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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the inexplicable actions of the Iranian regime that led to the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini and the brutal violence it has perpetrated on its people have led to a watershed moment in history. People in Iran have said that enough is enough. Iranians protested and rallied in B.C., across Canada and around the world to demand change. They are demanding freedom, they are demanding justice and they are demanding that women's rights be respected. Canada has answered.

The individuals who are responsible for this tyranny will find no safe harbour in Canada, and non-Canadians will be expelled. Ill-gotten gains of these individuals in Canada will be seized and frozen.

Canada will continue to stand with the Iranian Canadian community and to do everything we can to keep them safe, as they and the brave children, women and men in Iran and around the world courageously stand up for basic human rights.

Zan, Zendegi, Azadi.

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LEADER IN INDIGENOUS FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Manny Jules, a community member and incredibly distinguished leader.

He has dedicated his life to public service and the economic and social advancement of indigenous peoples across Canada. Mr. Jules served as Kukpi7, or chief, of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc for 16 years, and in 1988 led the amendment to the Indian Act so that first nations could levy taxes on property on reserve.

He also helped create, and served as the chair of, the Indian Taxation Advisory Board, and was a visionary behind the current first nation property tax system. He was instrumental in the First Nations Fiscal Management Act, and he was the initial first nations chief commissioner since 2006.

I admired Mr. Jules, as I watched him from a distance as a young man. Getting to know him has been my honour as an MP. Receiving a blanket from him is something that I will not soon forget.

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BLACK MILITARY HISTORY

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *Honour Before Glory* is a moving documentary and important piece of Canadian history directed by Anthony Sherwood regarding our nation's one and only all-Black military battalion that was formed during World War I. The plot is based on the diary of Captain William White, sharing the story of the segregated battalion that allowed Black men who had previously been turned away by recruiters to enlist in the military.

In honour of Remembrance Day and in partnership with my friends and colleagues, the Minister of National Defence and Oakville Councillor Jeff Knoll, as well as Film.Ca Cinemas, we will be screening the documentary in Oakville on November 9 at 6:30 p.m.

I am thrilled to be joined by the director and the Minister of National Defence for conversation following the screening. There is no cost to attend this event, but space is limited. People may visit the link tree in my social media to reserve tickets.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

LÉANDRE DION

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Léandre Dion, a proud Quebecker and proud Maskoutan, passed away on October 29. He served as the PQ MNA for Saint-Hyacinthe in the Quebec National Assembly from 1994 to 2007. He worked with important people in Quebec's political history during the 1995 referendum, a very pivotal time.

Léandre was definitely what one would call a man of the people who made an extraordinary contribution to his riding. His greatest legacy is the major role he played in the creation of Saint-Hyacinthe's City of agri-food, veterinary and agri-environmental biotechnology.

It is no coincidence that he was awarded the Prix de la Technopole in 2018 for his commitment to the agri-food industry in the Saint-Hyacinthe region.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I extend my sincere condolences to his loved ones. An entire region is in mourning. He left us before he was able to make his dream come true. It is up to us to continue the work so that his dream becomes a reality and Quebec finally becomes a country.

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CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to farmers and other people in my riding who are concerned about flooding and prolonged drought caused by the climate crisis because it will permanently increase grocery prices.

Quebeckers want to see action and co-operation here in Canada and internationally. Federal carbon pricing does not apply to provinces that have their own systems, such as Quebec, British Columbia and Newfoundland, but it ensures a level playing field and ensures that together we will fulfill our obligations to our children.

Do the Conservatives in those provinces understand that when they argue against federal legislation, they are arguing against the interests of their own citizens?

A responsible federal government adopts a pricing approach that will ensure fairness across the country.

* * *

• (1410)

[English]

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, next week is Veterans' Week and on Friday, November 11, we will finally be able to meet in person to honour our veterans at Memorial Park in downtown Oshawa. Hundreds of my friends and neighbours will be in attendance as we get back to our regular services.

I want to thank my local Royal Canadian Legion branches 43 and 637, our military service clubs and the City of Oshawa for their coordinated efforts in organizing this year's ceremony.

I can proudly say that, in Oshawa, Remembrance Day is like none other across Canada. We welcome all to join us for this spectacular event as we will even have tanks on parade from our very own Ontario Regiment Museum.

This is the time we stand together, humbled, and reflect upon the sacrifices of those who laid down their lives so that we can live free. As we know, freedom is not free.

I am thankful for the work of our great community leaders in organizing this ceremony, and I look forward to paying my respects.

Lest we forget.

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REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the town of Oromocto, my hometown, Remembrance Day is more than just one day in November, it is a way of life.

Our town is home to the second-largest military base in our nation and has one of the highest concentrations of veterans and service members in Canada. For us, honouring the people who have given their lives in service to Canada is a constant commitment. It is the fabric of our community.

Today, walking the streets of Oromocto, we will see banners hanging from the streetlights that share the names and stories of men and women who have served our country. We are extremely privileged to be able to call this glorious land home, while so many people across the world are still fighting to keep and protect theirs.

I invite all Canadians to reflect on the service of the ones who sacrificed their lives, who fought for our collective and individual freedom, for the rights that we hold so dear and for this beautiful country.

Lest we forget.

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INDIGENOUS DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. Jaime Battiste (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November is Indigenous Disability Awareness Month. Many may be surprised to know that indigenous people have rates of disabilities three times higher than the average Canadian, many times without the support that many Canadians enjoy. However, they are some of the most resilient, kind and humble people in our communities.

One particular constituent comes to mind, and I would like to acknowledge Keenan Denny, fondly known in the Mi'kmaq community of Eskasoni as "Jinko".

Statements by Members

Despite having been diagnosed with BBS at the age of 15, Jinko has never let his disability stand in the way of his daily walk with the use of a cane to pick up the mail, or a visit with neighbours while fundraising for the National Institute for the Blind. From time to time, Jinko may fall, but he always gets up. He knows that he has a community that supports him, and so will the government that I am proud to stand with as we put forward the first-ever federal disability benefit in Canadian history with Bill C-22.

For all of the resilient indigenous people with disabilities in Canada, November is our time to recognize them, appreciate them and ensure that we take the necessary steps to help them.

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TAXATION

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals and the NDP coalition placed the financial well-being of Canadians on hold when they chose to vote against our Conservative motion to cancel the carbon tax on home heating. However, the leader of the NDP posted the following: “A cold Canadian Winter is coming. And this year, home heating costs could go up by 50 to 100% for Canadian families.”

This is hypocrisy at its finest. The NDP leader collects signatures to allegedly make life more affordable for families, but votes with the Liberal government to triple taxes, including those on home heating.

We said it before and I repeat it again: Canadians cannot afford the costly coalition between the Liberals and the NDP. Enough of two-faced politics. They must stop printing money while claiming to fight the cost of living crisis in this country. To keep Canadians warm this winter, the Prime Minister and his NDP caucus must commit to no new taxes and no more spending.

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● (1415)

[*Translation*]

MAISONNEUVE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Ms. Soraya Martínez Ferrada (Hochelaga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I want to mark the 50th anniversary of a fixture in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve community, the Centre Communautaire culturel social et éducatif Maisonneuve, or CCSE.

Since its inception, the CCSE has been involved in the cultural, social, educational and even physical development of our entire community. In its early days, it was one of the first to understand that cultural and social factors affect individual well-being. Economic challenges put recreational activities out of some people's reach.

All these years, the CCSE has enriched the lives of young and old alike through activities such as dance, sports and the arts. It is there for people from early childhood through the golden years.

Last week, I had the pleasure of awarding the organization a commemorative medal and certificate. I want to thank the executive director, Nadia Bourassa; Réal Ménard, former MP and chair of the board; all the volunteers; and everyone who, throughout the organization's 50-year history, has worked for the community.

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals spend, it is Canadians who pay. Hard-working Canadians pay through crushing inflation when they are buying groceries, filling up their vehicles and heating their homes. The Liberals have added more to Canada's debt in seven years than all the other governments combined in its 150 plus years of history.

With all this Liberal spending, is our country further ahead? No, it is not. It seems everything the Liberals are responsible for is broken. Instead of investing, the Liberals have wasted Canadians' hard-earned dollars. For example, they spent \$54 million on the Arrive-CAN app, which should have cost \$250,000.

The next time someone goes in for an overtime shift or to work an extra shift on the weekend, or the next time someone feels like they are working seven days a week to get ahead, I want them to remember one thing: Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that will cut government waste and respect our hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

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TAXATION

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the government had actually managed its accounts, maybe it would not need to triple the carbon tax on Canadian people. The NDP leader, in the government's costly coalition, is attempting to cover up the mistake he has made by supporting the government tripling the carbon tax. Now he is asking for the government to remove the GST from home heating bills.

The government continues to bring Canadians to their knees as it increases taxes. The cost of living is through the roof. Credit card debt is through the roof. Mortgage interest rates and the cost of food are through the roof. This is a record-breaking government for all the wrong reasons, not to mention the \$54 million the government wasted on the ArriveCAN scam.

The NDP cannot do one thing and then do another. Their blatant hypocrisy is unbelievable. If they want to cut taxes, why not start with the carbon tax?

*Statements by Members***BREAST CANCER**

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is often said that 50 is the new 40. However, when it comes to safe standardized breast cancer screening, starting at age 50 for Canadian women is simply too late. Current screening standards are not meeting the reality of what Canadian women need when it comes to early detection.

A recent report by Statistics Canada showed that growing rates of women are facing late-stage breast cancer when screening is only accessible at 50. Numbers jump again for women who are racialized, marginalized, or from rural and remote communities. As federal members, we can be leaders in empowering women to access early detection, no matter what province there are in across the country.

We all know someone, whether she is our mother, daughter, sister or aunt, who has bravely faced breast cancer head on. For me it is my constituent and friend Shira Farber. She has been an incredible advocate for our York Centre community and now she is one for women from coast to coast facing breast cancer, as she battles for her own life with three children at home and an entire community behind her.

I ask women across the country to stand up for women to meet standards at the age of 40 to be screened safely, for their health and for the health of all Canadian women.

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MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry declared that Canada carried out a genocide three years ago. The lack of progress in the 231 calls for justice is beyond shocking. At a recent coalition of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls meeting, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations acknowledged that the process needs to be indigenous-led, but he admitted that he does not know how to proceed.

The coalition has been advocating for inclusion and a seat at the decision-making table from the outset. Not only have they been excluded, but they have also been forced to create their own action plan without any government support or resources. Frontline workers who work closely supporting vulnerable indigenous women have also been ignored. Communication with these stakeholders ranged from non-existent to sporadic.

It is time that the minister listened to these women to ensure they are included in the development and execution of the federal pathway plan. The NDP is also calling for independent oversight of government bodies and repercussions for negligence in meeting timeline and targets. Enough is enough.

● (1420)

[*Translation*]**MICHEL LEPAGE**

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Michel Lepage passed away on October 25, 2022, just before his 75th birthday. Mr. Lepage was an expert pollster who worked for the Parti Québécois for 30 years and served under five premiers from René Lévesque to Bernard Landry. He could predict the outcome of an election within a hair's breadth.

Michel Lepage dedicated his entire life to Quebec's independence. He was always cheerful and never missed a gathering or an election. He was there for every battle, always present and ready to fight for the cause. When he offered to help out with my Bloc Québécois nomination, I was deeply honoured. Having Michel in my corner was a guaranteed win.

He was also passionate about heritage, and it is thanks to him that many churches are still standing today. He was often more interested in financing churches than in winning elections. Michel was the kind of guy who worked behind the scenes, putting all his energy into every project without asking for anything in return. He was an outstanding activist, a pillar of advocacy.

I salute my friend, who will forever live in our hearts.

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[*English*]**FINANCE**

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another day, another \$100,000 of new debt, all on the backs of Canadians. The costly coalition has added more to Canada's debt than every prime minister who came before him combined. The result is record-high, Liberal-made inflation and six consecutive interest rate hikes.

The Conservative Leader has been warning for years that out-of-control Liberal spending would cause inflation to balloon. More Liberal spending means the Bank of Canada had to increase the money supply, meaning the printers kept rolling. This led to record Canadian credit card debt and food bank usage.

The finance minister wants us to believe she has had an epiphany about spending, even getting her future predecessor from Papineau to utter the words “fiscally responsible”, but these are the arsonists who lit the inflationary fire in the first place.

Tomorrow, the finance minister has an opportunity to stop her inflationary spending, stop new taxes, stop punishing Canadians and stop plans to triple the carbon tax.

UKRAINE

Hon. Jim Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last weekend in Winnipeg, hundreds of delegates gathered for the meeting of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. I was pleased to host Ukraine's ambassador to Canada, Yuliya Kovaliv, to hear her assessment of the situation, both on the ground now and looking forward to the next steps. The civilized world is using its resources, of which there must be more, to fight Putin's aggression and prepare Ukraine for the rebuilding job, which will be necessary, we hope, very soon.

Remarkably, it came to pass that the ambassador and my daughter-in-law, who was born in Ukraine, come from the same place. Across 7,000 kilometres, the ambassador and a member of my family found out they grew up within 500 metres of each other. This is not just a "small world" story. It demonstrates how families have connected through the tragedy of this brutal war.

I want to reassure all members of the community, especially those living in my home province of Manitoba, that we will be unwavering in our support of Ukraine. We will prevail.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

HEALTH

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a month ago, the Conservatives warned the Prime Minister that there was a shortage of pain medication for children. This medication is widely available in the United States, but here in Canada parents are scrambling to find it.

• (1425)

[English]

Widely available in drugstores in the United States, pain medication for small children cannot be found here in Canada, leaving mothers and fathers scrambling to help their suffering children.

The Prime Minister has had a month since we warned him about this problem. He said he would fix the supply chain issues in our medical system. Why has he not solved this problem?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard from parents who are struggling to get pain medication for their kids. They are heartbreaking stories, and that is why Health Canada is taking concrete action to accelerate the flow of pain medication for children.

We are working closely with provinces and territories as they work to support and resupply as well. We know this is something that is part of the global disruptions we are facing because of climate change, and the pandemic has left—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. We are starting off on the wrong foot. I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition wants to hear the answer.

The right. hon. Prime Minister may finish off.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the pandemic has left challenges in our supply chains around the world, which is why we are continuing to work with partners to ensure we can get the things parents need to take care of their kids.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess in the meantime Canadians will need to continue to drive to the United States, where these medications are widely available for parents.

Back here at home, the Prime Minister's half a trillion dollars of inflationary deficits have given us a 40-year high in inflation. Now they are driving up interest rates. Inflationary taxes, including the Prime Minister and NDP's plan to triple the carbon tax, threaten to force Canadians to turn off the heat during winter.

Tomorrow is the fall economic update. Will the government commit today to freezing spending and freezing taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through the difficult times of the pandemic and now as families are faced with rising prices on so many different things, we have been there to support them. As of Friday, the cheques will start rolling out to 11 million households for a doubling of the GST rebate, which is going to help people in meaningful ways.

We are also moving forward on rental supports, as well as dental supports for children across the country. Unfortunately, the Conservatives, despite their supposed preoccupation with the cost of living for Canadians, are opposing our support for families who need dental care for their kids and our support for low-income renters.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's \$500-billion inflationary deficits and his coalition with the NDP have increased the cost of things we buy and the interest rates we pay. Now the Prime Minister wants to triple the taxes on heating, groceries and fuel to make the situation even worse.

Tomorrow, the government is presenting its economic update. We have a very clear demand or we will vote against this update.

Will the government freeze spending and freeze taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are always preaching austerity and budget cuts to employment insurance and pensions for seniors.

Oral Questions

We will continue to be there not only to support Canadians with measures such as doubling the GST credit, help for dental care for children or help for low-income renters, measures the Conservatives oppose, but we are also there to create an economy that works for everyone, with investments in a future that is greener and more prosperous for all workers.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, actually, Conservatives are the only ones protecting pensions and employment insurance against the inflation that is eating up the paycheques and the benefits of Canadians. Now the finance minister is suddenly pretending to agree with me on all of this. She sent a memo, that has since been leaked, in which she says that her ministers will have to find savings to match any new spending in the fall economic update.

It is not clear whether the Prime Minister got the memo. He still wants to continue to pour inflationary fuel on the fire with more spending still. Will he listen to his finance minister, who has started to listen to Conservatives, and cap spending and taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, only cold-hearted Conservatives would imagine and describe sending kids to the dentist, when they otherwise cannot afford to go, as pouring fuel on inflationary fires. Only Conservative politicians would consider that giving targeted support to help low-income Canadians pay for their rent is pouring inflationary fuel on the fire.

Inflation is a global phenomenon right now, and we have moved forward with targeted supports for families that will make a meaningful difference. Unfortunately, the Conservatives, for all their rhetoric, stand in opposition to help for families.

* * *

● (1430)

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we stand in opposition to the policies that have sent 1.5 million Canadians to food banks in a single month. We oppose record credit card debt on which the Prime Minister's policies are now driving up interest rates. We oppose policies that have forced one in five families to skip meals because they cannot afford food.

If we want to talk about cold-hearted, this is the guy who wants to triple the carbon tax on home heating when bills are already expected to have gone up 100%. Why will he not cancel that cold-hearted plan and cap taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are clear. The price on pollution returns more money to average families in the jurisdictions in which it applies than they pay out in pollution costs. This is the fact that has allowed us to lead in the fight against climate change and put more money back in the pockets of Canadians, but the reality is—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I do not know what it is today, but everyone is very rowdy.

Maybe I will let the Prime Minister start over again. I am hoping that everyone will listen this time rather than shout. I know that everybody wants to help him answer, but it is his turn to speak.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, despite consistent Conservative misinformation and disinformation on the matter, the simple mathematical fact is that the price on pollution returns more money to average families in the jurisdictions in which it applies than they pay in the extra cost on pollution. That is how we can move forward on fighting climate change while supporting families through this transformation of our economy and of our energy.

These are the things that matter to Canadians. This is where we are continuing to put them first, not ideology.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we recently debated the government's policy priorities. Besides the fact that we can certainly address more than one subject at a time, can we agree that there may not be a more important subject and priority than health?

In Quebec, the health care system is falling apart for lack of funding. Those who are ill languish on waiting lists, emergency rooms are overflowing, mental health is looking like a national crisis, and yet, the Prime Minister stubbornly withholds the money, creates delays and imposes conditions.

Does the Prime Minister agree that people's health is more important than his desire to strip powers from the provinces?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Quebecers expect and what Canadians expect are health care systems that deliver results for them, that are working to help them, to help their families, to be there when they need them. There are health care systems across the country that are not working in the manner that Canadians and Quebecers expect. For that reason, we are there to work with them, to improve these systems by providing more money, and also to ensure that Canadians see real results.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as my old man would have said: What would you know about that?

Oral Questions

Quebec is already administering a health care system that is bursting at the seams. That is true of all provinces. The pandemic has added to the already considerable pressure, and there is absolutely nothing to prove that a manager in Canada is better than a manager in Quebec or Alberta. There is nothing to prove that. Creating standards, implementing programs and imposing conditions is time consuming, it is very time consuming.

Does the Prime Minister not agree that, in the best interest of the people, he should transfer the money to the provinces first and then try to discuss with whomever he wants?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every year we pay tens of billions of dollars to the provinces for their health care systems and we will continue to do so. However, the reality is that health care systems across the country are not working at the level that Quebecers and Canadians expect. That is why we are saying that we need to work together to improve service delivery for Canadians, for Quebecers. We are here with more money, yes, but we are also here to ensure that we deliver real results for all Canadians.

* * *

• (1435)

[*English*]

LABOUR

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Premier Ford has just attacked workers, and not just any workers, but some of the lowest-paid education workers in the classroom. He knows that he is violating their charter rights. That is why he pre-emptively used the notwithstanding clause.

I have heard the Prime Minister's outrage, but that is simply not good enough. We know the Conservative leader and his party are not going to stand up for workers, but will the Prime Minister say today in this chamber what he is going to do concretely to stand up for workers and protect their charter rights?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, using the notwithstanding clause pre-emptively to suspend workers' rights is wrong. To invoke the notwithstanding clause in a way that denies Canadians the right to collective bargaining before that bargaining has even reached an impasse is wrong. The clause must only be used in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Like the leader of the NDP, I call on the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, who supposedly stands for rights and freedoms, to condemn the pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause to suspend people's fundamental rights and freedoms.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Conservative leader and the Conservative Party will not stand up for workers. It is not up to their party to—

The Speaker: Order. Would the members who want to have a conversation please go out in the hall rather than talk across the aisle?

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, we know that the Conservative Party and the Conservative Party leader will not stand up for workers.

We do have a question for the Prime Minister though. Expressing concern is not good enough. What the Premier of Ontario did is appalling. He attacked workers. Now we need action.

The Prime Minister has an obligation to act. Will he?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause to suspend workers' rights is wrong. Invoking the notwithstanding clause to deny Canadians the right to collective bargaining before negotiations have even reached an impasse is wrong.

We will always stand up to protect workers' rights. We will always be there to protect Canadians' fundamental rights.

As my NDP colleague noted, it is sad to see the Conservative Party, which professes to protect people's freedoms, not stand up to protect people's fundamental freedoms.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Liberal Prime Minister, nearly 50% of Canadians say their finances have worsened over the past year. For newcomers, that pain is leading them to leave Canada, with 30% of young immigrants planning to leave in the next two years.

Narinder is an engineer who messaged me saying the Liberal-caused interest rate hikes mean his paycheque is now being eaten up by his mortgage. He cannot afford food or necessities and is planning to leave Canada.

Will the Prime Minister stop his inflationary spending, stop raising taxes and stop driving people like Narinder out of Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know how important immigration is as a driver of our economic growth and as a counter to the labour shortages we are facing across the country. That is why we have put forward an ambitious immigration levels plan that is bringing in even more new Canadians, so they can ensure they are contributing to our economy, building better lives for themselves and their families and meeting the needs of Canadian businesses and Canadian communities.

We know there is more to do, but that is why we are making sure that students and engineers like Narinder are able to continue to succeed in Canada and build a life for the future.

Oral Questions

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Narinder wants to leave Canada, not stay here, because of the inflationary policies. It makes sense that a Prime Minister who spends a year's rent on a four-night hotel stay would think more inflation will address the inflationary crisis he created. It is like he wants to return to the days of his father, with out-of-control spending and Canadian families' cupboards being bare, and when people were giving their house keys back to the bank because they could no longer afford it.

Canadians cannot afford this costly coalition any longer. Will the Prime Minister stop the taxes, stop the inflationary spending and stop his plans to triple the carbon tax?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives engage in personal attacks focused on me, we are going to continue to focus on helping Canadians, whether it is directly with a price on pollution that is going to put more money in the pockets of Canadians where it applies, whether it is by moving forward with the GST rebate that is landing this Friday in many Canadian households or whether it is by moving forward on low-income supports for renters and supports for dental care for kids, which are two initiatives the Conservatives continue to stand against.

Canadians deserve a government that continues to stand up for them, not Conservative rhetoric.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was warned about his reckless spending. He was told it would lead to interest rate hikes and inflation, and he laughed off those concerns. Now, because of Liberal inflation, millions of Canadians are using food banks every month, and millions more are skipping meals because they cannot afford to buy basic groceries. They lay awake at night knowing they do not have the money to pay their bills, and the Prime Minister has the audacity to tell them they have never had it so good.

When will he learn from his mistakes, cut his out-of-control spending and stop raising taxes on Canadian families?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives are continuing to propose cuts, we are going to be there for EI, we are going to continue to be there for CPP and we are going to continue to be there to deliver a price on pollution that puts more money in the pockets of Canadians where it applies.

We moved forward with a GST rebate that is going to help 11 million households across this country, which is starting to flow this Friday. The Conservatives reversed their position and chose to support it, which is good, but they still stand against support for low-income renters and support for people to send their kids to the dentist. These are things that would really help Canadians. Why are they opposed?

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we are opposed to is the Liberal plan and Liberal policies that have led to millions of Canadians every month using food banks and cutting back on meals because they cannot afford groceries. Even the future Liberal leader, Mark Carney, has said that this inflationary crisis has principally been created in Canada.

The Prime Minister cannot blame others for the crisis he has created, and Canadians cannot afford more of the same failed Liberal policies. When will he stop making things worse, stop his out-of-control spending and stop raising taxes on Canadian families?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the investments we are making in Canadians, whether it is with the GST rebate that is going to help, whether it is with low-income supports for renters who need that extra support or whether it is making sure that all families can afford to send their kids to the dentist, are going to help.

Yes, there continue to be pressures because of global inflation, but the reality is that we are going to continue to be there for Canadians. In the economic statement we are putting forward tomorrow, people will see not just supports for families, but supports for the kinds of jobs and opportunities they will need in the decades to come.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all agree on one thing: Food is a basic right and a necessity that cannot be ignored. The problem is that the statistics are troubling. This morning we learned that one in five families in Canada has had to cut back on their food budget and on what they eat because of inflation. Last month, 1.5 million Canadians had to turn to food banks. At the Amélie et Frédéric food bank in my riding, the demand for assistance has doubled.

Does the Prime Minister realize that his inflationary policies are making food at the grocery store much more expensive for all Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware of how global inflation is hitting families hard right across Canada. That is why we are bringing in concrete measures to support them, such as help with dental care for children and assistance for low-income renters. The Conservatives, however, oppose these measures.

At the same time, with the investments we have been making in families since 2015, we have been able to lift 2 million people out of poverty across the country. We have been investing in families, seniors, youth and workers all along. The Conservatives have opposed most of these investments—

• (1445)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the Prime Minister says, this global context is not the only reason we have a problem here. It is because, in seven years, the Liberal government has never been able to control its spending. I am not the only one to say so. The aspiring Liberal leader, Mark Carney, actually said that this was not an imported inflation and that it was now a national inflation, a Canadian inflation.

Since the Minister of Finance, who also aspires to be leader of the Liberal Party, is presenting her economic update tomorrow, could her Prime Minister tell her to freeze taxes and spending? That is what will help lower inflation.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives keep proposing austerity as a solution, but the reality is that the targeted investments for families, seniors and workers are precisely what has created growth over the past few years and reduced poverty across the country.

We are here to help people. We are here to invest and build a stronger, greener future for everyone. Those are the choices we have made, and the Conservatives oppose them every step of the way. Whether we lower taxes for the middle class or pay benefits for children, they oppose it.

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HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am taken aback by the government's pretentious attitude. We in Ottawa are better than those people in Quebec. We know better than they do.

However, the government is finally organizing a meeting with health ministers. Despite how important this is, the health ministers will be there but not the Prime Minister. Furthermore, there is an economic update this Thursday and the health ministers' meeting will be held after that.

Am I to understand that this is a political operation, that the die is cast and that everything to do with the budget will have been decided beforehand?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that Quebecers, like Canadians, understand that the solution for health systems that do not perform as expected is not to simply inject more money.

Yes, money will help, and we will be there to invest more in health care systems. It will also take a collaborative approach to ensure that there will be results for Canadians and that health systems across the country work for them. That is exactly what we are focusing on.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, his collaborative approach is just a way of stalling so that he can impose conditions. I appeal to the Prime Minister's heart.

Even the hallways of emergency rooms in Quebec are full. Imagine how distressing that is. The waiting lists for surgery are endless. We are talking about real people, people who are really sick. I know parents, and I hope the Prime Minister knows parents, who are worried that their child is going to commit suicide. Actually, I

Oral Questions

hope he does not know any parents like that because that would mean that there are none.

Do we agree that people's health should not be jeopardized for the sake of a political agenda?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree that politics should not be a factor here. That is why we are saying that, yes, people should have access to family doctor.

People should not be left waiting in emergency room hallways. More money will not automatically resolve this problem. We need to do the ground work to improve the health care system. Yes, a collaborative approach is needed across the country. We need to make citizens the focus of the outcomes we want to achieve and that is exactly the conversation that we are currently having with the country's health ministers.

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[English]

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the NDP, the Prime Minister and their costly coalition voted to triple the carbon tax on people's home heating bills, the Prime Minister treated himself to a luxurious vacation and a wonderful night of singing in the palatial lobby of one of the swankiest hotels on planet earth.

He then spent \$6,000 per night on a single hotel room. Who stayed in that room?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives continue to focus on me, we are going to stay focused on supporting Canadians, whether that is with measures the Conservatives oppose to deliver rental supports for low-income Canadians or whether that is to make sure all Canadians can send their kids to the dentist.

We heard the Conservative leader, for months, talking about rights and freedoms for Canadians, and now that a government is pre-emptively blocking Canadians' fundamental rights and freedoms, there is not a whisper from the so-called freedom fighter. When is he going to condemn the use of the notwithstanding clause pre-emptively?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (1450)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was a nice try. He is very clever, but a moment ago I asked who stayed in the \$6,000-a-night hotel room, and he said that I was focusing on him. I guess we got our answer, then.

It is clear that the Prime Minister wants to talk about anything else to avoid taking blame for having spent that money on himself while Canadians are suffering. Can he confirm it was he who—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Conservatives continue to play rhetorical games, the reality is Canadians need a Conservative Party that stands up for them, which is something they simply are not getting. It is not stepping up on rental supports for low-income renters; it is not stepping up on dental care for kids who need it, and it is not even standing up for the fundamental rights and freedoms that the Leader of the Opposition made a full campaign out of. Now he is nowhere to be seen on standing up for Canadians' fundamental rights and freedoms.

Will he condemn the pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause?

* * *

LABOUR

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is from the guy who robbed a record amount from Canadian workers' paycheques when he imposed the highest inflation in 40 years on them. There was no negotiation for workers; in fact, they all took an across-the-board pay cut without ever giving their permission, and now the position of his government is that they should have their pay capped. The Governor of the Bank of Canada told CEOs that there should be no pay hike for Canadian workers to compensate them for the Prime Minister's inflation.

Does he agree with the Governor of the Bank of Canada that Canadian workers do not deserve a pay hike, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is trying to pretend he is standing up for workers right now when he is refusing to condemn a suspension of their most fundamental right, the right to collective bargaining. Workers' ability to negotiate a better future for themselves and their families is core to the success of this country's middle class.

Why is he not condemning this attack on the fundamental rights and freedoms of workers?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am condemning the attack the Prime Minister has undertaken on Canadian workers by giving them the highest inflation in 40 years, eating up their paycheques so that they cannot afford food. It is the Prime Minister who has sent 1.5 million Canadians to food banks in the month of March, the Prime Minister who has given them record credit card debt, and the Prime Minister who has forced one in five people to skip meals because they cannot afford to eat. Now the Governor of the Bank of Canada says those workers do not deserve a raise.

I condemn those comments. Will he?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the most fundamental rights available to workers in this country is the ability to fight for better rights, better opportunities, better pay and better working conditions, and that happens at the bargaining table. What has happened is they have been stripped of that right to bargain, to negotiate and to talk about a better future for themselves and their families by the pre-emptive use of a measure designed to suspend and override their fundamental rights and freedoms, but the Leader of the Opposition has refused six times to condemn that in this House.

• (1455)

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadian families are struggling with the rising costs of energy, whether it is putting gas in their cars or paying for their home heating. All the while, the oil and gas companies are raking in record profits, something the Biden administration is referring to as war profiteering. Frankly, it is. What is the Liberal government's response? It is to put even more public money in the pockets of these highly profitable companies.

When will the Prime Minister take a stand, protect workers, make these wealthy companies pay what they owe on their windfall profits and invest that into helping Canadians pay their energy bills?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by putting a price on pollution right across the country that puts more money in the pockets of families in jurisdictions where it applies, we are sending clear price signals to industry and to the private sector that they have to invest more in decarbonization. This is something we are focusing on, ensuring that these record profits from the oil and gas industry go into investing in decarbonization, go into CCUS technology to decarbonize, and are invested in better opportunities and jobs for the future while we fight climate change across the country.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the last election, the Prime Minister made some really big promises on health care. He made big promises to improve long-term care. He made big promises on mental health care. However, he is completely missing in action when it comes to the premiers of this country requesting a meeting on dealing with the health care crisis. When will the Prime Minister respond to the crisis we are dealing with and deliver on the promises he made?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we heard clearly from Canadians from coast to coast to coast that they want access to family doctors. We heard clearly from families from coast to coast to coast that they need to see an end to the backlog and they need better access to mental health services. These are things we are busy working on with the provinces and we are going to be delivering. Yes, we will do this with more funds, but also with clearer outcomes for Canadians. Canadians deserve a health care system that delivers for them. We know, as the head of the CMA has said, that we cannot just put money into a broken system. We need to fix the system. That is what we are doing.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, immigration is not just good for the economy; it is essential, and Canadians agree. According to a recent Environics survey, 85% of Canadians agree that overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy and the country.

My riding of Surrey Centre is embracing immigration, not only to reunite families, but also to ensure the future of our community. Could the Prime Minister please update us on the government's plan for immigration?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Surrey Centre for his hard work and his advocacy on the immigration file.

Yesterday, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship tabled our immigration levels plan, focused on attracting skilled workers who will contribute to the economy. Our plan will help cement Canada's place among the world's top destinations for talent, as well as fulfilling Canada's humanitarian commitments. We know that immigration grows the economy. That is exactly what we are continuing to do.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a new poll is out that suggests one in five Canadians are out of money, due to inflation. This means parents cannot afford to feed their kids and pay their bills, and they are terrified about where their next paycheque will come from. The Prime Minister just keeps making it worse. Canadians cannot afford this costly coalition. Will the Prime Minister stop his inflationary spending and stop raising taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder what the member opposite's constituents would say if they heard him saying that support for families who cannot send their kids to the dentist is inflationary and that extra support to help low-income renters to be able to afford their rent is inflationary spending.

That is the excuse the Conservatives are giving for not being there to help families send their kids to the dentist and for not being there to help low-income renters. These are things that will tangibly support Canadians, like our GST rebate, which is arriving in mail-

boxes as of this Friday. These are things that help. Why are they not helping?

● (1500)

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I cannot repeat in the House what my constituents have said about that guy. These families are in their darkest hour, and now even future Liberal leader Mark Carney has stated, “[I]t's not all imported inflation. In fact, most of it is now domestically generated inflation.” That is how out of touch the Prime Minister is. Therefore, will he stop his inflationary spending and stop raising taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will not stop ensuring that low-income families get extra help with their rental costs. We will not prevent Canadians from sending their kids to the dentist when they could not afford it before. These are measures we are putting forth that will help, in a meaningful way, millions of families across the country, yet Conservative politicians continue to stand against rental and dental support for Canadians.

If they really wanted to help Canadians in their ridings and across the country, they would step up and back our plan on rental and dental.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is the problem the Liberals do not understand: The Prime Minister cannot spend his way out of the inflation that he, himself, created. For the Prime Minister, \$6,000 a night for a fancy hotel room is three months of rent for Canadians who cannot afford it. It is \$12,000 a month for groceries at his house, while 1.5 million Canadians visited a food bank last month.

How can the Prime Minister pretend to understand the pain he is inflicting on Canadians, while simultaneously raising their taxes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this House we have put forward measures the Conservatives ended up choosing to support, which is good on them, to deliver GST rebates to Canadians that will start landing this Friday. Why will they not reverse their position on sending dental supports, so families can actually send their kids to the dentists, or support for low-income renters? These are things the Conservatives continue to oppose, concrete help that will deliver for Canadian families right across the country. The Conservatives stand, cross their arms and say, “No, we are not helping Canadians.”

On this side of the House, we will.

Oral Questions

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is raising taxes on seniors trying to heat their homes. He is raising taxes on families trying to buy groceries, because he gave his Liberal buddy \$250 million for ventilators we did not use, because he spent \$54 million on an app we did not need, that did not work and that should have cost a quarter-million and could have been built in a weekend, and because he gave \$133,000 to an anti-Semite and then covered it up for a month.

He is breaking the bank for his Liberal friends, while Canadians cannot break even. When will he just stop?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives need to stop with the misinformation and the disinformation. The price on pollution delivers more money to most families in jurisdictions where it applies than it costs them in extra costs on pollution. The fact of the matter is that our initiatives to fight climate change actually not only fight climate change, but put more money back in the pockets of families that need it. That focus is exactly how we are growing the economy, supporting Canadians and building a better future for everyone.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wonder why the Prime Minister thinks he is smarter and more competent than Quebec. Is it because of the 1982 Constitution? Is it because of the fiscal imbalance? Is it because of spending power?

I am getting the impression that he is telling Quebeckers that they are no good and that he and his buddies are better. I think he is confusing collaboration with taking sick people hostage.

I challenge him to name one thing in health care that a Canadian does that a Quebecker is unable to do.

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all Quebeckers are also Canadians. Until proven otherwise, his question is completely illogical.

All joking aside, the reality is that Quebeckers, like all Canadians, deserve a health care system that works. We are simply saying that the federal government will be there with more money. However, we must ensure that health care systems across the country see some improvement. It is not Ottawa that is calling for improvements, but Quebeckers and Canadians who are concerned about their seniors and their loved ones.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for me, being Canadian is like swearing an oath to the King. I do not have a choice.

Negotiating, talking, centralizing, that all takes—

An hon. member: Go home. You do not belong here.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet: —time. Meanwhile, doctors are waiting, nurses are waiting, patients are waiting, parents are waiting, young people in distress are waiting.

What does the government have to say to people who are waiting for their own money, for health care, just because the Prime Minister thinks he is better?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, families in Quebec who are waiting for health care are not waiting for federal money. They are waiting for health care provided by the Government of Quebec. They are waiting for improvements to the system. Like all Canadians, they expect solid results from their health care system, which is broken and needs fixing.

We will be there to invest more money in health care across the country, but we have to work with the provinces to ensure these improvements make a real, tangible difference for people.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the national sex offender registry is used by police to track and apprehend dangerous predators. Until last week's Supreme Court of Canada ruling, registration of sex offenders in the national sex offender registry was mandatory.

Will the Prime Minister do today what the justice minister would not do yesterday and commit to victims, to survivors, that his government will do whatever is necessary to make sure that sex offenders are again listed in the sex offender registry, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians need is legislation that goes after criminals, that protects our communities and that holds up in court. It is crystal clear that the Conservative Party's supposed tough-on-crime legislation over 10 years failed to do just that. It has been struck down in court and it is not protecting our communities. We will not take advice or lessons from this failed Conservative Party's failed approaches.

Canadians deserve real solutions that will deliver to protect our communities, protect our kids, stay the course and hold up in court.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that answer is not nearly good enough for survivors of sexual predators. He is going to have to do way better than that for survivors. Crime in this country is up 32%, with over 124,000 more violent crimes last year than when he first became Prime Minister seven years ago. Clearly, his approach is failing.

How many more people in our communities are going to have to get beaten, mugged and murdered because of his soft-on-crime policies? When is he going to change course, take action and clean up our streets? How many more people have to get hurt before we see results from the Prime Minister?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how many more supposed tough-on-crime laws passed by these Conservatives in the past decade need to be struck down by the courts before they understand that their approach is failing Canadians, is failing victims and has failed communities?

We are moving forward with real protections for Canadians that will hold up in court, that will keep people safe and that will continue to reduce the number of victims of crime in this country by keeping communities safe in real, tangible ways that will actually hold up in court.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was in Montreal recently to meet with victims' groups, racialized community groups and police associations to talk about crime in the streets of Montreal. They are unanimous. Bill C-5 is a mistake. Doing away with mandatory sentences for gun crimes is a mistake. I am not the one saying it. It is all the groups that I met with. This does not make any sense.

The bill is currently in the Senate. Will the Prime Minister call his friends in the Senate and ask them to vote against Bill C-5 and strike it down?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the measures set out in this bill increase maximum sentences for the worst offenders to ensure that there are real consequences. We are taking this approach to ensure that real criminals suffer real consequences, while recognizing that the best way to protect our communities is with bills that stand up to court challenges. That is something the Conservatives do not understand, because we keep seeing bills that they passed getting struck down by the courts because they do not protect Canadians or our communities.

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NEWS MEDIA INDUSTRY

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, an independent press is one of the pillars of our democracy. This is fundamental, and I believe it is our duty to protect it. Protecting it begins with ensuring that these individuals are paid properly for what they do. Can the Prime Minister update us on what our government is doing to ensure the vitality of our media?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her important question and for her hard work.

I agree with her. That is why I am asking Conservative members to stop siding with the web giants and instead support our bill. I understand that the Conservative leader would rather not have to comment on his approach to bitcoins and misogynistic buzzwords. We on this side of the House will stand up to the web giants in support of a free and independent press that keeps politicians accountable to Canadians.

[English]

HEALTH

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a parent's worst nightmare is a sick child. A shortage of infant and children's Tylenol, Motrin and Advil from earlier this summer is turning into a full-blown crisis. Parents are now having to choose between taking their sick kids to an overcrowded emergency room and crossing the border to the U.S., where there are no shortages on these drugs, just to get basic medicine to bring down their kid's fever and relieve pain.

When does the Prime Minister intend to do something about this crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we hear the concerns from parents on the supply of children's pain and fever meds. As a parent, I can completely understand. That is why we are committed to ensuring all families have access to the essential medicines their children need. Health Canada has been in communication with manufacturers, pharmacists and provinces and territories to ensure mitigation measures are in place. Our main priority will always be the health and safety of Canadians, and all options are on the table.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we advised the Prime Minister of this situation one month ago, but the Prime Minister always has a ready-made excuse to justify his inability to take action. As a grandfather, I get upset thinking about young children who are ill.

One month ago, he asked Health Canada to do something so that mothers and fathers can access medication for their children, medication that children will want to take.

Why is the Prime Minister once again making excuses to avoid providing the medications that sick children need?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are all hearing the concerns of parents about the supply of children's pain and fever medication. We will continue to ensure that all families have access to the essential medications that their children need. We will deal with this shortage.

Health Canada is in communication with manufacturers, pharmacists and the provinces and territories to ensure mitigation measures are in place. Our main priority will always be the health and safety of Canadians. All options are on the table.

Oral Questions

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Liberals' out-of-control spending makes life more expensive for all Canadians. Half cannot put aside savings. Home heating costs will double this winter. More Canadians already had to use food banks in one single month than ever before in Canadian history. For years, our new Conservative leader has warned that the NDP-Liberal costly coalition's inflationary deficits would force Canadians to have to pay the bill.

Tomorrow, will the Prime Minister finally give Canadians a break and stop his tax hikes and reckless spending?

• (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party has decided it needs to oppose supports for parents to send their kids to the dentist, and the Conservative Party has decided to oppose giving a \$500 top-up to low-income renters across this country to help with the rising costs of everything.

We are facing global inflation, yes, but there are things we can do to make it easier for families, things like child care, which we are moving forward on despite Conservative opposition, things like the CCB, things like the GST credit and dental and rental, which they continue to oppose.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Sustainable Finance Forum is on Parliament Hill this week. We will have over 60 speakers, and hundreds of participants will attend virtual sessions as well as events on climate finance and social finance. As we are all looking at ways to make the economy more sustainable, I would like to ask the Prime Minister about the progress our government is making to help Canadian businesses achieve both growth and sustainability.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Whitby for the hard work he does, not just for his constituents but for all Canadians.

From climate change to inequality, the world is facing big challenges, but together we can drive investment to create jobs in a net-zero economy, build affordable housing and make sure everyone has a real and fair chance at success. As a government, we launched our first \$5-billion green bond and released Canada's green bond framework. We also created the sustainable finance action council, and we will continue to build an economy that works for all Canadians.

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HOUSING

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 87% of indigenous households in Canada live in urban, rural and northern regions outside their traditional territories. That is 87%. Despite this, the Liberals are only committing \$300 million to address the urgent and imminent needs for urban, rural and indigenous community housing. This is so far nowhere near enough.

Will the Prime Minister commit to increasing the interim funding to a level that responds to the urgency and the desperate need the community has?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the housing challenges faced by Canadians right across the country are significant, but nowhere more significant than in vulnerable urban, indigenous, northern and remote areas. That is why we have put forward record amounts, a \$300-million direct investment, to support and grow housing supply in those areas.

We know there will be more to do, but we need to make sure that we are delivering results for Canadians and that is exactly what we are focused on.

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OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, in the midst of a climate emergency, oil and gas companies are sacrificing our kids' future for their corporate greed. In the past nine months, Imperial Oil made \$6.2 billion in profit, almost four times more than last year.

We cannot expect the arsonists to put out this fire. On the eve of the 27th annual global climate negotiations, will the Prime Minister finally eliminate subsidies to oil and gas companies and replace them with a windfall tax on their excess profits?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago, Canada committed, alongside other like-minded nations, to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025. That is not good enough.

The climate emergency means we need to act faster and stronger. That is why we are pulling forward by two years, until 2023, the need to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. We have already eliminated a significant number of them. We are going to continue to do it while ensuring that fossil fuel companies invest in decarbonization and in better jobs for everyone in the coming years.

The Speaker: I am afraid that is all the time we have for today.

We have two points of order, and we will start with the hon. member for Hamilton Centre.

Mr. Matthew Green: Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations and if you seek it, I believe you will find consent for the following motion: That, this House (a) reject any intervention aimed at restricting the collective rights of workers to freely negotiate their working conditions; and (b) condemn the use of the notwithstanding clause to destroy collective bargaining rights by Conservative Premier Doug Ford and the Government of Ontario.

• (1520)

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: We do not have unanimous consent.

The hon. member for La Prairie.

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[*Translation*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ALLEGED UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE FROM A MEMBER

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order regarding the member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, who just left.

While the leader of the Bloc Québécois was asking questions, the member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation used unparliamentary language. He said, “Go home.”

I would first like to say that the leader was democratically elected by the people of Beloeil—Chambly, who chose him as their representative. That is what we call democracy. I would very much like the member to apologize for making those comments.

The Speaker: The member in question is not in the House. I cannot ask him.

We will check what was said, and I will come back to the House with an answer.

Mr. Alain Therrien: Mr. Speaker, a number of us heard him. It is clear that those words came from him. I demand an apology.

The Speaker: I thank the member for bringing it to my attention.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—ARRIVECAN APPLICATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

The House resumed from November 1 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:22 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Carleton relating to the business of supply.

[*English*]

Call in the members.

Business of Supply

And the bells having rung:

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 207*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean

Private Members' Business

McPherson
 Michaud
 Morantz
 Motz
 Nater
 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Plamondon
 Rayes
 Reid
 Richards
 Rood
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schmale
 Shields
 Simard
 Singh
 Soroka
 Ste-Marie
 Strahl
 Thériault
 Tochor
 Trudel
 Van Popta
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Villemure
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Williamson
 Zimmer — 173

Melillo
 Moore
 Morrison
 Muys
 Normandin
 Patzer
 Pauzé
 Perron
 Poilievre
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Ruff
 Scheer
 Seebach
 Shipley
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Small
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Therrien
 Tolmie
 Uppal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Williams
 Zarrillo

Khalid
 Koutrakis
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lauzon
 Lebouthillier
 Longfield
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 Maloney
 May (Cambridge)
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKay
 McLeod
 Mendicino
 Miller
 Morrissey
 Naqvi
 Noormohamed
 O'Regan
 Powlowski
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Sahota
 Saks
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 St-Onge
 Tassi
 Thompson
 Turnbull
 van Koeverden
 Vandenberg
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zuberi — 149

Khera
 Kusmierczyk
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Lattanzio
 LeBlanc
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Martínez Ferrada
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 Mendès
 Miao
 Morrice
 Murray
 Ng
 O'Connell
 Petitpas Taylor
 Qualtrough
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Sajjan
 Samson
 Scarpaleggia
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Sorbara
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Trudeau
 Van Bynen
 Vandal
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Zahid

NAYS

Members

Aldag
 Ali
 Anandasangaree
 Arya
 Badawey
 Baker
 Beech
 Bennett
 Blair
 Boissonnault
 Brière
 Casey
 Champagne
 Chen
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
 Coteau
 Damoff
 Dhillon
 Dong
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Fergus
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fraser
 Gaheer
 Gerretsen
 Hajdu
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hutchings
 Jen
 Jones
 Kayabaga

Alghabra
 Anand
 Arseneault
 Atwin
 Bains
 Battiste
 Bendayan
 Bittle
 Blois
 Bradford
 Carr
 Chahal
 Chatel
 Chiang
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fillmore
 Fonseca
 Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Garneau
 Gould
 Hanley
 Holland
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Jaczek
 Jowhari
 Kelloway

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

AN ACT TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF CHÂTEAUGUAY—LACOLLE

The House resumed from October 28 consideration of the motion that Bill S-207, An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Châteauguay—Lacolle, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-207 under Private Members' Business.

● (1545)

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

*Private Members' Business**(Division No. 208)*

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bittle
Blair	Blois
Boissonnault	Bradford
Brière	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Fergus	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Gaheer	Garneau
Gerretsen	Gould
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Jones	Jowhari
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
O'Connell	O'Regan
Petipas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara

St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Vuong	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zuberi— 154

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
McPherson	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Paupé

Private Members' Business

Perkins
Plamondon
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Scheer
Seeback
Shiple
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer — 169

Perron
Poilievre
Reid
Richards
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

Berthold
Bezan
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerice
Bragdon
Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings
Carr
Casey
Chagger
Chambers
Champoux
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper
Coteau
Dalton
Dancho
Davies
Deltell
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Doherty
Dowdall
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Fergus
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Genuis
Gill
Goodridge
Gourde
Green
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfner
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khera
Kmiec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Bérubé
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Block
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brassard
Brock
Calkins
Caputo
Carrie
Chabot
Chahal
Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Victoria)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Damoff
Davidson
DeBellefeuille
d'Entremont
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Dong
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Ferreri
Findlay
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Fry
Gallant
Garon
Gaudreau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Gould
Gray
Guilbeault
Hallan
Hardie
Hoback
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Jeneroux
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khalid
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kram-Neuman
Kusie
Kwan
Lalonde
Lametti
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

● (1550)

[Translation]

FOOD DAY IN CANADA ACT

The House resumed from November 1 consideration of the motion that Bill S-227, An Act to establish Food Day in Canada, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-227, under Private Members' Business.

● (1600)

[English]

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

(Division No. 209)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Baldinelli	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron

Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
McPherson
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morantz
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Petipas Taylor
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Ruff
Sajjan
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Scheer
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh
Sorbara
Steinley
Stewart
Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Weiler
Williams
Yip
Zarrillo

LeBlanc
Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacKenzie
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCaughey (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Melillo
Mendicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrice
Morrisey
Murray
Naqvi
Ng
Normandin
O'Regan
Patzer
Pauzé
Perron
Plamondon
Powlowski
Rays
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schieffe
Seeback
Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Soroka
Ste-Marie
St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
van Koevorden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

Zuberi— 323

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. The bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division Government Orders will be extended by 38 minutes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

VETERANS' WEEK

The Speaker: Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence to commemorate our war veterans.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

[English]

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise on behalf of the hon. Minister of Veterans Affairs to pay tribute to all the Canadians who have so selflessly served our country in uniform.

When I was a little girl growing up in Kentville, Nova Scotia, where I was born, our province and town were steeped in military history. The history was palpable in our schools, on our class trips and at public gatherings. I remember visiting Historic Properties, the jetty in Halifax Harbour and Camp Aldershot, which is in Kentville.

● (1605)

[Translation]

Veterans' Week begins Friday. In the days leading up to Remembrance Day on November 11, Canadians across the country will pay tribute to those who have done so much to preserve our peace and security.

[English]

We must remember that this year we mark the 105th anniversaries of the battles of Passchendaele and Vimy Ridge.

[Translation]

We will also be commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Dieppe raid.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

We mark the 30th anniversary of the United Nations protection force in the former Yugoslavia, and 25 years since 8,500 Canadian Armed Forces personnel deployed to Manitoba in Operation Assistance.

We are truly so fortunate to live here and to have the opportunity to represent our ridings and our constituents in Ottawa as democratically elected members of Parliament. However, we must not forget that this privilege was born of the service and the sacrifice of those who came before us.

[Translation]

This peaceful, democratic country of ours was built by thousands of people who went off to war and never came back, and by those who returned but were never the same.

[English]

It has since been protected by every new generation of Canadian Armed Forces personnel, who so willingly and so selflessly assume the risks and responsibilities of military life.

The Canada of today exists because between 1914 and 1918, more than 650,000 men and women volunteered to serve, knowing full well that crossing the Atlantic could mean never coming back to their families, their mothers, their fathers, their communities and their loved ones.

[Translation]

The Canada of today exists because, for six long years from 1939 to 1945, our people once again answered the call, this time to help defeat Nazi Germany in Europe.

[English]

It exists because Canadians fought so valiantly for peace and democracy in the Korean War. It exists because of their service in the Middle East and Afghanistan. It exists because they have been instrumental in restoring and maintaining order and security as gatekeepers and peacekeepers.

[Translation]

It exists because they have always been there for the people of this country, never hesitating to go anywhere in the world to help Canadians overcome difficult situations.

[English]

Hundreds of thousands of Canadians have given their lives in service of this nation, and we are forever indebted to them and their families.

I ask our veterans and the members of our armed forces, on behalf of the Government of Canada, to please accept our profound gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

• (1610)

In our schools, our towns and our cities across this great country, from Kentville to Kamloops to Cambridge Bay, lest we forget.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 66,349 is the number of Canadians who laid down their lives during

the First World War. The number of Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Second World War is 44,090. The number of Canadians who gave their lives during the Korean War is 516. The number of Canadian Armed Forces members who lost their lives in Afghanistan is 158.

Those are the numbers, the statistics, but they are not just numbers or statistics. They represent real people who laid down their lives for our freedoms. They left behind families, who mourned them. They were someone's brother or sister, son or daughter, mother or father. They were young men and women who had hopes and dreams that will forever go unrealized.

[Translation]

They did it for all of us so that we can continue to live in freedom. They did it voluntarily, in the ultimate act of courage and sacrifice. It is a debt that we can never repay.

[English]

In much the same way, there is never enough we can do or say to thank those who served this country and came back forever changed. Whether their injuries are physical, psychological or emotional, they leave deep scars and often have a lasting impact on their relationships, on their families and on their futures. We owe it to them to listen, to seek to always do what is right by them and to ensure that what they fought for is never taken for granted.

[Translation]

We pay tribute to them for their loyal service and sacrifice. It is a great honour for me to be here today to express, on behalf of the official opposition, Canada's Conservatives and all Canadians, our appreciation, admiration and deep respect for them and to promise that we will always be there for them, like they were there for us.

[English]

Now, if I can, for a moment I will speak to a date that all Canadians should know well: April 9, 1917. It is said that from a Canadian perspective, World War One was both our greatest sorrow and our finest hour, and perhaps no battle symbolized that better than Vimy Ridge.

During four days in April 1917, four divisions of Canadians, fighting together for the very first time as a unified force, did what many felt was impossible: They took Vimy Ridge. It was our coming of age as a nation. It was a defining moment in Canadian history. As Canadian Brigadier-General A.E. Ross said of the victory, “[I]n those few minutes I witnessed the birth of a nation.” However, we should remember that while it was our finest hour, it was also our greatest sorrow. Not only was it our greatest victory, but April 9, 1917, was also the bloodiest day in Canadian history. Over 2,500 Canadians gave their lives that day.

If Canadians ever have the chance to visit Vimy Ridge, which is something I wish all Canadians could do, I would ask them to do something: Take a few moments to reach down and feel the grass. That is the life that grows from dirt and mud soaked by the courageous blood shed by young men in the cause of freedom.

April 9, 1917, is a date we should all know well, as are August 19, 1942, the Dieppe raid; June 6, 1944, when Canadians landed on Juno Beach during D-Day; and April 24, 1951, when Canadians held the line in the Kapyong Valley by calling in an artillery strike on their own location to hit the enemy soldiers among them.

These are all significant dates in Canadian history and they are significant dates for the world. On these dates, Canadians helped shape the course of world history. They are events that we should all take pride in, just as all Canadians should take pride in the valour of fellow Canadians who have served and sacrificed all over the globe in the time since, in UN missions in places such as Croatia, Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Cyprus, Kosovo, the Congo, the Golan Heights and many others; in Vietnam; in the Persian Gulf; in Libya; in Afghanistan, which was the longest deployment of our troops since World War II; and right up to the present day in Operation Impact. All of the Canadian men and women who served in these places and others should know that their fellow Canadians owe them so much.

I stand here to acknowledge that governments can do better. We must do better. It will not be enough until every single veteran feels heard and understood, supported and cared for, appreciated and honoured. Much needs to be done at the political level, and that conversation must and will continue because no veteran should suffer in silence, not know where to turn or feel like the government is not there for them.

If I can, I will speak directly to all of Canada's veterans. We must acknowledge the profound impact that their service all too often has. We must be there to care for their injuries, especially those we cannot see and may not understand. We have to ensure the necessary supports are there for their transition to civilian life and to support their families. Most of all, we need to listen and seek to understand so we can serve them as they have served us.

• (1615)

[*Translation*]

We all have a role to play in showing our respect. We should express that respect at all times and in all places. Whether big or small, every gesture and every show of support counts. It is important to wear the poppy, which is the symbol of remembrance, and to participate in local Remembrance Day activities.

It is not just during one event or one day or one week that we should be thinking about our veterans. We need to remember them every day of our lives.

[*English*]

If we were to ask any of our veterans to tell us the single most important thing we could do to repay them, I am sure they would all say the same thing: to never take for granted that which they fought for, our freedoms.

Routine Proceedings

Please join me and my colleagues in Canada's Conservative Party in making that commitment today. We pledge to uphold those freedoms. It is how we will honour their memories, thank them for their service and show our respect for their sacrifice. Freedom came at all costs and at all costs we must ensure it is maintained.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what is a commemoration? It is the act of remembering a person or an event, often in a very ceremonial manner. That is a simple and brief definition, but it carries a lot of meaning. It carries a lot of meaning because it is related to maintaining and adding to the collective memory of a people.

Through commemoration, we write our history. We write our history, and we define part of our identity. Through commemoration, we also define the things that are important to us, the things that we do not want to forget and the things that we must not forget.

Today, of course, we are commemorating Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day is observed on November 11 because that is the date when the armistice was signed to end the First World War in 1918. However, Remembrance Day is not just about honouring the memory of those who fought and died in the Great War.

In Quebec and in Canada, November 11 is a day to honour all our soldiers in all conflicts who willingly made the ultimate sacrifice. It is dedicated to the memory of all Quebecers and all Canadians who died so that we could live, live free, live in peace, and just live.

It is with humility and the greatest respect that I and my Bloc Québécois colleagues pay tribute today to the sacrifice of the Quebec and Canadian men and women who died serving the nation or for the nation.

Routine Proceedings

Do my colleagues know that 2022 was an especially important year for commemorations? At each commemoration, Quebeckers were honoured. I am thinking of the soldiers of the Royal 22nd Regiment who, 105 years ago, during the Second World War, gave everything for victory at Vimy. I am thinking of the selfless soldiers in the Fusiliers Mont-Royal regiment who, 80 years ago, took part in the Dieppe raid, the deadliest event in the Second World War. I am also thinking of the soldiers of the Royal 22nd Regiment who, 70 years ago, during the Korean War, served with distinction in the Battle of Hill 355. I am thinking of all those who, 20 years ago, went to fight for peace in the Balkans during the UN mission. In each of these conflicts, as well as in Cyprus, Rwanda and, recently, Afghanistan, Quebeckers and Canadians were there.

Quebeckers were killed. Many Quebeckers were killed.

We have been blessed with an unprecedented period of peace and prosperity over these last few decades. There is no doubt in my mind that we owe this period of prosperity to our veterans. It is important that we do not forget their sacrifices.

As a side note, the saying “Je me souviens” is not only the motto of Quebec and Quebeckers, it is also the motto of the Royal 22nd Regiment, the first French-speaking unit to be created within the British Empire in 1914.

In preparation for November 11, the Bloc Québécois invites all Quebeckers to wear the poppy, donate to a veterans' organization, speak to a veteran and take a moment to reflect on and remember the contributions and sacrifices made by these men and women, our veterans.

● (1620)

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand in this place on behalf of my New Democrat colleagues to recognize the sacrifices Canadians have made to pay for the freedom and democracy of our home and the homes of those in other countries. On November 11, we honour those who dedicated their lives in service for Canadians. We remember those who lost their lives in the line of duty, and we show our respect to those who continue to serve in war and peace, both at home and abroad, in protection of our rights and freedoms.

On November 8, we honour indigenous veterans. Back home in my riding on Vancouver Island, the plane of reconciliation hangs in the Comox Valley Airport. It is a unique commemoration of the substantial contributions made by indigenous veterans to Canada, who sacrificed not only their lives, but also their status and rights if they returned home. This history must not be suppressed. We must remember their bravery and their stories to ensure a better future for everyone who serves today.

As the NDP critic for veterans affairs, I am always deeply humbled and moved when I hear the stories of brave Canadian soldiers who endured significant burdens to do as they are called upon for our country. I have heard from generations of soldiers, and every single story is important for us to hear. It is in the remembering and the knowing that we do not forget.

This year, when I laid a wreath on behalf of the Parliament of Canada at Vimy Ridge with the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, I was deeply humbled by the love for Canadian soldiers in France. Driving through those communities and seeing both poppies and Canadian flags in the windows gave me a deep appreciation of the sacrifice, and the gratitude for that sacrifice.

Standing over the graves of so many young Canadian soldiers has also left me with a tremendous respect for those who wear the uniform and a deep confirmation that the cost of war is far too great. It is a cost that cannot ever be taken without the deepest of consideration. As we see the conflict of our planet, we must always consider the preciousness of every single life and the sacrifice we are asking for when we ask them to protect us. When I was a young person, my neighbours were a couple who had fled Nazi Germany. I remember Mary telling me, “We must pray for peace unceasingly.” Every year of my life, I understand this more fulsomely.

The cost of war is high, and there are many ways to remember and thank those who paid the ultimate price, as well as those who came home with wounds, which we often cannot see, but often there are ones that we can. There is also the sacrifice of those who loved them the best. Remembering is a commitment every Canadian must dedicate themselves to, and not just for a week a year during Veterans' Week, but every single day. History repeats itself unless we learn collectively and remind ourselves what sacrifice is.

Canadians from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds have served and continue to serve today, from serving in the major wars of the first half of the 20th century to fighting in Afghanistan and the Middle East, and from peacekeeping in overseas operations to helping right here at home combatting the COVID-19 pandemic, floods and forest fires. Those are the many contributions the armed forces have made.

When the call is made for them, whether it is domestically or away, I hope we in this place and every Canadian all remember the body in each of those uniforms, and that each soul has loved ones who stand beside them. They know the risk and are willing to carry it in service of our country.

Earlier this year, on May 14, our riding lost 100-year-old veteran James “Stocky” Edwards, a Canadian fighter pilot during World War II and a community touchstone. We all miss him so very much. Many soldiers from the Second World War have left us. It falls on us to carry their stories and their history, which is our history, and learn and understand the history of every task and battle put before our Canadian Armed Forces, for which they rose to the challenge.

● (1625)

On this Remembrance Day, to all members of the Canadian Armed Forces, past and present, I thank them deeply for their service. I thank them for getting up every day and protecting our country, both in the past and the present. I call on all civilian Canadians to take on their responsibility to learn and understand so that we remember, lest we forget.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to offer some thoughts today.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today among all my colleagues to mark Remembrance Day.

[English]

Each one of us has been touched deeply and personally by the sacrifices of people within our own families and in our communities. I want to thank the minister for her words. I want to thank the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie for his thoughtful comments, as well as the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles and my friend, the member for North Island—Powell River.

The member for North Island—Powell River anticipated some of what I wanted to share of that feeling we have every year, and now we are coming out of COVID and can gather together again in person, of going to the cenotaph and having the honour of placing a wreath in the memory of those who have fallen to ensure us the life we have, the liberties and the freedoms.

In that moment, we look around, and every year we see fewer veterans. These are the brave men and women who have served in numerous wars, and each year, gathering at the cenotaph, there are fewer of them. We do, as the hon. member for North Island—Powell River said, miss them. I am going to try to get through this, because I want to speak of one of my favourite friends, who is in that category.

First, I want to thank Peter Chance, who is one of the members of my riding who is coming up to his 102nd birthday. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy and is a commander retired. He served in the Battle of the Atlantic, D-Day and the Korean War. He will be there on November 11 at the cenotaph in Sydney in British Columbia. He is doing remarkably well, and he enjoys sharing the stories of his time with those younger people who need to know what it was like.

One of our other major local heroes, Major Charles “Chic” Goodman, retired, is certainly well known to the member for Durham, who went with Chic Goodman to the memorials for the role of the Canadian military in liberating the camps in the Netherlands. Chic served in France and Belgium, and was wounded in the Netherlands. As a member of the South Saskatchewan Regiment, he was part of the original Canadian group to liberate Kamp Westerbork.

Routine Proceedings

I mention this now because there is something I hope the minister and her colleague, the Minister of Finance, will do for our veterans while there is still time. My dear friend Chic Goodman, who is now 96, is in palliative care. His wife gave me permission to share this with the House. She is standing vigil with him. He is not expected to last many more days, and I do not think he will be with us at the cenotaph. However, his most profound wish is that his wife of 36 years would get a veterans pension. She falls under what we call, and the member for North Island—Powell River knows this well, the “gold diggers clause”. All we would need to do is lift it.

We speak these words to honour our veterans. There is something tangible we can do, and Chic Goodman would certainly like to know, before he breathes his last breath, that his dear wife Nancy, his wife of 36 years, so not a gold digger, would have a pension from the government for the service of her brave husband, a real war hero.

I will not say more now; I am not sure I could. As all of us gather, we must never forget. Also, as we remember, we must do what we can to be of service to those who sacrificed so much for us.

● (1630)

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to thank all members for their interventions.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

* * *

PETITIONS

FALUN GONG

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first is a common petition that has been presented over the last number of weeks with respect to some of the atrocities we are witnessing in China. The specific requests of the petitioners are that Parliament pass a resolution to establish a means to stop the Chinese Communist regime from systematically murdering Falun Gong practitioners for their organs, amend Canadian legislation to combat forced organ harvesting and publicly call to an end the persecution of the Falun Gong in China.

● (1635)

HOWE ISLAND FERRY

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am presenting today relates more directly to my riding of Kingston and the Islands. One of the islands is Howe Island. There is a ferry service to access the island, but in recent weeks, the number of vehicles on the ferry has been reduced pretty much without warning.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners understand that there are some requirements of the Ministry of Transportation to re-establish it to full capacity. However, they are asking the minister to directly work with the vessel operator so that the maximum capacity can be temporarily reimposed and give the vessel operator the opportunity to properly modify the vessel so it would be in compliance with the requests of the Ministry of Transportation.

SALMON FISHERIES

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to table a petition on behalf of British Columbians who are concerned by the number of B.C.-bound salmon being caught by ever-expanding Alaskan fisheries. According to Watershed Watch, more than 15 million U.S. dollars' worth of sockeye, chinook and coho salmon are caught each year by Alaskan pink fisheries. With the Pacific Salmon Commission meeting early next year, these residents hope the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will raise their concerns.

The signatories call on the Government of Canada to demand a renegotiation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty to address the expansion of Alaskan fisheries and other interceptions of B.C.-bound Canadian salmon.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The signatories of the first petition are calling on 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; require companies to do their due diligence, including carefully assessing how they may be contributing to human rights abuses or environmental damage abroad; establish meaningful consequences for companies that fail to carry out the report; and establish a legal right for people who have been harmed to seek justice in Canadian courts.

AGRICULTURE

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is with regard to multinational seed companies gradually replacing the immense diversity of farmers' seeds with industrial varieties. The petitioners call on the House to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women; recognize their vital role in the struggle against hunger and poverty; ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers; and protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition today, in which the petitioners are looking for transparency and accountability in government. They acknowledge that transparency and accountability are the two main pillars of good governance and that the Liberal government has no external tools to hold elected officers accountable. They note this is at least partly based on the lack of proportional representation for fair voting.

The petitioners believe the situation would be improved with the creation of an arm's-length integrity committee to report to the public on a regular basis, and ensure elected officials are accountable and transparent and exhibit good governance. They call on the government to create such an arm's-length integrity commission.

JUSTICE

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. I have two petitions to table before the House today.

The first concerns a situation that is close to my heart. It relates to street crime. The people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, particularly people who are residents in downtown Kamloops, call for this chamber to legislatively respond to recent decisions from the Supreme Court of Canada, particularly as they relate to bail.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls on the government to immediately revoke the permit to return the sanctioned Nord Stream 1 turbines to Russia via Germany, and to enact further economic sanctions on Russia as deemed feasible and desirable.

* * *

● (1640)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

*Government Orders***REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE**

USE OF NOTWITHSTANDING CLAUSE BY ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that I have received notice of a request for an emergency debate. I invite the hon. member for Hamilton Centre to rise and make a brief intervention.

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to seek leave for an emergency debate on the authoritarian use of section 33, the notwithstanding clause, on some of the lowest-paid public sector workers we have here in Ontario. This is an attack on the charter rights of not just the CUPE workers, but all workers across the country.

The \$39,000 the workers make is not enough. These workers have had 10 years of deferred wages and many years at a 0% freeze. They are mostly women. The government's use, under Doug Ford, of the notwithstanding clause, pre-empting any kind of negotiations, shows the lack of faith they have in this process.

I stand today in solidarity with the leader of the official opposition in Ontario, Peter Tabuns, and my NDP colleagues in that legislature calling the government on its lies. Doug Ford is absolutely a liar. He is lying about the impacts that it has—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The usage of that term in the House of Commons is not acceptable. I would ask the member for Hamilton Centre to retract that and find a more appropriate word.

Mr. Matthew Green: Mr. Speaker, just to be clear, that rule only pertains to the members within this House. Given the premier is outside of this House, I will not withdraw my comment, because he is misleading Ontarians on the impact this will have on these workers.

This is serious and it is extortion. He is extorting these workers in order to negotiate in favour of the government. For these reasons and for that purpose, I think it is important for every worker across the country to pay close attention to the premier's use of the notwithstanding clause, because no doubt it will be used for workers in every province across the country unless we stand up for these workers here today.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Hamilton Centre for his intervention. However, the Chair is not satisfied that his request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

• (1645)

AVAILABILITY OF CHILDREN'S MEDICATIONS

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that I have also received another notice of a request for an emergency debate. I invite the hon. member for Carleton to rise and make a brief intervention.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think all parents would agree that the matter I am about to raise is indeed an emergency.

Across this country, there have been shortages of medications required for pain relief by small infants and babies. Children's Tylenol, ibuprofen and other medicines are necessary to relieve the often intense pain that young children feel during sickness, teething

or other conditions. It has come to be expected that one could go to a local drug store to get these medications. Unfortunately, in Canada, that has not been the case. There have been shortages right across the country. We raised this matter a month ago.

The good news is that in the United States, they do not appear to have this problem. We did check online today and found it was easy to order these medicines, but an American address is needed to get them. The American shelves are stocked, but here in Canada the shelves are empty.

I want to thank the hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake who brought this to my attention. She was the one who first alerted me to this crisis. She is a young parent. I am a parent, although not a young one. We were lucky last night. My little one needed children's Tylenol. We had a few pills left, but I cannot imagine what kind of night it would have been for her and us if we had run out.

On behalf of parents right across the country, Conservatives are seeking an emergency debate on how Canada could restore its supply chains and supply parents and children with these necessary medications that are available in other countries, but for some reason that the Prime Minister still cannot explain are not available here in Canada.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Carleton for his intervention. However, the Chair is not satisfied that this request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended by 28 minutes.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Nunavut, Indigenous Affairs; the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Taxation; and the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Housing.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR A HEALTHIER CANADA ACT

The House resumed from October 31 consideration of the motion that Bill S-5, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, to make related amendments to the Food and Drugs Act and to repeal the Perfluorooctane Sulfonate Virtual Elimination Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill S-5.

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[English]

I will give a bit of background for people listening this afternoon.

Bill S-5 is an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, to make related amendments to the Food and Drugs Act and to repeal the Perfluorooctane Sulfonate Virtual Elimination Act

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, CEPA, has not been significantly updated since it was passed in 1999. Bill S-5 is the first major update of this very important bill.

I just want to remind people watching that if they look at the word “conservative”, the root of the name of our party, it means to conserve. We have always been committed to protecting our ecosystems and our environment.

There are some things in this bill that are good and there are some things that are not so good, which I want to explain. Let us start by talking about what is good and what is supportable in this bill right from the start.

This bill modernizes our environmental regulations in the act. As I said in my opening, it has been a long time and it is definitely overdue. It also reduces some of the red tape. This is a good thing. It helps our competitiveness. It helps people do business. It helps the environmental assessments get done and done properly.

It also allows other ministers to manage substances where another federal act is more appropriate. Again, these are more efficiencies.

It allows environmental risk assessment for drugs to be done solely under the food and drugs regulations and it removes duplicate monitoring under CEPA. Again, as someone who has served as the parliamentary secretary for the environment and health, I see how these work together. I see these as very positive things.

There are some things in here that are not so good.

The bill does introduce the concept of the right to a healthy environment. Again, this is a good thing. However, the bad thing about it is that it is not defined. What is the right to a healthy environment?

The Liberals have had a long time to approach this and define it so that it gives certainty. Unfortunately, they are going to have two years to define that. Anything that adds uncertainty, I find, is not a good thing.

The bill also has several amendments put forth by the Senate that really are not in the best interests of Canadians. I will talk about one of them.

One of the amendments introduces a new term called a “vulnerable environment” without defining it. This is more uncertainty. It gives a little bit more power to the minister, which is very subjective. Business and environmental institutions want some certainty, so that is a bit of a problem.

What I find is a big problem with it is it allows anyone to request that a minister assess whether a substance is capable of becoming toxic. Let us look at this a little more closely.

That means that anyone in Canada can bring forward a letter or request to a minister and the time this would take and the number of people who would be interested in doing this could be unbelievably large. In one part of the bill, it does help remove red tape but then in another part like this, it increases it.

I would like to talk about the plastics industry. I am from Oshtemo where we like to manufacture stuff. One of the things that we have a history of manufacturing is automobiles. Plastics are one of those substances that allow automobiles to be lighter and more efficient, which, when we are thinking about the environment, is a good thing.

With this bill, what we have now is that plastics manufactured products are listed in schedule 1, part 2. The Alberta government is actually taking the government to court over this because it is very, very serious. The government renamed schedule 1 so that it is no longer called a list of toxic substances. However, substances are still referred to as toxic in the act. This is problematic.

● (1650)

To explain it to the House, I looked up the definition of “toxic”, so I would like to read it into the record. Toxic means containing or being poisonous material, especially when capable of causing death or serious debilitation; it is also defined as being of, relating to or being caused by a toxin or another poison.

This is a problem. We just came out of a pandemic, for example, and plastics were an extremely important part of our being able to manage that. As I said, for car parts, where I come from, this is going to be really important, and I do not think the government has looked at the economic cost of changing this and calling plastics toxins.

It is something I am really worried about. I think we have to look at this in committee and make sure we change it, because I wonder what the motivation is here. I think it is going to cause a lot of fear. We can pick up anything here in the House, and whether it is a phone or an earpiece, they are all plastics. Again, I wonder what the motivation is.

I mentioned that Alberta is taking the government to court over the legislation. It seems the government, whenever it gets the chance, wants to beat up Alberta. It is horrible, because plastic is another economic driver, and I am very uncomfortable with the legislation.

We can elaborate a bit on the plastics. What do people think about in this past pandemic when they think about plastics? They think about PPE. They think about something that is very sanitary. It has trusted performance. We can be sure it is going to do what it has to do, and it is very convenient, so if we start to call these things toxic and we are dealing with them in health care, it does not even make sense. What are going to be the options for physicians in hospitals, if they cannot use plastic?

In Oshawa, we see what we can build cars with, but sometimes there is no real option other than plastics, so what is going to happen if we enforce the legislation? What I see happening is that it is going to drive plastic manufacturing outside the country. A lot of it is going to be driven to areas that do not have really great environmental laws and protections, like we have here. I could mention China, and maybe I will talk a bit more about that, if I can get to it.

When we are looking at plastics, everybody would like to see less plastic, for example, go into the oceans. Everybody is okay and in agreement with that, but Canada is not the problem here, so we would be putting something in, when 93% of the plastics dumped into the oceans come from 10 rivers, and seven of those are in Asia. One is the Yangtze River in China, and two are in Africa, so the government would be driving jobs out of Canada. It just does not make sense. We do this really well. Canada is not the problem. We should not be getting punished because the government really has not thought this through.

Let us take a look at the competitiveness issue. No matter what, if we are not manufacturing plastics here in this country, we are still going to have to use them. I know the Prime Minister does not really talk about monetary policy, and he does not really think about it, but other MPs in the House have to. We really have to look after our communities that are going to be hit really hard, for example, this winter, so let us take a step back here and allow the legislation to go to committee, because having these plastic bans, sometimes, sounds good, and the Liberals like things that sound really good. However, the bans may have a negative effect on the environment, because we would have to substitute different products.

Maybe I could talk about how this is starting to happen and affect everyday people. I took my mom out for dinner last night. She is 94 years old. One of the places she loves to go is Swiss Chalet, so we had a drink. Instead of a plastic straw, we got one of these paper straws, and I will just go into a bit of statistical analysis here. We go into this restaurant, and instead of a plastic straw, which takes 39 kilojoules of energy to make and emits 1.5 grams of carbon dioxide in its life cycle, we now have a paper straw that takes 96 kilojoules of energy to make and emits 4.1 grams of CO₂ over its life cycle, so the problem with a lot of these Liberal policies is that they sound good, but they really are going in the wrong direction.

I would like to continue. I know I am running out of time, but I welcome questions from my colleagues.

• (1655)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to say that Swiss Chalet was an excellent choice by the member's mother at 94 years old. I

Government Orders

would love to know the secret to living that long, and maybe he could share that with me later. Maybe it is Swiss Chalet.

In all seriousness, I have heard this argument from the other side of the House a number of times, about plastic straws versus paper straws. Members may know that former Progressive Conservatives, like Brian Mulroney, did not care where acid rain started and did not care who was directly responsible for the depletion of the ozone layer. They saw them as global problems, and they saw Canada's unique position to be leaders in confronting those problems.

Why are the Conservatives insistent on drilling down into the micro details of how many kilojoules are created during the process of making something, rather than looking at the global problem and seeing Canada's opportunity to lead in terms of change that the globe needs?

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Kingston. Hopefully one day we get to share that chicken at Swiss Chalet, and hopefully he is paying this time.

Let us actually talk about results. The member talked about Brian Mulroney, and he is exactly right: Brian Mulroney realized that we had to take action, but the action had to have results.

I brought up the issue of the straw, because literally millions of straws are used every year, and it is absolutely going in the wrong direction. Add that to some of the other Liberal policies, like the carbon tax, for example, which we see has done absolutely nothing to lower emissions. Let us look at the record of the Liberal Party. It has not actually met any of its targets.

We can talk, and we can kind of massage things, but at the end of the day, Conservatives on this side want results. At the same time, we want to make sure our economy keeps growing and that we are a good place to do business.

We will support the bill, but we have to send it to committee because of some of these amendments, and because there are problems with the bill.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I have a few things I would like to say to him, but I do not think that I have enough time.

First, Canada obviously has a plastic problem. Only a tiny fraction of our plastic gets recycled. It is ending up in rivers in China and elsewhere because we are sending our garbage to the other side of the world. We have pawned our problem off on others.

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Second, when I look at the amendments the bill makes, it is easy to see all of the factors that need to be considered before a substance is deemed to be toxic. The minister is not the one who decides whether or not a substance is toxic. There are many factors that must be considered.

Finally, I thank my colleague and the opposition party for saying that they will vote in favour of the bill so that we can study it in committee.

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

What I am talking about here is perspective, and we have to look at what Canada can do. I was quite correct when I said 93% of the plastics that go into the oceans come from 10 rivers that are not in Canada. However, we are successful at recycling, and we can get better, but we cannot put in something that is going to be doing the exact opposite of what we should be doing.

As I said, we have so many issues here with the carbon tax, and I could go on and on about that: how it is increasing our costs and decreasing our competitiveness. What we want to see as Conservatives is something that is really going to be effective in lowering greenhouse gases and doing something positive for the environment.

I welcome my colleague's comments, and hopefully we can get something together that will make a positive impact for Canada.

● (1700)

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member. I am happy to hear that he is looking for results and is in support of the bill's going to committee to get some work done.

New Democrats have been calling for the creation of an office of environmental justice to address the disproportionate impacts of toxic substances and environmental hazards on Black, indigenous and racialized communities. The U.S. has had an Office of Environmental Justice for nearly 30 years now, whereas Canada lacks a coordinated capacity to ensure that racialized and disadvantaged communities have the same opportunity to enjoy environmental protections as other Canadians.

Would the member support the creation of an office of environmental justice like the one that exists in the United States?

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, this is one of the important things we can talk about when we debate it at committee. There are many things we can do as a country to make improvements. Unfortunately, the way the bill is written right now, it just is not going to do that.

Hopefully, we will get an opportunity to chat a bit more in committee.

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will start by wishing you a belated happy birthday.

I am pleased to rise on Bill S-5. I have not spoken in the House for a while. I have been too busy covering committees. It is nice to be back.

Of all the hundreds of bills I have debated, this one has to have the sexiest title: an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, to make related amendments to the Food and Drugs Act, and to repeal a couple of words that I cannot pronounce Virtual Elimination Act. This bill basically replaces Bill C-28, which the government brought in during a previous Parliament.

When introducing this bill, the environment minister talked up the usual propaganda. He talked about Canadians knowing the urgency of the need for this bill and said that the government is responding to this urgency. I have to laugh, because, again, this bill existed in the previous Parliament, but the environment minister was part of the government that called an early election and effectively killed the bill, using crass political opportunism to take advantage of what were favourable polls at the time and also to kill the Winnipeg lab inquiry. Basically, it killed the bill, the same one that is so urgent that the government was seized with it but decided to waste a year by killing it with a cynical election.

Generally, as my colleague from Oshawa commented before me, we support Bill S-5. Our chemical management plan is probably the best in the world, along with our chemical engineers, especially in Alberta at DuPont. I used to work in Fort Saskatchewan, at a chemical plant there, with lots of great jobs, lots of very strong investment and high-paying jobs, which is very good for Canada.

This bill will also modernize the CEPA and ensure it sticks with a risk-based approach to management, as opposed to the more burdensome red tape and growing hazards-based approach.

The bill also recognizes a right to a healthy environment, which I generally support. I mean, who would not support a right to a healthy environment? However, I have to say I have great concerns that it does not define what that is in this bill, and it gives the government two years to do this. The failure to define this issue can have great implications in the future. I am very wary of a bill from the Liberal government that says, "Just trust us on this issue and we will get back to you." There were five years of consultations on this specific issue, and the government is asking for two more.

Of course, I have to say that five years late from this government is not bad. The government is seven years behind on icebreakers; seven years behind on joint supply ships; seven years behind on fighter plane replacements; seven years behind on the offshore patrol ships; six or seven years behind on fixing the Phoenix pay fiasco; years late on buying handguns for our armed forces; years late on the frigate program, which has gone from \$92 billion to \$306 billion; years late on introducing whistle-blower protection; years late in getting ATIPs processed. I actually have some ATIPs that are so late and so old that they could have gone through a graduate program at university in the time it has taken for them still not to have been brought before this House. That is just to give colleagues the idea.

Those are just the examples that I am dealing with out of the operations and estimates committee. I imagine every single person in this House has further examples. While I fear outright malfeasance from the Liberals in leaving this issue open, I generally accept it, knowing that given the incompetence of the government, it will never get done.

Speaking of not getting stuff done on the environment, we have had lots of big announcements from the government. As I mentioned, the environment minister, when introducing Bill S-5, talked about the urgency of getting it done. He said Canadians have an urgency; the government has an urgency.

The Liberal government talks a lot but delivers very little. At the same time, we have the same environment minister in the paper this week, with a headline saying something about the environment minister slamming oil companies for sitting idle on the climate. That is from the government that killed Bill C-28, this bill, the urgent bill that was before the last Parliament, yet it is blaming the oil companies for not taking action.

We have some Alberta oil companies and transmission companies that are working on the environment, not sitting idle.

● (1705)

TransCanada PipeLines is investing in solar and wind for both its customers and to power its ops. Enbridge is building green energy to power its products. It is investing in 24 wind farms, five waste-heat recovery facilities and hydrogen facilities as well. These are companies that are investing in green technology, despite the government planning to phase them out and despite getting slammed by the environment minister for doing nothing. Both these companies, as well, have committed to zero carbon emissions by 2050, or neutral anyway. Suncor, CNRL and others, since 2012, have spent \$10 billion on green energy R and D. Suncor, CNRL and Synovus have spent over a billion dollars in 2020 alone in green R and D.

If members remember, in 2020, during the worst of COVID, oil had a negative price. Oil companies and people had to pay to store the oil. CNRL lost a quarter of a billion dollars in 2020, Imperial Oil lost \$1.3 billion and Suncor lost \$3.2 billion, yet they were still investing in green energy R and D. Those are the same people the environment minister is slamming for sitting on the sidelines. They are actually getting stuff done while the government is not. That was \$5 billion in losses just for those three companies, yet they still invested a billion dollars. It was \$10 billion alone in the last decade.

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This is from an industry that has had to weather the downturn in 2014 in oil, the 2020 crash and the Alberta provincial NDP trying to block the pipeline. The former NDP premier actually went on TV and said that she would block northern gateway. Of course, we also had the Liberal government with Bill C-69, which was the “no more pipelines” bill; Bill C-48; and everything else it has been trying to do to destroy that industry, which is investing in green R and D.

The environment minister attacks the companies for not doing enough, but they are doing their part for Canada. I would suggest to the environment minister, when he attacks these people for not doing enough, that people in glass houses should not be throwing rocks, or in his case people in glass greenhouses should not be throwing rocks.

I am going to look at the minister's own department results. These are numbers from the Treasury Board. These are not my numbers. These are not made-up numbers. This is from GC InfoBase, from the departmental results. In 2021, the environment minister achieved, with his department, 14% of its targets. That is one out of every seven. In 2020, it was 27%. In 2019, it was 23%. In the department's best year in the last three years, it barely got to 25% or one-quarter of its targets.

The minister has the gall to attack Alberta's oil industry for not doing its part. He attacks Canada's largest exporter of goods. The minister attacks the largest industrial employer in Canada of indigenous people. The largest investor in green R and D in the private sector, he attacks for not doing enough, yet he presides over the abysmal failure in his own department of just 14%. I am wondering if the environment minister would have stopped at scaling just 14% of the stairs at the CN Tower when he was illegally doing his protest and consider 14% a success.

There are other failures from the current government. The Auditor General reports in the “Greening Government Strategy” report that the government has failed on its results. Those are the exact words from the Auditor General. The report states:

...government decision makers, parliamentarians, and Canadians do not...know...whether the government will meet its...target.

It actually gets worse. The Treasury Board requires, as part of the greening government strategy, that assistant deputy ministers sign off on the integrity of the government's emissions reduction reports. Seventy-four per cent of the bureaucrats have refused to sign off on their mission targets.

Government Orders

We will support Bill S-5, but we actually need action and not just talk from the government.

• (1710)

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, British Columbians have seen the impacts of climate change first-hand. We have seen the impact of what happens to our communities, which have been devastated by flooding, fire, and so on and so forth. I sat here and listened to the member opposite talk about failures of the government to promote the ongoing destruction of the environment.

I wonder how this member reconciles his views with the fact that people like Preston Manning have come forward and said that carbon pricing is a good idea. Stephen Harper, the godfather of the Conservative Party, agrees that carbon pricing is a good idea.

What is the Conservative Party's policy on climate change? What is its plan to stop climate change? I would love to know.

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, I grew up in Vancouver, so it is nice to chat with someone from there. It is funny he talks about what we would do. What we would not do is put out government emissions reports that our own bureaucrats refused to sign off on and refused to state, yes, those were correct.

We would not do that. We would have results achieved. We would not sit by and congratulate ourselves for failing 86% of our targets. Those targets talked about engaging indigenous people in consultations on prosperity on resource development. We would get stuff done. We would not just sit there. We would not fly across the country from Vancouver to Ottawa and then complain about carbon emissions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am glad my Conservative colleague shared that reminder about what led up to this bill, about how we got from Bill C-28 to Bill S-5, and about how so much time was wasted on what was really a totally pointless election.

As I see it, Bill S-5 has three elements at its core. They are laid out in clause 2. These three elements are as follows: considering the exposure of vulnerable populations to toxic substances, considering the cumulative effects of toxic substances, and requiring labelling to indicate the risks posed by all products containing toxic substances.

These three elements are worded differently in the current version of this bill.

Does my colleague agree with these elements?

• (1715)

[*English*]

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, I will be supporting this bill. There are a lot of good points in it. There has been some engagement with the industry, which has commented on what it liked. There are some issues we will be seeking amendments to in committee. Yes, while we will be supporting the bill, there are some amendments we do need to consider.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while listening to my Conservative colleague, I am reminded the Conservative Party has come a long way since Stephen Harper called the climate crisis a socialist plot. They are now at least acknowledging it is real.

There has been alarming information come out in the last couple of days that strikes a great deal of consternation as to whether we will actually be able to keep climate change and the temperature rise below 1.5°C. In fact, we are now looking at a 2°C temperature increase. However, the government, while claiming to care about the climate crisis, has purchased and is expanding the Trans Mountain pipeline, approved the Bay du Nord project and is also talking about expanding LNG exports.

Does my hon. colleague think Canada can meet our Paris accord commitments and reduce carbon emissions in this country? Can we still, at the same time, pursue all of those fossil fuel expansions in this country?

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, I recognize their ideological base wants to shut down our oil and gas. Our reality is these same issues he has brought forward are the same drivers of our economy and the same drivers of our prosperity that allow us to enjoy the living we have. To move away from this would strip our economy of tens of billions of dollars.

The Auditor General report on the just transition alone states that if we did this, it would be as devastating to Alberta as the cod fishery closures. We are not ready to sacrifice the livelihood of Albertans and many other Canadians for their ideology.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join the debate this afternoon.

I thank my colleague from Edmonton West for his remarks. I do appreciate them.

The member for Vancouver Kingsway talked about a socialist plot. I think there are some socialist plots, but I do not think they involve the environment. They are more or less about wealth redistribution than anything else. The members are quite cagey on the NDP side, so I look forward to answering questions from them after this speech.

A member from Vancouver on the Liberal side asked what the Conservatives' plan is when it comes to the environment. I would put this to him.

Several private members' bills were put forward last session before an unnecessary election was called. One of them was to ban the dumping of raw sewage into the lakes, rivers and oceans, to make sure we could clean up the St. Lawrence River. That private member's bill was put forward by my hon. colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle and only God knows why, but the Liberals voted against it. They voted against the ban on dumping raw sewage into our pristine lakes, rivers and oceans in Canada.

Government Orders

When they talk about the environment and what would be the Conservatives' plan, one would think a very good start would be to ensure that we do not put pollutants into our water systems. That would be a rational conversation and something that any government should do. We have the capacity. We have the Liberals' failed Infrastructure Bank, which could have put money into making sure the municipalities had the money to upgrade their infrastructure so we would not be putting raw sewage into our water systems in this country. That would be a start. If the member asks the question again, I may have pre-emptively answered it for him.

A bill that was brought forward by the member for York—Simcoe in the last Parliament, and which was part of the Conservative campaign plan, was to make sure that we stop dumping plastics in other countries and to make sure we look after our own waste. Once again, unknown to many in this chamber, the Liberals voted against that private member's bill brought forward by the Conservatives to make sure we have a cleaner and greener environment to be passed on to the next generation.

A couple of those private members' bills we put forward in the last session before the election of 2021 would have definitely been concrete measures to make sure the environment is cleaner. I would like to have that conversation and put on the record that there have been several measures we have looked at as a party to ensure our environment stays clean.

As my friend from Edmonton West said, we will be supporting the bill going to committee for amendments. Because the CEPA has not been amended since 1999, I think there are some things that need to be changed. We look forward to having that conversation at committee.

Another thing we have asked our Liberal counterparts is what their environmental plan is. The bill proposes to change CEPA, but what is their plan to ensure that emissions go down? They have a carbon tax, but that definitely is not an environmental plan. It is a tax scheme. Under the current government, emissions have continued to increase.

The Liberal government has brought forward policies recently, such as, the reduction in fertilizer use on farms across the country, which is not an environmental plan either. That is just a plan to hamstring our producers, ranchers and farmers even more when they are trying to feed the world. That is not a climate plan. We would ask our Liberal colleagues across the way that same question. When I talk to residents in Saskatchewan and around the country, they want to know what the benefit of the fertilizer reduction plan is. One of the biggest things I am asked is if it will result in less food in Canada.

On the flip side, if the Liberals want our farmers and producers to continue to produce the same amount of food with less fertilizer, they are going to have to use more arable land. This would result in more machinery being used and higher fuel consumption because more land has to be used to produce the same amount of food. A lot of the time when we hear about the environmental policies and actions of the Liberals, they have some unintended consequences, because they either have not done their homework or they do not understand what it takes to produce food.

• (1720)

When I see the environment being impacted in different ways when the Liberals bring forward these policies, that is what I like to bring to the table. Maybe they do not understand what it takes to actually produce the food that ends up in grocery stores across the country.

Another thing I would say about our environmental plan is the Conservatives also put forward a policy called the clean air act. For all of these things, we have taken steps to try to ensure we have a cleaner environment for the next generation. I have three young children, and I think everyone in this chamber wants to ensure they have the opportunity to enjoy a clean environment, just as we did growing up as children.

I grew up on a family farm, and we took the sustainability of our farm very seriously. If we did not have grassland, our cattle could not be fed. If we did not have the proper soil and nutrients in our hay lands to produce hay, we did not have feed to feed the dairy cows. I grew up on a dairy farm, so we had to make sure there were nutrients in the soil, that we conserved water and that we had runoff. Tree rows would collect the snow so there would be runoff.

Producers have been environmental stewards for generations, and it is not because of any government policy—

The Deputy Speaker: We have a point of order from the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I apologize to my hon. colleague from Regina—Lewvan, but in the last debate on Bill S-5, the great majority of the speeches had no connection to Bill S-5. I rose on a point of order several times at that time, and I reference at this point Standing Order 11(2), which says that when the attention of the House is called to the conduct of a member whose presentation is irrelevant or repetitious, the member can be asked by the Speaker to discontinue the speech, and if the member continues, the Speaker shall name the member. It is a serious standing order saying that speeches should be relevant.

I have been listening carefully. I have heard a lot about how the Conservatives feel about the Liberals' environmental record, much of which I will agree with, but this debate is on Bill S-5. I feel rather guilty when Liberals ask me why I opposed shutting down debate. Debate has to be about the subject before us, based on the Standing Orders.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the member for that intervention.

I remind all members of the House that when we are debating, we should stay relevant to the bill at hand. We do give a lot of leeway when it comes to members getting all of their thoughts out.

I will say to the member for Regina—Lewvan that maybe with the three minutes and 40 seconds left in his time, he can get back to the bill.

Government Orders

The hon. member for Regina—Lewvan

• (1725)

Mr. Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this time and am glad that I have three minutes left.

I actually feel sorry for the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, who would not understand that the environment and agriculture go hand in hand and that talking about what we do in agriculture to make sure there is a sustainable environment does actually pertain to the bill. My sympathies go out to her for not having been on a farm and not realizing how important agriculture will be to a clean environment going forward.

This leads me to the next—

The Deputy Speaker: We have a point of order from the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I am afraid this is the treatment I got in the last debate, particularly from a number of members who attacked me for raising our rules.

I know a lot about farms. I am from a rural riding. The hon. member may not know how many dairy farms are in my riding, but this is not about me. This is about trying to listen to the Standing Orders so that this place will work better.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the member again for her intervention.

I thought I made myself clear on this, but I will let the member for Regina—Lewvan finish.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that interjection. I know that my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands knows the rules very well, and I appreciate her constantly trying to remind everyone how much better she is at knowing the rules. I appreciate her continuous interjections as well as her thoughts.

I will wrap up with a few comments about the environment.

Once again, as I put forward in the conversation, the Conservatives have had the opportunity to put forward bills that would help the environment and make the environment cleaner. My friend from Lake Simcoe put one forward, and my friend for Regina—Qu'Appelle has put forward bills. When I look at Bill S-5 on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, it has not been amended since 1999, to put that on the record. We will be talking about it more, along with amendments, in committee when it goes to committee.

With that, I am very happy to answer any questions members may have on Bill S-5. I cannot wait to hear what my friend from Kingston and the Islands has to ask, because I see he is waving his hand. I will not make him wait any longer so he can take to his feet.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, I have a question for the member, because I always get a kick out of when the Conservative plan for dealing with the environment is to talk about dumping sewage into our rivers and lakes. It is a very important issue; I will not dispute that, but I will forgive the member if he does not understand how the sewage system works.

Basically, we have pipes in a municipality, and they all lead to a pool. When that pool fills up, we have to do something with the water. Unfortunately, the legacy of the way municipalities have been created over the last number of decades and centuries in our country is that the stormwater is connected with the sewage water, so when we have increased storm events, those pools fill up faster. There are various different ways that we can control and deal with that problem, and this is what I would like the member to comment on. We could have grey infrastructure solutions, which basically would be to build larger tanks to hold and deal with the increased flow. We could have green infrastructure that tries to localize the sewage more individually, to deal with it before putting it into this network of sewers and pipes that lead to this pool.

I know the Conservatives are against dumping the sewage, and they should be, as we all should be, so I am wondering what their solution is to deal with it. Can he propose a solution?

Mr. Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy the presentations of my friend across the way. One thing I put forward, if he was listening to my speech and its relevance to this, was to use the infrastructure bank to ensure municipalities got some of that money so they could upgrade their infrastructure. What I would not have done is use an omnibus budget bill to make sure Montreal could continue to dump millions of litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence for another 10 to 15 years without talking to anyone about that.

I appreciate the lesson in municipal infrastructure. I live in a municipality as well, and I thank him very much for that, but there is a way the federal government had the capacity to help municipalities make sure they could use that money and not dump raw sewage into our lakes, rivers and oceans. I would say he should take that back to his cabinet and to his Minister of Infrastructure and say that instead of the money leaving here and maybe building pipelines in China, maybe they should build some water infrastructure in Canada.

• (1730)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the hon. member shared his views on so many topics, but specifically to Bill S-5, a number of members of Parliament have suggested that the reference to plastics under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is tantamount to a ban on plastics. I just want to make sure that, in reading the bill, the hon. member will agree with me that Bill S-5 would not ban any plastics. Bill S-5 would create the ability for the federal government to move ahead on existing commitments, and not all plastics are on the radar for any regulation. Only a very small number, and far too small a variety of single-use plastic items are slated for regulation. The bill would create the opportunity only for future regulations, and no one is proposing banning all plastics.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS***[Translation]***PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY ACT**

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ) moved that Bill C-290, An Act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for being here today.

There is nothing more important for a government than an ethical, competent and responsible public service, and we must value the work of our public servants. Public servants are in the best position to note irregularities in government, in its management of public monies and use of Crown assets, as people here like to call them. Sometimes, out of a sense of responsibility, these officials become whistle-blowers by disclosing wrongdoing. It is an extremely important role. For that reason, we must protect them. We also need to create and enhance mechanisms that these officials can use to disclose wrongdoing.

Currently we have the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act. This legislation came about as a result of the sponsorship scandal. We all know that the federal sponsorship program was highly problematic from 1997 to 2001 and caused a major scandal. It was created in the aftermath of the 1995 referendum, when the federal government wanted to have more visibility in Quebec and decided to hang Canadian flags in just about every cultural and social space in Quebec.

Unfortunately, in addition to being fundamentally bad, this program ended up being used as a quid pro quo mechanism. Communications firms with close ties to the Liberal Party would receive huge contracts, and the money would directly or indirectly wind up back in the Liberal Party of Canada's coffers. This undermined taxpayers' confidence in the government and public confidence in government operations.

The whole thing got out of control and naturally undermined the very democratic process that ensures that we are elected to the House and that people trust the process. We are not talking about a scandal involving small sums of money; we are talking about the proven waste of a quarter of a billion dollars of public funds, which led to the Gomery commission.

As members will recall, this resulted in Paul Martin's government being severely punished. It was re-elected with a minority government in 2004. Ultimately, Canadians and Quebecers decided to toss out the Liberals when they voted in many Bloc Québécois members and gave the Harper government a minority mandate. That government took swift action to protect whistle-blowers in the public service.

Members will recall that one of the reasons the public learned as much as it did about the extent of the sponsorship scandal was because of a whistle-blower nicknamed "MaChouette". She spoke regularly with journalist Daniel Leblanc, who had to battle in court to protect her identity.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the conversation, but the conversations we have had in our caucus are to the effect that the legislation would heavily regulate, but not ban, the plastics. I appreciate my hon. colleague's taking the time to ask such a thoughtful question, as I always appreciate her interjections.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the things in Bill S-5 that I know is concerning is the ability for anyone in Canada to ask for an assessment of a product. Maybe the member could speak to the challenges the government is going to have, when the government is effectively broken on so many levels and cannot get things done.

What would happen if every Canadian could ask for a substance to be assessed?

Mr. Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, that is what happens with the government a lot of times. Let us talk about unintended consequences, whether it be with its fertilizer reduction target, its targets in banning plastics, or Bill S-5. A lot of the time, when the government brings forward policies, it has not thought about them and does not know what the actual consequences are going to be. We see this as the government being broken. Passport offices are broken. Immigration is broken. There are so many things the government has gotten wrong over the last seven years. This will probably just be added to the list.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion.

[English]

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Thursday, November 3, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at the appropriate time to start Private Members' Business.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: Accordingly, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

Private Members' Business

One of the Harper government's first pieces of legislation was the Federal Accountability Act, followed by the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, which came into force on April 15, 2007.

Obviously, the world has changed a lot since then, but this law has not changed and has not been improved, amended or corrected in 15 years. Now the time has come to do the right thing for our competent public servants and protect whistle-blowers.

The objective of Bill C-290 is to protect public servants who disclose wrongdoing in the public service, and also to establish a process to investigate the wrongdoing. That is very important because we want wrongdoings to be disclosed and we want to put an end to them. We want to have processes to help us do that. The ultimate goal is better management of government resources.

The current act covers many things. It was an ambitious law at the time, and it had good intentions. It described wrongdoing as a contravention of any act of Parliament or of the legislature of a province, or of any regulations, by persons in authority; a misuse of public funds or a public asset; mismanagement in the public sector; an act or omission that creates a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons, or to the environment, other than a danger that is inherent in the performance of the regular duties of a public servant, of course, because we want them to be able to do their job.

• (1735)

The act covers serious breaches of a code of conduct stemming from the events I just mentioned and, of course, wilfully and knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit any of the wrongdoings I just listed.

It is still a fairly ambitious law with built-in mechanisms. The act created a mechanism for the disclosure process. We want there to be a mechanism. We do not necessarily want whistle-blowers calling journalists in secret and passing confidential documents to them. We want there to be a process, a process that is supposed to protect anonymity and, more importantly, protect public servants from reprisals. The act created an independent institution, the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada, which can receive disclosures and investigate allegations and possible reprisals. Lastly, the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal was created.

If the act is so great, why did we introduce Bill C-290?

Again, the principles of the act that has been in effect since 2007 are excellent, but the act has many flaws. They are small flaws, but when you add them all up, they make this legislation ineffective. We have seen it. Since this legislation was implemented, we can count the number of cases where disclosures have gone through the correct process. We can basically count them on two hands.

That is consistent with the findings of the International Bar Association, which ranks Canada at the bottom of the list when it comes to laws that protect public servants who disclose wrongdoing. Canada has one of the worst records in the world in this regard. I will spare my colleagues from having to listen to a list of the countries that rank above us because it is both embarrassing and shame-

ful. When the International Bar Association assessed the Canadian legislation, Canada got a zero on 19 of the 20 assessment criteria. Do members know what criterion Canada did not get a zero on? Just having an act. That is the only criterion on which we did not get a zero. We are not starting from scratch, but we have a long way to go.

Other jurisdictions have led the way on this. The European Union, Australia and the United States have good systems, and we can follow in their footsteps. The point is, things have to change for the better. Taxpayers deserve better.

We do not have to start from scratch either. There was a committee study in 2017. I acknowledge my parliamentary colleagues who worked very hard on that report. They met 12 times, heard from 52 witnesses, received 12 briefs from experts, whistle-blowers and unions, people who know about this stuff, people on the ground. Challenges and shortcomings were identified, and 15 recommendations were issued.

I know that one of the people who made a significant contribution to drafting the recommendations passed away recently. That person was Michael Dagg, and I, along with a number of my colleagues, want to pay tribute to him.

What did we learn from the committee? The committee showed us that there is not enough protection for whistle-blowers in the public service and that public servants lack confidence in the process because of the way it works. They know that mechanisms exist, but since they do not have confidence in where the process will lead and they are afraid that it will end up being very harmful to them, what we end up with is an act that is not used and public servants who do not disclose wrongdoing.

Bill C-290 addresses these shortcomings and, as I said, essentially seeks to correct the problems with the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act.

What does this bill do? First, it broadens the definition of wrongdoing. The act covers serious cases of wrongdoing and illegal acts, but it does not cover cases of political interference in administrative decisions, even though it should. If a public servant discloses an incident of political interference, their complaint will simply be rejected. It cannot be processed or even considered by the public servants in the department who deal with complaints or by the commissioner.

However, we need to be able to get to the bottom of things. Under the current legislation, it is impossible to do that when wrongdoing is disclosed. This bill will help to remedy that.

Private Members' Business

● (1740)

In the current situation, turning to the people in charge of receiving complaints can be extremely formal, difficult and intimidating for a public servant. What is more, the commissioner who deals with these matters has a limited budget. He barely has the necessary resources, expertise, or knowledge of the departments. As a result, often the investigations go nowhere. It is possible to refer the case to the police, but, again, there needs to be an investigation first and that generally does not happen.

Bill C-290 proposes to allow the auditor general to investigate such cases. Remember that at the time of the sponsorship scandal, it was the auditor general, Sheila Fraser, who helped expose the wrongdoing.

In addition, we want to protect more people. The act currently protects public servants, but it does not protect former public servants who may have witnessed wrongdoing over the years but did not decide to disclose it until later. Furthermore, the act does not protect contract or temporary employees, such as someone who works at CRA for a few months during tax season. These are the people who are most vulnerable in these circumstances, because their employment status is precarious. They can easily become victims of intimidation or reprisals.

At the same time, we need to rebuild trust with the public service. Under the current act, a complaint can be dismissed, even if the wrongdoing is well established, because the commissioner may find that the person reporting the wrongdoing had personal reasons for doing so.

We understand the seriousness of that. Often someone who denounces a wrongdoing did not witness it only once or twice. It was not a quick 15-minute incident on a Tuesday morning. It happens repeatedly for days, for years. It makes the workplace extremely challenging. It is normal for a whistle-blower to become bitter, frustrated and angry, and that can negatively impact the workplace. It is unfair that an assumption about the reasons for a public servant's deep emotions can result in the facts being set aside.

This bill will have a positive impact. As members know, I am a relatively new parliamentarian. I decided to introduce Bill C-290 as my first private member's bill because I think it is important to introduce non-partisan legislation that is in the public interest. Every single person in this House, no matter their party, their ideology or which side of the constitutional divide they are on, wants public funds to be well managed. We all want Crown assets, federal government assets, to be used properly. We all want taxpayers who submit their income tax returns in April or May to have confidence in the machinery of government.

The main reason I introduced this bill is out of respect for the thousands of professionals who dedicate their lives and their careers to public service, people who devote their time and energy to public service, who truly care about the work they do. If we do not update the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, we are essentially preventing those people from doing their jobs to the best of their ability in extremely important situations. I think our public servants deserve Bill C-290.

● (1745)

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. He has demonstrated why it is important to examine this issue.

We will soon begin a comprehensive review of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act with the support of experts. We want to ensure that the act effectively protects public servants. We also want to strengthen Canadians' confidence in the integrity of our public institutions.

Does my colleague not think that more work is needed, given the seriousness and scope of this legislation?

● (1750)

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, I can assure the House that I am acting in good faith, and I presume the members opposite are doing the same. That is why I hope they will support the bill.

Having said that, I hope it is not a coincidence that when Bill C-290 was introduced, the government suddenly decided to review that legislation.

The committee that worked on this issue heard from witnesses, made recommendations, heard from experts and worked very hard. It released a terrific, comprehensive report. This bill was drafted, in part, based on that incredible work, which is why I think the government has a vested interest in supporting Bill C-290 and not rejecting the immense amount of hard work done by the committee.

[English]

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the excellent private member's bill. I also want to thank him for paying tribute to Mr. Michael Dagg, a hero to whistle-blowers in Canada, who, along with Allan Cutler and several others, helped our committee write the gold bar for whistle-blower protection, one that the government has ignored for five years.

What does my colleague think about the government sitting on this report and doing nothing about it for five years, and then proposing to spend millions of dollars over the next three or four more years to study it, rather than bringing in protection for our public servants immediately?

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, since I was not here over the past few years, I will not pass judgment.

Private Members' Business

That being said, private members' bills are useful. Through these bills, MPs are sometimes able to focus on important legislative aspects with the help of people around them. The government has its hands full, what with the pandemic, inflation and the upcoming recession. That is why I am introducing this bill with a view to serving the public.

I do not want to speculate on why the government did not have the time to make progress, but today, with Bill C-290, the government has the opportunity to address this issue. If it refuses to support Bill C-290, I will have good reason to question its intentions. For now, I can only assume and hope that the government will collaborate.

[English]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I thank the member for Mirabel for introducing this important bill. I think it is very important, especially at a time when we need to regain trust in our institutions. It is a very important instrument that can help build toward that.

I want to ask about the systemic racism that many indigenous peoples, Black people and people in the BIPOC community experience from public servants. Can he see a way for the public servants who are perpetuating systemic racism to be addressed through this bill?

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be evasive, but I am not going to go into detail in answering my colleague's question because it is a matter that I know very little about. Furthermore, it is a matter that is somewhat peripheral to the bill.

My colleague told us that, to some extent, there is a lack of confidence in our institutions. We have seen that in recent months and throughout the pandemic. It is important that taxpayers have confidence that their taxes are well managed.

It is important that taxpayers see the government not as an open bar, but as a serious institution that has serious processes for implementing serious programs for its population. I believe that Bill C-290 can make a modest but important contribution to that.

Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to rise to speak to Bill C-290, an act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act.

First, I would like to thank my colleague from Mirabel for introducing Bill C-290, which is very well written. This is very useful and important work. I think everyone will agree that public servants who disclose serious wrongdoing must be protected.

• (1755)

[English]

The question is not if we can strengthen those provisions, but how. Bill C-290 offers some potential steps forward, but it also poses some important legal and operational challenges.

Today I am going to speak about what has been done to better protect whistle-blowers, the upcoming comprehensive review of the

act and what needs to be fixed in Bill C-290 to help it create the positive change I know my hon. colleague certainly intends.

[Translation]

The Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act promotes a work culture based on ethics and the integrity of the federal public service. Canada's whistle-blowing legislation is one of the various recourse mechanisms available to public servants when it comes to harassment, discrimination, labour grievances and privacy complaints.

[English]

The government has made meaningful improvements to the system. We have implemented greater guidance for the internal disclosure process.

[Translation]

We have increased the number of awareness activities and training sessions for public servants, supervisors and managers. We have also improved reporting on the internal disclosure process and founded wrongdoing.

The government has also established a central website as part of the government portal. It will allow Canadians to access information about founded wrongdoing within federal institutions. In his mandate letter to the President of the Treasury Board, the Prime Minister directed her to build on the progress that has been made and to "continue to take action to improve government whistle-blower protections and supports". In keeping with this mandate, we will soon be conducting a comprehensive review of the act, which will include recommendations for possible amendments.

The review will be conducted by a working group of academics, experts and union officials. Their work will take into account international research and the Canadian experience, the report from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates on the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, as well as the debate and testimony on Bill C-290.

[English]

Our intent is to ensure that the law effectively protects and empowers public servants to shine a light on wrongdoing and to help strengthen Canadians' confidence in the integrity of our public institutions. This is what makes the bill before us so important.

[*Translation*]

As it currently stands, Bill C-290 contains some positive measures. It would extend protection to cover more public servants involved in reporting wrongdoing. It would extend the period during which a reprisal complaint may be filed from 60 days to one year. It would increase the applications respecting offences under various sections of the act. It would enable the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner to disclose additional information in specific circumstances. It would also require a review of the act every five years. These are valuable and important proposals.

The hon. member who introduced this bill is to be commended for the work he did in preparing this bill.

That said, Bill C-290 also raises issues that have to be looked at in committee to make sure there will not be negative legal and operational repercussions. It is important to note that the purpose of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act is to address serious ethical breaches that cannot be dealt with using ordinary recourse mechanisms. It is not designed to deal with all ethical breaches or to replace existing recourse mechanisms meant for issues such as harassment, discrimination, workplace grievances and privacy complaints.

These other recourse mechanisms include those set out in the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act, the Canada Labour Code, the Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, the Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Privacy Act and the code of conduct for procurement.

I would also like to point out that the provisions of Bill C-290 will result in a significant amount of overlap and duplication when it comes to these processes. Consider, for example, the bill's proposal to remove the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's power to refuse to deal with a complaint regarding reprisals that may be or have been dealt with under another act of Parliament. This change could lead to the use of multiple processes for the same issues by various administrative bodies with different mandates and objectives.

• (1800)

[*English*]

Such overlap and duplication could result in wasted resources. It could lead to inconsistent determinations, differing remedies and duplicating settlements. I doubt that the hon. member had these consequences in mind.

Another example is the proposal in Bill C-290 to include abuse of authority in the definition of wrongdoing. This could lead to overlap with staffing complaints on the same allegations under the Public Service Employment Act. Once again, this could result in the potential for parallel proceedings and multiple decisions on the same matters that could contradict each other.

We need to avoid introducing unnecessary duplication and confusion into the current system. We must be careful not to undermine the value of grievances, which are an important tool for unions in the public sector.

Private Members' Business

Other provisions will change the degree of severity of wrongdoing covered under the act, opening up the process to the most trivial of misdemeanours, which will clog the system and reduce its effectiveness. Bill C-290 also requires executives to provide support to a public servant involved in a disclosure, which conflicts with the principle of confidentiality.

[*Translation*]

By including contractors in the provisions, Bill C-290 could not only result in problematic employment relationships, but it could also encroach on provincial jurisdiction. I have no doubt that that was in no way the Bloc Québécois member's intention.

This bill also removes the discretion of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal to decide whether to add the person alleged to have taken a reprisal as a party. This could in fact expose whistle-blowers in cases where the person alleged to have taken a reprisal does not know who the complainant is.

My colleague has introduced a very important bill. Parliament needs to consider whether the operational concerns I have outlined today can be addressed in committee or whether it would be better to wait until the review leads to more complex reforms.

In closing, I would like to thank my hon. colleague from Mirabel for his work on Bill C-290, and I look forward to the next steps in the legislative process.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mirabel for introducing this bill.

[*English*]

This legislation is very dear to my heart. For close to 15 years I was a public servant at Global Affairs Canada, so I certainly know the importance of this legislation today.

The legislation, as outlined, would amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act to strengthen current whistle-blower protections for public servants. It would expand the definition of the term "wrongdoing", and it would broaden what is considered a supervisor so that public servants can make a protected disclosure to any superior within the organization. This is very interesting because it means a deputy director can go not only to their direct director but also to the director general, the ADM or perhaps even the deputy minister, so that is a very important piece.

Private Members' Business

The legislation would extend protection to former public servants, government contractors and all those involved in disclosure. It is very important to me as a former public servant that, if I were called into an investigation, I would have protection under this legislation. It would expand the deadline to file a reprisal complaint from 60 days to one year. That is also very important. As we know, vindication is not always swift. Sometimes these actions can take time, so the fact that there is sixfold greater time frame for this is of much comfort to many public servants.

It would expand the annual report requirements to include the number of disclosures made of wrongdoing, the duration of all open cases and cases closed during the fiscal year, the distribution of cases by region and the distribution of cases by federal departments and agencies. On this side of the House, we love transparency, so the more transparency that is provided to Canadians by those who have called their colleagues to account, the better.

This legislation would also provide fines for reprisal against a whistle-blower, which would increase from \$10,000 to \$200,000 for indictable offences and from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for summary convictions. Again, on this side of the House, we are always very pleased to see those who have been determined to have been negligent and committed wrongdoing get more than a slap on the wrist, as we saw, for example, when the former finance minister paid only \$200 for not declaring his French villa. We are very pleased to see the increases in these fines.

As I am sure members are well aware, the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act was first introduced through the Federal Accountability Act on April 11, 2006, by then president of the Treasury Board John Baird. As my colleagues have alluded to, the initial Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act was introduced under Prime Minister Harper in response to the Liberal sponsorship scandal. Certainly the scandals continued into the future under additional Liberal governments, but that scandal was taking place at that time and this legislation was a response.

I will also note that the member of Parliament for Edmonton West was instrumental in the review, in 2017, by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. He was absolutely instrumental in that review, along with the late Michael Dagg, unfortunately, as well as Erin Weir. We are very grateful for their assessment of the legislation at that time.

As has been mentioned, it was expected that the government would implement these recommendations, but no action has been taken to this point and it does not seem to be a priority of the government. Therefore, I do not blame the member of Parliament for Mirabel for being proactive in presenting this legislation. Unfortunately, it is not the only case where the government has been too slow to act on important legislation. As shadow minister for transport during the pandemic, I begged the government to come up with a plan for the airline sector. It was negligent in doing that, allowing the airlines to recover themselves.

● (1805)

In fact, this past spring and summer when we saw that delays were severely impacting Canadians, the Liberals did not even take responsibility for it at that time. Rather, their Minister of Transport blamed Canadians for still learning how to travel when it was, in

fact, the government's inaction with the plan as well as its mandates that created this situation, so too little too late.

Tomorrow we will have the fall economic statement. Lo and behold, recently, we have heard the finance minister say that for every dollar of new spending, they must now find a dollar of savings. Our leader was well ahead of this. He started to talk about inflation two years ago. He came out with a "pay as you go" model long before this. He has, in fact, made it a commitment for Conservatives going into the next election, whenever that is, that under a Conservative government there will be no new taxes and that for every dollar of new spending there must be a dollar of savings.

Unfortunately, another place where we saw the Liberals act too little too late was with the Afghan interpreters and support staff. On July 23, 2021, the Taliban were sweeping across Afghanistan and closing in on Kabul. The minister of immigration, refugees and citizenship at the time announced a special immigration program to bring Afghans and their families who worked directly with Canada safely to our country. At the time he said, "Lives hang in the balance, which is why we're taking timely and decisive action to support the Afghans who supported Canada". A year later, those Afghans were still desperate for that timely and decisive action that was promised. Not only did the minister of immigration fail to act quickly, but he was ending the special immigration measures after only 18,000 applications were received.

Passports was another area where we saw the government act with too little effort and too late as thousands of Canadians were denied passports. We heard horror stories in the media of Canadians camping out overnight, sleeping outside passport offices in an effort to get their documents.

Last but not least, the position of ombudsman for victims of crime was left vacant for almost a year. Finally, someone was appointed in September of this year. It is not new that we have seen Liberals replete with inaction and other members of the House must find it within themselves to find legislation to help Canadians. That certainly is the case here.

I will point out that, as indicated by the history of protecting whistle-blowers on this side of the House, the Liberal government has actually been the greatest perpetrator against whistle-blowers. We all remember Jody Wilson-Raybould in August 2019. The report came yesterday and for the second time in just four years, the Ethics Commissioner found the Prime Minister guilty of violating the Conflict of Interest Act in connection with his role in the SNC-Lavalin corruption scandal. I quote:

The Prime Minister, directly and through his senior officials, used various means to exert influence over Ms. Wilson-Raybould. The authority of the Prime Minister and his office was used to circumvent, undermine and ultimately attempt to discredit the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions as well as the authority of Ms. Wilson-Raybould as the Crown's chief law officer.

It sounds really familiar with respect to a couple of things we are seeing in the House right now.

Of course, who can forget the tragedy of Vice-Admiral Mark Norman? The Crown stayed its charge of breach of trust against Vice-Admiral Mark Norman citing that there was no reasonable prospect of conviction in this case. The minister of defence announced that the government would pay his legal fees. That is a small consolation prize. Norman served as the vice-chief of the defence staff until his suspension in January 2017.

There was overwhelming evidence at the time that the Prime Minister and his Liberal government politically interfered in this case and tried to destroy Vice-Admiral Mark Norman. As the prosecution made clear, the documents that the Prime Minister and the Liberals were fighting to keep secret from them and Vice-Admiral Norman were the very documents that caused the charges to be dropped. This strongly suggests that the government was deliberately suppressing the evidence in order to maintain a bogus and politically motivated prosecution on Vice-Admiral Mark Norman.

In conclusion, I will say that the government has a notorious history, as I have indicated, of just doing too little too late. This is another case where the government has silenced whistle-blowers. On this side of the House, we have always stood up for whistle-blowers. The legislation proves it. Our track record proves it.

• (1810)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, as pleased as I am to join the debate this evening to speak on Bill C-290, an act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, I am sad I have to be doing it from my home.

I have had to come back to the unceded land of Tseshaht and Hupacasath and the homelands of the Nuu-chah-nulth people to attend the funeral of the Tla-o-qui-aht Chief Muuchinink, also known as Bruce Frank, who suddenly passed away on Sunday. I will be travelling through his *Ha-Hoothlee*, his territory, tonight to join his family and his community. I will bring greetings from all of us from Ottawa, and condolences to his people. It is a very sad time for the people in our communities and for all Nuu-chah-nulth people. He was a great man who loved his people.

I want to thank the hon. member for Mirabel for bringing forward this bill and prompting this important discussion. It is very important, and I really appreciate his work in doing this.

Private Members' Business

When the new Conservative leader, the member for Carleton, was a minister under the Harper government, he brought forth legislation that he repeatedly said would offer “ironclad protection” for whistle-blowers in the federal public service. Instead, after 15 years in force, it is clear this law is a complete failure.

I am going to talk about David Hutton, a whistle-blower protection expert and senior fellow at the Centre for Free Expression at Toronto Metropolitan University. He recently wrote in *The Hill Times*:

After studying this system closely for the past 15 years, I have come to believe that it was never intended to protect whistleblowers. It does not look like a regrettable accident resulting in an ineffective system. In reality, it functions as a highly effective, finely tuned offensive weapon against whistleblowers. It lures them into a trap, where their disclosures of wrongdoing are disregarded and buried forever, the promises of protection made to them prove to be false, and their efforts to obtain justice place them on a treadmill of endless, costly and ultimately fruitless rigged processes.

Indeed, after 15 years, the results of Canada's whistle-blower regime speaks for itself. The Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner has found a mere 18 cases of wrongdoing out of more than 1,500 disclosures from whistle-blowers. While 500 whistle-blowers have submitted complaints of reprisals, the tribunal set up to address these complaints has never once awarded a remedy.

In another article, David Hutton wrote, “there have been no happy endings for whistleblowers, who nearly always lose their job, their career, and their livelihood.”

The failure of this law does not just cost whistle-blowers. It costs all of us when wrongdoings and mismanagement are allowed to continue unchecked. We see this all the time in procurement, and the failure for whistle-blowers to be able to come forward. I will cite one, which is the disastrous Phoenix pay system. It was supposed to save money, but it has resulted in at least \$2.4 billion in unexpected costs so far. It is an example of what can happen when there is a culture of fear in the public service.

This started under the Conservatives, and it has carried on under the federal Liberals. It is unacceptable. That culture of fear is reflected in the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's own findings. In March 2022, the Office published a report it commissioned entitled “Exploring the Culture of Whistleblowing and the Fear of Reprisal in the Federal Public Sector”. The report was based on focus groups drawn from a selection of departments, and it echoed the findings of similar surveys conducted in 2011 and 2015. This latest report found that fear of reprisals remains a major concern in the federal public service.

Private Members' Business

It also contained some other concerning findings: first, that most workers and managers surveyed did not know of the office's existence; second, there is increasing disillusionment and cynicism about whistle-blowing; and, third, increased activity around whistle-blowing, such as awareness raising and education, is seen mainly as window dressing instead of actual change. We could make a long list here.

• (1815)

It is disappointing to read these findings in 2022. The need for change in how we deal with whistle-blowers has been well known for years. There are serious deficiencies in the existing act, including a narrow definition of wrongdoing and a focus on procedures for dealing with allegations rather than protecting whistle-blowers.

In 2017, the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates tabled a unanimous report recommending sweeping changes to the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act. This report was prepared at the request of the Treasury Board to fulfill the requirement for statutory review that should have been conducted five years earlier. It sounds familiar. It has been five years since, and the government has not implemented the legislative changes the committee recommended, and we heard the member for Mirabel talk about it earlier. Instead, in the most recent federal budget, the government committed \$2.4 million over five years for the Treasury Board Secretariat to launch a new review of the act.

It is a positive development to see the federal government finally acknowledge the need for legislative reform, but I am concerned whether there is genuine political will to move forward and make real changes or if this is simply a face-saving exercise. As the member for Mirabel talked about, the government did not even start this until Friday, just as this bill came up for debate.

It reminds me of how the government acts suddenly when private members' bills come up, like my bill, Bill C-216, on substance use. The government did nothing on the Province of B.C.'s request for an exemption for people who are caught with a small possession of substances to not be criminally charged. The government announced that B.C.'s exemption would be granted the day before the vote on my bill. It is just all too familiar. I have seen this happen a lot.

To get back to the bill, its latest review was likely prompted by a 2021 analysis by the International Bar Association, which compared countries with whistle-blower protection laws and ranked Canada as tied for last place. This is an international embarrassment. It is about transparency and trust, and it is a clear call for action, yet in September, Canada failed to send any representatives to an International Labour Organization meeting to discuss the protection of whistle-blowers in the public sector. Surely some helpful information could have been gleaned from this meeting to inform the government's new review. It could have gained a lot.

Again, I am glad that the member for Mirabel has brought forward this bill, which acknowledges the failure of the current act and will hopefully help generate momentum for much-needed change. My office has engaged with public sector unions regarding the bill. The general sentiment is that this is a step in the right direction, but further changes will be required to truly protect whistle-blowers and the Canadian public.

The bill does not address all of the recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates in 2017. However, it does propose some significant improvements that are worth noting.

The bill would expand protections to more people, including contractors and former employees, and cover more types of wrongdoing, including political interference. I believe the bill has merit and should proceed to committee where members can hear from public service workers and experts and see if there are opportunities for amendments that could offer more protection for whistle-blowers.

I will note that I do not believe the Treasury Board's new review of the act should preclude moving forward with improvements now. It is not clear when this review might be completed, but it is clear that Canada's whistle-blower protection regime is broken and is in desperate need of reform to protect brave public service workers and the Canadian public who disclose wrongdoings.

In 2015, the Liberals promised that transparency would be a hallmark of their government, but that promise has fallen to the way-side, just like the Conservatives. Under the frequent cloud of scandal, I question whether the government is truly motivated to improve protections for whistle-blowers who could shine a light on government wrongdoing or mismanagement of public funds.

In closing, I want to thank the member for Mirabel for bringing the bill forward, and I look forward to engaging in further debate on this issue.

• (1820)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Madam Speaker, any self-respecting country must have the means to ensure that public funds are used properly, not diverted, not doled out to cronies and not used for any other wrongdoing.

After the sponsorship scandal, Stephen Harper's government enacted legislation to protect public servants who disclose information. We must remember that the sponsorship scandal was only brought to light because of a whistle-blower known as "MaChouette". People had to go to court to keep this individual's identity secret. Let us keep this in mind, as it is important.

Private Members' Business

Without that individual, it is very likely that the sponsorship scandal would never have become public knowledge and that these kickbacks and this program might possibly have still been ongoing. Thanks to this individual and the Gomery commission, we learned that the amount siphoned off by the sponsorship program was \$250 million. What would that amount be if “MaChouette” had not blown the whistle? It would be an enormous amount of taxpayers' money.

In order to encourage public servants who witness questionable practices in government to report them, an act was passed to protect them. Does it really do so? The answer is no, and it is precisely because the act is flawed that my colleague from Mirabel introduced Bill C-290, an act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act.

I would like to remind members of the objectives of the act, give a short list of reasons why the law is basically ineffective and provide a quick explanation of the corrections that Bill C-290 makes to the legislation in place.

The Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act has two objectives: to protect public servants who disclose wrongdoing in the management of the state and to implement a process for investigating such wrongdoing and help put an end to it.

I want to be very clear. Most public servants are basically honest. It only takes one person with questionable practices to tarnish the reputation of all public servants. If such a person exists, they need to be found and reported. The entire state suffers the consequences of a bad reputation.

Public servants are aware of all that. Nevertheless, there are people in our society, as in any other society, who pay little heed to these considerations and who may feel untouchable or undetectable. Fortunately, only a small minority of these people among the hundreds of thousands of our public servants have no qualms about diverting hard-earned taxpayer money for their own benefit or to do what they think is best.

This very hierarchical system—I would even say there is a code of silence—and competition ensured, and probably still ensure, that honest public servants kept quiet, even when they knew that a colleague or a superior was breaching ethical, or even legal, boundaries. They kept quiet, and continue keeping quiet, for fear of reprisal. If they blew the whistle, they would be pressured. Some fear this pressure to the point of getting sick or being forced to resign. These are examples that unfortunately I have heard from former public servants who are now retired, who wanted to improve something and blow the whistle on a particular situation and who experienced the pressure I just mentioned.

The 2007 act was necessary to protect the people who work for the public, but it also needed to be drafted in such a way as to prevent workplaces from becoming an environment where everyone suspected everyone else of wrongdoing. Instead of creating toxic workplaces we needed to create collaborative places where it was clear that if something was wrong, someone would do something about it. However, in wanting to protect the balance, the legislation went too far and became unworkable.

• (1825)

When I was a teacher and we had to implement a rule, one of the first questions I would ask myself was whether it could be enforced. I might have the best intentions in the world, but if I could not enforce the rule or if there were no consequences, the students would not be fooled and would realize it at some point. They would find the loopholes and skirt the rule. It is the same thing in the machinery of government. That is what happened with the existing legislation. The government enacted a law without having the ability to properly enforce it and without making it clear that if there was a problem, there would be consequences. That is what is missing.

I will give an example to support my argument. In 15 years, the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner has officially investigated only eight cases, and none of these led to a whistleblower being protected or resulted in an investigation of wrongdoing.

Furthermore, the International Bar Association has compiled about 50 whistle-blower laws. It has ranked countries that provide the best protection for whistle-blowers. On a list of 20 criteria to be checked, Canada has only checked off one, the fact that it has a law. That is it. Botswana, Rwanda, Bangladesh, Pakistan and other countries are ranked higher than we are. We should be looking at best practices, such as those used in the European Union, Australia or the United States.

As my colleagues have also mentioned, the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates issued a report in 2017, if I am not mistaken, and the recommendations in that report have not been followed. We are still waiting. That is what my colleague's bill will do. It will make that report come to life and, more importantly, it will enable public servants who see wrongdoing to be truly protected.

Bill C-290 is designed to give the act some teeth by proposing a series of remedial measures. I will not go through the whole list. When I look at a bill, I take the original act and the bill, and I note everything that is different, everything that has improved, everything that has been taken out and everything that has been added. It takes hours, so I will not put my colleagues through that. I only have ten minutes. I will try to be brief.

First, the bill broadens the definition of wrongdoing. For example, the original act considered only serious wrongdoing. What does “serious” mean? It is a bit unclear because it can mean different things to different people. For example, to me, theft is theft, even if it is something small. In other words, wrongdoing, whether major or minor, is wrongdoing. It is serious to me, but the act does not specify exactly what the word “serious” means. Now the word “serious” is going to be taken out. If a person witnesses a wrongdoing, it is a wrongdoing and must be dealt with. There is no distinction between minor and major wrongdoings. I do not know if everybody sees it that way, but I hope so.

Adjournment Proceedings

It also introduces the notion of political interference. Next, it corrects something that does not make sense, because, in the case of a major incident, the existing act states that the department must investigate itself. Bill C-290 would amend this. That part did not make sense to me because, if a member of society commits a wrongdoing, that person does not get to investigate their own actions. That is the police's job. The act asks the department to investigate itself. I have a problem with that. Bill C-290 fixes that.

In conclusion, to regain the public's confidence, the government and its public servants must be exemplary. In order for that to happen, public service employees need to feel confident about disclosing anything they consider to be wrongdoing, and there have to be meaningful consequences following these disclosures, not only for public servants, but also for contractors and former public servants who may have kept quiet for a long time.

• (1830)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1835)

[*English*]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, my constituents continue to vocalize their concerns regarding Baffinland's phase two proposal to the Mary River project. The government continues to ignore their concerns on impacts to the wildlife and surrounding environment.

The government will have to decide whether it will listen to the recommendations made by the Nunavut Impact Review Board, or do what it is good at and ignore the wishes of Nunavummiut. The decision will impact thousands of Nunavummiut and, more directly, the five communities of Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Arctic Bay, Igloodlik and Sanirajak.

Since time immemorial, the land has provided communities with the resources they need to survive. The Inuit way of life is threatened if phase two is approved against the wishes of the hunters and trappers' organizations. They risk losing their rights to hunt and pass on their culture to their children and grandchildren.

On September 22, the Minister of Northern Affairs approved a nearly two million tonne increase in shipping iron ore. This increase was discouraged by the Nunavut Impact Review Board for over two years. Disappointingly, the minister chose to support private business interests over addressing the calls for mitigating current damages caused by Baffinland.

The government has an obligation to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Nunavut

Land Claims Agreement. This agreement, which supports and upholds indigenous rights, must not be a secondary thought.

Jobs are important, but in a committee meeting, Moses Koonark of Pond Inlet said it best when he stated, "I'm not worried about gaining money, but I worry about the wildlife because that's our food, that's our way of life too."

All levels of government are not recognizing the skills and expertise Inuit have. Instead, the governments are limiting Inuit employability to superficial job description requirements. Inuit are forced to rely on employment from industries that have allowed on-going damage to our lands. If the land is no longer healthy enough to support families, conditions will worsen. People's livelihoods are on the line.

I echo the question of Elder Rhoda Arnakalak of Pond Inlet, and others who attended the Nunavut Impact Review Board hearings: Has the federal government already made up its mind or will it properly consult with Inuit organizations regarding the Mary River project?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to emphasize that our government shares the member's concern that Nunavummiut can meaningfully participate in impact assessment processes. This is a responsibility of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, an independent arm's-length body established through the Nunavut Agreement to ensure the interests of all Nunavummiut are protected.

On May 13, the independent Nunavut Impact Review Board submitted its report on the Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation's Mary River phase 2 project. We thank it for its important work and all northern indigenous partners for their participation in the NIRB process.

I note that prior to the Nunavut Impact Review Board's May 13 phase 2 recommendations, the Minister of Northern Affairs travelled to Pond Inlet, Nunavut, in August of last year and met with the community; project proponents; the designated Inuit organization, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association; and the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization.

Northern Affairs also provides funding to partners to participate in reviews of this nature. Since 2018, through the northern participant funding program, Northern Affairs has approved financial support to 13 organizations involved in the phase 2 review, with a total funding amount of just over \$2 million. This funding has helped ensure the meaningful participation of north Baffin Inuit and other interested parties in the phase 2 review process.

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I want to assure the member that the Government of Canada relies on this agreed-to process to assess the impacts of proposals such as the Mary River phase 2 development. The Nunavut Impact Review Board process helps ensure that resource projects create economic opportunity, protect the environment and respect Inuit rights.

We know there is much attention on this particular project. During the decision phase, parties wanting to share their opinions on the board's recommendation should contact the president of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

The government will continue to work in partnership in creating employment opportunities through sustainable economic development, benefiting Nunavummiut and all Canadians.

Building on past budgets, budget 2022 proposes to provide \$15 million over five years, starting in 2022-23, to support indigenous economic development in the north. I know that the minister works closely with territorial and Inuit partners, and all communities in Nunavut, to make sure their interests and rights are protected.

Our work continues to be guided by the values and principles of the Inuit Nunangat Policy, strengthening the Inuit-Crown partnership through meaningful collaboration. This policy was co-developed by the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee and was endorsed earlier this year, in April, at a meeting of this committee that was co-chaired by the Prime Minister and the president of the ITK.

The government remains committed to working with the hon. member for Nunavut in protecting these interests.

• (1840)

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, as stipulated in section 5.7.3 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the hunters and trappers associations and organizations in Nunavut have an essential responsibility to regulate and manage harvesting in their communities. I say this again: They protect harvesting rights in Nunavut.

The Liberal government has consistently refused to meet with impacted hunters and trappers organizations, or HTOs, regarding the impacts of the current project and the implications of approving phase 2. With such an important role the HTOs have in feeding their communities, I must ask again if the ministers met directly with the HTOs after the Nunavut Impact Review Board made its recommendation to reject phase 2.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I am really happy the member opposite has raised this issue. As I mentioned earlier and I just want to reiterate, prior to the Nunavut Impact Review Board's May 13 phase 2 recommendation, the Minister of Northern Affairs travelled to Pond Inlet, Nunavut, in August of last year. He met with the community, project proponents, the designated Qikiqtani Inuit Association and, in specific answer to the question, also the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization, so there was a visit in August of last year.

TAXATION

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise on behalf of the people of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Recently, I rose during question period on behalf of Bonnie, a constituent who lives in a remote part of my riding. Bonnie and her husband are seniors living on a fixed income of \$25,000 a year. Bonnie had just learned her oil bill this winter will be over \$2,000, almost triple that of last year. I asked the government why it was not cutting the taxes fuelling energy inflation. As is often the case in this House, when asked about taxes or inflation, the government's only answer is climate change, which confirms what the Conservatives have been saying for years. The carbon tax is not an environmental policy. It is a tax policy.

That was not all the minister said in response to Bonnie's predicament. The minister said that higher energy prices were needed to address the existential threat to humanity. This belief in a climate apocalypse is a dangerous illusion. It is one thing for juvenile delinquents to throw food at priceless works of art and justify their actions with climate change, but it is another when a government itself is delusional. This should terrify Canadians like Bonnie. The Liberals already declared their ends justify any means when it came to the freedom convoy. If government members truly believe the carbon tax is saving the world, saving humanity, then what is it to them if senior citizens freeze to death this winter?

Of course, the carbon tax saving the world is nonsense. Humanity has witnessed sea levels rise by hundreds of metres. Our forebears spread to every corner of the world using stone tools, yet somehow the government believes that a two-metre change in sea level over 60 years spells the extinction of the human race.

Emissions reductions require thoughtful policy that balances the interests of post-industrial economies, industrial economies and developing economies. Conservatives have argued that Canada, having a small size, can maximize our efforts by focusing on replacing coal with natural gas. Canada can lead in developing new technologies such as carbon capture and small modular reactors. The best part of those policies is that they do not leave people like Bonnie freezing over the winter. The problem with calling it a climate emergency is that it can be used to feed greed through a carbon tax.

We saw how this government crushed civil liberties such as the right to due process when it declared a public order emergency because of illegally parked trucks. What rights are they willing to lock down to stop their climate emergency fantasy? History is full of examples of good, decent people doing horrible things because the end was near. Our culture has even had an expression for those people. We say they drank the kool-aid. The government has been binge drinking the green kool-aid.

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It has embraced the myth of a climate change apocalypse with a cult-like zealotry. This type of extremism is driving the polarization in our country. If one does not sign on to the leftist narrative one is attacked as a denier and a conspiracist. It does not matter if one believes that climate change is measured in millions of years. It does not matter if one supports reducing global emissions. If one does not support making energy unaffordable for the most vulnerable, one is shunned by the cult.

Does the government's parliamentary secretary agree with the minister that climate change will lead to the extinction of the human race? If she really believes that, can she tell us exactly how many seniors the government is willing to see freeze to death this winter?

• (1845)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to address the issue of inflation. The elevated inflation experienced now in Canada and, frankly, the rest of the world is a major issue for all Canadians.

We do understand that Canadians continue to experience higher costs of living and that many are struggling to make ends meet. However, it is important to remember that inflation is a global phenomenon. It is a lingering result of the COVID pandemic, which has been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and by the snarled supply chains that are affecting people and businesses around the world.

While Canada's inflation rate of 6.9% is less severe than that of many of our peers, like the United States at 8.2%, the United Kingdom at 10.1%, and Germany at 10%, we appreciate that this will continue to be a difficult time for a lot of Canadians. While it is not a made-in-Canada problem, we do have a made-in-Canada solution to help those who need it the most.

We are moving forward with our affordability plan, which includes targeted measures worth \$12.1 billion. For example, now that Bill C-30 has received royal assent, individuals and families receiving the GST credit will receive additional support starting this week. With Bill C-31, we are proposing the Canada dental benefit for children under 12 in families with an annual income of under \$90,000 who do not have access to a private dental plan.

I am confident the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke can appreciate the positive impacts that our affordability measures are having on her constituents.

I would like to remind the House that all of these support measures are targeted and fiscally responsible. Now is not the time to pour unnecessary fuel on the flames of inflation.

When it comes to pollution pricing, we know that a national price on pollution is the most effective and least costly way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. That is why we have moved forward with this system.

Climate action is no longer a theoretical political debate. The reality is that it is an economic necessity. Most provinces have their own pollution pricing mechanisms. In the provinces where the fed-

eral backstop had to be applied, families get payments to offset the costs of the federal pollution pricing.

The reality is that most households are getting back more than they pay. Indeed, in the four provinces where the federal system applies, the climate action incentive payments mean that a family of four will receive \$745 in Ontario, \$832 in Manitoba, \$1,101 in Saskatchewan and \$1,079 in Alberta. In addition, families in rural and small communities, like those living in Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, are eligible to receive an extra 10%. This is putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians.

This is important work, but I want to also highlight that it is not the entire climate plan. It is one of the tools in the tool box. We are working hard on affordability and at the same time addressing climate change.

• (1850)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, every cult needs a chorus. It is such an irony that the Liberals would opt for the line “price on pollution”. According to this climate cult, every word the parliamentary secretary just said was pollution. Nobody looks to a cult for consistency. If the government really thought carbon dioxide was pollution, it would never utter another word.

Of course, cult leaders never hold themselves to the same standard they set for their followers. It is why the Prime Minister can fly to Tofino for a one-day vacation. It is that same climate hypocrisy which galls Canadians.

In one carbon-spewing breath, the Liberals call it an existential threat and then they will turn around and fly hundreds of environmentalists and groups to the next COP meeting in a human-rights-violating state.

Can the parliamentary secretary tell us what number of climate cultists will we be paying to fly to Egypt's resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh to attend COP 27 this year?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I am sure most Canadians agree that taking action on climate change is important not only from an environmental perspective, but also as an economic necessity.

However, if we are talking about economics too and affordability, there are good reasons for Canadians to be confident. Canada is already supporting those who need it the most with our affordability plan at the moment they need it the most.

Tomorrow afternoon, our colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, will present the fall economic statement, which will lay out some of the steps our government will take toward a brighter future for our country.

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I am looking forward to that presentation tomorrow.

HOUSING

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to come back to the need to urgently act on the housing crisis. I would like the parliamentary secretary to understand why I am coming back to it.

First of all, it is because the number of people living unsheltered in my community has tripled in the last three years, going from just over 300 people to over 1,000. Also, homes continue to become less affordable. Dating back to 2005, for example, it used to be that house prices were three times the average median income. If we fast-forward to today, homes are eight times as much, which is completely out of reach for the average person, while the wait-list for an affordable one-bedroom unit is now almost eight years long.

The housing crisis will continue to define my community, as it already has, whether it is a young person who is unsure if they will ever be able to move out of their parents' place, a senior living on a fixed income or a health care worker. A nurse I spoke with a few weeks ago said they were not sure if they would be able to continue living in our community at all.

It is clear that across all levels of government, we need urgent action. At the federal level, we need to invest at the rates that are required to build the units we need, while also addressing the underlying conditions that have led us to this crisis. The fact is that homes should be places for people to live and not commodities for corporate investors to profiteer from. If a corporate investor wants to make a bunch of money, they should invest in the stock market, not do it on the backs of low-income folks in my community.

Multiple studies show that one very reasonable measure that would help is removing the existing tax exemptions for one type of corporate investor: real estate investment trusts. Back in 1996, RE-ITs did not own any rental units across the country. Today, they own nearly 200,000 units. In fact, although institutional investors across the country do not fully disclose the number of units, we know it is somewhere between 20% to 30% of the purpose-built rental housing stock.

In my community and across the country, what we are seeing is these real estate investment trusts buy up affordable units, quickly raise rents and then make it more difficult for renters to afford a place to call home. These corporate investors are in it not for what they can contribute, but for what they can take out, with the largest return possible. It seems pretty reasonable to tax them appropriately and invest the funds in affordable housing.

That is exactly what a motion I put forward in the House, Motion No. 71, would do. When I last raised this motion with the Minister of Housing, the reply I got was that the governing party needed to study it more.

Well, the good news is that the studies have already been done. One was done by the Office of the Federal Housing Advocate, which recommended this. There was another study by The Shift, which was in its directives. Locally, in my community, a study was also done by the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region. As a result, groups across the country, including Citizens for Public Justice, Canada Without Poverty, the Canadian Centre for Policy Al-

ternatives in its proposed alternative federal budget and the National Right to Housing Network, are making this same recommendation. They recommend to remove this tax exemption from real estate investment trusts and, in the words of the motion, to put the funds toward affordable units.

Knowing that the studies have already been done and knowing that civil societies are recommending this change, will it be in the fall economic statement tomorrow? If not, why not?

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear members of other parties in the House agree with us on the need to increase housing supply and preserve affordability. It is vital that responsibility for this goal be shared amongst all levels of government, the private sector and the non-profit sector. We all need to do our part to maintain affordability.

Too many people in this country are struggling to find housing that they can afford, that meets their needs and that also meets the need to live with dignity by having a safe and affordable home. There is simply not enough supply to meet the demand.

Our government has implemented a number of programs under the national housing strategy to increase the supply of housing. However, as my colleague pointed out, supply is only one of the factors driving up the cost of housing. Financialization and speculation have artificially increased prices to such an extent that prices no longer reflect the true value of housing. That is to say nothing of the “renoviction” phenomenon.

That is why we brought in a 1% annual tax on vacant residential properties belonging to non-resident, non-Canadian owners. That is also why we adopted a measure prohibiting foreigners from purchasing residential property in Canada for a period of two years. That is also why we are planning a suite of other measures to guarantee that housing in this country is used for its intended purpose, in other words, as a place to live for people in need.

Earlier this year, we announced a federal review of housing as an asset class. This fiscal review will help us better understand the role of large corporate players in the market and their impact on Canadian renters and homeowners.

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We also announced measures to protect buyers and renters against bad practices. We are implementing a homebuyers' bill of rights that will make the process of buying a home more open, transparent and fair. We are also proposing new measures to crack down on illegal activity in our housing market and make sure that property flippers and speculators are paying their fair share of tax.

Our government has made housing affordability a priority since we were first elected, and we will continue to do so. It was the cornerstone of our 2022 budget, which proposed measures to address the issue from every angle that could have an impact.

I thank my colleague for asking me this question and for giving me another opportunity to talk about housing. Again, it is a shared responsibility. He can count on my full co-operation in providing affordable housing for all Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, I think it is important to highlight again that what I am raising here is not that the governing party is doing nothing. There is more nuance than that. What I am raising is that the measures that are being put in place are insufficient. In my community, the number of people living unsheltered has tripled in the last three years, so it is clear that more needs to be done.

In her response, the parliamentary secretary again cited the study that is being done. I would like to highlight for her that others have already done the work. These studies have already been done and in those studies one of the obvious recommendations that I think parliamentarians from all parties could agree on is that these corporate

investors should at least be paying their taxes, and if they did, we could use those funds to invest in affordable units.

Would she address the substance of the motion I have put forward on the floor of this House or help us understand why this is not being undertaken by the governing party?

• (1900)

[Translation]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to reiterate that we must do more. That is exactly the commitment we have made. We have committed to implementing more measures to improve housing affordability. The plans we announced in the spring budget take into account the complexity of this problem by addressing it from several angles, including increasing supply and fighting financialization and speculation in the housing sector. We will continue to make housing a priority, as we have since we were first elected. I am very pleased that my colleague from Kitchener Centre shares this concern. I hope we will be able to count on his support for the suite of measures that we will be introducing in the House.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:01 p.m.)

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