subject to creative control by a TV channel, network, streaming service or cable company. They are crucial to creative risk-taking, authentic storytelling and diverse representation in our audiovisual sector.

In film and television, independent productions cover a wide range of formats and genres, from art house films to popular animated kids shows and everything in between. Popular independent programs include comedies like *Letterkenny*, French-language originals like *M'entends-tu?* and science fiction like *Orphan Black*. There are also many acclaimed indie films, such as Ruba Nadda's *Cairo Time* and Kim Nguyen's French-language film *War Witch*. These are only a few examples of the range of quality programming that our independent producers create.

To successfully realize a project, independent producers do many things. They invest in development, make pitches, secure financing, hire creative and technical teams, scout locations and navigate complex trade, tax and labour arrangements to make projects happen. Not surprisingly, Canadian independent producers often work closely with Canadian musicians for scores and soundtracks.

There are over 600 independent production companies in Canada, most of them small and surviving project to project. Cana-

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dian independent film and television accounted for \$2.9 billion in production volume and more than 81,000 jobs in 2019-20. Many of these independent production companies are undercapitalized and often face difficulty obtaining project financing. In Canada, once a finished project is in hand and all the rights for its creative elements are clear, the producers then make money. However, it is a risky business with a lot of upfront costs.

While we may recognize Toronto landmarks in the background of an episode of *Suits* or even in the foreground of Pixar's *Turning Red*, these are American productions. They work with Canadian talent below the line: the "best boys", "grips" and "gaffers" listed in movie credits. They work with our visual effects, post-production and virtual production studios, such as Stoic in Vancouver, Deluxe in Toronto and MELS in Montreal. They are valuable, without a doubt.

• (1845)

Canadian productions, and specifically independent Canadian productions, are important for ensuring that cultural industry investments touch down and take root in the places where our stories come from. For example, the long-running Canadian television series *Heartland* is set in Alberta. It is produced by Calgary-based Seven24 Films and Dynamo Films and has a big local economic impact. For just one season of *Heartland*, they spent over \$28 million on production, saw each dollar of federal tax incentive produce more than \$11 in GDP and hired more than 1,400 vendors across Alberta.

Independent Canadian productions also tell untold stories and develop diverse programming. Consider *Indian Horse*, a film adaptation of Richard Wagamese's novel about a talented Ojibwa hockey player who survives the racism and residential schools of his time. Its independent producers were committed to engaging with local indigenous communities, providing jobs and working with elders to ensure respect for cultural protocols.

Diversity is one of Canada's greatest strengths. Without independent producers taking risks, we would never have films such as *Water* in Hindi and *Edge of the Knife* in the endangered Haida language. In children's and family programming, Canadian independent producers are innovators. The Kratt brothers are pushing boundaries in the multiplatform arena, while WildBrain has become a global programming powerhouse.

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Our stories and our creative talent are at the heart of the online streaming act. The legislation lists several important factors for the CRTC to consider in its definition of Canadian programs, including, for example, collaboration with Canadian producers, Canadian ownership and exploitation of IP by Canadians. This would give the commission the flexibility to require all types of broadcasting undertakings, including online streaming services, to financially contribute to the development of Canadian programs and Canadian talent. That is what Canada's important independent production sector needs to continue to thrive.

A strong independent production sector ensures Canadian stories are told by and for Canadians. However, it is not enough to encourage the production side alone. It is important that Canadians can find and access Canadian stories and music. As we see more of ourselves reflected in these popular mediums, it creates a sense of pride and a sense of unity, which are precisely what we need in these difficult times.

The influx of streaming programs has meant access to endless content, but it can be difficult to find or even recognize Canadian programs. This is in part because online platforms are not required to showcase Canadian programs in the same way as traditional broadcasters.

Our independent productions, and especially Canadian music, deserve to be discovered and supported. However, in the current context, it is a challenge for independent producers to remain visible in the marketplace.

With major artists like Kanye, Adele and Ed Sheeran dropping new music every few weeks, new content simply outpaces our ability to consume it. While we find pride in Canadian artists such as Drake, The Weeknd and Shawn Mendes dominating streaming playlists, we know that production and quality music alone are not enough to get noticed. If that were the case, we would see artists such as k-os, Hawksley Workman, Ada Lea and the quartet Corridor find the global success they deserve.

Word-of-mouth marketing is no longer sufficient. Our musical tastes are increasingly dictated by algorithms. What we are asking for has proven successful in the past. Forty-one years ago, the federal government stepped in with requirements for CanCon to save our singers and musicians from being lost to the radio hits from the United States. We are adapting this policy to safeguard Canadian music for the future.

Without prominence, Canadian stories and songs will not be discovered, heard or remunerated. Discoverability is important. It is an opportunity to be introduced to up-and-coming Canadian artists such as Morgan Toney, a young Mi'kmaq fiddler from Nova Scotia.

I will end here, as I know my time is short. Anything I did not say I can hopefully get to in a question or two.

• (1850)

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, foreign tech giants have been crashing on our couch in Canada without paying their fair share. Today, those subscription-based foreign streaming platforms benefit from access to Canadian markets but have zero responsibility toward Canadian artists and contributing to our creators. Passing the online streaming act and regulating

these foreign web giants to pay into the system that our traditional broadcasters already pay into would contribute to funds for artists and our own storytellers.

Can my colleague from Avalon tell the House how important arts, music and culture are to Newfoundland and Labrador?

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. I have been in his riding many times. I have family in the area.

This will help local artists and producers. We only have to look at some of the shows that have come out of Newfoundland. Consider the *Republic of Doyle*, for example, and what it did for our province to highlight and drive the tourism industry literally crazy because of the scenery it showed and the houses and colours of St. John's and beyond.

Our own artists need all the help they can get, especially with trying to come out of COVID. The member is an artist himself, and he fully understands how hard it is to make it in the industry. Why should people not be compensated for someone benefiting from their talent? They should be compensated, they should be supported and that is exactly what our government would like to do.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Avalon, for whom I have tremendous respect. We are both members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. We all appreciate his work as chair, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank him. I also want to thank him for his speech. I was very happy to hear him talk about independent producers, who are literally the driving force behind the cultural economy in Canada and Quebec.

I would like my colleague to tell us about the work that committee members, specifically my colleague from Drummond, have done on the discoverability of French-language content. Can he comment on why it was important to protect French-language content in Bill C-10 and, of course, in Bill C-11?

[*English*]

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for her comments. At the committee we serve on together, FOPO, she continues to amaze me with her intent, her questions and her knowledge of the industry. I also know her to be a performer, because she has gifted us with her talents at committee different times.

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We have to protect our cultural identity, regardless if it is our French culture in Quebec, our Irish culture in Newfoundland and Labrador or our Ukrainian culture in Saskatchewan. We have to do everything we can. This country is unique given its diversity. As a government and as parliamentarians, we should try to build on it and make sure we do not lose it going forward, because if we lose our identity and culture, there is really nothing that says what Canada is.

We have to do everything we can to protect it, whether it be the French-language culture in Quebec or in other areas of the country. We have a great, talented country, and our music and talent speak for themselves.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a blended family, and my stepbrother and stepsister were from upstate New York. They used to come here and were filled with the idea that Canada had no movies or music to offer. It was not that they did not exist, but they were not getting exposure. I feel like so much more work has been done to support Canadian artists and content creators.

What is at stake if we do not pass this bill? What do we risk losing?

• (1855)

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, what is at stake is losing who we are as a society and as a culture. As I said to the previous question, if we do not protect our own identity, who will protect us? We would be absorbed by the U.S.

I have said to different people that some people do not know where they are from. They have no connection to their community. They can leave one part of the United States, move somewhere else and think nothing of it. I am from Conception Bay South, Newfoundland, and I hope I will one day be buried in Conception Bay South, Newfoundland. I have never lived anywhere else. I love where I live. I love our identity and I do not think we can afford to lose it, because we will disappear as a society if that happens.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank the member for Avalon for sharing his time with me today.

Allow me to make a quick digression to talk about my family. I just returned to Parliament Hill after waging my own battle with this nasty virus that has been talked about so much over the past two and a half years. I am fine now. We fought it off as a family. I want to thank my partner, Caroline, who is recovering as well, her daughter Alexandrine and my daughter Lily Rose. The girls and I are warriors, and we are fine now.

I am happy to be back, but not so happy to be debating Bill C-11, or more specifically, Motion No. 16, which is preventing us from talking more about Bill C-11. There are both pros and cons here.

It is never feels good to forgo our duty and privilege as parliamentarians to debate bills as much as necessary before voting for or against. The debate needs to stop at some point, however.

One day I will be able to say that I was there in 2022. I was also there in 1991. Some might think I am not old enough for that, be-

cause I do not look my age, but I was working as a radio host in 1991 when the Broadcasting Act was modernized. At the time, I have to say that we had the same concerns, fears and criticisms that are being expressed today about what we are trying to add to the act through Bill C-11.

We heard criticisms about what is now being called discoverability, but used to be called quotas, those infamous quotas of Canadian content, those French-language music quotas for the radio.

I can say that in 1991, radio stations had quotas to meet, and it was a source of frustration for me and most of my fellow radio hosts at the time because it took a real effort. We could not get away with just playing the big hits from the U.S. anymore. We had to make the effort to discover content that we knew nothing about, since French-language music and Quebec artists were nearly impossible to find at the time.

The same was true for Manitoban artists, with the exception of Daniel Lavoie, who was one of the French-Canadian artists who was doing well at the time. Fortunately, there was a place for him on the radio waves. Discovering the others, however, required showing curiosity, going to the record shop, then listening to albums and deciding to try something that people generally had not heard on the radio.

Those quotas allowed us to offer our artists something they would not otherwise have had: a showcase on Quebec radio. As a result, this music has gained popularity over the years, and now it is being increasingly played and increasingly requested on the radio. Thanks to that, Quebec has now a French-language music industry driven by francophone artists and a thriving music industry in general, independently of language, because the market has been well protected and has fostered homegrown content.

Therefore, it is not true that the concept of discoverability that we are attempting to impose on today's various broadcasters, primarily those online, is bad or evil, nor is it an infringement on the freedom of choice and freedom of expression of music consumers in Canada and Quebec.

The future will confirm what I am saying now, because it has been proven time and time again in Quebec. There is a good reason why there is such massive support for this bill in Quebec. Clearly, what we are trying to include in the bill is well-thought-out and positive.

• (1900)

I was around in 1991, and I was still around 2021, when the bill was called C-10. Earlier, I heard a member say that the only difference between last year's bill and this one was the "1" in the title. One thing I know for sure is that, when Bill C-10 was introduced on November 3, 2020, it was like a big, blank paint-by-numbers document. All the real work had yet to be done.

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Some 130 amendments to this bill were put forward. The Bloc Québécois suggested some extremely important amendments that were debated and adopted so as to include discoverability of not only Canadian, but also Quebec, francophone and indigenous language content. For Bill C-10, we had to reintroduce the concept of Canadian ownership to prevent our own homegrown undertakings from being swallowed up by giants for what to them is pocket change.

We added all kinds of things to Bill C-10, and those things are in Bill C-11. The fact is, the bill we are debating this year—or, rather, will be debating for a short time this year—is not the same as the one we debated last year. There is still room for improvement. We may run out of time for that, but I will still urge my committee colleagues to do the right thing and work efficiently and collaboratively. That may be wishful thinking.

The Conservatives want to hear from more witnesses. That was one of the arguments they used to hold up the process during the committee's recent work on Bill C-11, yet they were the ones who proposed limiting our time with witnesses to 20 hours. I remember because I was there. We agreed to that proposal.

During those 20 hours, they could have invited the witnesses they say they did not have time to invite, like APTN, which is an extremely relevant witness and one of the first witnesses we should have heard from, but no. Our colleagues in the Conservative Party decided to invite YouTubers, TikTokers, creators of digital content. This is their choice and their legitimate right. Still, did they really need to invite the 160,000 creators who make YouTube videos in Canada? I think we got the message. We could have moved on to more relevant witnesses.

However, I am somewhat responsible for what happened. Since we had already heard from many witnesses and met with dozens and dozens of organizations since the beginning of this great adventure dealing with the broadcasting bill, I myself convinced a bunch of organizations not to testify, telling them that we would be able to study the bill faster clause by clause, and saying that we knew what they wanted and that we would represent them properly. I apologize to my Conservative colleagues, because I am perhaps somewhat responsible for the fact that we did not consider it essential to receive witnesses for hours and hours, as they would have liked.

It is important that this bill pass. I would really have preferred for it to pass in a more democratic manner, and for us to have a healthy debate on it. That did not happen in committee. However, it is important that it pass, and it needs to be flexible so that it can be adapted to new technologies. Soon online platforms will have the final say on what music and content we consume in our cars. Who knows where will be next. However, the CRTC must be given the opportunity to set out the rules and regulate this industry that is so dear to us, and it is up to us to do just that.

• (1905)

The Deputy Speaker: Before continuing, I would like to make a brief comment.

I like having something in common with another person. Like the member for Drummond, I began my career as a radio host in 1991.

[English]

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

[Translation]

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I like my colleague. He is a friend and he is also my French teacher. We work together on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. I did not know he was that old.

Can he explain just how important this bill is for protecting Quebec culture and the French language?

Mr. Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, we both started our careers in radio, but I have to say that I started a few years before you. I know that is somewhat hard to believe.

I would like to congratulate my colleague on the progress he is making in learning French. Last year, it was much more difficult for him to speak French. He just asked me a question entirely in French and I congratulate him.

It is not a secret. We talk about it often in the House. French in general is at risk and in decline, and it must be protected. It is true for the French language in everyday life, but it applies even more so to francophone culture. We are a francophone island in the sea of North America, and we are being invaded by American culture. We must protect francophone culture as best we can, especially Quebec culture, but francophone culture across Canada also. With bills such as Bill C-11, we can make this difference and this distinction by protecting our culture.

[English]

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I joined the ranks of journalism, as well. I know it well and went on to be an online content creator and know what it can do. I am sorry I am not speaking in French. I am working on that.

I am actually really curious, because my office has received hundreds of emails opposed to Bill C-11 from very concerned people. Has his office also received the same concerns, and how does he respond to his constituents?

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. We would be happy to help her work on her French. We are already seeing progress with the member for Perth—Wellington.

We have also received a lot of emails from members of the public, but I have to say that, with a few exceptions, none of these emails came from Quebec. They came from western Canada. I am not here to judge others' opinions. However, I believe that an interpretation, or disinformation, really, is what is behind the concern about Bill C-11. This bill does not contain any threat to freedom of expression, from what I understand. At the very least, it does not contain any of the threats that people mentioned in the many emails we have received.

There is widespread support for this bill in Quebec. Almost none of the emails my colleague is talking about came from Quebecers.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I am very pleased that he is back in the House of Commons. Like me, he is a member of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage where, for weeks, all kinds of tactics were being used.

The chair of the CRTC could not come testify because the Conservatives blocked his testimony. We finally worked around that. We saw all kinds of stalling tactics that meant that we could not do our job.

He supports Bill C-11, I support Bill C-11, and the vast majority of witnesses said the same thing. However, he also wanted us to look at each of the amendments and make this bill better.

My question is simple. Why did the Conservatives not want us to improve this very important bill?

• (1910)

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Drummond has time for a very short reply.

Mr. Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, it is a big challenge to give a brief answer. I will try nonetheless.

I thank my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby for his comments and his question.

I cannot answer the question about the Conservatives' motives. I believe that it may be ideological obstruction. However, it must be said that these delays in the work on Bill C-11 have consequences for more than just Bill C-11. These stalling tactics are causing delays for important bills, such as Bill C-18, which must soon be referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. There are also consequences on other very important studies that we decided to put forward.

Unfortunately, I do not have an answer, but I would say that it has consequences for more than just Bill C-11.

[English]

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise tonight once again to speak to the government's proposed Bill C-11. In the last Parliament, it was Bill C-10, and it certainly generated a lot of feedback and frustration from Canadians across the country. We have been witnessing that here again in the last couple of months with this bill in its current form.

I have been receiving a lot of emails and advocacy petitions from constituents, both online creators and those who consume the con-

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tent. They are concerned about what this bill entails and, frankly, among several things I will get into, what it does not entail. I believe that kicking the can to the CRTC and other organizations is a slippery slope and not a good precedent, based on the precedents that have caused a lot of frustrations to build up over the years.

I want to note that I will be splitting my time with the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

We are debating this motion tonight because of an attempt by the government and its NDP partners to try to jam this legislation through the House of Commons once again. I know there are still numerous witnesses who want to provide their perspectives and voices at the heritage committee and share the legitimate and reasonable concerns they have and the clarifications they wish to see that they are not getting from the government and its partner.

One of the problems we have that is typical of the Liberal-NDP strategy when it comes to legislation, which we are seeing in Bill C-5, the criminal justice reform legislation, is that if members do not support the Liberals and NDP on the bill, it means we do not care about racism. If members want an end to federal mandates and the chaos we are seeing at the borders and airports, it means the members hate vaccines and health care workers. Now, with the Internet censorship bill, Bill C-11, if we do not support their way and their ideas, we hate content creators and arts and culture in this country. It is an either-or, a divisive approach, but it is not surprising. It is one that we see more and more.

I will repeat what I said in the last Parliament because Bill C-11, as we have it, is very similar to what we saw in Bill C-10, and a lot of the concerns we had last time are not addressed or clarified in the bill in its current form.

Let me start with a positive in terms of agreement in Parliament. The Broadcasting Act was created in 1991. I do not remember it. I was about five years old at the time. Boyz II Men, Paula Abdul and Bryan Adams had some hits then, but since that original piece of legislation, a lot has changed in how Canadians create content and get it out there as well as in how they consume it.

We have the Internet, social media platforms, YouTube, Spotify, TikTok and so forth. There is an agreement that we need to have a level playing field with these large conglomerates of a foreign nature and how they do business in this country. At the same time, we also need to make sure that we protect the individual freedoms and rights of individual content creators, like those on YouTube who have been able to explode in not only the Canadian market but also the international market with the evolution of the Internet and social media platforms.

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There are serious flaws, and I have a perfect example. My colleague from Perth—Wellington, the shadow minister for Canadian heritage, raised this as a perfect example today. We all want to make sure Canadian content is created and is fairly represented on Netflix, Hulu, Crave and all the different platforms. He alluded in the chamber today to this bill not creating the specific measures to clarify some of the red tape about what is Canadian content. A perfect example that was illustrated was *The Handmaid's Tale*. I do not agree with Margaret Atwood and a lot of her politics, but I will admire her and give her respect as an artist and an author and for what she has done over her incredible career. A proud Canadian she is.

The Handmaid's Tale, a blockbuster TV series, was filmed in part in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. One would think Margaret Atwood and filming in the province of Ontario, the GTA, would classify as Canadian content. It does not. That speaks to the need to define this content better, to set better parameters and better definitions when it comes to this. Sadly, the bill would not do that. One would think it would when we talk about the modernization that we face.

● (1915)

I want to specify my concerns during my time. This comes perhaps from my background before being in the House, as a mayor at the municipal level, and perhaps it is a bit affected by my experience in the past few months on the public accounts committee, which reviews Auditor General reports on programs and efficiencies and how they run.

I want to reiterate my concern with regard to the vague definitions particularly around user-generated digital content, claiming there is an exemption, but section 4.2 is there. The government says not to worry about it. The CRTC says not to worry about it. I do not think Canadians have a lot of faith in that approach to what we have.

The CRTC is a public entity, but considers itself very independent. I have a lot of frustrations with the organization that I will not get into tonight when it comes to providing Internet service to rural and remote communities. That is a speech for another night.

Particularly, what is happening is that the government's legislation is extremely vague. Conservatives have been standing up in committee and in the House, not just in this Parliament but also in the last Parliament, and I have foreseen and I am foreshadowing what I know is to come. We see it over and over again. The government says, "That is not our intention. Do not worry." The legislation would pass and then it would go to the CRTC, after which, at some point down the road after the bill is passed, after it has come into law and been enacted, suddenly we would see algorithms or we would see content. At that point, the CRTC would say, "We are independent. There is nothing you can do. This is the law that was passed and this is the way it is interpreting it."

The minister has tried to claim that user-generated digital content and YouTube creators, TikTok creators and Canadians who have been able to burst onto the scene, not just in this country but internationally, are free from having their content regulated. They say that they have no interest in looking at that.

If that is the case, the government should be going for what we have been advocating for: it should specifically rule it out and make it black and white. It should make it very clear so that there is not a little door poked open for the CRTC, when it is batted over there to look after, all of a sudden to decide that, in the public interest, it is going to be doing this.

This is the time for Parliament, for Conservatives, for us to stand and be on the record to say that there are amendments. There are a lot of things that need to change, but there are specific amendments at least on that. I believe that just speaks to the rushed attempt that we are seeing from the government. It speaks to the secrecy of what it is trying to do. It is trying to pass the buck over to an independent organization, one that is overly powerful in my personal view, to interpret these laws, at which point the government can later say that it was its goal but secretly it was not the government's problem but somebody else's.

It is government creep at its worst. We have seen it before. We see it at the public accounts committee, in terms of leaving it to bureaucratic organizations to organize, and the success of that.

In my time remaining tonight, I want to acknowledge some of the comments made by a Canadian YouTube creator who spoke at the Canadian heritage committee a few weeks ago, J.J. McCullough. I go back to what we could agree on: Modernization is needed for the Broadcasting Act to make sure that large companies such as Netflix pay their fair share and also create Canadian content for us to have as Canadians. J.J. McCullough noted the following, which really hit home when I heard his testimony:

The tremendous success and even worldwide fame of many Canadian YouTubers in the absence of government regulation should invite questions about the necessity of Bill C-11. An unregulated YouTube has been a 17-year experiment, and the result has been an explosion of popular Canadian content produced by Canadians of every imaginable demographic....it is important to understand that it is simply impossible to regulate a platform like YouTube without also regulating creator content.

We have seen more Canadians become known. We have seen more Canadians make a living on these platforms. What the government is proposing is not that if one does not support this, one does not care about Canadian artists. We are standing up for individual content creators to say that platforms like these have given them the opportunity to make a living, to get known and to get Canadian brands, Canadian stories, Canadian music or other things we could name out there.

Our colleagues will stand up for those individual creators in making sure that we get the government to better define the very slippery slope it is on, not just with Bill C-10 in the last parliament. It is repeating the same mistake with Bill C-11.

• (1920)

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the way was talking about receiving emails from people who had concerns about the bill. I know that members in the House can say whatever they want in the House and then post it on their Facebook, Twitter and so on. I am curious if the member has had any communications in his households on Bill C-11 and what he says to members in his community about it that is resulting in people contacting him from across Canada. The previous speaker mentioned that he gets tons of emails from across Canada, as do I, from people not in my riding, about certain legislation.

Does the member opposite feel his party is maybe playing into the fact that they are igniting this fake outrage about this piece of legislation?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, in the last Parliament, I had a petition on my social media for Canadians in my riding, particularly in my region, who were concerned about the overreach of the bill and the vague definitions. It was a slippery slope that did not go through.

It is not a fake outrage. There are many things that the government, the NDP, the Bloc and others could do to give further clarity to the definitions, give specific exemptions and eliminate proposed section 4.2 regarding individual user-created content, and they choose not to. They are fuelling the rage by not listening to those who are opposed to the bill, who have reasonable suggestions that could better define and narrow the scope of what the CRTC's mandate is in doing this. They are ignoring it, and the language of false anger on this is something that only adds to that.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am going to take this moment, since *The Handmaid's Tale* was mentioned, to give a shout-out to my university roommate Edie Inksetter. She is an actor and producer for *The Handmaid's Tale*, and that is Canadian talent.

I wanted to ask the member about the missing tax dollars that Canadians have not been able to benefit from, let us say, over the last seven years, since 2015. Could the member comment what he thinks the government and Canadian citizens are missing out on by way of fair taxes?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from the NDP's intervention. It is always nice and appreciated to give a Canadian shout-out to a Canadian artist. That is appreciated.

On the revenues, as I said in my intervention, we need to make sure that companies such as Netflix, whether of a national or foreign nature doing business in Canada are paying their fair share, and also contributing to Canadian content using the revenues they have and the power they have to generate Canadian content of Canadian stories, creating Canadian jobs and so forth.

The example I laid out concerning *The Handmaid's Tale* speaks of how broken the idea of Canadian content is. Bill C-11 is not the solution. It does not tackle those problems appropriately, and I think it is going to leave a lot of confusion in the industry about coming into Canada and creating authentic Canadian content and jobs for actors and producers. There is also all the behind the

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scenes we see from a wide variety of platforms and the media viewing aspect of things. We are to be left behind.

We need better clarity on this. This bill does not do it. Just saying a title and that it is for artists does not actually mean it is going to benefit all those it says it is going to.

• (1925)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, this is a tough issue for me, as an individual MP, because I do not like a motion that says we are going to fast-track all amendments, close things down and push something through on this basis, as the government is proposing to do on Bill C-11.

I am honestly still trying to decide how I will vote on the Conservative motion. I would rather we stay in this place and do it right, even if it took sitting into July. I do not know about taking until September. That is what I am struggling with right now. I also know in the previous Parliament, with Bill C-10, and in this Parliament, and I do not want to make this personal in any way, shape or form, but the tactics of the Conservative Party cannot be described as anything other than obstruction for the sake of obstruction.

I would like him to try to tell me what he thinks would happen if the government did not push this through. Would we have a chance to improve this bill and then get it passed?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, amendments could be made that could improve the quality of the bill. I have always tried to be constructive, and many of my colleagues have been. There are areas that could provide better definitions. There are areas that perhaps, as I mentioned, could provide specific exclusions.

The reality of this is that the government bungled it in the last Parliament, in terms of the management of this bill. We are seeing this motion because of the same thing again. My understanding of this is that even if we pass it here in the House and rush through this process, the Senate said it is not going to get to it until September anyway.

We need to hear from more people. Every time government officials intervene, more questions are asked. We need to hear from more witnesses and hear their ideas. I believe that public pressure will lead to better changes and a better legislative framework for this.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise and bring the voice of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to this chamber. I want to thank my colleague for splitting his time with me.

I am pleased to speak to Motion No. 16. Actually, I am not pleased to speak to it, but I am honoured to have this opportunity on Motion No. 16, the programming motion on Bill C-11.

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Canada is home to some of the best talent in the world. Our artists, our actors, our musicians and other creators in our arts, culture and heritage sector continue to develop incredible Canadian content on a daily basis. The development of the sector is alive and well, with young talent consistently emerging across the country. These exceptional artists and creators deserve nothing less than an even playing field and to be supported with all the tools they need to thrive in their industry. They deserve fair compensation and a competitive economic environment that enables them to continue sharing their stories through their medium of choice, whether it be television, film, music, prose, theatre, the concert hall or perhaps the fastest-growing medium, the online content on the Internet.

I can personally relate to this field, as my oldest daughter is making her way through life as an artist, teaching music, singing opera and producing opera, albeit live at this moment, and living a gig-economy lifestyle.

The last time any major changes were made to the Broadcasting Act was in 1991, over 30 years ago. Given the rapid pace at which technology has been advancing in the past decades, it is undeniable that we have seen major technological changes in that time. Unfortunately, the legislation and regulatory framework have not changed with it. The government and, consequently, the CRTC need to adjust the way Canadian arts, culture and media are treated to match these changes. What we see, however, is the government failing in its attempts to bring the Broadcasting Act into the 21st century by adapting existing policy to reflect the digital reality of our times and failing to help future-proof it for future technologies and challenges yet to come.

Let me be clear: Conservatives support a requirement for major streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney to reinvest back into the production of Canadian content in both official languages. These requirements would also incentivize these platforms to partner with independent Canadian media producers. What is crucial, however, is that Canadians who upload content to social media platforms continue to enjoy the freedom of speech and the ability to express themselves freely within the confines of the law.

Sadly, Bill C-11, much like its failed predecessor in the previous Parliament, Bill C-10, would give the CRTC unprecedented powers to monitor online audiovisual content. These powers would include the ability to penalize digital content creators and platforms that do not comply with these regulations. These powers would be used and applied to Canadian content at the discretion of the CRTC, based on three criteria: whether it directly or indirectly generates revenue, whether it has in whole or in part been broadcast on a more traditional broadcasting platform, and whether it has been assigned a unique identifier under any international standard system.

As most digital content generates some kind of revenue, and given that most social media platforms have a system by which to provide a unique ID to their content, the CRTC could regulate almost all online content under this bill, including independent Canadian content creators who earn their living on social media platforms like YouTube and Spotify. This represents a major concern about the freedom of speech and the implications of possible government overreach in this bill, just like Bill C-10, in how it could affect Canadians.

Canada is known as being a world leader in many fields. Contributions by Canadians have revolutionized medicine, communications, agriculture, domestic life, entertainment and much more. Experts have testified that this bill would represent an unprecedented move and that Canada would once again become a world leader, but this time in its heavy-handed practice of regulating user-generated content. Not a single other country in the world has taken this approach. This is not an area Canadians should be proud to pioneer.

Instead, what we are seeing is a large number of Canadians, both content creators and consumers, expressing serious and valid concerns with the approach their government is taking to their livelihoods and entertainment, respectively. This attempt by the Liberal government to regulate the Internet and restrict the free speech of Canadians was unacceptable under Bill C-10, and it is equally unacceptable now.

● (1930)

I want to talk about what this bill would not do. This bill would not reduce the regulatory burden faced by Canadian broadcasters, nor would it reduce the cost to Canadian broadcasters. The part II licensing fees in 2019-20 alone amounted to over \$116 million. I would rather see that money go into creating new Canadian programming and content than into CRTC coffers.

In the previous version of the bill, Bill C-10, there was an exclusion for user-generated content, which was then excluded at committee. Now, in Bill C-11, the government has reintroduced an exclusion on user-generated content on social media; however, this is written in the most convoluted and bureaucratic of languages. The exclusion to the exclusion is so broad that the government, through the CRTC, could again regulate a large amount of content uploaded to social media.

What concerns me and my colleagues, and we have certainly been hearing about it from our constituents, is the impact this is going to have on our Canadian digital content creators. It is estimated that there are 28,000 full-time jobs in Canada created by content creators who have enough of an audience to monetize their channels through places like YouTube. This type of digital-first Canadian content creation is something we should be supporting instead of hindering.

We have heard from creators across Canada who are concerned that government-approved Canadian content is going to be put ahead of independent Canadian content. More to this, Canadians also want to see Canadians telling Canadian stories, but what is not clear is how the CRTC is going to adjust the criteria to ensure that real Canadian stories are being told.

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Our artists deserve an even playing field between large foreign streaming services and Canadian broadcasters, as technology evolves and carries on into the future and as we move further and further into the digital reality and online spaces. We need them to tell our stories, whether through music, movies, television or online content. Without that, part of our history will be lost.

I think we can all agree that the Broadcasting Act needs to be updated to reflect our current technology growth, but the last thing we want is Canada to fall further behind or to pass a law that would detrimentally affect our artists.

We need to support our Canadians artists in all the various forms and mediums they use to tell their stories. Our young talent continues to develop and contribute to our national culture. It is part of our role as elected officials to pave the way for the next generation's success. We should not be passing bills that disrupt the creation of new content. We need to help innovation happen. Innovation happens every day here in Canada through many venues, and we need to enable our creators to benefit from and export our talent around the globe.

Our artists, musicians and creators are deeply invested in the future of the industry and the future of this particular piece of legislation. These creators and artists deserve to be treated fairly and to have the tools they need for success, and they need to be heard at committee; dozens have yet to be heard.

We have been there for Canadian creators, artists and broadcasters by asking the tough questions, both here in this chamber and at committee. We carefully reviewed every aspect of the bill and expected the Liberal government to make the adjustments necessary by adopting amendments that were brought forward to protect Canadians' free speech and the livelihoods of independent content creators.

Proposed section 4.2 and any provision that enables the inclusion of user-generated content need to be removed. There needs to be a clear definition of "discovery", and there needs to be an update to clearly articulate what Canadian content is. What is the definition of it? Very importantly, the policy directive to the CRTC on how this whole legislation will be implemented needs to be made public.

We have been clear in our position on the bill. We will not be supporting the bill until we are confident that Canadians do not need to be concerned about their rights and freedoms on the Internet. Our concerns have not yet been addressed, and I will not be supporting this motion to ram through Bill C-11 at committee, as the Liberals have done at every stage of the bill.

• (1935)

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, one really critical aspect about why we are debating this today is the fact that, especially when it comes to witnesses, they have not been able to get the time in committee. Much of that time has been occupied by filibusters: 29 hours.

Can the member explain to all the witnesses, particularly those who have not had an opportunity to speak to the bill, why the Conservatives continue their filibuster?

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, this legislation has not been updated for 31 years. There was an attempted update in the last Parliament, and the very same flaws that we saw in Bill C-10 are being brought again to this chamber and again to this committee. Why were adjustments not made?

We have seen time allocation moved at every stage of this bill, rather than the genuine debate that I think my colleague in the NDP is seeking. We want to hear from the witnesses and have that debate. Why is every stage being rammed through?

That would be my response.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the member this. He has referred to Bill C-10, so we know that similar legislation came to this House of Commons before. As well, in Bill C-11, there have been improvements made, so there has been ample opportunity for the Conservative members to read the bill and understand the bill.

I am wondering if we can get to the amendment stage, the clause-by-clause stage of the bill, and whether the member has some actual amendments to propose.

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I actually articulated the specific areas that needed addressing. Those same areas were articulated and brought forward with Bill C-10, and again there were closure motions rather than serious dialogue around those changes. That is what we experienced.

I do not sit on that committee. I cannot speak specifics to that, but I certainly can speak to which motions need to be clarified in the overall content. That has been known by this chamber and has been known by the people who have been reaching out to me on my social media since Bill C-10 was introduced.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Madam Speaker, that was a great presentation.

When we are looking at doing something so significant, I am curious to know why there is a rush. As somebody who comes from a journalism background and who also was an online content creator, I know how important it is to make sure things are done properly.

What would be the ramifications of not rushing it through and making sure it is done well as opposed to done fast?

• (1940)

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I guess my immediate response goes back to how one backs up a double-wheeled wagon. The fastest way to back up a double-wheeled wagon is to do it very slowly. Those from a farming background will know that, because if it is rammed through, it will have to be done again. That takes more time and more effort, with more acrimony and things like that.

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I would say we need to take the time to do it once and do it right. There have been those opportunities; there just does not seem to be a willingness to address the very thorny issues, the tough ones. Much of this bill is actually supported by all sides of this House. Let us go with those, but let us work at those issues that we do not have agreement on yet, issues that we are all hearing about from our constituents, the concerns around free speech and around the ability to have that not unduly censored or directed.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague gave us a lot of food for thought in this chamber.

Some artists are the biggest proponents of free speech and freedom of expression. This bill's legislation is supported by the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada. It is supported by the Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and by ACTRA and so many other organizations.

Can the hon. member tell us which organizations he has spoken to that have concerns about this particular legislation?

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I think the direction to update the Broadcasting Act is supported by all organizations and all sides of this House. That need is clearly understood.

What I have been hearing is that in the process of updating and attempting to gather support to update the bill, there has been overreach. We have seen that too many times. Those are the concerns I am hearing about. I am hearing about the overreach, not the need to update a bill that is 31 years old.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to close debate tonight on motion 16, which I have also entitled the “stop Conservatives from wreaking havoc at the heritage committee” motion.

What we have seen over the course of the last few weeks is Conservatives wreaking havoc at the heritage committee. Bill C-11, as so many speakers have pointed out over the course of the last few weeks of debate in Parliament, would do important things to actually help to foster Canadian content, help to build the industry in Canada and make sure that there is more Canadian employment. There are many aspects of Bill C-11 that are important and that actually would make a difference.

How have Conservatives acted in committee? We saw it. After having an agreement for the equivalent of five weeks of hearings into Bill C-11, we saw the Conservatives systematically obstruct and wreak havoc at committee. They did a number of things, and they are important to put on the record.

First off, when there were witnesses outside—and I will point notably to the chair of the CRTC and also to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, all of whom came to answer questions from members of the committee, and they were often tough questions—what did Conservatives do? They actually blocked them from testifying and answering questions.

Who does this? We are parliamentarians and we are supposed to be asking the tough questions. Conservatives said, “No, we are go-

ing to just talk out the clock and refuse to let these people actually come in, testify and answer questions about the bill.”

Weeks ago, about a week and a half ago, the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP all filed their amendments, yet we saw Conservatives systematically obstruct and wreak havoc within the committee by refusing to actually file the amendments that are to be based on testimony from the witnesses we did hear. I should note that it turned out that the Conservatives finally admitted to actually filing their amendments on Friday. The idea that somehow this was accelerating a process that was unfair to them is simply false; they also tabled their amendments.

We heard from dozens and dozens of witnesses. We also had a whole slew of amendments suggested, and people and organizations also submitted written testimony to the heritage committee. Our job, as members of the heritage committee, is to take all of those suggested amendments, all of that witness testimony and all of the memoirs that were submitted and improve the bill, and it is important to note that the vast majority of witnesses support Bill C-11.

We have not had a single Conservative stand up in the days of debate we have had around Bill C-11 and actually admit that most of the witnesses who came to committee support Bill C-11. Not a single Conservative has admitted to that. That is a problem. There is a question of credibility when we are hearing from witnesses saying that Bill C-11 is necessary and would make a difference, that it would level the playing field between the web giants and help create more Canadian jobs and more Canadian economic prosperity, when not a single Conservative is prepared to admit that most of the testimony has been in Bill C-11's favour. I think that fundamentally undermines their credibility on this issue.

I will say something further about the Conservatives' lack of credibility on this issue: We have had absolutely wacko claims by Conservatives. Members will recall Conservatives saying that somehow Bill C-11 had something to do with the government actually following people on cellphones.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives who are trying to heckle me now can take a look at Hansard and see that the member for Provencher asked me the question of whether I was concerned about Bill C-11 and the government following people on cellphones. I have Bill C-11 right here on the desk, and there is not a word about cellphones or the government following people on cellphones. Conservatives are inventing things around Bill C-11. Is it because they never read the bill or is it because they believe in deliberate disinformation? Either way, they simply do not have credibility on this bill.

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• (1945)

The Conservatives have simply shown themselves not to be a responsible opposition party. They cannot invent things that are not in the bill. They cannot not read the bill and then show up in the House of Commons and simply throw out things that are not true. We have seen on social media how Conservatives have tried to equate this with some kind of censorship.

When Canadians read through the bill, they will see that the intent of Bill C-11 is very clear. It is levelling the playing field with the web giants, ensuring that there are more Canadian jobs, ensuring that we actually have Canadian content, and that we can develop the kind of prosperity in our sectors that we have seen under the traditional Broadcasting Act.

For Conservatives to pretend that there is a wide, wacko number of things that are not in the bill, never were in the bill and are not listed in the bill, and to pretend that has some kind of credibility in connection with the bill, is very rich.

We had Conservatives blocking witnesses who were trying to testify. We had Conservatives filibustering for weeks, refusing to have consideration of the improvements that must necessarily be made, in the opinion of the New Democratic Party and in this corner of the House. We see Bill C-11 as an important step forward, but we have heard testimony from many witnesses who want to see improvements. We have been tabling amendments as we go along and as witnesses have come forward, making sure that the bill actually reflects that important witness testimony and is improved.

Again, Conservatives refused to set any sort of deadline around amendments and refused to put in place a kind of structure around amendments. In this place, there is the incredible work of the legislative clerks that takes days to do. We have the translation facilities that are so important, because as a bilingual country we need to make sure that every document is accurate in English and French. With Conservatives refusing to submit amendments, it meant that work had to take place not in the way that it had for every other party that submitted their amendments a week and a half ago. It meant we were now going to have to cater to the Conservatives and spend a few hours making sure that the Conservative amendments were not mis-drafted and that they were available in both official languages.

The other parties already took care of that. The other parties, being responsible and not having a “the dog ate my homework” approach, actually believed that it was important to get the amendments to the legislative drafters in time and that it was important to make sure the translators, who do such a remarkable job in the House of Commons, actually had the time to put together those translations.

This is another way the Conservatives have been wreaking havoc in the House of Commons, rather than submitting the amendments. Why would they refuse to be responsible and respectful to the workers in this chamber who do such valuable work in drafting legislation and amendments, and in translating them? It shows a profound disrespect. Conservatives have been wreaking havoc in so many ways with a profound disrespect that they have for parliamentary institutions.

Here we are. We finally have an opportunity, as the House of Commons, to call the Conservatives on the Canadian heritage committee to account. These are the same Conservatives who blocked important testimony from witnesses who had a lot to offer: witnesses who should be questioned in some detail about their approach on Bill C-11. These are the same Conservatives who refused to submit amendments, the same Conservatives who blocked additional witnesses and the same Conservatives who have delayed, by weeks, consideration of clause-by-clause that should normally occur once we have heard from witnesses.

The Conservatives have done all of that at the Canadian heritage committee. Now, in the coming minutes, we will be called upon to judge them on their actions. I believe that the majority of the House of Commons will say that the Conservatives were wrong to do that.

• (1950)

The Conservatives, at committee, need to get to work. They need to work to improve the legislation the way the other parties at committee want to do. When the Conservatives get what I can only call condemnation from the House of Commons that they have not been acting appropriately, they have no one to blame but themselves.

It also indicates a bigger problem within the Conservative Party. As we will recall, right after the election, there was one of the culminating moments of this Parliament so far. It is a moment we were all proud of. We had the ban on conversion therapy come forward, and it was passed at all stages unanimously. That was a remarkable victory for common sense and equality. The ban on conversion therapy passed.

After that, there were all kinds of divisions within the Conservative Party, and ultimately, the member for Durham lost his job as leader of the Conservative Party. Since then, the Conservatives have dissolved into factions. I regret this because I know there are moderate MPs in the Conservative Party who I have a lot of respect for. Then there are other Conservative MPs who endorsed the hate and disrespect for democracy that was embodied in the so-called “freedom convoy”.

Right outside this House, there was a so-called “freedom convoy”, which called for the overthrow of a democratically elected government, expressed hate, flew the Nazi emblem and confederate flags, which are disgraceful emblems of hate, yet some of the more extremist Conservative MPs endorsed those aims and the so-called “freedom convoy”. One of them is even running for the leadership of the Conservative Party, the member for Carleton. What does that say about the Conservative Party when we have seen this disintegration of its respect for democratic institutions?

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Again, I note that there are moderate Conservative MPs who do respect democracy. I think their voices, tragically, have been muted within the Conservative caucus, but when Conservative MPs, including the interim leader of the Conservative Party, endorse the aims of the so-called “freedom convoy”, it should cause all of us to question what the direction of the Conservative Party really is. It was not a high point for the Conservative Party. Subsequently, we saw the concerns around the vandalism and violence with the so-called “freedom convoy”. It is simply not anything that any member of Parliament should be endorsing.

The aim that we have seen over the last few months seems to be that the Conservative Party is essentially refusing to let any legislation through. I have said before, and it bears repeating, that there are two block parties in the House of Commons: the Bloc Québécois and the block-everything party. The block-everything party is the Conservative Party, which has simply refused to let any legislation through. That has included important legislation, for example, that would provide supports to farmers and teachers. The Conservatives blocked it.

There was the budget implementation act, which the NDP was proud to have negotiated through confidence and supply. For the first time, an adequate and substantial investment in affordable housing was going to be made to meet a housing crisis that has been so hard on so many Canadians. The NDP and the member for Burnaby South, the leader of the NDP, negotiated that. For the first time in decades, we would see, coming down the pipeline, enough investments in affordable housing to create tens of thousands of affordable housing units, but they would not be based on market prices.

In my part of the country, New Westminster—Burnaby, a one-bedroom apartment can be \$2,000. That is not something that most people in Burnaby or New Westminster can afford, but when there is affordable housing based on 30% of people's incomes, then it becomes affordable. Then, regardless of people's income category, they can afford to have a roof over the heads and put food on the table. This is all a result of the confidence and supply agreement.

As well, the national dental care plan, for the first year, would be put into place for all children 12 years of age and under. We know that good dental care early in life allows for better dental care later in life as well.

• (1955)

As the Speaker would know, because I know how closely she is tied to her constituency, people in our country, millions of them, have never had access to dental care. We can see what that does to their teeth over the course of years without access to dental care. I have seen constituents whose teeth are literally rotting out of their mouth. Now for the first time, over the next couple of years, thanks to the NDP push and the confidence and supply agreement, we are going to see national dental care.

Dental care for those 12 and under and housing were very much part of the budget implementation act, yet the Conservatives blocked them as well. I say that sadly because there is no doubt this would make a difference in people's lives, but the “block everything party” just blocks by reflex. It just wants to block every piece

of legislation. That makes no sense when Canadians need the supports in the legislation before the House.

The Conservatives' refusal to accept, in this case, the ability of the heritage committee to put in place and improve Bill C-11 and add the amendments that we have heard from many witnesses will make the bill better, and the Conservatives' refusal to allow amendments to be tabled and allow a discussion to be held, have brought us to tonight and Motion No. 16, which I will again cite as a motion to stop the Conservatives from wreaking havoc at the heritage committee. It will allow us to finally improve Bill C-11, after hearing from witnesses and after weeks of delay due to the Conservatives blocking everything. It will make Bill C-11 better, and make it, in a very real sense, a bill that creates more Canadian jobs, levels the playing field for Canadians against the web giants and ensures that we will have a vital broadcasting industry for years to come that will tell Canadian stories to Canadians.

With that, I will conclude my speech. It is now eight o'clock, and I believe the bells will be ringing and soon we will be called to vote. I will be voting yes on Motion No. 16.

• (2000)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 8 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Government Business No. 16 now before the House.

The question is on the amendment. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of amendment to House*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the amendment be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. deputy House leader.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

• (2030)

[*Translation*]

And the bells having rung:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the amendment. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of amendment to House*]

• (2045)

[*English*]

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

*Government Orders**(Division No. 149)*

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Berthold
Bezan	Block
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chambers	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Deltell	d'Entremont
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Ferri	Findlay
Gallant	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lantsman
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poillievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
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Williamson	Zimmer — 116

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains

Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Paupé	Perron

Government Orders

Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi — 207	

PAIRED

Members

Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough — 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the amendment rejected.

The next question is on the main motion.

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

The official opposition House leader.

Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, I would like a recorded division.

● (2100)

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

(Division No. 150)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel

Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garneau
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauson	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Weiler
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 176

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Members

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Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benzen	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Moore

Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Members

Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough — 4

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried.

[Translation]

It being 9 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9 p.m.)

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