



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

**Volume 151 No. 126**  
Monday, November 14, 2022

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, November 14, 2022

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The House resumed from October 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-281, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), the Broadcasting Act and the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to such important subjects as human rights and the track record of this government, this country, in that regard.

Bill C-281 is a private member's bill that was introduced by the Conservative member for Northumberland—Peterborough South. It is currently at second reading stage. Its long title, which is a bit complex, is an act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, or Sergei Magnitsky law, the Broadcasting Act and the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act. Given its title, we see that Bill C-281 addresses some very distinct issues and makes significant amendments to a number of bills.

I want to begin by saying that the Bloc Québécois will support this bill, which we definitely think is important, particularly when it comes to human rights.

Bill C-281 aims to increase the federal government's transparency and accountability when it comes to human rights. It does this in several ways. First, it proposes to “impose certain reporting requirements on the Minister of Foreign Affairs in relation to international human rights.” Second, it “amends the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act”, also known as the Sergei Magnitsky law. Third, it would “prohibit the issue, amendment or renewal of a licence in relation to a broadcasting undertaking” that is influenced by an entity that has committed crimes against humanity, such as genocide. Fourth, it “amends the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act

to prohibit a person from investing in an entity that has contravened certain provisions of the Act”.

Given the scope of the bill, I would like to focus my speech on the second area, namely, amending the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, which is known as the Magnitsky law.

The story behind this act is particularly tragic and interesting. Sergei Magnitsky was a Moscow lawyer and he revealed the largest tax fraud in Russian history. This was a fraud that allegedly benefited President Putin personally. The whistle-blower was imprisoned and tortured for nearly a year and he died as a result of this abuse on November 16, 2009. No credible investigation has been conducted by Russian authorities into Sergei Magnitsky's detention, torture and death, and the individuals responsible have never been brought to justice.

In what can only be described as a ludicrous twist, the Russian state held a posthumous trial in which Magnitsky was found guilty of the fraud that he had himself exposed to the entire world.

In subsequent years, the United States, the European Parliament, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy and Poland all passed laws and motions condemning the poor treatment suffered by the Russian whistle-blower. In 2017, Canada followed suit by enacting its own Magnitsky law. This law essentially provides for restrictive measures against foreigners who are responsible for serious violations of internationally recognized human rights.

One relevant amendment that Bill C-281 makes to the Magnitsky law is that it would “require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to respond within 40 days”, or within any other time limit set by committee, “to a report submitted by a parliamentary committee that recommends that sanctions be imposed under that Act against a foreign national.” The minister's reply should be made public. It should also respond to the committee's recommendations and indicate whether an order or regulation will be made and explain the reasons for the decision. In short, Bill C-281 proposes to increase the government's transparency and accountability regarding its decisions whenever invoking the Magnitsky law.

*Private Members' Business*

• (1105)

For example, let us imagine learning the identities of the Iranian officials directly involved in the arrest, torture and murder of young Mahsa Amini. Let us imagine learning that some of those officials, those executioners, have assets in Canada such as land holdings, assets, bank accounts and so on. This law would allow a parliamentary committee to recommend freezing the assets of these individuals and to ask that the government respond to that recommendation within, say, two weeks.

This bill would require that the Minister of Foreign Affairs provide a full and public response to the recommendation within a given time frame. In this case involving Iran, I have no doubt that it would take the necessary enforcement actions. After all, the elected members of this House have on more than one occasion expressed their support for the case of Mahsa Amini and condemned the Iranian regime for that crime. I think the results of the bill would be obvious.

However, there are instances where we know very well that government may not want to take a stand on a human rights issue. We can also imagine that it may not want to make a decision public on an issue involving the Magnitsky law.

I am thinking in particular of anything related to China and Saudi Arabia. With China, it could be out of fear or weakness. With Saudi Arabia, it could be in the interest of preserving an alliance with Canadian arms dealers. We know that those two countries are rogue states with respect to human rights. They would be deserving of Canadian sanctions targeting their nationals involved in serious human rights violations. One need only think of the current genocide of the Uighur minority in Xinjiang; of the terrible fate of Raif Badawi in Saudi Arabia, or journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was brutally murdered in 2018, likely under the order of the Crown Prince; of the succession of abuses committed by the terror regime of Vladimir Putin against his opponents or simply his critics.

In my view, Bill C-281 is relevant, as it gives Parliament more power through its committees. Basically, in my opinion, this bill would strengthen our democracy. It could potentially even improve Canada's record in defending human rights. I say "potentially" because it would force the government to take a position, at the risk of revealing its priorities, for example, with respect to Canada's policies concerning China and Saudi Arabia.

I would like to conclude my remarks by declaring my solidarity with the Iranian people, especially Iranian women, who, for 43 years, have been suffering unjustly from fanatical abuse inflicted by a handful of ultra-religious zealots.

I am hopeful that Bill C-281 will do more, but if it can help punish even one Iranian leader involved in the murder of Mahsa Amini or any other Iranian woman, this bill will have gone a long way. In my humble opinion, this bill is truly necessary and deserves to move forward.

• (1110)

[*English*]

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I welcome everyone back to the House after a week in our constituencies. I ask everybody to give me a brief mo-

ment this morning to wish my father a happy 80th birthday. It is his 80th birthday today. Duke McPherson, my dad, who is Frederick Clark III but is in fact called Duke, is a bit of character. We were never quite sure who was the parent and who was the child, but we always had his unrelenting love, so I wanted to take a moment to wish him a happy birthday this morning.

Today we are talking about a piece of legislation brought forward by the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South. It is a very good piece of legislation. I have long suspected the member of being an NDP at heart, because he does recognize the important value of human rights. This piece of legislation is something that all of us in the House can agree closes some of the gaps in the human rights legislation in this country. It closes some of the holes present in our human rights legislation.

Human rights, for me, is an extraordinarily important part of what we do. Canada has an obligation to be a leader in human rights. Canada has shown itself in the past to be a leader, and there are so many more things we need to do as parliamentarians, as a Parliament, as a government and as people representing our constituents to ensure human rights are protected in Canada, because many human rights are not being protected here. We also need to ensure that human rights around the world are being protected. This stems from the fact that for many, many years, Canadians have expressed concerns about Canada's human rights and the approach that our governments have had with regard to human rights, and not just the current government but previous governments as well.

We know we must do better. We know that no person should profit off the use of cluster munitions. We know foreign nationals involved in genocide or human rights abuses should not be able to broadcast in Canada. We know the Government of Canada must be more transparent with its sanctions regime, as well as the work it is taking on to defend prisoners of conscience.

While this is a very good bill that would close some gaps, there are some things it would not do. There would still be loopholes in Canada's cluster munitions legislation. We will still need a fulsome review and fix of Canada's sanctions regime, in particular the enforcement of sanctions.

Many times in the House I have stood and asked questions of the government about the sanctions regime, particularly with regard to how it is being implemented against Russian oligarchs. It is very difficult to get information on how much has been seized and how effectively our sanctions regime has been enforced. This is something that I have used Order Paper questions for as well. In fact, I was told the government could not give me the answer for the sanctions questions I had because it was not sure it would have the right answer. It was therefore not able to give an answer at all.

Of course, there are more things we need to do. We need to make sure that Canada's approach to human rights is consistent. We have seen time and time again that our human rights approach has been inconsistent in this country. There are times when Canada has been very strong and has been a human rights leader, but there are notable blind spots.

One of those blind spots is Saudi Arabia. We continuously fail to stop the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia despite the fact that we know they are being used against civilians. We know they are being used brutally.

We fail to recognize that there is a disproportionate war happening in Palestine and Israel. International law is being broken at this moment, which is having implications for civilians.

We have not done enough to deal with the ongoing genocide happening against the Uighur people in China. The government worked very hard, and we are very grateful that we were able to get the two Michaels returned to Canada. However, there are other Canadians who are still being held in China, and we have not seen the same level of focus on them. Huseyin Celil has not seen his family in over 16 years. He is a Canadian citizen who has not seen his children in 16 years. This is a human rights atrocity that we should also be standing up for.

• (1115)

A personal issue that I have taken up with my Bill C-263 is with regard to our Canadian mining and extractive industries around the world and how we do not apply the same human rights lens to mining companies around the world like we do to other industries in other places. Ensuring that people in Latin America, in South Asia and in Africa are protected from the environmental and human rights abuses caused by Canadian mining companies is very important.

My colleague, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, has brought forward some forced labour legislation that is extremely strong. I certainly hope the government looks at the legislation that the member has prepared, which he has worked with the sector to prepare, as it looks at developing its own forced labour legislation going forward.

These are some of those gaps we see in Canada's human rights response and it is vital that we close them.

With regard to this bill, the idea of requiring the minister to publish an annual report that would outline the measures the minister has taken to advance human rights internationally as part of Canada's foreign policies is an excellent idea. We probably should already have that. It is an important step that will shed light on the government's priorities and give us more information about what we need to do to push them harder to do the right thing.

However, I do have a couple of concerns. One is that Canada needs an international human rights action strategy. If we had that, then there would be something clear and concrete against which we would measure this proposed report. We want to see the government produce an action plan that will then lead to an annual report on what it will do and whether it has done it. We need that response mechanism so we can keep that in place.

### *Private Members' Business*

In addition, the bill would require that the government produce a list of prisoners of conscience, for whose release the Government of Canada is actively working toward. This is an excellent step and I am very thankful the member has brought it forward. It does give us some transparency and some accountability. However, there is no international legal definition of a prisoner of conscience and this could mean that some folks deserving of our attention would not be included on this list. For example, could we use a term such as "prisoners detained in contravention of human rights legal standards or legislation standards?"

Even just recently, for example, the family, a Canadian family, of Dong Guangping has no idea where he is. He went missing in Vietnam. We do not know where this gentleman is. Canada can do more to work on that, helping people like him find their way to Canada.

Moreover, we do have a concern that the public list of this kind may not provide the needed nuance or subtlety that Canada needs to employ in delicate cases. Should a name not be on the list, does that mean Canada is not working for that person? We would propose a meaningful plan of action and a set of guidelines for prisoners that would ensure greater consistency and transparency and accountability to families in civil society.

We need something more useful than the list. An actual change of behaviour from the Canadian government is something that we certainly would be proposing.

Giving the parliamentary committees the right to recommend Magnitsky sanctions is an excellent proposal. It is something we should already have done. We need to be using the Magnitsky sanctions more. We need to ensure that we are specifically targeting those individuals who are causing these crimes. The Magnitsky act, implemented by Bill Browder, on behalf of his friend Sergei Magnitsky, is one of the strongest pieces of legislation we have to hold individuals responsible for human rights abuses to account. I strongly support the ability of people who are studying issues, for example, at the foreign affairs committee or wherever, to be able to contribute to that and be part of that conversation.

I would like to thank the member for the bill. This is excellent legislation. We will be providing some friendly amendments. I look forward to closing some, though not all, of the gaps in Canadian human rights law.

• (1120)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an immense honour for me to speak in support of Bill C-281, the international human rights act, and to recognize this as legislation that would bring together a number of important measures that advance human rights.

*Private Members' Business*

I want to recognize the work done by my colleague and friend from Northumberland—Peterborough South. We were together in Mississauga about a week ago doing a town hall on the legislation. It was really incredible to see a number of different communities represented at that event, and the diversity of experience that has driven people who want to see the legislation pass.

When I was first elected, I started sharing the story of my grandmother. My grandmother was a Holocaust survivor. Learning about her experience in Germany during the Second World War was a key motivator for me to get involved in international human rights work. I would share her stories and our family's experience with the different people I met. I would often hear people sharing their stories of other kinds of mass atrocities, genocides and persecutions that they or their families had experienced, which led them to come to Canada.

One of the things that is striking about our multiculturalism in Canada is that we have many people who have come to our country fleeing different kinds of persecutions, mass atrocities and genocide. Many of those have come as refugees. They carry with them the experience of trauma and violence against their families and their communities.

Those communities and those who are refugees or descendants of refugees have been a key motivator in pushing the House to do more when it comes to defending international human rights and putting forward some of the concrete ideas around this bill.

Right now, we see the horrific genocidal invasion of Ukraine happening. We see violent repression inside Russia against civil society, pro-democracy activists and others. We see the heroic freedom movement taking place in Iran. We see the worsening human rights situation in Sri Lanka. We have the Uighur genocide and other human rights abuses in China. There are many places with instances of human rights abuses.

This legislation does not name specific countries. It is not about addressing individual human rights issues as one-offs. It is about changing the framework with respect to the way the Government of Canada approaches human rights, putting in place a framework that will push the government to always prioritize human rights in its foreign policy. We need to do that not just today, but into the future. We need to do that not just in relation to particular hot spots we see, but do that, in general, in every case.

The bill is called the international human rights act. A key aspect of it that relates to most of its provisions is accountability. This is legislation that would establish accountability around human rights in two principle ways. It would force the Government of Canada to be more accountable to Parliament and the parliamentary committees when it comes to human rights. It also seeks to hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable for their actions.

Let us start by talking about the aspect of holding the government accountable. Do I have criticisms of the government of the day's approach to human rights? Yes, I do, but the legislation is not just about the government today. It is about establishing a framework whereby any government of Canada in the future would be more accountable to Parliament when it comes to fulfilling its obligations on human rights. It would apply to future Conservative

governments. It would apply to any government, that human rights should be a central part of our approach to foreign policy.

The bill would require the Government of Canada to table an annual report of the work it is doing on advancing human rights. This would be a way of clearly signalling what work the government is doing and maybe give parliamentarians an opportunity to identify absences and things the government should be doing, but is not doing. This is a powerful accountability mechanism. It is a jumping-off point for raising questions, pointing out gaps and asking the government to do more in certain respects.

The legislation also calls for that report to specifically identify prisoners of conscience, individuals who are detained around the world, who should not be detained and who Canada is advocating for their release.

There has been some debate in this opening section of the bill. Is the requirement to list prisoners of conscience appropriate? Are there cases where the government might not want to publicly list prisoners of conscience because, in some cases, private advocacy would be more effective by not naming someone publicly?

• (1125)

First, I know the member who is sponsoring the bill, and those of us Conservatives who are on the foreign affairs committee, will certainly be open to a discussion around reasonable amendments and hearing from witnesses as to how to strengthen aspects of the legislation. However, any exception to the public naming of prisoners of conscience should be clearly circumscribed and sufficiently narrow. What we hear overwhelmingly from family members and advocates of people who have been detained is that bringing more attention to these cases is virtually always helpful. When we say the names, when we talk about Huseyin Celil for example, when we bring more attention to these cases, their families and advocates want us to do that. They want us to highlight the fact that they are arbitrarily detained to ensure they are not forgotten. Through saying their names, by speaking out about their cases and calling for their release, we bring more attention and more pressure to that call.

Might there be exceptions? Sure. As a committee, we should talk about how to refine those cases, but there should not be *carte blanche* for the government to not list names maybe for some strategic foreign policy reason. We want to be bringing as much attention to these instances of arbitrary detention as possible. What we have heard from civil society is that bringing attention to these cases of arbitrary detention is helpful to those prisoners of conscience.

With respect to the international human rights act, accountability is a key part of it. One aspect of that accountability is holding the Government of Canada accountable. It has to publish this report and identify the prisoners of conscience for whose release it is advocating. It would allow us to ask questions about why this or that name is not on the list as well as suggest names that maybe should have been on that list, hoping that they are added in subsequent years, and to increase the work the Government of Canada is doing, specifically to advocate for the release of people who are wrongfully detained.

Another aspect of the accountability piece is an amendment to the Magnitsky act. I recognize the great work done in passing the Magnitsky act. It was introduced by my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. It was passed unanimously in the House. In fact, Canada was the first country to adopt Magnitsky sanctions legislation. We have also seen it adopted around the world.

The challenge with the Magnitsky act is that it gives a tool to the government with respect to sanctioning human rights abusers, but the tool is only as good as its use. If we, as a legislature, empower the government, as we have, with the ability to impose Magnitsky sanctions but it does not actually sanction people who are abusing human rights then we have not used that tool and it has not had the desired effect.

The fact is that there are many countries with significant human rights problems where the government has sanctioned no one and therefore there is a vital need for us to use the Magnitsky act more. That is why we are introducing with this legislation a parliamentary trigger, a mechanism whereby if a parliamentary committee passes a motion to call on the government to sanction someone, the government would have to provide a response within 40 days or another timeline prescribed by the committee. It still leaves the government with the discretion around who to sanction, which is fair enough, because it will have access to information that the House does not have. Ultimately, it is the government's responsibility to make these kinds of decisions, but we want a mechanism that requires more accountability and puts more pressure on the government to actually use the Magnitsky sanctions, something it has been reluctant to do. This accountability would push the Government of Canada to do more with respect to human rights.

Also, applying Magnitsky sanctions is about holding the perpetrators of human rights violations accountable. When there are human rights violations, Magnitsky sanctions are a way of saying to the perpetrators of those abuses that they cannot travel to or move their money to Canada. Hopefully, if countries work in concert to apply Magnitsky sanctions, it would be a significant deterrent for the human rights abusers who potentially want an escape valve from the authoritarian regimes of which they are a part.

It is a powerful coincidence that the day this bill is coming to a vote at second reading is the anniversary of the death of Sergei Magnitsky. I hope we honour his memory and the memories of all the victims of human rights violations around the world by passing the bill, bringing it to committee, studying it further and certainly looking for ways to improve and strengthen it. With this legislation we can position Canada's foreign policy, not just in this Parliament but for generations to come, so Canada can be a leader in human rights and can follow through with exactly what those communities

### *Private Members' Business*

and the people we have been meeting with across the country want us to do.

• (1130)

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, advancing human rights is an integral part of the Government of Canada's multilateral engagement in our foreign policy, and as such it does not, as the previous member suggested, ever need to be pushed toward that work.

Around the world, we are increasingly seeing concerning trends with some authoritarian governments seeking to undermine international human rights norms, be it Russia, China or Iran, including the stifling of civil society and restricting the full enjoyment of the rights and freedoms of their people. Consequently, it is important to consider new opportunities to add to Canada's tool kit so as to better respond to emerging human rights crises and to advance the promotion and protection of human rights.

Therefore, we welcome the opportunity to discuss Bill C-281, which was presented to the House by the member of Parliament for Northumberland—Peterborough South. I personally thank him for his work on the bill. The bill introduces several amendments to four statutes in an effort to uphold Canada's commitment to human rights in a strong and meaningful way.

The government supports the intention of the bill and will support it at second reading, aiming to find ways to strengthen it to effectively add to Canada's robust tool kit and our approach to addressing human rights situations around the world. We will support it going to committee for a thorough review and study by committee members.

We welcome the opportunity to work with our colleagues on the other side of the House, as well as on this side of the House, on this important piece of legislation in an effort to strengthen the bill and to address certain aspects of the provisions that would hinder the bill's ability to achieve its objective under the law.

[*Translation*]

Canada's policies and initiatives to uphold human rights abroad, including support for human rights activists, get a lot of attention from parliamentarians, and so they should. The bill proposes new reporting requirements for the Minister of Foreign Affairs when it comes to Canada's efforts to advance human rights through our foreign policy.

*Private Members' Business**[English]*

We agree with the objective to better demonstrate Canada's engagement in the promotion and protection of human rights. However, as currently drafted, the bill's means of pursuing the objective as it relates to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act is somewhat problematic. It would impose direct instruction to the minister from Parliament concerning the conduct of Canada's foreign relations, and that could have broader, unrelated and unintended implications and consequences for the conduct of foreign relations under the Crown prerogative.

Unlike most other acts concerning federal departments and agencies, the act does not confer powers or authorities on the minister, but rather the powers of the minister are found in the Crown prerogative, which is a long-standing, valid source of executive authority. It has a foundation in Canada's Constitution, and its scope and content have been shaped through judicial decisions.

The act purposefully refrains from limiting or displacing the prerogative as a source of executive authority over foreign relations. It also refrains from giving direct legislative instructions concerning the executive's order of Canada's foreign relations. Over the years, this approach has maintained the flexibility needed by the government, no matter which party is in power, to adequately manage and balance the complexities of foreign relations in an evolving world.

In order to respect the aim of the provisions of this bill, while protecting the government's ability to conduct foreign relations, we recommend the legislative reporting requirement be replaced by a strong policy statement on human rights in the House of Commons. This statement could commit to the development of a human rights report that speaks to the ways Canada advances respect for human rights abroad, including our efforts to support the vital work of human rights defenders.

Additionally, the bill calls for the minister to publish a list that sets out the names and circumstances of the prisoners of conscience detained worldwide for whose release the Government of Canada is actively working. I want to caution that this could very much endanger the safety of human rights defenders and in certain cases could cause them to lose their lives. For example, if a human rights defender is detained in a country with known reports of torture, publicizing the prisoner's circumstances could lead to retaliation from the government.

- (1135)

*[Translation]*

Moreover, since the amendment proposed in this bill is not limited to Canadian prisoners of conscience, making known any interest in people detained in their country of origin would damage our bilateral relations and undermine Canada's ability to provide support to such human rights defenders.

*[English]*

I recognize that during the previous debate on this bill this issue was raised, and the member of Parliament for Northumberland—Peterborough South stated he was supportive of amendments that would improve this bill. I look forward to working with him to en-

sure that we do not inadvertently endanger the lives of human rights defenders.

Sanctions are an important tool used by Canada to address human rights violations abroad. Bill C-281 would require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to respond within 40 days to a report submitted by a parliamentary committee recommending that sanctions be imposed upon a foreign national. The Government of Canada takes the imposition of sanctions very seriously and has used the Magnitsky act and the other acts for sanctions extremely judiciously but proactively. Evaluating the feasibility and appropriateness of pursuing sanctions in response to a specific situation requires thorough and significant due diligence under the acts that govern them, including consultation, policy and legal analysis.

The bill's proposed 40-day response period would be an entirely new reporting requirement for the minister and it conflicts with the standard practice for a government response to standing committees, which is 120 days for the House of Commons and 150 days for the Senate. Furthermore, it would presuppose cabinet and Governor in Council approval and risk the measures being made ineffective.

Publicly announcing sanctions before they enter into force would effectively notify the targeted individual and as a result allow them to rapidly move their assets outside of Canada, which no one in this House would want. Finally, a public announcement of this nature would make it more difficult for Canada to coordinate our sanctions with our allies. That would hamper our ability to make effective sanctions, which are always more effective if we do them with our allies.

We therefore recommend adjusting the minister's response so that it would acknowledge the committee's recommendation and commit to its consideration while ensuring that it aligns with current standard parliamentary response practices, protects Canada's judicious approach toward the imposition of sanctions and meets the objective and intention set out in the bill.

With respect to cluster munitions, they pose an immediate threat to individuals around the world who live in conflict and post-conflict zones. In 2015, Canada ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions and is fully compliant with the treaty. Canada implements its obligations to the treaty through the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act.

We welcome the prohibitions to direct investments introduced in this bill, which would make it explicitly clear that it is illegal for Canadians to invest in cluster munitions. However, the bill's prohibition to indirect investments would pose challenges to enforcement, as it would potentially criminalize indirect investors, such as mutual fund holders, who may be unaware of what investments they hold.



*Private Members' Business*

[Translation]

The media play an important role in transmitting ideas, especially ideas about promoting human rights. The bill recognizes that important role by prohibiting the issue, amendment or renewal of a licence in relation to a broadcasting undertaking that is vulnerable to being influenced by certain foreign nationals or entities of concern. This includes those who have committed acts that the Senate or the House of Commons has recognized as genocide or that have been identified under the Sergei Magnitsky law.

● (1140)

[English]

Actions to protect the broadcasting system from influence are important, and we welcome the opportunity to add clarity through a thorough discussion at committee of this bill.

In closing, this bill is a forward-looking effort to strengthen Canada's engagement on human rights both at home and abroad. We thank the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South for his work, and we look forward to working with him at committee to strengthen it.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be back and to rise to debate this bill, which I feel is extremely important and particularly relevant, at a time when the world order is being turned upside down on a daily basis on all continents by a failure to respect fundamental human rights.

As parliamentarians in a G7 country, we want to take concrete action to ensure that those rights are respected in every corner of the world. We have a responsibility to take a leadership role on the world stage, particularly on this issue. To do that, we obviously need clear guidelines on what human rights represent for our democracy. We must also make it clear that corrupt foreign leaders are not welcome here, specifically by blocking any interference by nations whose objectives do not at all align with our common good. That must be part of our objectives, and I am pleased that the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South has taken the initiative to present concrete ways of achieving that.

As my colleague, the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, indicated earlier, the Bloc Québécois supports the principle of Bill C-281. I will remind members of a few points that explain why my party supports this initiative.

First, the text of this bill would amend section 10 of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act to impose what can be considered to be new, more modern standards concerning human rights around the world. The amendment to this section would therefore require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to publish an annual report summarizing the measures taken by the government to advance human rights internationally. The minister would also be required to publish an annual list to provide an overview of prisoners of conscience who are being held abroad and whose release is being sought. This would therefore be a much more transparent process that would help Canadians be better informed about their government's actions abroad.

I would remind the House of what constitutes a prisoner of conscience. According to Amnesty International, a prisoner of conscience is “someone who has not used or advocated violence or hatred in the circumstances leading to their imprisonment but is imprisoned solely because of who they are”. This could include sexual orientation, ethnic, national or social origin, language, skin colour, sex, economic status or religious or political convictions, among others. A prisoner of conscience is therefore a person who is in prison not because of what they did, but simply for expressing their opinions or beliefs.

This is a painful reminder of a very specific case, that of Raif Badawi. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the family of Raif Badawi, a prisoner of conscience who was incarcerated in 2012 by the Saudi regime for the crime of using his blog to advocate for a more open, liberal society in Saudi Arabia. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes and a fine of one million Saudi riyals for criticizing the country's religious authorities. Although he was finally released in March, Mr. Badawi is still stuck in Saudi Arabia because he is not authorized to leave the country. He was banned from travelling for 10 years, banned from working in the media and forced to pay a \$335,000 fine, which was part of his sentencing when he was convicted. It is an absolutely horrible situation that has been going on for far too long.

I commend the work of my colleague, the member for Lac-Saint-Jean, who has been tirelessly advocating since his election in 2019 for the release of Raif Badawi and his return to Canada. He has repeatedly asked the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to use his discretionary power to give Raif Badawi Canadian citizenship. He even moved a motion here in the House, which passed unanimously in January. However, the government is still dragging its feet.

In this case, Quebec even paved the way for Raif Badawi to be exiled to Canada by putting him on a priority list of potential immigrants for humanitarian reasons. The federal government could do more today, but continues to refuse. That is why I believe that legislation to expand the power of the House, and therefore of parliamentarians, would be of great benefit and could have a significant impact on diplomatic efforts. I was concerned that the government would be somewhat reluctant, and that is unfortunately what I did hear in the previous speech.

With a stronger foreign affairs act, as proposed by Bill C-281, Canadians could have been better informed about what was happening to Mr. Badawi, and they could have asked their government to do more, if that was their wish, rather than relying on rumours or innuendoes for 10 years.

*Private Members' Business*

Bill C-281 would also amend the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act to require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to respond within 40 days to a report submitted by a parliamentary committee recommending that sanctions be imposed. The minister would also have to make public the decision made in relation to the committee report and set out the reasons for that decision.

• (1145)

I think it is an excellent idea, quite frankly. I know that important work is being done by all parliamentary committees, including the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. Since its creation, this subcommittee has studied human rights in a number of countries, including Iran, Cuba, China, Honduras, North Korea, Mexico, and many others.

This subcommittee studied the case of Sergei Magnitsky, whom the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Leaders Act, also known as the Sergei Magnitsky law, was named after. The story behind this legislation is worth sharing again.

I know that some colleagues have already gone over this, but I will take the liberty of doing it again. I was not here when Parliament passed this law, but I am sure many of my colleagues who were here remember it clearly.

British American multi-millionaire Bill Browder headed up a major foreign investment fund in Russia until his company became the target of one of the biggest frauds in modern Russian history. Expelled from Russia for calling out corruption, Mr. Browder handed over control of his company to his lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky. Shortly after Browder's departure, the police seized everything in his office and took possession of his company. Magnitsky discovered that the public officials behind the seizure received a \$230-million tax refund within just 24 hours. The fact that the money was spirited out of the country proved that the whole thing had been orchestrated by high-level individuals.

After exposing the scandal, Sergei Magnitsky ended up in a Moscow prison, where he was tortured for 358 days. Eventually, he died of untreated pancreatitis in 2009 at the age of 38. Russian authorities never conducted a thorough, independent, objective investigation into the detention, torture and death of Sergei Magnitsky. Those responsible were never brought to justice. After his death, an unprecedented posthumous trial was held, and he was sentenced in Russia for the fraud he himself had exposed.

Known as the "Magnitsky law" in memory of the Russian lawyer and thanks to Mr. Browder's work with parliamentarians in Canada and around the world, this legislation makes it possible to freeze financial assets and deny entry for foreign leaders and officials who have committed serious human rights violations.

Strengthening this legislation, as Bill C-281 does, and imposing reporting requirements on the Minister of Foreign Affairs are of vital importance to citizens, who often feel as if they are merely bystanders with little knowledge of foreign affairs issues that might affect them, directly or indirectly. This would be a welcome step forward.

The Broadcasting Act would also be amended to prohibit the issue, amendment or renewal of a licence in relation to a broadcasting undertaking that is vulnerable to being influenced by a foreign entity that has committed acts that the House, the Senate or both chambers have recognized as wrongdoing. This includes potential acts of genocide.

This is a significant change that would give parliamentarians a lot of power, again, but could make a real difference in the way some of us fight for human rights. I am again thinking about my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean, who has been fighting tooth and nail to get Canada to recognize the ongoing genocide of the Uighur people in China. He fought in vain to get the Beijing Olympic Games cancelled out of respect for the Uighurs who are suffering atrocities.

Finally, I want to comment on the change to the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act set out in Bill C-281. It would expand the groups of people who are subject to restrictions under this legislation to include any person or corporation who may have a financial stake in a group or person who has committed, or aided or abetted a third party to commit, a reprehensible act under the current legislation.

On that note, I am pleased to say that Canada is finally adhering to the Convention on Cluster Munitions drafted in Dublin in 2008. Unfortunately, as we know, that is not the case for every country. The United States, Russia and China are among the few countries that have not ratified this agreement. This seems like a step in the right direction for a safer world, as does this bill as a whole, the principle of which has the full support of my party.

• (1150)

[English]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand today to speak to Bill C-281, the international human rights act. I want to thank the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South for bringing forward this important piece of legislation, which would amend legislation I introduced in the House back in 2018, Bill S-226. My partner in crime in the Senate at that time was Senator Raynell Andreychuk, who worked very hard on that bill. She and I had had numerous meetings with the government, to the point where we had unanimous consent on the bill. The legislation we are debating today reintroduces some of the changes to the earlier iterations of Bill S-226.

We have to make sure everybody understands that we use Magnitsky sanctions to move in lockstep with our allies. When the parliamentary secretary says we want to have a coordinated response with our allies, our allies, whether it is the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia, are all using Magnitsky sanctions. Unfortunately, the government has not used Magnitsky sanctions since 2018.

*Private Members' Business*

All the sanctions that have been brought against some of the corrupt foreign officials and gross human rights violators we are seeing today in the war in Ukraine, and what Russia has been doing with its kleptocracy, have all been under the Special Economic Measures Act. We know that act does not have the same teeth or accountability built into it as the Magnitsky law itself. Having Parliament provide a mechanism to put names on a list to present to the government through the foreign affairs committees of either the Senate or the House would provide more accountability, as well as debate and discussion as to why certain names should be added to the list.

I have worked with numerous communities for years to try to get more of these gross human rights violators and corrupt foreign officials on the list. We have submitted names to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development and the Department of Justice, and none of those names have ended up on any sanctions list, either SEMA or the Magnitsky law. The Vietnamese community, the Cambodian community and Falun Gong practitioners have dozens of names of people proven to have committed gross human rights violations against citizens in those countries, yet the government sits idle.

Amending the Magnitsky act, as has been brought forward by my colleague from Northumberland—Peterborough South, would address that shortfall. It would allow communities and parliamentarians to come forward with names. Then, the ultimate accountability of the government would be to report back within 40 days as to why it is either taking action or not taking action. It would also file annual reports. The bigger goals are naming and shaming those committing gross human rights violations around the world.

We have to make sure we move forward with this legislation. I am glad we are getting to the point of probably having unanimous consent for sending this bill to committee, but I would say to my colleagues in the Liberal Party that, instead of trying to make a whole bunch of amendments to the bill at committee, they actually listen to the people who have suffered violations of their human rights because of corrupt foreign officials, the human rights violators who put their own ideology or wealth ahead of that of the citizens they are supposed to be serving.

We have to make sure we go back to using Magnitsky sanctions, just as our allies do, to ensure there is one declaration that these individuals have violated the human rights of their citizens, are corrupt, they are being held to account and cannot use Canada as a safe haven. I know the government has been apprehensive about using Magnitsky sanctions because it is required to report on financial institutions on a quarterly basis whether any of the names on the sanctions lists we have under Magnitsky are making use of our financial institutions to hide their wealth, or hiding their families here and taking advantage of our great universities. Those practices have to be monitored, and the best way to do that is through the amendments suggested in Bill C-281.

• (1155)

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it has been said before that to accomplish something one needs the support of many others. Today, I rise on the shoulders of giants. Of course there was Sergei Magnitsky, who stood up bravely against corruption in Russia and was

supported by Bill Browder, who has campaigned around the world to put these sanctions in place so that gross violators of human rights and corrupt officials cannot continue to operate with impunity.

I stand here on the shoulders of great members of Parliament, such as the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, who previously put forward a private member's bill and shepherded it through Parliament with unanimous support. I stand here beside a great colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, who has worked with me to draft and put together this legislation.

It is a true honour to be in the House every day, and it is a true honour to stand to carry this legacy further. This legislation is what Bill Brouder has pushed so far and so hard for. He in a recent editorial, he stated that he supports Bill C-281. We have heard that the NDP, the Liberal Party and the Bloc Québécois support Bill C-281.

More important than the support of our political parties and even of its originators is the support I felt when the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan and I had a town hall. We heard from survivors of incredible violence. Many of them were standing there when the rest of their families had been murdered by some of the most gross and heinous violators of human rights in the world. They stood there. They came there even with their own drama, one who had been a sex slave for over two years. They stood up and said to me, “We support your bill. We want it done. We want this legislation pushed forward. We don't want it watered down. We want it strengthened.”

While I am 100% open to any amendment that makes the bill better, I am not open to any that makes it weaker, not because of me, Irwin Cotler or Sergei Magnitsky, but because of the people who are suffering this moment, whether they are in Tehran or Kyiv. In our position of privilege and power, we owe it to them to stand up for them. If this small little part can do it, then that is a great thing.

In addition to being at that town hall, I had the opportunity to be at a protest against the terrible crimes that are being committed by the IRGC. I brought my son along with me, to honour the 41 children who have been lost in the recent protests in Iran. My son was there observing and hearing everything about the protests, their support and the people who were victims of these terrible human rights crimes. He heard that, and we walked off the stage together hand in hand. I felt more pride then than during any of my other accomplishments in the House of Commons. He leaned over to me and said, “Dad, when I get older, I want to be just like you. I want to fight for the good guys and hold the bad guys to account.” That was from my nine-year-old son. I have never been so proud.

### Government Orders

My message to all of the parties in the House is this: Let us make all of our children proud. Some legislation is very nuanced, so we need to have depth of consultation in our conversations. We will study this one and try to make better, but as a concept it is very easy. It is good versus evil. It is right versus wrong. It is helping those who are helpless and who have no one to help them.

We need to stand up. We need to get this to the foreign affairs committee, get it studied, get to work and get it passed so we can hold those people who are committing some of the worst crimes in this world accountable.

• (1200)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The question is on the motion.

[Translation]

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

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, we request a recorded vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 16, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 22—EXTENSION OF SITTING HOURS AND CONDUCT OF EXTENDED PROCEEDINGS

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

- (a) until Friday, June 23, 2023, a minister of the Crown may, with the agreement of the House leader of another recognized party, rise from his or her seat at any time during a sitting, but no later than 6:30 p.m., and request that the ordinary hour of daily adjournment for a subsequent sitting be 12:00 a.m., provided that it be 10:00 p.m. on a day when a debate pursuant to Standing Order 52 or 53.1 is to take place, and that such a request shall be deemed adopted;
- (b) on a sitting day extended pursuant to paragraph (a),
  - (i) proceedings on any opposition motion pursuant to Standing Order 81(16) shall conclude no later than 5:30 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday, 6:30 p.m. on a Monday or 1:30 p.m. on a Friday, on an allotted day for the business of supply, except pursuant to Standing Order 81(18)(c),
  - (ii) after 6:30 p.m., the Speaker shall not receive any quorum calls or dilatory motions, and shall only accept a request for unanimous consent after receiving a notice from the House leaders or whips of all recognized parties stating that they are in agreement with such a request,
  - (iii) motions to proceed to the orders of the day, and to adjourn the debate or the House may be moved after 6:30 p.m. by a minister of the Crown, including on a point of order, and such motions be deemed adopted,
  - (iv) the time provided for Government Orders shall not be extended pursuant to Standing Orders 33(2), 45(7.1) or 67.1(2);

(c) until Friday, June 23, 2023,

(i) during consideration of the estimates on the last allotted day of each supply period, pursuant to Standing Orders 81(17) and 81(18), when the Speaker interrupts the proceedings for the purpose of putting forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the estimates,

(A) all remaining motions to concur in the votes for which a notice of opposition was filed shall be deemed to have been moved and seconded, the questions deemed put and recorded divisions deemed requested,

(B) the Speaker shall have the power to combine the said motions for voting purposes, provided that, in exercising this power, the Speaker be guided by the same principles and practices used at report stage,

(ii) a motion for third reading of a government bill may be made in the same sitting during which the said bill has been concurred in at report stage;

(d) on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, Thursday, December 15, 2022, or Friday, December 16, 2022, a minister of the Crown may move, without notice, a motion to adjourn the House until Monday, January 30, 2023, provided that the House shall be adjourned pursuant to Standing Order 28 and that the said motion shall be decided immediately without debate or amendment;

(e) on Wednesday, June 21, 2023, Thursday, June 22, 2023, or Friday, June 23, 2023, a minister of the Crown may move, without notice, a motion to adjourn the House until Monday, September 18, 2023, provided that the House shall be adjourned pursuant to Standing Order 28 and that the said motion shall be decided immediately without debate or amendment; and

(f) notwithstanding the order adopted on Thursday, June 23, 2022, and Standing Order 45(6), no recorded division requested between 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 15, 2022 and the adjournment on Friday, December 16, 2022, and between 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 22, 2023 and the adjournment on Friday, June 23, 2023, shall be deferred, except for any recorded division requested in regard to a Private Members' Business item, for which the provisions of the order adopted on Thursday, June 23, 2022, shall continue to apply.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to get an opportunity to speak to this motion. I want to start at the outset by thanking my colleagues, the hon. House leaders, for the areas in which we have been able to find co-operation. There have been a number of different areas in which we have been able to work constructively together. The intention of this motion is to be an expansion and not a reduction of that.

I am going to speak very briefly to some of my concerns with respect to the legislative agenda we have and some of the challenges that currently exist with that, and then I am going to speak more broadly to the state of discourse and our engagement with one another in this place politically.

It is my hope that this will provoke more dialogue among the parties to make clear what exactly our respective intentions are in terms of the number of speakers and length of time taken with each bill. It has been a source of frustration to not know how many speakers are going to be put up, specifically by the Conservatives, and that is, frankly, obstruction by stealth. I will give specific examples.

Bill S-5, which this House voted for unanimously, took six days of House time just to get to committee. This is something that was voted on unanimously. More specifically, let us take a look at Bill C-9, which is a very technical bill on judges. That bill, again, was supported unanimously. However, when there were interpretation issues in the House and we asked for an additional 20 minutes so we did not need to spend an entire additional House day dealing with this bill, which was unanimously supported, that was rejected by the Conservatives.

*Government Orders*

Although most times we have not been told how many speakers there will be, we have been told that the Conservatives want more speakers on this bill. This motion would provide the opportunity to do that. I have heard the hon. House leader for the Conservative Party indicate concern with committees. I share those concerns and want to work with him to make sure committees are in no way impeded and may conduct their business without interruption, so both committees and the House can do their respective work.

I have just a couple of comments, though, because this is an inflection point and we have a choice as to the direction we take right now. If there is upset about sitting later hours, there are solutions. Simply give us the number of speakers and have a frank and honest conversation about how long is reasonable for a bill to take. Let us have that conversation understanding no one party here has a majority, which means no one party should be able to dictate to all the other parties that something does not move forward.

It is totally fair to oppose something. It is totally fair to vote against it. It is totally fair to disagree with it vociferously. However, if a majority of the House wants to move forward, then the fair question is how many voices need to be heard from those who are not in the majority to allow the House to do its business. Giving no answer is not an acceptable response and is not something that can be worked with. Most reasonable people would see that.

This is really a call or a provocation for a conversation. In that conversation, I want to invoke a dear friend, who was the deputy leader of the government in this place. His name was Arnold Chan. I go back to the speech Arnold gave as he was mustering the last of his energy in his last days of life to speak to this chamber about how we need to work with one another.

Arnold was one of my best friends in the world, and watching him die was profoundly painful, but his words always echo in my ears. One of Arnold's chief frustrations was that this chamber, this place that was so important to him, was often reduced to just reading talking points with one another: us saying how wonderful we are and the other side saying how terrible we are, and them saying they are wonderful and us saying they are terrible. Of course, in that back-and-forth, the truth of the situation and the difficulty of what we are going through is lost. In difficult times, we lose the opportunity to genuinely hear each other.

• (1205)

Let us be straight about where we are. These are the most difficult times the planet has faced since World War II. People across the world are scared. They are watching the price of their basic necessities of life rising, be they groceries, rent or any of a myriad things. They are watching a war in Ukraine. They are watching horrors in Iran. They are seeing climate change ravage their communities, and they are hungry for answers.

The truth is that in really hard times, often we do not know all the answers. In fact, if any one of us was to stand in this House and say we know what the world is going to be in six months, we would be lying. We live in incredibly turbulent times, and I am looking forward to hearing the hon. House leader's speech soon. We live in a time where we have to be straight with each other about what those hard things are and what the solutions are.

I really love New Orleans. I had the opportunity to go down there, and sometimes it is easier in another country to reflect on the state of their politics than it is on our own, but when I had an opportunity to talk to a young Black lady in a store about the state of being Black in America, how unjust it was and how hopeless she felt, she did not think that anybody was really speaking truthfully about the situation she and her community were facing.

That makes me think of the people we represent on both sides of the aisle, who are suffering in so many different ways that we do not always have the answer to, whether it is somebody who walks into our office who is finding they cannot afford to pay rent or somebody who walks into our office who is facing the horror of some unimaginable terror that is happening in another part of the world. When we look at them and try to give them compassion and answers, too often we all, and I will own this, have been prone to exaggeration and to having more solutions than we actually have. However, what we do in that exaggeration, on both sides, is that we allow them to think we do not really see the picture for what it is.

I will give a very specific example. On that same trip, when I walked into Studio Be, an art gallery of Black artists who are talking about the experience of being Black and the terrors they face, it was a deeply uncomfortable experience for me. It is not my country, and a lot of the horrors that were being written about are not happening to our citizens, but the injustice that has been visited upon Black people in our own country is very hard to look at and very hard to respond to. That place, though, met all of that injustice with such love, compassion, truth and forgiveness that it calls on all of us to do the same. We can yell at each other. We can deride each other, but there are old lessons that are being forgotten in that.

We look at old wisdom from something like *The Lord's Prayer*, something we have said so many times. It says, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Let us think about that as a covenant, that we cannot move forward unless we can truly understand the suffering of somebody else and understand their position.

I think, and I maybe I am Pollyanna to believe it, that we have to have more compassion for one another. I think that compassion, empathy and forgiveness are not weaknesses, but the bedrock foundation of civilization and the only things that have ever held us together. I think that in the darkest hours, and let us not lie to each other, we are in dark hours as our hospitals fill up with children, as we worry about whether key surgeries can move forward, and as we worry about the state of our planet, we need that compassion and empathy for one another, and we need the realness in our dialogue. Why do we need that realness? It is because, when we live in an environment of "gotcha" and playing games, we distort the truth.

*Government Orders*

● (1210)

That same woman I talked to in a shop, who was talking about the horrible conditions that she felt existed for her community, told me the world was run by 12 people. She is a deeply intelligent woman, but she believed in conspiracies because people did not speak what was true and because they attempted to take an opportunity to play games with it.

I look at the hon. House leader for the Conservatives, who is laughing right now, and I say to him—

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Who is saying this?

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Madam Speaker, exactly. I proclaim that I have been a hypocrite. When I was in opposition, the tone that I used and the way that I asked questions could have been different. I think I often asked the right questions in the wrong way. I do not have a problem acknowledging that the tenor and tone with which I approached issues needed to change. I have tried to address that, and I will continue to.

All I am saying is that when we fight over the small things, the big things get hidden. Each of us knows that when we see and hear truth and when we distort it, exaggerate it and continue to play that game, it makes it feel to others that we do not see truth. It is not enough for us to see truth in private rooms. It is not enough for us to see truth in corridors. We have to speak it in a chamber like this.

The question that we have to ask now is not what comma will come after our names, because in 100 years' time no one will read that Wikipedia entry. All of us, I dare say, will be forgotten, me included. However, it is up to us to meet the challenge of the time that we are in, and I think we have a lot to learn from each other. I am here today to say that the challenges that our country faces cannot be faced unless we listen to one another. I approach this in the same way.

Let me go back to Remembrance Day. A long-time friend shared a story with me that I had never heard before from the Battle of the Somme. He talked about his grandfather. His grandfather saved not one, not two, not three but four Canadian soldiers, and as he was dragging the fourth soldier back, he was shot and killed. We have to ask this question: How many people would he have saved had his life not been taken? I think it is worth asking, for all of us, what was in his heart as he charged into certain danger.

What was in his heart as he charged into certain danger was hope for a better world, gratitude for what he had and love for his fellow man. I do not think it is too much to ask of all of us, regardless of our differences, to approach this in the same way. When we approach the issues of our time with grievance and anger, it never works. We could do it, and we could talk about freedom. There is absolutely a freedom to being full of grievance, bitterness, anger and a feeling that we are not getting what we want and what we deserve, and we have a right to do that, but this has led to very dark places.

I would submit that true freedom, actual freedom, is the ability to speak truth but also hear truth and be truly as we are. Evil does not hide in self-expression. Evil hides in the denial of truth. We are facing forces that would rip apart our democracies, and that is no ex-

aggeration. If we are serious about saving liberal democracy, then I think it is time we return to the principles of the enlightened. In the enlightenment, the key and most powerful insight was the acknowledgement of what we do not know and the courage to use science and data to find out what is true.

● (1215)

In this chamber, if we can come to know the problems of our day, meaning the enormous difficulties we have, while being honest about the challenges that are in front of us and being truthful about what the solutions might be, then we can be worthy of the incredible honour we have of being in this chamber. I would submit that the only way forward in this time is for us to figure that out. If we cannot figure it out in this chamber and build a bridge to one another with our differences here in the chamber, then how can we expect the country to heal? How can we expect our neighbours to find that bridge?

I will end on this note. As we think of Remembrance Day and we think of battles fought against the Nazis and other evil regimes, the battle that we fight today is not across a trench or an ocean. It is not through barbed wire. It is in our own hearts.

I had a conversation with a wonderful fellow, and it did not have anything to do with politics. I met him out in Kitchener. He runs a grocery store called Dutchie's. His name is Mike and he has courage. He said it used to be that when we saw something as ridiculous as a seven-dollar head of lettuce, a person would create a new business and could make a huge profit selling it at five dollars or four dollars. He said that people are tired and they have gone through so much. They do not want to take a chance or take a risk. They are afraid to hope.

Humanity has gone through much darker hours. When we look at what happened in World War I when people were dealing with the Spanish flu, they longed to go back to the Victorian age, to the time of corsets and dinner parties. However, they could not have imagined the prosperity that lay before them in the 1920s.

In the 1920s, when they were celebrating, they were rocked by the Great Depression, and then a world war and great darkness. They longed to go back to the 1920s, to a period of flapper girls and prohibition parties. Of course, they could not have imagined the prosperity that was about to greet them in the 1950s and 1960s.

It is true, again, that with a period of great inflation and energy shortages at the end of the 1970s and leading into the early 1980s, people wanted to go back to the glory of the 1950s and 1960s. We always talk about going back, but we forget that if we do hard things and we continue to move forward, there lies a prosperity that we cannot imagine.

That prosperity, I think, is going to be rooted in very different motivations than what we have seen before. Yes, people will still want to put food on the table. Yes, people will still want a roof over their heads. Yes, people will still want nice things. However, they want purpose. They want to wake up in the morning and believe that they are part of something bigger than just their lives.

*Government Orders*

I think our goal, not just as a government but as a Parliament, is to dream with them, to hear their dreams and to listen to somebody like Mike, who is imagining a different future, trying to change the way the grocery industry works, trying to upend convention and taking chances and risks. For each of us, regardless of our political party, it is about saying he has it right. Taking a bet on our universe, taking a bet on good and taking a bet on the moral arc of history is what we should all be doing. We should not be stoking fear or amplifying grievances, but lifting up every person we see trying in these hard times.

What does that have to do with extending hours? It has to do with what kind of debate we have in the chamber. It has to do with what kind of conversation we have with each other about the times we are in. Yes, we can be cynical. Yes, we can call each other names. Yes, we can write each other off. However, if we cannot figure it out, who is supposed to?

• (1220)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I just want to assure the hon. member that my sarcastic laughter was not directed at him personally but at the party and government he represents. I appreciate the quotation from the Lord's Prayer. It is something we try to say in our household on a daily basis.

As the member talked about forgiving trespasses, I would like to refer him to another part of Christian scriptures: the number of times that people ask for forgiveness in the gospels. Of course, Jesus, being the source of forgiveness and mercy, always forgives, but he always includes a very important phrase after granting forgiveness: "Go and sin no more." That is the part the government House leader is missing. It is the sinning no more after asking for that forgiveness.

We can all forgive him for his hypocrisy. He is a much different colleague today than when we first served together, as am I. I remember my first few years in the House and the hyper-partisanship that many new MPs have when they come to this place. Many do, over time, appreciate their colleagues on a personal level. However, when we are talking about all the things that the House leader talked about, such as disinformation, hatred and divisiveness, the reason I point out the hypocrisy of his Parliament is to tell him to look at his own side of the House.

The Prime Minister openly questions whether certain Canadians should be tolerated. There are the lies that were told about the invocation of the Emergencies Act, which are now being proven to be such at the hearing. Then there are all the statements we heard about who was asking for the Emergencies Act. They are all being proven to be false. Do members remember the famous expression we heard when the Prime Minister said the allegations in *The Globe and Mail* article regarding the SNC-Lavalin scandal were false? All of those were proven to be untrue.

That is where the role of the opposition comes in. We use the House's time to draw out those untruths and falsehoods. We use the House's time in a variety of ways to expose to Canadians the misinformation they are being given from their own government.

There is a wonderful thing that happens often in this place when the government tables legislation or the public accounts. Every opposition party ruthlessly scrutinizes it. The time in this House is part of that, and by the government—

• (1225)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The member will have time to make a speech. I would like to give the House leader an opportunity to comment.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Madam Speaker, I completely agree that I have made mistakes; I am not without sin. I try to talk directly about those things. However, I would disagree with something very important the member opposite said. I have yet to meet a man or woman who stops making errors in sin. Is he that person in front of me? I do not think that is what he is saying, but I do think the fundamental lesson is whether we learn from that. It is not whether we make a mistake. It is whether we atone for that mistake, whether we are truthful about that mistake and whether we move forward.

Nothing exists other than the moment we are in right now and the conversation that I am having. I do not believe that I am coming across with grievance. If the member wants me to be more specific, let me talk to Bill C-281. The member for Northumberland—Peterborough South, who was just speaking, talked about his son, the type of world he wanted to have and why he was supporting the bill. I do not deny that those are his motivations. I do not deny that is what he is trying to do.

The member opposite can vociferously disagree with my approach, but surely he cannot disagree that, like him, I am a person of character trying to make a difference in the world and in this country. I know how hard it is to get elected. I know how difficult it is to be an MP. When we do not talk with compassion to one another, then people do not treat us with compassion. If they do not think we are hon. members, they will not listen to what we have to say.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am somewhat surprised by the turn today's debate has taken. I note that the government House leader gave a spiritual and somewhat philosophical speech about how he sees things. I see signs of his personal growth. I heard him quote the Bible. I realize that it may be pleasant to hear ourselves talk and share ideas, but we must not forget what today's debate is about.

We are debating a motion that essentially muzzles the opposition. I want to speak about truth, but who holds the truth? I do not claim to know the truth or to believe that my colleagues' notion of the truth is better or worse than mine. I am seeking a guarantee for the exercise of democracy, and democracy is exercised in debates between a government and a very strong opposition, which makes it possible for the government to excel and be even better.

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I missed the first two minutes of my colleague's speech, but I would like to hear him explain why we need today's Motion No. 22, under Government Business, to extend sitting hours. I want to talk about the facts. The facts are that 36 bills have been introduced, 19 bills, or 52%, have passed all stages of the House; three are at the Senate, 16 have received royal assent, seven are in committee and 10 are at second reading. Personally, I think that it pretty good. I do not understand this obsession with extending sitting hours and saying that we need this because Parliament is paralyzed, when in fact the opposite is true.

I would like the government to explain to me, with supporting evidence, why we are debating this motion today.

• (1230)

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

My hon. colleague opposite is a very reasonable person. She is her party's whip, and when I was the Liberal Party whip, it was a great privilege to work with her because I found her to be extremely reasonable. Today, I am taking the same approach and doing things in the same spirit.

Unfortunately, with the Conservative Party, it is often absolutely impossible to obtain basic information, such as the number of speakers who will rise when debating a bill or the time that the party needs to pass a bill. When that sort of information is not available, it is completely impossible for me to manage our legislative agenda. We then need to get a majority vote on a motion to extend sitting hours.

If not for that and if we could have a reasonable conversation, then I would have no need at all to extend the sitting hours. I understand that this raises concerns about committees and the use of our administration. I understand all that very well, and I want to work with all of the parties on that issue.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is true that Canadians are living through exceptionally difficult times. They are having difficulty putting food on the table and keeping a roof over their heads. They have the challenges of climate change. We have war in Europe. These are troubling times and, as members of Parliament, we have a responsibility to step up for our constituents and for Canadians.

As members are well aware, the member for Burnaby South and the NDP caucus have pushed for doubling of the GST credit. We have pushed for rental supports for those who are struggling to keep a roof over their head and for a national dental care plan for those families that want to ensure their children have access to dental care. These have been our contributions in the House of Commons to ensure Canadians are being supported during these very difficult times.

However, the reality is that we have to work longer and we have to work harder because the job is not done. Canadians need those supports. This Parliament has to step up and that means we have to work longer and harder. That is the reality.

I am a bit troubled by some of the comments from my Conservative and Bloc colleagues that seem to indicate they are not in support of working longer hours and working harder at a time when Canadians are working longer and harder. Why would any member of Parliament object to working longer hours and working harder on behalf of constituents at this difficult time?

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Madam Speaker, it is an excellent question and we do have to be sensitive to the additional strain that we are asking members to take on, but it is the times we are in. This is one of the reasons why the virtual provisions are so important.

However, as a call to members, I have an instinct about how people make decisions, and it is not about who tears somebody down the most effectively, but who has the best ideas and is coming forward with the greatest spirit of trying to make transformation and change.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will use the first few moments of my remarks to continue with the point I was making, because it really is astounding to hear that member.

On a personal level, as House leaders, we all get to know each other a little. We have extra meetings throughout the week to talk about the business of the House, things like the Board of Internal Economy and other aspects about the place. I have always found that my counterpart on the government bench has been decent to work with, and I want to say that off the bat. We all come from different political perspectives, we are all human beings here, and I do appreciate that about him. However, to listen to a representative from the government talk about misinformation, divisiveness and the battle for the heart and soul of Canadians, this is a government that has been caught telling blatant falsehoods time and time again.

I want to share with the hon. member that when I referenced the scriptural part about "Go and sin no more" would I ever presume to hold myself up to that standard. I can assure him that I make no pretensions whatsoever. However, I will let the member in on a little secret. In a couple of hours we will have question period, and we will hear misinformation and falsehoods coming from the government side. We will hear the Prime Minister deny that he has a role in inflation.

We have a Prime Minister who has directly caused the worst inflation Canadians have had in 40 years, and on a daily basis he gets up and he denies that. He gets up and tries to say that it is all these external factors, that it is kind of like the weather, that inflation is just happening to us, so we better bundle up, add another layer and shove some twenties in our pockets as those prices will get us if we are not looking carefully. It is just nonsense. We know that his money printing and deficits caused the Bank of Canada to bankroll his out-of-control spending, a good chunk of which had nothing to do with COVID. That is why we have inflation, but we do not hear that. Instead, we hear misinformation and falsehoods, with the government trying to blame everybody else for the inflation we see.



There is an expression many people are probably very aware of, which goes something along the lines of “Your poor planning does not constitute an emergency on my part.” The government House leader referenced a couple of examples of legislation that his own government is responsible for the delay. He talked about Bill C-9, which sat on the Order Paper for six months before the government called it. When it did call it, the Liberals were surprised that members wanted to speak to it, that they wanted to point out some of its deficiencies. They do not like that.

The member also talked about Bill S-5 needing six days of debate, as if six days is a long time. Bill S-5 is comprehensive legislation that would amend several acts, has a whole bunch of new regulations as it relates to the chemical industry and all kinds of inter-related aspects. Members of Parliament need to draw out, in their time in the House, some of the flaws in that bill to raise awareness. Many stakeholders and industry groups will be affected by that legislation.

When we come to this place, we do that due diligence and we take our time to highlight that. We allow time for people who are affected by the legislation to react, to educate their members or their colleagues or to educate us. Sometimes we start debating legislation and all of a sudden our agenda gets booked by people wanting to meet with us to tell us what the impact would be if the legislation is or is not passed, and all that takes time.

The government does not give every single Canadian a heads up as to what it is doing. There is no daily Canada Gazette email to Canadians that says that in four or five months this is what the government will be doing so let it know what they think. There is a small notice period where the government tells the House what it is going to do and then tables it at first reading, and often we are on to the second reading debate the very next day. Many Canadians are getting that information for the very first time, and it takes time for people to inform their members of Parliament as to how they will be affected.

Acting as if six days in the House before a bill gets to committee is an inordinately long period of time is ridiculous, especially when we consider that two of those days were one-hour debates. The government called the debate for second reading on short days. In fact, if I am not mistaken, the NDP critic for the legislation on Bill S-5 had to wait until the third day to conclude remarks because of that. If the government is saying that it does not want to listen to the NDP members give speeches, I have some affinity for that and some sympathy, but I do not think it is proper to ram through a motion like this and, as a result, not allow for enough time for NDP members to have their say.

● (1235)

I certainly believe in hearing all points of view and all voices before the House takes a decision, so this is just a completely false and bogus argument altogether. There is nothing to it; there is no justification for it.

What is it akin to? The government House leader spoke a lot about the need for the House to get things done. I think a lot of Canadians would agree with that. They see us in this chamber. We know the issues that are affecting them on a daily basis and they want some action. They want their elected representatives to tackle

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those issues. However, they also do not want the government to have a completely unfettered hand.

Every democracy tries to put in place not only mechanisms for decisions to be made, but mechanisms for those who oppose those decisions to, at the very least, have an impact and to limit the unfettered power that the executive branch may have. In Canada, we have some checks and balances. Other countries have more. Other countries make the inability to get things done a feature of their system. Many people might look to the United States and see a very complicated process that takes a lot of time and requires a political party to have control in all three branches of the government with respect to both houses, congress and the senate, and the presidency to really make ambitious changes. They might look at that and say it is a flaw, which it may very well be at times. The system may have been designed to make it difficult to get things done.

The Canadian system was designed to make it easier for the government to implement its agenda, but it is not without checks and balances in and of itself. We have a second chamber in our Parliament, the Senate, that provides many of the same rights and privileges that many members of Parliament have. It goes through the same process. Once a bill leaves the House and goes to the Senate, it has its three readings. It has committee study. There have been occasions in Canadian history where the Senate has held up government legislation when acting as that kind of check.

The calendar and the daily program is also a check on the government's power. The Prime Minister cannot come in and start moving legislation, have it rubber-stamped and sail it through. The government has to prioritize. It has to look at the calendar and the number of sitting days and prioritize its legislation. If it brings something in that the opposition has no intention of supporting, because it is poorly drafted or will have terrible consequences, then it has to understand that the House will take longer to pass that kind of legislation, which will have an impact on other bills it wants to pass.

Therefore, by the government giving itself the power to extend these sittings, it really does take away a very important check on the unfettered power of the Prime Minister. It is going to weaken the ability for the House of Commons to put the brakes on some of these terrible ideas we see coming from the government side.

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The Conservatives will make no apology for fighting the government's inflation-causing agenda. Yes, we absolutely will go through pieces of legislation to ruthlessly scrutinize whether they will add to the cost of government, because we know the cost of government is driving up the cost of living. There is a direct correlation between the massive deficit spending that the Prime Minister has put Canadians through over the past years and the record-high prices Canadians are paying at the grocery store and the fuel pump.

Therefore, every time the government brings in legislation, that is our first and foremost lens. The Conservatives get out the sharp pencils and the extra scraps of paper and we start to ruthlessly scrutinize it to see if it will add to the cost of government, if it will grow the obligation the state has to pay out of taxpayer funds or if it will add extra compliance costs to industries that are already suffering under some of the biggest regulatory and tax burdens among our major trading partners. It takes time to do that. It takes time to not just do that research, but meet with those stakeholders.

I have been a shadow minister responsible for infrastructure. Among my colleagues today, I see many shadow ministers from a wide variety of portfolios. I know that I speak for all of us when I say that, when we get legislation, our speech in the House of Commons, the 10 or 20 minutes of analysis we provide, is just a small fraction of the work we do. We instantly start meeting with the people who will be affected by the legislation, to hear directly from them.

● (1240)

The government talked about Bill S-5. I have never been in the plastics industry, but I sure as heck know a lot of people who are, and they know exactly how this legislation would affect them. I know people who work in various aspects of manufacturing, distributing and retail who would all be affected by some of the regulatory burdens in Bill S-5. We have to meet with them, take what one groups says and weigh it off against what another group says, and use our intelligence and wisdom to sift through all of that information before we make a determination as to whether or not we are going to vote yes or no.

Debate in the House of Commons acts as a check on the government, preventing it from being able to ram through its agenda, and that is really important in today's context because the Canadian people have refused to give the Liberal Party a majority government in two elections. We all know that is very disappointing to the Prime Minister. He was hoping that an election might have cleansed his reputation after the corruption his government was involved in came to light with the SNC-Lavalin scandal and his own personal acts of racism, when he committed racist acts by putting on blackface so many times he has lost count.

We know the Prime Minister was hoping to get a majority government to have a palate cleanse of those things and to redeem his reputation, but Canadians did not give him that. Canadians do not want this party to ram through its agenda. They want those checks and balances to make sure there is a lot of oversight and a lot of scrutiny on what the government is doing. Extending the hours on a selective basis is going to allow the government to ram through more of its agenda. It is trying to avoid that accountability by stealth.

It is also very hypocritical. I am not using unparliamentary language when I quote the government House leader who called himself a hypocrite. I have to say that he has some justification for that when it comes to the government's excuse for this measure. He is talking about the fact that there is not enough time to get through the legislation when it was the party that prorogued just to get out of a corruption investigation scandal.

For anybody watching who might not be up to speed on all the fancy words we use in this place, proroguing is kind of like a big reset button. It is like cancelling the rest of the House's sittings for a period of time, and it resets everything. It is like a big eraser on a whiteboard of all the bills. The government is saying it has to now sit late to enact all of the bills that had been completely cancelled and had to start from scratch. We did not do that. The opposition party cannot prorogue Parliament. There is only one person who can, and that is the Prime Minister. That is what he did. There is only one person who can call elections in this country, and that is the Prime Minister.

The previous Parliament had a very similar makeup to what it does now. We had an election last year just because the Prime Minister decided that he wanted one, just like when he prorogued Parliament during the WE group of companies investigation. Do members remember that? In the early days of the pandemic, when Canadians were still suffering through some of the harshest lockdowns around the world and being told they could not visit their loved ones in hospitals, when children were being told that they could not go to school, and when young and healthy athletes were being told they were not allowed to play sports or finish their year, what did the Prime Minister do? The Prime Minister never misses an opportunity to take advantage and reward his friends.

While Canadians were focused on their health and trying to save their businesses after these punitive restrictions prevented them from earning a living, while Canadians were all focused on the very horrifying impact on their lives in so many ways, what did the Prime Minister do? He took the time to take out the chequebook that is written on the taxpayers' bank account and reward his friends at the WE group of companies by giving them an untendered half a billion dollars of Canadian taxpayers' money.

When he got caught, he pressed the big reset button. While that investigation was going on, he took out the big whiteboard eraser and—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

● (1245)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** If I may interrupt the honourable member, I would ask that we please have order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I am really hoping that you will encourage the member to stay on the subject of the motion. He seems to be widely off the subject right now.

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**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member knows there is quite a lot of latitude in how these speeches go.

The hon. opposition House leader has the floor.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Madam Speaker, for my hon. colleague, I am establishing the motive behind this motion today. It may take some time, because the government does not like to talk about its motives, especially when it has been involved in so much corruption.

As I was saying, that is when the government took out the big whiteboard eraser and prorogued Parliament. It did so to avoid the kind of scrutiny that was coming out of the investigation into the WE scandal.

Last summer, Parliament was exercising its authority to get information and documents for Canadians and trying to get to the bottom of the Winnipeg lab scandal. Do members remember when there were two researchers at a lab in Winnipeg who were closely tied to the Communist Party in Beijing? They were very quickly escorted out of the country and sent back, and we wanted to know why. What was going on at that lab? Why were these two researchers, who were so closely connected to the Communist Party in Beijing, involved in this type of research here, and what led to their sudden dismissal and deportation?

We were trying to get to the bottom of that. Not only did the government refuse to abide by legitimate and procedurally proper motions passed by the committee and by the House of Commons, but it also took the unprecedented step of taking the Speaker to court. It sued the Speaker of the House of Commons. That is a role I once held. I cannot imagine any—

• (1250)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Does the hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît wish to rise on a point of order?

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, I thought it was time for questions and comments.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** No, there is no time limit on this speech.

The hon. opposition House leader.

[*English*]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Madam Speaker, I would be happy to answer questions at the end of my speech.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** When will that be?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Madam Speaker, we will get there.

We wanted to get to the bottom of that. I held the role of Speaker. I cannot imagine something like that happening by any other prime minister I have ever served with or come to know over the years, except for this one. He did not like it when the democratically elected representatives of the people demanded to get to the bottom of a scandal that impacted every single Canadian. If it is related to public health, it impacts us. Our national security impacts every

single Canadian. We have the right to come to this place and demand those types of answers.

Every political party agreed, and it takes a lot to unite opposition parties in this chamber. We are fundamentally different than the Bloc Québécois.

[*Translation*]

We believe in a united Canada, in our history and our future. There are a lot of areas of concern on which no common ground has been found with the Bloc Québécois.

[*English*]

The New Democrats and the Conservatives disagree on a whole lot of things. We believe in free markets and individual liberty. The NDP believes in central planning and government control. Therefore, when we have something that unites the Conservatives, the Bloc and the New Democrats, and we all come together to demand accountability and transparency, it means something. That is significant.

Providing Canadians with openness and transparency is the disinfectant that the Prime Minister used to like to talk about. We do not hear him say that a lot. He used to like saying that sunshine is the best disinfectant, and many Canadians took him at his word, but we do not hear him say that too often now. He has drawn the blinds, closed the drapes and gone into the darkest corners of the house to avoid that openness and transparency.

Therefore, rather than having that long-drawn-out court fight, as he started to feel the political pain from suing the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Prime Minister called an election. Do members know what happens to government legislation when they call an election? It kills it all. Here we are today, halfway through November, and now the government has suddenly realized that it has a time issue on its hands. It wants to get more and more of its agenda rammed through, so that is the motivation behind this move.

There is one other piece when it comes to motivation that we must make sure that Canadians are aware of and that is the real reason behind this move. Something has been going on since September that the government really does not enjoy and that is what is happening at committees.

At committees, the opposition parties have developed a working relationship where we can expose Liberal corruption and mismanagement. That is very unpleasant for the government because at committee we have been getting to the bottom of these kinds of scandals. At committee, we have found out that the government spent \$54 million on an app that experts say could have been done for \$250,000 over the course of a weekend.

When we found out who got paid, the companies the government had on that itemized list, we did what many people would do. We called the companies to ask if they had been paid for the work. Some of those companies are saying they never did the work and they never got paid, yet the government put their name on a list to try to justify the spending. We are finding that out at committee and the Liberals do not like it.

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We are finding at committee some of the information as it relates to some of these scandals that I have already mentioned, with Winnipeg labs being one of them. The point is that at committee, members of Parliament are drawing out and exposing Liberal corruption and that scandal.

How does work at committees relate to this motion today? As members know, the House of Commons gets first dibs on parliamentary resources. Therefore, when the House of Commons sits late, translators and IT workers have to serve the House of Commons. This is the primary chamber of Canada's parliamentary democracy, and when they extend hours they take resources away from committees. That is what this is actually all about: killing accountability by stealth and using this bogus excuse of time management as a rationale for diverting resources away from committee.

Members do not need to take my word for it. The best indication of future behaviour is past behaviour, and there were outcomes of a motion similar to that we are debating here today. For a bit of context, the government did this back in May of last year. It brought forward a very similar motion.

I will read a headline from the Hill Times. It said, "Stretched thin: Resources to support committees strained amid virtual format, late-night sittings". The article continued, "A total of 13 parliamentary committee meetings were cancelled last week, with MPs citing limited support resources as the main cause."

● (1255)

The last time they moved this same motion it had a direct and devastating impact on the ability of committees to get to the bottom of Liberal corruption and Liberal scandals. That is what this is actually about, using this type of excuse to draw resources away from where the Liberals do not control the agenda to where they do.

In the House the government gets to set the agenda and it gets to call government business. Other than on opposition days, the government gets to tell members of Parliament, every day, what we debate. If we would like to debate something else, we have to wait until one of our precious few days to do it. We cannot propose government legislation. We are not the government.

The government controls all of that here, but it does not control it at committees. Committees are masters of their own domain. Even though the government would like the ethics committee and the public accounts committee to just rubber stamp all its decisions, hard-working Conservative MPs are using those valuable resources and those opportunities to expose the Liberal corruption and the mismanagement. That is why the Liberals are bringing forward this motion today.

Again, rigging the rules of the parliamentary calendar would be like in a sports contest. If one team was worried that they might not get to score enough points, then they unilaterally decide that when they had the ball the clock would not run. The Grey Cup is coming up in Regina, and I hope the Speaker is able to make it out. It is going to be a fantastic—

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Go, Bombers.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** I could put up with all the other heckling, Mr. Speaker, but when the member for Winnipeg North says, "Go,

Bombers", I have to react to that and ask if that is parliamentary. I am pretty sure that should get him ejected from the chamber.

In a football context, imagine if the Bombers got the ball and they tried to unilaterally tell the referees they were not going to run the clock while they had the ball. It would not be fair. It is not part of the game. It is not part of how the dynamic works.

To have a situation mid-session where, all of a sudden, the Liberals were going to rig the clock, rig the calendar, to help them ram through more of their legislation, hoping to exhaust Conservative MPs from using our time in the House to make these points. It is not just about time, when the government counts the number of hours or days when the debate is actually going on. That is just part of the picture. We can think of many examples where, thanks to the debate taking some time, flaws in the bills were exposed. I can think of the medical assistance in dying bill that the chamber has debated in several Parliaments now.

I can appreciate the goodwill from members on all sides to try to get aspects of that right, and to put in proper protections for vulnerable Canadians. It was because it took time to go through that many people expressed their concerns and identified flaws in the legislation, saying that vulnerable Canadians, people with mental health issues, young Canadians and our veterans would be more susceptible. They may fall through the cracks and may have this type of medical action taken, maybe without their full consent or by catching them at a vulnerable time.

Conservatives used that time to help expose it and inform Canadians. As a result, we saw many disability groups and other types of groups become more engaged and ultimately try to make the bill better when it did get to committee.

There are lots of examples I could run through. Thanks to the fact that we had more time in the House, not just time in terms of hours of the day or number of speeches given, but literally days off the calendar, it gave those industry groups, stakeholder groups and people affected by the legislation more time to run through the bill and inform their members of Parliament. Therefore, before the bill even came to committee there was already a plan in place to try to fix the deficiencies.

Right now we have Bill C-11 in the Senate. It is a massive expansion of the government's power to regulate the Internet and control what Canadians could see and say online. If the government had had its way, it would have sailed through all stages and it would have been law by now. However, it was because we took extra time to debate it that more Canadians realized that this would have a massive negative impact on Canadians' abilities to express themselves freely. We were able to hear from content creators, who are very famous people with their own YouTube followings and social media presences. They talked to individual MPs and said that, as Canadian content creators, Bill C-11 would have a negative impact on them. They did that because we gave them that time to do so.

• (1300)

Rather than seeing the number of days as a problem, the government should see it as an opportunity and welcome it. What the government does has an impact on every single Canadian and I, for one, hope that it would want to get that right. That goal is actually good government not just Liberal priorities being passed.

If it should come to light that there is a flaw in a bill or unintended consequences, it should welcome that the same way that a small business owner does who hears from one of their staff that the way they operate is making them lose money or annoying customers. A good small business owner wants to hear that. Any business owner wants to hear that. I want to hear from my own family if there are certain things we do that have a negative impact on one of my kids or my spouse. We want to hear that. We want to have a good family environment, and business owners want to have successful operations with happy employees and happy customers. We should welcome that.

When Conservatives say they want another day of debate or we want to talk about this a little bit longer, the government should say that is great and it wants to hear what we have to say and the constructive feedback. The government House leader spoke at great length about this type of thing, encouraging conversations, encouraging feedback and critiques and admitting that the government does not get it right all the time. That is why it is so hypocritical to hear a House leader talk about all this context while he is putting through a motion that is going to assist the government to ram through its agenda at an even greater pace. That is why Conservatives are opposed to this piece of legislation.

We are in favour of good government, we are in favour of good legislation and we will do our part. The government continuously ignores the feedback from Canadians. When Canadians are saying they do not want record-high inflation and to stop the printing presses, stop the deficit spending and stop borrowing money to throw it into an economy that drives up prices, it is not listening. We have to be that voice. It is our constitutional role to do that. We actually have a moral obligation as the official opposition to do that. We are not going to be cowardly or apologetic just because the government is frustrated with its timelines.

To close, it is so difficult to hear a Liberal member of Parliament, the government House leader, talk about cultivating a climate of respect and talk about cordial and constructive conversations when his leader, the Liberal Prime Minister, speaks with such contempt

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for anybody who disagrees with him, pitting Canadian against Canadian and dividing us.

Remember the government's reaction during the pandemic when many Canadians wanted to make their own health care choices and make their own determination for themselves as to what medicines they put in their body? The reaction from the government was that it forced people to choose between keeping their jobs and taking a medical treatment that they may not have been comfortable with. That does not sound very constructive or respectful to me.

Then the Prime Minister openly asked if they should even tolerate these people. That is the type of language we hear horrible dictators use against segments of their population that they would rather do without. We saw the contempt that he had for those who came to Ottawa to fight for their freedoms. He invoked an Emergencies Act that had never been used in Canadian history. By the way, now it is coming out how flimsy the excuse was for doing that, as police entity after police entity, from the Ottawa police to the Ontario Provincial Police are all saying that they did not ask for it and that existing laws were sufficient to do the work that they were asked to do. We have a Prime Minister who insults, demonizes and bullies.

The government House leader talked about the impact that type of toxic environment has had on its own family, yet he sits in a caucus where many members on this side witnessed the Prime Minister get up out of his seat, walk over and bully a former Black female member of Parliament who was forced to leave politics. She said that one of the reasons she was leaving politics when she did was the personal treatment that the Prime Minister inflicted upon her.

The Prime Minister fired the first female indigenous justice minister. What did he fire her for? She would not go along with his corruption. She had the audacity to stand in her place and say no. As the former minister of justice and the attorney general, she had a higher obligation to the law than to her political master. He fired her.

The government House leader has no problem sitting beside the Prime Minister and supporting the Prime Minister in all he does. It is a bit rich. The reason the opposition party does not put a lot of stock in his words is that he is clearly quite comfortable with the toxic behaviour that his own Liberal leader has put his own colleagues through.

• (1305)

Since it is a massive undermining of a very important check on the government's ability to ram through its agenda, because of the hypocrisy of a government that has so mismanaged its own timetable and its own calendar and because of the direct impact that this motion would have on committees, Conservatives cannot support this motion.

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Since we are hopeful that some of what the government House leader said may have been sincere, we are hoping that they may support an amendment to specifically protect the very important work that committees are doing.

I move:

That the motion be amended, in paragraph (a), by replacing the words “and that such a request shall be deemed adopted” with the words “and, provided that if the Clerk of the House personally guarantees that there would be no consequential cancellation or reduction of the regularly scheduled committee meeting resources for that day, the request shall be deemed adopted”.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The amendment is in order.

We will move on to questions and comments with the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, imagine this. The opposition House leader says that he wants to have more time. He does not want the government to stop members from being able to debate bills. The very motion that we are talking about gives more hours of debate inside the House of Commons. Think about that.

The reason the Conservatives do not want to support the motion is that they do not want to sit later in the evening. New Democrats and Liberals have made the commitment and we are prepared to sit additional hours so that MPs will have more time to debate legislation.

When the member talks about hypocrisy, he might want to reflect on what it is that I just finished saying and maybe explain to his caucus colleagues that if they are in favour of additional time to debate legislation, they should be voting in favour of this legislation. Do not be scared to sit late at night. Many of our constituents work until midnight and beyond.

I would encourage members to revisit their tactical decision to prevent MPs from having more time to debate government legislation.

• (1310)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the hon. member had no clue as to what the actual point was behind more time to debate legislation, because time does not just occur in this chamber. Yes, we could run speeches every day until midnight and we could say there is lots of time for debate.

What we are talking about is days on the calendar to allow the time for people who are affected by the legislation that the government is bringing in, affected by the runaway inflation that the government has caused and affected by the curtailment of their speech, to organize and to prepare their briefing materials and to book their meetings with MPs.

If we had every member of Parliament speak until midnight for a few days and get the bill through in two or three calendar days, that is not enough time in the world outside of this place. That is the point we are making.

If the hon. member stops working at six o'clock, when the House adjourns, then maybe he should let his constituents know that. We do not. When the House adjourns, we go back to our offices, we an-

swer correspondence, we answer phone calls and we do the research on the bills that we are debating. That is when all of that occurs. Therefore, the days off the calendar are just as important as the number of hours that we spend in this place debating legislation.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. Perhaps he should take a cue from his House leader, who is suggesting that everyone remain reasonable, calm, open-minded and forgiving. I think he still has a lot to learn from his House leader. I do not see how shouting and raising one's voice in the House is a credit to anyone. It sends the message that the previous speaker is irrelevant and knows nothing. There are limits that must not be crossed.

I have a question for the House leader of the official opposition.

With his question, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is suggesting that the opposition members, or at least the Conservative and Bloc members, are a bunch of lazy so-and-sos who simply do not want to sit for several hours to defend and debate bills that matter to our constituents. Everyone knows that that is completely false. We are hard-working people and we are not afraid to sit until late at night.

What also matters to me—and the government House leader knows this, and I would ask the House leader of the official opposition to say it—is knowing what will happen to parliamentary committees every time Parliament sits until 12:30 a.m. How many parliamentary committees will not be able to sit because the House sitting is being extended?

Committee work is an extension of Parliament, and the government leader knows that. Can the House leader of the official opposition tell us how extended sitting hours in Parliament affect parliamentary work in committee?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague raised a very good point. It will certainly have a terrible impact on committees.

[*English*]

I will read again from the Hill Times article: “A total of 13 parliamentary committee meetings were cancelled last week, with MPs citing limited support resources as the main cause.” That is from May 25, 2022. That is after two years of the House investing in IT and translation services with hybrid Parliament. After two years of that, just a few extended sittings back in May and June in one week cancelled 13 parliamentary committees. That is an incredible workload. I can only imagine the work that was delayed because of all those committees being cancelled.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

As my hon. colleague knows, committees often hear from witnesses who are not denizens of Parliament Hill. They have to travel long distances, spend a lot of time and go to a lot of trouble to come here and tell MPs about the pros and cons of a given bill. When a committee meeting is cancelled, witnesses often lose the opportunity to do that, and the impact on committees is very negative indeed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I think the opposition House leader would agree with me about time being the most valuable currency we have in this place. Once we spend it, we do not get it back.

The Conservatives, on occasion, have shown a fondness during the rubric of Motions to move debate on concurrence in a committee report. Some of those we have agreed with. Others we felt could have been done in different areas of the House's time. I agree with the government House leader that we should pay special attention to committees not being disrupted. I sit on three committees, and I do not want to see my work disrupted.

If the Conservatives show a fondness for moving concurrence debates, which sometimes have interrupted some of my colleagues' speaking spots when they were awaiting their turn for a government bill, so they had to be moved to another day, then perhaps this motion before us allows a bit more flexibility in giving the Conservatives time to move debate on certain motions on committee reports while also respecting that the government needs a bit of time to have debate on its legislative agenda as well. Perhaps there is a middle ground here and we do not need to be so at each other's throats all the time.

• (1315)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Madam Speaker, I agree that time is the most important resource we have here. That was the point I was making. With NDP members, the coalition partners with the Liberals, granting this outlet for the government to ram through more of its agenda, they are basically taking away the tools they have as the opposition. They are doing it to themselves.

We talked a lot about hypocrisy and hypocritical aspects. We see messages out of the NDP, complaining about Liberal policies when they themselves have facilitated them. I saw a very hypocritical tweet from the leader of the NDP, talking about rising fuel prices. The leader of the NDP and his entire caucus support the government's plan to triple the carbon tax, so they are giving away any ability as an opposition to make their points and try to get the government to accommodate their requests by giving the government this kind of outlet.

I hope to be able to play poker against the leader of the NDP at some point in my life, because he must be a great guy to play against when he gives away all his chips at the table. Again, it is completely hypocritical to hear the NDP, which has worked hand in hand with the government to implement its inflationary agenda, massive deficit spending and the money printing that caused inflation, to then criticize or complain about it. It is the height of hypocrisy.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the official opposition House leader for his intervention.

I just want to say that as vice-chair of the Standing Committee on National Defence, I am very concerned about having committee meetings cancelled. We have already witnessed this because of limited resources, and because our interpreters are often facing workplace injuries because of the virtual Parliament system that we are in. We need to make sure we keep our staff around here safe. There is important work that is addressed through committee, especially at the national defence committee, with the war in Ukraine, with the recruitment crisis that we have within the Canadian Armed Forces today, and with the need to buy new ships, fighter jets and other materiel to support our troops. If we are having committee meetings cancelled, we are losing witnesses and we are losing time to address these important issues.

My question to the House leader for the official opposition is this: We know that Conservatives, when we have to sit late, are here to work. We always have been, but we know that from the other side, often the Liberals do not participate in the debate, with the exception of the members for Kingston and the Islands and Winnipeg North, who seem to always carry the ball there, in a very caustic way. How is that going to play out in setting the right tone here during our political discourse?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Madam Speaker, my colleague has made a very important point that I did not make in my speech, so I welcome the opportunity to make it right now.

Part of the motion is wording that would prevent the House from asking the Speaker to see if there is quorum. Now, quorum is a fancy Latin word that basically asks if there are enough MPs to have an official sitting of the House. The Liberals specifically wrote into the motion that they do not have to keep quorum, which means they would not have to be here late in the night to work.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to this debate on Motion No. 22 under Government Business. For those watching us, this motion may seem procedural and maybe even uninteresting. We are talking about procedure and rules. The public does not usually like that part and does not consider it a priority.

However, we are talking about democracy here. From what I see, and from what my entire caucus sees, the government is taking advantage of its alliance with the NDP to change the rules of the House.

Before, changing a rule required debate. There is a way to do this under the Standing Orders. Ever since the pandemic and the adoption of a hybrid Parliament, the government has not really been shy to propose changes to the Standing Orders to serve some interests more than others. Maybe we should talk about this and consider what the rules are for.

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We have a good rule book that sets out the agreed-upon rules of the House that must be followed. Most importantly, these rules guarantee the exercise of a healthy democracy. In our Parliament, democracy is practised with a government in power and opposition parties that challenge it. I often say that the better the opposition, the better the bills and debates and, consequently, the better the government. A government that seeks to muzzle the opposition by changing the rules is a government that is basically depriving itself of the expertise of witnesses and parliamentarians to improve its bills.

The motion that we are talking about today essentially seeks to extend sitting hours late into the night. However, 10 days of intensive sitting days are already set out on the parliamentary calendar, depending on the needs of the government. When the government manages its legislative agenda properly, Standing Order 27(1) proposes a calendar that is negotiated among the leaders of each recognized party in the House at the beginning of the Parliament. The leaders agree on a calendar and establish the ground rules at the beginning of the Parliament. This standing order about the calendar was established in 1982, so the House agreed a long time ago that it would decide on a calendar in order to have more transparency and to exercise a healthy democracy. This means that we are well aware of the times when the government can intervene to extend the sitting hours.

I remember the government House leader lecturing the Bloc Québécois last June. Quebec's national holiday falls on June 24, but we begin our celebrations on June 23 and end them the evening of June 24. The Bloc Québécois had asked that we rise earlier, on June 23, so that members could return to their ridings to celebrate the national holiday. This elicited a strong reaction from the parliamentary secretary. He told us that it was ridiculous for the Bloc to dispute something that had been agreed to unanimously by all parties. He criticized us for revisiting a unanimous decision made by all parties. I could repeat that my colleague, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, stated that we needed to be reasonable.

Today, I consider that the original calendar proposed at the beginning of the Parliament was the reasonable outcome of discussions, and it was adopted. Now, the government itself is brazenly revisiting it and is seizing the opportunity to change it, not just until Christmas but until June 23, 2023. We do not understand this. We are wondering what is happening. Why amend the calendar up to June 23, 2023?

● (1320)

This motion circumvents Standing Order 26. According to the Standing Orders, if the government wants to extend sittings in addition to what is already provided for, it can move a motion. However, if five opposition members rise to object to the motion, that is one way for the opposition to play the parliamentary game and object to a government motion.

Today's motion circumvents that. It will no longer be possible for opposition members to rise and object to an extension of sitting hours.

I am sorry to have to say this, but I am surprised to see my NDP colleagues support this motion, insinuating that we will have more

hours for debate, and then wonder why we oppose the motion. They also say it will not cause problems for parliamentary debate, which is totally false, and they know it.

Standing Order 106(4) enables members who sign a written request addressed to a parliamentary committee to discuss and debate a priority matter in committee.

At the beginning of this Parliament, we unanimously agreed that the opposition could not play around with this standing order. Everyone agreed, reasonably, that a request to call a committee meeting should be signed by different parties. In other words, if the official opposition wanted to call a committee meeting, it would need help from the NDP or the Bloc Québécois in order for the matter to be considered a priority in committee.

However, today's motion gets rid of that idea. It takes only one other House leader to extend the sitting hours. It seems to me that it would have been more transparent, beneficial or democratic to say that two leaders are required to change the sitting hours. Instead, only one leader is required. What is the motive behind all this? Again, I have a hard time understanding how my NDP colleagues could get on board.

By putting forward this motion, the government is seeking to limit, but not ban, the use of gag orders. There have been a lot of gag orders in the past year. I am guessing that the government is starting to get a bit embarrassed about needing to use gag orders to manage its agenda. The government has decided to bypass a few Standing Orders and do indirectly what it cannot do directly.

Let us be honest. Even if this motion is adopted, it will not stop the government from using closure motions, with the NDP's support.

What is motivating the government to table such a motion? We think the House and the committees are working very well. In the last year, 29 debatable bills have been introduced in the House. The House has passed 18 bills, 15 bills have received royal assent, six bills are currently in committee and five bills are at second reading. When I hear someone say that Parliament is not working, that sounds like nonsense to me.

On the face of it, the government would have us believe that Parliament is not working, when that is completely false. As I said, many bills have passed in the House and are either in the Senate or have received royal assent.

I did a little research. In 2015, the majority Liberal government passed 13 of the 37 bills it introduced in its first year in office. Clearly, the current minority government is performing better than the majority Liberal government did in its first year in office.

● (1325)

What is more, on October 5, the House adopted a motion by unanimous consent to extend the debate in order to pass Bill C-31. This was possible because we negotiated, discussed and concluded ad hoc agreements. This allowed us to avoid a "supermotion", which would effectively bulldoze the democratic process and would not be the fruit of the parliamentary discussions we should be having.



*Government Orders*

This leads us to question why the government wants to extend the sitting hours of the House of Commons when in fact it is reducing parliamentary debate. I think my colleagues are aware that the work done in committee and the studies they do, on bills and other issues, are very important to me. We know that the parliamentary work suffering the repercussions of the hybrid Parliament is the work done in parliamentary committee. I will give some examples.

This morning, a committee meeting with veterans was cancelled because a motion had been moved under Standing Order 106(4) at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. The meeting with veterans was cancelled so that discussions and debates could be held at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. We had to do this because we do not have enough interpreters or technical support staff to go around. This means the whips must agree on which committee will cancel its meeting.

As a whip, it was heartbreaking today to have to cancel a meeting with veterans, two days after the Remembrance Day celebrations, to give priority to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Every time a minister rises to ask for extended sitting hours, the whips will have to agree on which committee will have to be cancelled. It will not be just one committee because when we sit until midnight, we usually cancel two committees. Those two committees will not do their work, will not move forward and will have to cancel on witnesses they invited.

It seems as though this government has just accepted that it is now normal for committee meetings to be cancelled because of the limitations of the hybrid Parliament. I do not mind sitting until midnight. I do not see any problem with that, as long as no committee meetings are cancelled. However, I do not want anyone calling me lazy for not wanting to sit until midnight when I just want to make sure that committee meetings are held. Right now, the NDP and the government are consciously working to cancel committee meetings and limit their important work.

I would say that partisanship has trumped common sense. One cannot call for a better democracy and extended debates in the House while limiting important debate in committee without anyone noticing. On Thursday, we may sit late and we will have to determine which committee will be cancelled. The Board of Internal Economy is sitting one afternoon, and we will have to cancel yet another committee meeting. No one from the government or the NDP is talking about that situation.

I kept a close eye on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs' work on the subject of hybrid proceedings, and I was quite touched by all the talk of work-life balance. The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons' very personal testimony about the importance of avoiding burnout, participating in family life and finding balance was moving. Now, however, he is an ardent proponent of extending sittings until midnight or 12:30 in the morning. Can someone explain to me how that squares with the importance of work-life balance? The NDP, despite its support for a hybrid Parliament, is doing the same thing. One of the main reasons the NDP is in favour of a hybrid Parliament is that it makes work-life balance possible, or so it says.

If I have kids and I work until 12:30 in the morning a few nights a week, I might find it challenging to collaborate and get work done. Obviously that will have repercussions on my family life.

● (1330)

What should be normal is having a climate of collaboration and discussion in the House, a climate that allows us to prioritize bills and agree on a legislative process. That process should focus on seeking a consensus or a majority, rather than having the agenda dictated by a government that will simply seek an alliance with the NDP. I do not understand my colleagues' lack of sensitivity on such a fundamental issue, and that goes for both the government members and the NDP.

What is more, we have yet to talk about the interpreters. As we know, there is a shortage of interpreters. Many were injured during the pandemic. Even now, interpreters are still being injured by acoustic shocks. We know that there is a shortage of interpreters, yet the government, with the complicity of the NDP, has decided to make the interpreters work until 12:30 a.m. under conditions that could lead to burnout.

I do not understand the position of the government and the NDP in this regard. They are not in such a hurry to move a motion that would make it mandatory for witnesses and MPs to wear headsets and require committee chairs to attend meetings in person. They are in less of a hurry to protect the health and safety of our interpreters than they are to muzzle the opposition in order to advance their legislative agenda.

Honestly, I am completely dumbfounded. Normally, I would say "appalled" because that word reflects my sadness at the government and NDP members' lack of sincerity and authenticity in the context in which we are debating, namely a hybrid Parliament with a shortage of interpreters and technical limitations. The Board of Internal Economy, of which I am a member, has spent countless hours talking about this dangerous situation for our interpreters, and yet I still feel as though, today, the government and the NDP are abandoning them and their health and safety. The government and the NDP are saying loud and clear that parliamentary committees do not play an important role in our overall work. That is sad.

Members will realize from the comments I have made that we will be voting against this motion. We are doing so not because we are not willing to work hard or sit until midnight, but because we object to the government's refusal to discuss or agree on a calendar with the opposition parties. The government is acting as though it has a majority. Quebeckers and Canadians voted in a minority government, and that requires that it work with the opposition.

Therefore, I am moving this amendment to the amendment moved by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle: that the amendment be amended, in paragraph (a), by adding, after the words "provided that", the following: the House leader of a recognized party that supports the government's request also rise from their seat to orally and formally indicate their support to the House.

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My amendment to the amendment demonstrates that transparency is important to the Bloc Québécois.

• (1335)

[English]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I believe that once an amendment has been moved, it is your obligation as the Chair to read the amendment, and the individual who is speaking no longer has the floor.

• (1340)

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Once the hon. member has presented her amendment, there is no action to be taken on her comments. Furthermore, following consultation with the clerks, it is deemed that the subamendment is not in order because it falls outside the scope of the amendment.

Chapter 12 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* states the following:

Most of what applies to amendments applies equally to subamendments. Each subamendment must be strictly relevant to, and not at variance with the sense of, the corresponding amendment and must seek to modify the amendment and not the original question.

I hope that answers your question. We will move on to questions and comments. The hon. secretary to the government House leader.

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the concern from this side of the House does not stem from the fact that debate wants to be had. The member said that we are trying to silence members. On the contrary, we are trying to open up more time to allow for more discussion to take place.

I would ask her for her thoughts on Bill S-5, which came before the House. Bill S-5 is about environmental protections. I realize that members of the House have passions about different issues. Some people really want to talk about the environment and some people want to talk about certain social programs. However, let me just recap Bill S-5.

Six Liberals got up to speak, four NDP members got up to speak, five Bloc members got up to speak and one Green member got up to speak. Do members know how many Conservatives got up to speak to Bill S-5? It was 27. If members listened to the debate on Bill S-5, which I did, they know that none of the Conservative speeches even talked about environmental protections. Then at the end, the Conservatives voted in favour of it anyway.

It has become very clear to me that the objective of the Conservatives in the House is not about scrutiny and oversight, as the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle talks about. It is about obstructing at every possible impasse the ability to do anything for Canadians.

Could the member from the Bloc reflect on whether she thinks it is peculiar that 27 Conservatives spoke to Bill S-5, which they vot-

ed in favour of, while the rest of the parties only had four or five speakers?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, five Bloc Québécois members participated in the debate on Bill S-5, as did 27 Conservatives. That works out to about the same proportion for both parties.

I cannot complain or criticize if members want to speak to a bill. I find my colleague's argument rather weak. The government has passed all its priority bills. It has checked a lot of items off its legislative to-do list.

As we see things, it does not need this motion to pursue its legislative agenda. Empirically, it has done well for itself so far. Just because more MPs spoke to one bill than to another it does not mean Parliament is at a standstill. On the contrary, I think the government should be proud to have garnered this much support and to have moved this many bills all the way to royal assent given the minority context.

[English]

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I deeply appreciate the speech that my colleague gave today, especially the part about committees and her concern for veterans affairs. I share that concern given the fact that we have had two meetings cancelled at a time when we want the minister and the deputy minister to return to give a clearer understanding of their testimony versus what came forward from our veterans. It is very disconcerting that this is happening.

I would like the member to speak momentarily about the fact that, as I am hearing, the Liberals are upset that we on this side of the House want to speak. They are now giving us more time to speak, but they are removing themselves from that equation with the opportunity to not have to meet quorum. How does she feel about that?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I am not sure if it is a coincidence, but we know that the NDP whip is also a member of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs. This morning she was also at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The idea is to determine whether committees are being cancelled out of expediency. The Standing committee on Veterans Affairs is an important committee. My colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles said that there is a major problem adversely affecting the integrity of francophone veterans who are not getting the services they are entitled to. It is worth hearing the minister and his officials justify this situation, and I demand that they correct it.

Slowing the work of committees stops the opposition, witnesses and experts from documenting a problem and finding solutions. Every day, as soon as we start sitting later, one or two committees will be cancelled. How can we justify this?

• (1345)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for the Bloc Québécois whip.

However, I sense a contradiction between what she said about work-life balance and the fact that the Bloc Québécois has not made any suggestions for improving work-life balance. I am thinking especially of our hybrid Parliament, which has made a huge difference, especially for members from the Pacific coast and the Far North. The Bloc Québécois opposed the hybrid Parliament, which is hard to understand given the importance of work-life balance.

What the Bloc Québécois whip said about interpreters is complete misinformation. This is a serious issue that must be addressed, and my colleague knows very well that the NDP has raised it as much as the Bloc Québécois. This situation, in terms of occupational health and safety, must be improved. We all have a responsibility to improve the situation.

I have a lot of respect for my colleague, but I disagree with her on this. Is she prepared to work with the other parties so that we can come up with solutions to ensure that our interpreters are working in conditions that meet occupational health and safety standards at all times?

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, we are not debating the hybrid Parliament today. However, since the question was asked, I will provide a quick answer.

The hybrid Parliament was created for use during the pandemic, but now it is being changed with a view to perhaps making it permanent in order to foster work-life balance, among other things.

The Bloc Québécois does a lot to promote work-life balance and, as whip, I am in favour of many requests on that subject. The hybrid Parliament is not the only solution. Sometimes it is, sometimes it is not. My colleague, the NDP House leader, and I both sit on the Board of Internal Economy. He knows very well that I have proposed concrete solutions. I proposed that we all agree to require witnesses and MPs to wear a headset that meets the safety standards and to require chairs to attend in person. I proposed concrete solutions on behalf of the Bloc Québécois.

I condemned the fact that no one seemed to be in much of a hurry to turn the suggestions I had made on multiple occasions into a motion that we could adopt unanimously to guarantee occupational health and safety for interpreters.

Today we are debating a motion to extend sitting hours, which will have an impact on the health and safety of our interpreters and cause burnout among mothers and young fathers in every party. Although I respect my colleague, I do not think I have anything to learn from him on this subject.

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, the whip, for her excellent

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speech. I was listening to her in the House, and I could not help but rise to ask her a question.

To respond to my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby, I am sorry he did not hear my testimony before the Standing Committee on Procedures and House Affairs. I clearly demonstrated that the hybrid Parliament is not always the solution for all mothers.

However, as a young mother, I am concerned to learn that the hours will be extended. I have just returned a meeting from Kigali. Other countries' parliaments realize that they may need to set schedules that are more conducive to work-life balance. It is not because women are lazy and do not want to work.

When we work to the point where we are debating until midnight, what message does that send to young women interested in a career in politics? They will see this and realize that the schedules are crazy and detrimental to work-life balance. We ought to try to work harder during regular hours so we do not have to extend our sittings until midnight indefinitely.

• (1350)

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, I think that my colleague's testimony and question say it all.

Today, the government is trying to do indirectly what it cannot do directly: dictate to the opposition how work is to proceed.

I think that, given all his personal and professional qualities, the government House leader could have made more of an effort to try to secure the co-operation of all House leaders. If he had accepted to negotiate one-on-one, he would have been able to better demonstrate the importance he places on democracy, discussion, negotiation and parliamentary politics.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by saying that the NDP supports this motion, as we have always supported the idea of working harder for our fellow citizens across the country. This is a tradition for the NDP. People often say that we are like worker bees in the House, and that is true. We are prepared to work until midnight. We are prepared to do this because we think it is important.

In recent months, we have seen the results of initiatives introduced in Parliament by our leader, the hon. member for Burnaby South, and by our caucus: dental benefits, benefits for renters across the country and the doubling of the GST credit to put hundreds of dollars more into Canadians' pockets. These are all initiatives that the NDP, in a Parliament where no party has the majority, has been able to introduce to help Canadians. Up to 12 million Canadians benefit from the NDP's initiatives.

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Of course, we want to work even harder to make sure that families having a hard time right now can benefit. There is no other way to say it: People are having a hard time. They are having a hard time putting food on the table and keeping a roof over their head. Canadian families are having a really hard time with all these challenges they are currently facing. In our opinion, the solution is clear and simple: We need to work harder to help people more during these difficult times.

[English]

That is why we are supporting this motion. We believe that at a time when so many Canadians, such as seniors, people with disabilities, students and families, are struggling to put food on the table and struggling to keep a roof over their heads, we have a responsibility as parliamentarians to step up and work harder than ever before. The reality is that Canadians need supports from the federal government and need supports from federal Parliament. We need to make sure that we get those supports to people.

The NDP and the member for Burnaby South have already proven our worth in this minority Parliament by the things we have fought for and obtained, such as dental care, supports for renters and ensuring that the GST credit is doubled so people can get immediate support, with hundreds of dollars in many cases. Up to 12 million Canadians get those supports because the NDP has fought for them.

In a minority Parliament, it is the responsibility of all members to fight hard and make sure that Canadians are benefiting from supports at this difficult time. However, sometimes the only way to do that and ensure that people are able to speak on behalf of their constituents is to work longer hours. That is something we have always supported in the House. The NDP has always believed that we have a responsibility to work harder and longer on behalf of our constituents, particularly in troubling and difficult times. It is important for parliamentarians to step up.

Our bosses are our constituents in our ridings across the country. I have great bosses in New Westminster—Burnaby, bosses who are struggling to make ends meet. We have this responsibility to our bosses to work harder than ever before at times like these that are troubled, when people are looking for supports and when people need those supports.

For us, it is not a question. There is no doubt at all that we have to step up and have extended hours. Some members of Parliament have raised questions about committees, and we certainly believe that is an important consideration. It is an important consideration for the government and all parties in the House of Commons.

● (1355)

I think my colleagues will be particularly interested in the statistics I am going to give after the shift to the COVID committee of the House of Commons. I will give those shortly before 2 p.m. I am sure my colleagues on both sides of the House will be interested in hearing those figures in a couple of minutes' time.

The reality is that the responsibility to work hard on behalf of our constituents is something we take seriously. That is why we in the NDP caucus and the member for Burnaby South have pushed for all these improvements, to make sure people are taken care of at

this difficult time. Those things I mentioned earlier, such as dental care, rental supplements and supports, and the doubling of the GST credit for 12 million Canadians, are all important initiatives, but there is so much left to do. That is why having these extended hours gives us the opportunity to speak to and on behalf of our constituents with respect to this important legislation and at the same time get things out the door and to the finish line. We have the opportunity to speak on this legislation. We then take a vote and Parliament makes a decision about where that legislation goes, whether it stops or whether it moves forward to committee or the Senate, which is that careful balance that is so important.

The issue of the interpreters and how that has had an impact at committee is something we all need to work on. It is not an issue of whether or not we are having evening sessions, but whether we are providing the supports and the resources to have the number of interpreters necessary to ensure we can continue with committee work at the same time as we continue with the important work in the House of Commons and move things along. Canadians expect no less.

I mentioned earlier the issue of attendance at sittings. I think it is important to note this. I am going to quote from a news article in *The Globe and Mail* by Marieke Walsh, published on June 23, 2020. As the House knows, there was a key decision point a couple of years ago around having a continuing Parliament and committee hearings. This article referenced the following:

The Conservatives have the worst attendance record of all five political parties at the House of Commons COVID-19 committee meetings.

Of the 21 special sessions in which all MPs could participate, records show the Tories averaged a 47-percent attendance rate, placing them well behind the other parties.

The article went on to say that the low turnout was “prompting charges of hypocrisy from the NDP, whom the Conservatives criticized for agreeing...to [have those] sittings”.

Before the Speaker shuts down the first half of my speech, the following figures are important. The Conservatives had a 47% attendance rate. The Bloc was better, at 73%. The Liberals were at 76%. The highest attendance among the recognized parties was the NDP, no doubt the worker bees, at 85% attendance.

That is important to note. We do not just talk the game; we do not just talk about extending sessions; we do not just talk about working until midnight. We actually get the work done. Therefore, when Canadians elect NDP MPs, they are going to work harder and longer than MPs from other parties. We believe that our responsibility in the House of Commons is to show up, to speak out on behalf of our constituents and to get things done. I will have more opportunity in the second half of my speech to speak more to those issues and the history of all the recognized parties in the House of Commons.

*Statements by Members*

My final point is this. At times when Canadians are struggling so much to make ends meet, all members of Parliament have a responsibility to get together to work harder, to work longer and to work better on behalf of our constituents. I hope this motion will pass unanimously, because Canadians deserve no less than parliamentarians who are willing to work until midnight every night on their behalf.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

### FIFA WORLD CUP 2022

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to do something we have not been able to do for quite some time. That is to wish Team Canada the greatest success as they compete in the FIFA World Cup. For the first time since 1986, Canada will be sending a team to compete in the most prestigious association football tournament in the world.

It is an historic year as Qatar becomes the first Middle Eastern country to host the tournament. It will welcome an expected 1.7 million fans and transform Doha into an outdoor exhibition to demonstrate its artwork, shows and vibrant Arab culture.

As a soccer mom, I see this as an exciting moment. Sport is so much more than competition. It is an opportunity to connect with the global community over our shared love of our game.

Congratulations to all the players, and to head coach John Herdman for leading the team to this moment. We truly are a football country. On the 23rd, let us all cheer extra loud for Canada.

\* \* \*

### SMALL BUSINESS IN SASKATCHEWAN

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this past week I had the pleasure of meeting with representatives from the Prairie Sky, Rosetown and Humboldt chambers of commerce. While our conversations covered a wide range of topics, a common theme was how difficult the past two and a half years have been for local businesses, especially independent retailers. Lockdowns drove customers to larger retailers and online shopping sites like Amazon.

The impact of inflation was top of mind for most, whether they were business owners or municipal representatives. With rising prices, not only is inflation cutting into the bottom line of their customers; it is also increasing costs for businesses and making it difficult for them to survive, let alone thrive. Additionally, one mayor told me that inflation is causing municipal projects to run 25% to 40% over budget, forcing municipalities to make cuts and raise taxes.

Small and medium-sized business owners need a Conservative government that will put an end to the Prime Minister's—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Alfred-Pellan.

[Translation]

### CHARGING STATIONS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the price of gas takes up a lot of room in most Canadians' budgets, but gasoline also generates significant greenhouse gas emissions. That is why we are making the purchase and charging of electric vehicles simpler and less costly, namely by contributing to the extension of the Canada-wide network of charging stations where Canadians live, work and play.

This brings me to the opening last week of new charging stations in my riding of Alfred-Pellan. Thanks to federal funding for EcoCharge, in collaboration with Earth Day Canada and IGA, the installation of charging stations at Marché de la Concorde will allow Laval residents to charge their vehicle while they do their groceries, thereby putting more Canadians on the path to carbon neutrality.

That is what it means to build a healthier, greener economy.

\* \* \*

### FAIRMONT LE CHÂTEAU FRONTENAC RECOGNIZED

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec City has won international renown not once, not twice, but three times.

The Fairmont Le Château Frontenac still does us proud, winning the 2022 global hotel of the year award at the 16th annual World Luxury Hotel Awards. The Château is also the global winner in the luxury castle hotel category, and its restaurant Le Champlain is the regional winner in North and Central America in the fine dining cuisine category.

We are lucky to have this treasure at the heart of our city, which has welcomed many celebrities, from Alfred Hitchcock to Céline Dion, Maurice Duplessis and Grace Kelly.

This symbol of Quebec, the most photographed hotel in the world, is part of our history and will be for a long time to come. These awards are the result of the quality of the work and professionalism of all of the hotel's staff members and managers. They are the pride of our city, unique in North America. Bravo.

*Statements by Members*

● (1405)

*[English]***DAVENPORT PLATINUM JUBILEE LEADERSHIP AWARDS**

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth II, who served her nation and the Commonwealth for 70 extraordinary years, I hosted the Davenport Platinum Jubilee Leadership Awards last week in my riding. In the spirit of Her late Majesty's commitment to service, I wanted to honour the incredible leaders and organizations that are having a profound impact in Davenport communities. At a ceremony held last week at the MOCA Toronto, 22 awards were given to leaders or organizations that serve and inspire, and that rise up to the moment to address and reflect the issues of today.

Congratulations to Tracy Jenkins, Clay and Paper Theatre, Rose-neath Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto, Teixeira Accounting, Henderson Brewing, Theatre Direct, Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement, LA Centre for Active Living, West Queen West BIA, Oasis Dufferin Community Centre, Abrigo Centre, BIG on Bloor, Do West Fest, Compost Council of Canada, John Keating, Erella Ganon, Carlos De Sousa, Our Place Community of Hope, Inuit Art Foundation, Community Food Centres Canada, Dovercourt Boys and Girls Club and Mario Calla.

I thank all the winners for their service to our community. They are an inspiration to all of us.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is report card time for the Liberals. Let us have a look.

Lowering taxes and controlling inflation: fail.

Ensuring housing affordability and jobs: fail.

Stopping foreign interference and being tough on crime: fail.

Fixing our airports and borders: fail.

Safeguarding access to children's Tylenol: fail.

Providing basic government services: fail.

Right across the board, everything feels broken; everyone is worse off, and no one gets ahead. Instead of providing solutions, the Liberals' fall economic statement confirmed that they are out of ideas and out of money.

The Liberal government has been in power for seven years. Ask anybody on the street and they will say they were a lot better off seven years ago than they are today. Most Canadians look around and see what our country has become. The only real change is that there is no change left in Canadians' pockets.

\* \* \*

**ANTI-SEMITISM**

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week I attended Rise Up Ottawa, where we heard from students as young as 12 years old about unacceptable acts of

hatred they experience just because they are Jewish. Many of them said they are hiding their Jewish identity to avoid being targeted. A brave teacher, Lisa Levitan, coordinated the event to give these youth a voice.

Nobody should feel scared to go to school because of their religion. No child should hide who they are in fear of Nazi symbols and rhetoric that should be so anathema to our society that they would be shunned instantaneously, yet they are not.

We need to teach all young people about the Holocaust, so they learn the danger of indifference to oppression.

The member for Ottawa Centre and I were among the only non-Jewish participants. We all have an obligation to speak out. To be silent is to cause harm. I ask the House to join me in calling for an end to Jew hatred.

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**WORLD DIABETES DAY**

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November 14 marks World Diabetes Day. Throughout 2021 to 2023, the theme of World Diabetes Day is "Access to Diabetes Care".

More than 95% of the time, people living with diabetes are looking after themselves.

*[Translation]*

To ensure that people with diabetes have access to the medical resources they need on a daily basis, there must be better access to quality education about diabetes for health care professionals and decision-makers.

*[English]*

I would like to recognize this year's Kids for a Cure delegation from JDRF, which is here meeting with parliamentarians today. Tonight, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Sir John A. MacDonald Building, I invite all members to attend and hear from our youth delegates about their struggles and their journeys living with type 1 diabetes.

Education is key to understanding the issues facing people with diabetes.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, when it comes to the environment, the Liberal government talks a lot, taxes a lot, but does not do much. I am not the one saying this, it is in the report released at COP27 today, which concludes that, of 63 countries, Canada ranks 58th.

Rather than tax Canadians, we want to reduce our carbon footprint where emissions are being generated. It is not the government's role to tell companies what to do; it must help them reduce their emissions through research and development. It must make green energies more affordable by reducing the amount of paperwork and red tape to allow more hydroelectric dams and the development of lithium and other mines for electric vehicles.

We need to promote and export Canadian know-how. We are the best in the world when it comes to carbon capture, hydroelectricity, wind power and nuclear energy. We must support our green energies here in Canada rather than exporting billions of dollars offshore, and in so doing, allow first nations to share in Canada's prosperity.

The world needs Canadian know-how now more than ever. Let us be proud of Canada.

\* \* \*

● (1410)  
[English]

#### VETERANS' WEEK

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as always, both across the country and in my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Canadians turned out in large numbers at a variety of commemoration events to recognize our veterans during Veterans' Week.

I myself had the opportunity to attend a number of events, both here at home and across the country. These included joining the veterans at the Camp Hill veterans hospital for a moving candle-light tribute to remember their fallen comrades and the unveiling of a statue at the Highway of Heroes that marked the planting of 2.5 million trees as part of the Trees for Life campaign, as well as several visits to different memorials, legions and classrooms.

It was quite moving to see how many Canadians of all ages and all walks of life took the time to show our veterans how grateful they are for keeping us safe and free. Let us continue taking the opportunity to value and recognize the amazing contributions and sacrifices of our veterans all year around.

Lest we forget.

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#### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just met with Melody and Jack Horton and their two boys Lucas and Jesse. They had the same hope as all young families to own a home. This was out of reach for them in Ontario, so they left and bought their dream home on a lake in Nova Scotia. They quickly found jobs. The family loves swimming in the lake in the summer and skating on it in the winter.

Life was everything they hoped it would be, until this year. The rapid cost increases for gas to heat their home and for food for the family was too much. Melody and Jack sold their dream house in September. They moved into a house half the size, and they are still struggling to pay the bills. The Hortons do not understand why the Liberals do not know how tough it is for families.

#### Statements by Members

The new Conservative leader will always put people first. He will always work every single day to make paycheques bigger and government smaller for families like the Hortons.

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#### BEIJING

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, recent reports that Beijing interfered in our democracy are deeply troubling. It is clear Beijing spread disinformation through proxies in the last 2021 election campaign. It is also clear in recently unsealed indictments in U.S. court that Beijing's agents are operating freely here on Canadian soil, coercing members of the Chinese community.

Recent reports have also revealed the presence of three illegal People's Republic of China police stations operating in the Toronto region. Now we find out Beijing illegally funnelled hundreds of thousands of dollars to at least 11 election candidates in the 2019 general election.

Despite the government knowing about this for at least 10 months, no one has been expelled, no one has been criminally charged and no action has been taken. The biggest victims of this interference is the Chinese community itself.

When is the government going to take action to protect Canadians and protect Canadian democracy?

\* \* \*

#### CANCER CARE

**Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, cancer care deserves priority health care funding. Hamilton has a world-class network of health care providers, including the Juravinski Cancer Centre in my riding of Hamilton Mountain, where nearly 5,000 health care workers live. I hear regularly from constituents who provide care and from many who receive cancer care.

Recently I met Mélodie. During the pandemic, she waited far too long for a biopsy on a lump on her thyroid. She travelled from Sudbury to Hamilton and had to return home again when her procedure was cancelled due to backlogs. Mélodie says she is grateful our government's targeted investments will help provinces and territories remedy these problems.

Cancer is still the leading cause of death for Canadians and last week, a report from the Canadian Cancer Society has showed us cancer cases are on the rise. We need more investment and to make cancer care a priority at every level of government.

*Statements by Members*

I want to thank the Canadian Cancer Society for encouraging us to make cancer care even better.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, according to the UN, to limit warming to 1.5°C, global emissions have to drop 7.6% every year. To save our planet, Canada must reduce its emissions by 60% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. Addressing oil and gas emissions is critical if Canada is to reach its share of that target.

Instead of subsidizing the oil and gas industry, which, by the way, made \$147 billion in profits this year alone, Canada should be reinvesting in the green tech sector and supporting communities in building climate resilience.

Canada also needs just transition legislation, a clean jobs secretariat and a training centre for workers. The adoption of a clean jobs industrial strategy that echoes the calls from CAN-Rac, Ecojustice, CLC, Unifor and Blue Green Canada is a must. Interprovincial electricity grid connection, massive transit expansion and the acceleration of retrofits with a big focus on energy poverty and low and medium-income households must be prioritized.

We have no time to waste.

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[Translation]

**350TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAVALTRIE**

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to mark the 350th anniversary of Lavaltrie, a magnificent municipality in Berthier—Maskinongé. The municipality owes its name to Séraphin Margane de Lavaltrie, a lieutenant in the Carignan-Salières regiment to whom Intendant Talon granted a seigneurie in 1672.

Its magnificent church was designed by Victor Bourgeau, a Lavaltrie native, and a sculpture of the architect created by artist Claude Des Rosiers was recently unveiled on the church grounds.

Author Honoré Beaugrand also set his story of the Chasse-galerie legend in Lavaltrie.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the historical society and all the volunteers, and I invite everyone to follow the historic trail of the traditional rally held by Lavaltrie for many years in which I had the great honour of participating.

I would like to wish all Lavaltrie residents a happy anniversary.

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[English]

**GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP and Liberal Party have launched an attack on parliamentary committees. Today they brought a motion to strip committees of their already scarce resources. This means cancelled meetings and interruptions of important investigations.

The government operations committee is digging into the \$54-million ArriveCAN app, including the false reports that contractors were paid millions but did not receive a dime. Where is the money and who got rich?

The heritage committee is investigating the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion from providing funding to known racist and anti-Semite Laith Marouf.

The procedure and House affairs committee has an investigation into foreign interference in our elections. The Prime Minister knew since January and has failed to act.

This important work of all House committees will be restricted by today's motion. The Conservatives continue to fight against "just inflation" and higher taxes. The government needs more accountability, not less. This motion shields the Liberals from criticism, and the Conservatives will not stand for it.

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**UGANDAN ASIANS**

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in August of 1972, President Idi Amin ordered everyone of South Asian descent out of Uganda. Given 90 days to leave or face military internment, thousands suddenly became stateless, triggering an international call to accept these refugees. Canada answered that call. This was a huge step. Until that point, this country had never attempted to resettle a group of non-white, non-Christian people from outside of Europe.

Among the 8,000 people who would settle here that fall were me, my sister, and my parents, a family like so many others that came here seeking one thing, safety. However, what we found was so much more. A cold climate, yes, but a warm and welcoming people who helped us settle and helped us integrate.

Ugandan Asian refugees have emerged as leaders in business, the professions, even as parliamentarians, but all have made a point of giving back.

On this 50th anniversary, I can only thank my mother and father for having the courage to cross the planet to start over, and this country, Canada, for giving my family and all Ugandan Asians not just safety but opportunity.



## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[Translation]

### HEALTH

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian children are in pain and there is no medication available. Mark Parrish, the president of a drug distribution association that represents 19 countries, says that Canada is the only country that has a shortage of essential drugs. Parents are even having to go to the United States to buy these drugs, because although we do not have them here in Canada, they are abundant south of the border.

Why is it that children in other countries have these drugs, but Canadian children do not?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think we can thank our colleague for asking that question and addressing the stress that families and children are under.

There are two pieces of good news. The first is that Canadian production of these drugs has increased substantially in the last few weeks. The second is that just a few hours ago, we were able to announce an agreement with a company to provide Canadians with several months' worth of additional pain medication for children.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it does not answer the question.

I will quote from the Wall Street Journal, which had an article about Canada's shortage of children's medication. Mark Parrish, president of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers, a trade association with members from 19 countries, says that no other country is experiencing similar shortages as Canada is.

That forces our parents to drive south of the border and buy the medications in the United States, where they are abundant and in supply, and bring them back here. Many people are actually hawking them with a profit back in our country.

Again, why are these medications available abroad but not here at home?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to repeat the answer in English this time.

The question is right. The stress that families and children are going through is real. That is why we were pleased with the collaboration with other producers and partners in the last few weeks to see a substantial increase in production, home production, of analgesics for children. More important, just a few hours ago, we announced an important importation of a few months additional supply of analgesics for children, which will make a big difference in the ability for children to be cared for in Canada.

### Oral Questions

## EMPLOYMENT

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Governor of the Bank of Canada has said that inflation here is domestically generated, not imported from the rest of the world. He agrees with our friend and the future leader of the Liberal Party, Mark Carney, who says that inflation is coming from Canada. However, interestingly, the governor says that the solution is to cap wages and cut jobs. He says that the only way to stop inflation is to drive up unemployment.

Does the government agree that it needs to kill jobs to fight the inflation that it has caused?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what our government believes in is an economic approach that is both compassionate and fiscally responsible. In fact, here is what the Globe and Mail, which as a rule does not agree with our government's policies, had to say about the fall economic statement. It said, "It is, broadly speaking, the right approach" and that Canada has "the slimmest government shortfall in the G7. In inflation-fighting terms, that has Liberal fiscal policy looking pretty good, especially graded on a curve."

\* \* \*

## TAXATION

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is not looking pretty good is the cost of diesel. In New Brunswick, it is over three dollars a litre. Diesel is not a luxury; it is a necessity when one lives in the country and drives a big truck. It is a necessity for the truckers to bring us our goods to our grocery stores. No wonder we have 11% food price inflation. And home heating bills are not looking any better. They are going to double this winter and families in oil-heated communities will have to spend thousands of dollars. Cutting their subscription to Disney will save them \$13, which is not enough to pay the bill, but what would help is that Liberals cancelled the plan to triple the tax. Will they?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every single member of Parliament who sits in the House is privileged. We all earn good salaries and we have hard-working staffers who support us well.

I absolutely recognize how privileged my family and I are, and that is why in the fall economic statement tabled earlier this month, we focused our government's finite resources on helping the Canadians who need it the most. We did that by doubling the GST credit, providing a \$500 top-up to Canadians struggling to pay the rent and providing dental care for Canadian kids.

*Oral Questions*

● (1425)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if she really wanted to empathize with low-income people who are struggling, then she and her NDP coalition partners would cancel their plan to triple the carbon tax. They want to do it at a time when home heating bills are expected to double, costing thousands of dollars for families in oil-heated communities, and when the diesel price is over three dollars a litre.

Canadians cannot afford it, nor can they afford to spend \$6,000 on the Prime Minister's hotel rooms, nor do they need lectures about cancelling Disney+. Will they cancel the carbon tax instead?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I come from a region of the country that has recently seen the most severe weather event over the course of my entire life, but what really upsets me is that we know there is more to come. We know that, since the time I was born until the turn of the century, the average insured losses in this country were between \$250 million and \$450 million a year for severe weather. Now it is almost \$2 billion annually. A few years—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I would like everybody to please pay attention to their whips.

The hon. Minister of Immigration.

**Hon. Sean Fraser:** Mr. Speaker, I have a better solution than people listening to their whips. Turn the microphones on in the background so we can hear members on that side denying that climate change is a real threat to Canadian communities.

The reality is that the cost of inaction is too great to ignore. We are dealing with hundreds of millions of dollars, probably billions of dollars, of losses from events that have torn down silos, destroyed wharves and caused untold damage to property, including in my community. The plan to put a price on pollution is actually going to give more money back to families who live in our communities.

If the opposition, for the third time in a row, wants to camp out on a commitment to take money from families, they can triple down on a strategy that will keep them in opposition for a long time.

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[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it seems as though health care funding is futile. That is what the Minister of Health said.

He considers it futile to ask the federal government to increase health transfers because, apparently, Quebec and the provinces are rolling in money. They supposedly have so much money and things are going so well in hospitals that it is futile to ask the federal government to contribute its fair share.

Has the Minister of Health spoken to emergency room doctors in Quebec about their futile situation? Has he told the nurses who are

doing mandatory overtime that it is futile to provide adequate funding for health care?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for pointing out the useful battle that we need to be waging, the battle for our health care workers, who are suffering, who are sick and who left the profession in droves in Quebec and other parts of the country. They need our help to be able to take care of those who are seriously ill right now and who did not have the surgeries and diagnoses they should have over the past few months.

Let us talk about that useful battle because that is what is important for workers and patients across the country.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is a futile answer.

The government members like to lecture us, but they cannot even print passports, manage the borders or process immigration files. What is more, La Presse reported on Saturday that they are not even capable of sending seniors their old age pension cheques. I could not make this stuff up. Last year alone, 70,000 new retirees had to wait months to get their pension.

Who would want these sanctimonious people to decide anything to do with health for seniors, or anyone else, when they cannot even figure out how to send them their cheque?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find the Bloc Québécois's questions interesting because the Bloc Québécois just came out of its party convention 48 hours ago. They just got together for a party.

The main conclusion of the Bloc Québécois's convention is that they must use every forum and every opportunity to try to convince Quebecers of the need to form a country. That is their priority.

When the Bloc Québécois tells us that they listen to Quebecers, it would be nice if they actually did it for once.

● (1430)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, across the country, the number of children in emergency rooms is on the rise. Everywhere we look, hospitals are out of beds for children and winter is not even here yet. Parents are distraught at the idea of their children getting sick and not being able to get any care.

Instead of squabbling, when are the Liberals going to take the situation seriously and take action to protect our children?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously we are very grateful to the member for that question.

*Oral Questions*

Indeed, our children, our seniors and our families are having a difficult time. Respiratory viruses are spreading at a startling rate. COVID-19 is not over yet. Approximately 10% of hospital beds are filled with people who have COVID-19 and, on top of that, there is the respiratory syncytial virus and the flu, which is going to be very severe this year.

We have an obligation and a responsibility to take care of each other, and we do that by getting vaccinated and implementing public health measures.

[English]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, parents do not want to hear excuses; they want to know their kids will be taken care of when they get sick.

Across Canada there are shortages of children's Tylenol and Advil, and now hospitals are dealing with a lack of pediatric antibiotics. It is a scary time to be a parent, and there are things the government can do now.

Instead of giving vague promises and pointing fingers, the Liberals must ensure our kids get the medicine they need. Parents are desperate for help. Where is the plan to care for our children?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, families and children are indeed living through stressful times, and that is why we were pleased to announce just a few hours ago that there will be a special importation of additional analgesics, the equivalent of several months' of normal supply, in addition to the increased domestic production of these analgesics, so that children and their families can have access to those drugs in a very short time. We will keep working on longer term solutions to these shortages.

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**TAXATION**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, temperatures are dropping across Canada, and Canadians are needing to heat their homes. Home heating prices are doubling this winter, and Liberals will add to the pain by increasing the carbon tax. The finance minister's advice to families, though, is to cancel Disney+. That \$14.99 a month will not do anything for the one in five Canadians skipping meals. The minister is out of touch, and Canadians are out of money.

Why will the Liberals not give Canadians actual relief and cancel their plans to triple taxes on gas, home heating and groceries?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about some really terrible advice that was offered to Canadians in the spring by the Conservative leader. He urged Canadians to invest in crypto as a way to opt out of inflation. Now, Bitcoin has crashed by 21% over the past week and by more than 65% since the Conservative leader first gave Canadians that reckless advice. The Conservatives should apologize today for this reckless policy and admit that investing in crypto would have bankrupted Canadians.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what a delusional response from the minister of Netflix. Maybe, instead of advising Canadians to cancel their \$14.99 Dis-

ney+ subscriptions, the minister could do the right thing and cancel the government's greed.

Their government told us the whole point of the carbon tax was to lower emissions. They have spent over \$100 billion since 2015 on the environment, and despite what the Prime Minister says, emissions are up and Canadians are out of money. Why will the Liberals not give Canadians some relief and cancel their inflation tax?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what should be cancelled is the reckless advice that the Conservatives offered to Canadians, for which they have never apologized, which was to invest in crypto. If a Canadian had invested \$10,000 in crypto when the Conservative leader told them it was a good idea, today they would have less than three and a half thousands dollars. If they had invested in a crypto exchange platform, they would be totally wiped out. What should happen is that the Conservatives should apologize and withdraw that reckless advice.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the private jets have landed and the limousines are idling in Egypt for a UN climate change conference, where the minister is claiming to save the planet. Meanwhile, in Canada, struggling Canadians are paying record high prices for the Liberals' costly plan, which has not even reduced emissions. This means private jets and limousines for Liberals and higher prices on gas, groceries and home heating for Canadians.

When will the Liberals admit that their plan is not working, park the jets and scrap the carbon tax, which they plan to triple?

• (1435)

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that eight out of 10 families will be better off under our price on pollution and the climate action incentive. The hon. opposition never talks about the costs of climate change. There are many members from British Columbia on the other side. There has been a \$9-billion impact from the floods, fires and droughts experienced last year, and 600 people died under the heat dome.

We have a moral imperative and an economic imperative to do something about climate change. The hon. members of the opposition have no plan. They never did, and they never will.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is misinformation from the member opposite.

In one month, 1.5 million Canadians used food banks. The response from the finance minister was to tell struggling Canadians that she was cutting her Disney+ subscription, but \$14 a month is not going to put food on the table.

*Oral Questions*

It is insulting. Canadians are out of money. The government is out of touch. When will it stop its out-of-control spending and stop raising taxes on Canadians?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me tell the House what is really out of touch. It is an economic plan which would eviscerate the EI system, endanger seniors' pensions, make pollution free again, claw back climate cheques from Canadian families, leave Canadian children without dental care and deprive low-income renters of the support they urgently need.

Our plan is responsible and compassionate. The Conservative approach is neither.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government takes money from the pockets of Lac-Mégantic's citizens and puts it in its own pockets, that is called a tax. When the government wastes this money lining the pockets of Liberal friends like Frank Baylis or creating an app like Arrive-CAN, that is called a scandal. When the costly coalition wants to triple the carbon tax on gas, groceries and heating, that is called making families poorer.

When will the government finally show some compassion and scrap its plan to triple the carbon tax?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our plan is both compassionate and responsible. The day we released our economic update, Moody's affirmed Canada's AAA credit rating with a stable outlook. The next day, Canada released an excellent jobs report, with Canadians adding 108,000 jobs in October. Canada has now recovered 116% of the jobs lost compared to 104%—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a mother of six told me she can no longer afford to feed her family. The Minister of Finance suggests she should make a choice: Disney+ or Netflix. In reality, she has to choose between hamburger and bologna. That is the reality of life in Canada.

This costly NDP-Liberal government is attacking the least fortunate. Why does it want to force this family to pay more tax next year?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what my hon. colleague said is absolutely false. Our government is actually supporting Canadian families. Thanks to the Canada child benefit, that mother of six gets thousands of dollars a year to support her children.

What is the Conservatives' plan? Cuts. What will they cut? They are not telling, but it will no doubt be something that will hurt Canadian families.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health insulted Quebec and the provinces by saying that their demand for increased health transfers was futile. That is out-

rageous. Quebec spends more than 40% of its budget on health care. Allocating forty percent of a budget is not futile. That is not futile, especially when we know that, even with 40% of the budget, our system is depleted and out of resources because his government is not contributing its share. When will the minister realize that the only thing that is futile is his stubborn refusal to give money to our hospitals?

• (1440)

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member ended with “giving money”. Giving money is what we have been doing for several years now. We certainly did that when we invested \$72 billion to fight COVID-19. Those investments continue because COVID-19 is unfortunately still around. In the last budget, we invested \$2 billion to reduce the backlogs in surgeries and diagnostics. We also invested \$3 billion in mental health, \$3 billion in long-term care and \$3 billion in home care. I could go on and on, but I know I do not have much time. If the member wants to know more about the money, another question would be helpful.

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, why not just increase transfer to 35%, then?

I will quote the minister. When leaving the meeting on health transfers, the minister said, “My job is not to send dollars to finance ministers. My job is to make sure that whatever we do helps my colleagues, health ministers, do the difficult and important work that they are doing.”

Quite rightly, all his health minister colleagues clearly told him that the way to help them do their difficult work is to send money. If the Minister of Health cannot send money, why does he not let the Minister of Finance take over instead of wasting everyone's time?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the member for another excellent question.

My responsibility, as Minister of Health, is to not send money without conditions to the finance ministers. I like the finance ministers, but my job is to help the health ministers. Sending money without conditions to the finance ministers may please the finance ministers, but that is not what the health ministers need. What we are going to continue doing is focusing on what the health ministers must do amongst themselves and in co-operation with one another.

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health's fight against funding comes at a cost. It is not just the patients who are paying the price, it is every taxpayer in Quebec.

Quebec invests more than 40% of its budget in health. Even with 40%, we know that expenses are going up in a hurry. All that money is money that is not going to our overflowing classrooms, it is money that is not being redirected to the less fortunate in the social safety net, and it is child care spaces that will never exist.

There is a major hole in Quebec's social safety net. Does the minister know that he is the one making it bigger?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I commend the member for putting more focus on results, on the things that actually need to be done, such as reducing wait times for surgeries and diagnostics; increasing access to family doctors, especially in rural areas; increasing access to mental health care; ensuring that home care and long-term care are accessible and distributed fairly; and supporting health care workers who need it so much and who need us to help them take care of one another.

\* \* \*

[English]

### TAXATION

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week, we heard that the Liberal government has been strong-arming the Government of Nova Scotia to prevent it from reducing provincial fuel taxes. With the cost of living at an all-time high, Canadians could use any help, but thanks to the Liberal government, absolutely none is forthcoming.

Why is the minister pulling out all the stops in a concerted effort to hurt Canadians more and more by tripling the carbon tax?

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is beyond disappointing to hear from the hon. member. Many weeks after hurricane Fiona, the hon. member wants to take an important measure off the table that will help reduce pollution and put more money in people's pockets.

We are there with \$300 million to help Atlantic Canadians rebuild. We are there with \$120 million to help them transition to cleaner forms of energy. We will be there for Atlantic Canadians, ever and always.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us be clear: The majority of Atlantic Canadians still have not seen a penny for the cleanup of Fiona, and the mess is still there. I want to read a quote: "provinces and territories must not implement measures that directly offset, reduce or negate the price signal sent by the price on carbon". The Liberals want Canadians to pay more at the pumps, and shame on any provincial minister of finance who would dare try to reduce the tax. This is the attitude we are dealing with.

Why does the Liberal government refuse to allow provincial governments to reduce taxes on gas, groceries and home heating? They are the essentials.

• (1445)

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with great respect to my hon. friend, colleague and neighbour in Nova Scotia, I point out to him that governments from Newfoundland to Ontario of different parti-

san persuasions have done exactly what he has just declared is not possible. The facts tell a very different story.

What is most important is that we actually address climate change. There is a cost to my community. If we talk to any dairy farmer and try to find one who has lost less than \$100,000 in crops, I bet no one can. I have spent time on the ground actually talking to them about what their losses are. I have viewed my neighbours' fences be turned into splinters, and I continue to want to support our community by putting more money in their pockets by making sure this—

**The Speaker:** The member for King—Vaughan.

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### SENIORS

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's seniors are struggling to survive. Denise, a senior living in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has been employed since she was 16 years old. Denise's income includes a job, old age security and her Canada pension, yet Denise is forced to live in her car as she is unable to afford housing.

When will the Liberal government show some compassion, give our seniors some relief and cancel its plan to triple the taxes on gas, groceries and home heating?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for Denise's sake, I really hope she did not follow the Conservative leader's advice to invest in crypto as a way to avoid inflation. If she had done that, at best she would have lost 65% of her savings. She may well have been entirely wiped out had she listened to the Conservatives and invested in a crypto platform. It is time for the Conservative leader to take responsibility for this reckless advice and apologize.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the last year, Canadian family wages rose less than half as fast as inflation, yet the Liberals recently had the gall to say that higher wage pressures are causing inflation, all while major grocery chains make huge profits and pay millions of dollars in compensation to their shareholders and CEOs. Just like the Conservative leader, the Deputy Prime Minister refuses to acknowledge the full extent to which corporate greed and profit-seeking are driving inflationary pressure on Canadian household budgets.

My question is simple. When are the Liberals going to stop blaming workers and tackle the real causes of inflation by forcing CEOs and their corporations to pay their fair share?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is absolutely committed to ensuring that everyone in Canada pays their fair share. Let me give just a few examples.

We have permanently raised corporate income tax by 1.5% on Canada's largest and most profitable banks and insurance companies. We have introduced a Canada recovery dividend of 15% on banks and insurance companies to help pay for the cost of fighting COVID. We have also now introduced a luxury tax on planes, cars and yachts: planes and cars worth over \$100,000 and yachts worth over \$250,000.

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**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has put thousands of refugee claimants and migrants in immigration detention in provincial jails even though they have not committed any crimes. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International are calling on the Prime Minister to end this abusive practice. B.C., Nova Scotia, Alberta and Manitoba have proactively cancelled the immigration detention contracts with CBSA, but this should not just be on provinces. Refugees and migrants are not criminals.

Will the Liberals put an end to this odious immigration detention practice and stop putting migrants and asylum seekers in provincial jails?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has a robust and fair refugee system, and immigration detention is a measure of last resort. While we have made significant progress, there is more work to do.

We thank the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy and Hon. Allan Rock, as well as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, for their efforts on this issue. I look forward to continuing to work with them on this important issue.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian people have been fighting bravely against Russia's brutal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine. They have been making incredible progress, retaking territory while defending the values that we all share of peace, democracy and human rights.

Canada's military aid has been integral to Ukraine's counteroffensive. As the NATO Secretary General has said on many occasions, Canada is a leader in supporting Ukraine.

Today, the Prime Minister of Canada made an announcement of additional military support for the people of Ukraine. Could the Minister of National Defence please share with the House and with Canadians that announcement?

● (1450)

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Prime Minister announced an additional \$500 million of military aid for Ukraine, bringing the total com-

mitted by the Government of Canada to over \$1 billion. In addition, Canada is transporting military aid on behalf of our allies and ourselves. We have transported over five million pounds of aid. We stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine in the short and long term.

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**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Beijing interfered in last year's 2021 election. Beijing's ambassador to Canada commented critically and publicly during that election campaign and Beijing spread disinformation through proxies on Chinese-language social media platforms.

Last week we found out that Beijing also interfered in the 2019 election. We found out that the Prime Minister was told months ago, in January, about hundreds of thousands of dollars that were illegally funnelled to at least 11 election candidates.

My question is simple. Who are these 11 election candidates?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is good to see the Conservatives actually taking foreign interference seriously for once. We saw in the last Parliament that Conservative members did not care about protecting national security. They removed their members from NSICOP, which provides the information the member opposite is looking for.

The member for Durham, when he was leader, took his toys and went home. He took Conservative members off of that committee, which actually provides the very information the member opposite is looking for.

We have taken our democratic institutions seriously and implemented many measures to ensure that foreign—

**The Speaker:** The member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is an appalling answer. It is the government that allowed People's Liberation Army scientists of the People's Republic of China into a top-level lab in this country against the government's own security protocols and in threat to the Five Eyes alliance.

We are talking about payments of hundreds of thousands of dollars to election candidates. We are talking about Beijing putting agents in MPs' offices. We are talking about an increasingly aggressive campaign to silence Canadian MPs.

My question for the government is very simple: Who are these 11 candidates?

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the risk of foreign interference is something we have taken seriously since forming government. That is precisely why we put in place a non-partisan panel to assess any sort of foreign actors' interference to determine if it is a credible threat that the public should be aware of.

All parties were briefed and provided information about foreign interference, which is something the Conservatives never bothered to do previously. Putting in place a non-partisan panel during elections will ensure that our democratic institutions are protected—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service informed the Prime Minister that the Chinese communist regime had interfered in the 2019 and 2021 Canadian federal elections. This illegal interference included the clandestine financing of a network of at least 11 candidates, and no one was deported or criminally charged. The Prime Minister boasted to the media that his government had taken significant action to combat this threat. That significant action must have been very stealthy, since no one knows what it was.

Which 11 candidates benefited from the illegal money from the Chinese Communist Party?

[*English*]

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, any foreign interference poses a threat to the very fabric of our democracy and we will never tolerate it. The RCMP and intelligence agencies are aware of these threats and are investigating. In addition, all actions are on the table, including legislation.

I hope the members across the way will support the cybersecurity legislation before the House. Canadians demand that we take action and we always will.

• (1455)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the threat is very real. For the first time in Canadian history, criminal charges were laid today against a Hydro-Québec employee who was sending industrial intelligence to the Chinese communist regime. However, Canadian intelligence officials have also said that the peril Canada faces if it chooses not to act on allegations of Chinese foreign interference is significant. Even Canada's former ambassador to China, David Mulroney, said he did not think the government understands this or is inclined to act.

My question is simple. Will someone tell us who were the 11 candidates who benefited from money from the Chinese communist regime?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank

my colleague for raising such an important question. Nothing matters more to all parliamentarians than national security.

My colleague wants to know what action we took. I can tell him that we recently strengthened the rules governing critical minerals across the country. In addition, I recently blocked three transactions to protect Canada's national security. I think all parliamentarians can stand up and say to Canadians that members on this side of the House take national security very seriously. We will always act in Canadians' best interest.

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**OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY**

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not part of Canada's delegation attending COP27 on climate change in Egypt. Who is there instead? Believe it or not, representatives of the oil sands industry. I am not making this up. Canada sent six oil companies, one pipeline manufacturer and the bank most supportive of the oil industry to a meeting on climate change instead of the Prime Minister. It was no surprise that all environmental groups asked that they be expelled from Canada's pavilion.

Can the government confirm that it has already put them on a plane? If it has not, what is it waiting for?

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we must work with everyone to have a fair transition towards a clean economy. The fact remains that every sector has a role to play in reducing pollution and achieving net zero, oil and gas in particular. Our government has not hesitated to say that the oil sector must do more.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's strategy at COP27 is exactly the same as Saudi Arabia's.

They both showed up saying that they will continue to increase oil production. They both invited the oil industry to discuss how their oil is “greener than green” thanks to carbon capture and storage. Both used COP27 to promote sales of oil and gas while boasting about their environmental record.

Was it the government's intention all along to tell the whole world that Canada, like Saudi Arabia, is an oil monarchy?

[*English*]

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member would agree we need to work with everyone to achieve a just transition to a clean economy. Every sector has a role to play in cutting pollution, especially the oil and gas sector. We know the oil and gas sector must do more. That is why we are eliminating fossil fuel subsidies. That is why we are capping emissions. In these times of record profits, the oil and gas sector needs to put its shoulder to the wheel, invest in pollution prevention and build the clean economy of tomorrow.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with our new leader, Conservatives have a plan to curtail the 40-year-high inflation that is crippling Canadians. It is very simple really: Curb reckless spending and stop tax increases. As long as the government is in power, the reckless spending continues. After all, the Liberal motto is “don't just stand there; spend something.” Tax increases, however, can be stopped.

Why will the Liberals not give Canadians a break and finally stop their plan to triple the tax increases on groceries, gas and home heating?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader did have a very specific plan, which he recommended to Canadians, on how to opt out of inflation. It was to invest in crypto. If Canadians had followed that advice, at a minimum they would have lost 65% of what they invested. Many of them, had they chosen to invest in crypto platforms, would be totally wiped out. That is the Conservative inflation fighting plan. I have to say I prefer our compassionate response.

• (1500)

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would bet 15 Disney+ that Canadians are more concerned about tax increases on their bills right now. That just shows the new motto Liberals have of “just don't stand there; tax something.” This spend-and-tax Liberal government is taxing Canadians at a time when they need relief the most. Conservatives say to stop the spending and stop the tax increases.

Why will the government not do the bare minimum and cancel the triple tax increases on groceries, gas and home heating?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know our approach is compassionate. It is about doubling the GST credit. It is about giving kids under 12 dental care. It is about helping people struggling to pay their rent. What else? It is fiscally responsible. The day we tabled the fall economic statement, Moody's reaffirmed Canada's AAA rating with a stable outlook. The day afterward, Canada had a blockbusting jobs report with 108,000 jobs created in October alone. We have recovered 117% of the jobs lost to COVID, just—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley has the floor.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while Canadians are struggling with the cost of everything, the Prime Minister is busy spending \$6,000 a night on hotel rooms. He would rather leave Canadians to freeze in the dead of winter than help them keep the heat on by removing the carbon tax from their heating bills. One can bet Conservatives will keep the heat on these Liberals until they do just that.

Why will the Liberals not finally give Canadians a break and cancel their plan to triple taxes on gas, groceries and home heating?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if that member is concerned about

the government standing by Canadians in their time of need, I am curious why he stood by the hon. Leader of the Opposition at the beginning of the pandemic. When we rolled out supports to keep food on the table and a roof over people's heads, he said that Conservatives do not believe in “big, fat government programs”. Now he is concerned about making sure we are properly funding the Canada pension plan and EI. That money is there so that people can have dignity in retirement and make sure that when they fall on tough times they are supported. People have earned those benefits through their own earnings over the course of their careers, where they have busted joints and broken limbs working day after day after day. The least they deserve is to be supported, and we are going to be there for them.

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[Translation]

**FINANCE**

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on November 3, the Government of Canada announced its 2022 fall economic statement. This update outlines the government's plan to continue to help Canadians with the cost of living and to build a Canada where nobody gets left behind.

At a time when people are asking for help, can the Minister for Economic Development for the Regions of Quebec explain how the new measures will have a political impact on the lives of Canadians?

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for her excellent work and for her question.

The government is listening to Canadians and it is working tirelessly to support them. For example, starting November 4, an estimated 11 million low- and modest-income current GST/HST credit recipients will receive an additional payment. We also introduced the Canada dental benefit, which will support families who need it, the Canada housing benefit top-up and other concrete measures.

The government is listening to the middle class, who are calling for action, and we will always do everything we can to support them.



*Oral Questions*

[English]

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Christmas is just over a month away and while most Canadians should be wishing for and shopping for presents, they are not. They are wishing that they can afford to pay their bills. They are wishing that they will not have to rely on a food bank to feed their families. This is Canada, and we can do so much better. People are struggling to feed their families.

I ask the Liberals today: Will they cancel their planned tax hikes on home heating, gas and groceries?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, for the past seven years, we have demonstrated compassion and responsibility. We have been there for Canadians and Canadian families, whether it is through the Canada child benefit, whether it is through child care, whether it is through the Canada dental plan or housing. What we have not done is provide completely irresponsible financial advice that would leave Canadian families devastated.

If the member and members opposite care, I hope they apologize to Canadians for the reckless advice their leader offered in terms of investing in cryptocurrency, because they would have seen their savings completely eviscerated. That is disappointing, and they should apologize.

• (1505)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals need to apologize to Canadians, because they have the highest use of food banks in history. One in three of them are children. We have fallen from 10th to 30th place in child well-being. That they should be ashamed of. That is disgusting.

I will ask again. Canadians have to heat their homes and spend \$7,000. This is not a luxury. This is a necessity. Will the Liberals do the right and responsible thing? Show leadership and compassion and acknowledge the crisis that we are in. I know they must be receiving the same emails. Cancel the planned tax hikes.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are two million Canadians, including 450,000 children, no longer in poverty under this government than when the Conservatives were in power. They had the opportunity to actually vote on measures that would help Canadian families, like the Canada dental benefit, like the Canadian housing benefit, like child care for families from coast to coast, or perhaps the Canada workers benefit. These are all things that the Conservatives voted against.

They talk a good game, but when it comes to actually supporting Canadians they are nowhere to be found.

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[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this government spends without restraint and without keeping track.

La Presse reported that the government has purchased twice as many medical ventilators as are needed for Canadians' health. That is an expenditure of \$403 million for nothing. Even worse, the government cannot figure out how to resell them or even give them back. What is wrong with this picture?

Are there any real managers in the government to sound the alarm on Liberal incompetence?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would say that a government's competency and responsibility lies with ensuring the health and safety of its citizens. That is the primary responsibility of any government, certainly in times of crisis such as we experienced in early 2020.

That is why we invested where we needed to invest because we knew that people were going to go through some tough times. We knew that we needed to protect their ability to afford the goods and services they would need, but we also knew that we needed to protect their health in the event they caught COVID-19.

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[English]

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of Canada's great advantages as a country is a capable workforce and the strong economic relationships that we have with the United States.

When the U.S. passed the Inflation Reduction Act, we saw that Canada was successful in lobbying for a buy North America policy that protected our automotive sector.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House about how the fall economic statement represents the next steps in Canada's plan to seize economic opportunities of net-zero transition and maintain Canada's competitive advantage with the United States?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for the work he does for his constituents every day, which I have seen first-hand. It is very impressive.

In the fall economic statement, we introduced tax credits to encourage investment in clean technology and clean hydrogen. We advanced the Canada growth fund to attract private capital to fund the green transition. We invested in Canada's most valuable asset, our people, by moving the Canada workers benefit to an advance payment, and 4.2 million Canadians will get this important top-up.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals said they would ensure that mental health care would be treated as a full and equal part of Canada's universal public health care system. They promised to fund mental health supports.

However, that funding is again nowhere to be found in the fall economic statement. With rising costs and long wait-lists, struggling Canadians have been left with nowhere to turn but crowded emergency rooms. Today, the Canadian Mental Health Association called on the government to stop delaying and to deliver its promised mental health transfer.

When will the Liberals finally follow through on their promises and deliver the help that Canadians desperately need?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is engaging now with the provinces and territories to inform on the development of a new mental health transfer, a comprehensive evidence-based plan, including the timely sharing of health data.

We remain fully committed to investing an additional \$4.5 billion over five years through the new Canada mental health transfer, and this ongoing engagement will ensure transparency and accountability to Canadians. We are still investing the \$5 billion from the bilateral agreements and \$600 million for mental health to provinces and territories every year.

\* \* \*

● (1510)

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, as COP27 opened last week, UN Secretary General António Guterres said:

We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator.

Did the Prime Minister stay away because he knows he is over the speed limit? Did he stay away because he knows we are part of the problem and not part of the solution?

There is still time for the government to do the right thing at COP27. Stand up and announce that we have read the science. We understand we have to cancel the Trans Mountain pipeline, reverse the Bay du Nord decision and build a decarbonized electricity grid from coast to coast to coast.

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that our Prime Minister has been front and centre on the most ambitious climate plan in our history.

We have invested over \$100 billion since 2015 and \$9.1 billion in our emissions reduction plan. It is a granular, detailed, sector-by-sector plan that is going to get us to our 2030 emissions and on our way to net zero by 2050. It has widespread support. We have taken that message to COP27.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion that, given that Canadians, particularly rural

Canadians, ethnic groups and indigenous peoples, are vulnerable to misinformation campaigns, both foreign and domestic, to undermine our democracy, and the federal government must improve its strategy to support these specific groups, the House call on the government to employ a whole-of-society approach to counter disinformation and—

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I do not believe we have unanimous consent.

I just want to remind the hon. members that, prior to bringing unanimous consent motions to the floor, they should shop it around and talk to each other to make sure that everything is in place. This way, we can guarantee success.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development is rising on a point of order.

\* \* \*

**ARRIVAL OF UGANDAN ASIANS TO CANADA**

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have indeed been discussions among the parties and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That:

(i) After taking power in a military coup, in August of 1972, General Idi Amin ordered the expulsion of Ugandans of Asian descent, to take effect in 90 days;

(ii) That Canada answered the international call to provide safe haven to Ugandan Asians who had suddenly become stateless;

(iii) That in the Fall of 1972 the Canadian government and communities across the country mobilized to welcome 8,000 Ugandan Asians, among them people of various backgrounds and faiths, including Ismailis, Hindus, Sikhs, Catholics, Sunni and Shia;

(iv) That this initiative was precedent setting—representing the first time in Canadian history that a massive refugee resettlement of racialized persons from outside of Europe was undertaken; and

(v) That these refugees, who originally came here for safety, have also given back to Canada in immeasurable ways and continue to contribute to this very day.

Therefore, this House confirm that on the 50th anniversary of the Ugandan Asian expulsion, the arrival of 8,000 Ugandan Asians in this country has been to the benefit to Canada and our development as a nation.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay. I hear none.

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

(Motion agreed to)

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wanted to say this with regard to the first point of order seeking unanimous consent. The last one actually had the consent of the House and that had been sought beforehand.

I think that if we had a slight change to the wording formula, such as, “Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent to the following motion, which has been approved by the House leaders of the recognized parties.” I think if that formula was used every time, as opposed to asking for unanimous consent without mentioning that statement of fact, we would end this nonsense of people standing up to read a motion for which there was no consent. I would strongly recommend you consider that.

• (1515)

**The Speaker:** I want to thank the hon. member for his input. I will leave it to the hon. members to do the best that they can to get their messages across.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order regarding the official opposition members' shushing of the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

I believe that you would find, during the last sitting week and this week, that we saw the same thing and heard the same thing, a loud shushing of a member of this place.

I want to point out three things. The first is that we cannot do indirectly what we cannot do directly. Shushing is the same as telling someone to shut up, which we know is utterly unacceptable in the chamber. Secondly, the term is condescending. I do not think—

**The Speaker:** I think we are getting into debate here.

I want to comment on that. There was an issue during question period. Depending on which way we are looking at it, I was not sure whether they were shushing the minister, because they were very quiet about it, or they were shushing each other or mocking each other. Either way, it is very important that we respect each other. That is something that I say to all members on all sides. We are giving an example to the kids back home who are watching and the adults who are watching. Is this what we want them to learn from us? That is all I am asking.

The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order related to a couple of the points of order that have been raised.

The first case is with respect to when the member for North Island—Powell River was presenting a unanimous consent motion. I know that sometimes members present things here and do not end up getting unanimous consent, but it is important that they are able to finish presenting their motion.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, people are free to disagree, but they do not need to shout me down.

It is important to protect the right of members to put things to the House. If we establish a culture of cutting off members before they have a chance to put a question to the House, we are doing a seri-

ous disservice to their rights in this place. Therefore, I would ask people to contemplate that in their own minds, as well as you, Mr. Speaker, as you have the authority and power to rule on these things, because I am concerned about a culture here.

I respect what you had to say, Mr. Speaker, about decorum in the House and I thank you for that message, but it is also important that when members are raising points of order about anything, including decorum and events that have happened on the floor of the House, that they again be allowed to finish making the point. It is pre-emptive to rule on a point that has not been fully made. The member said she had three things she wanted to say about the behaviour that was being exhibited in this place and she was unable to finish speaking to the first thing she raised.

It is important that people be able to make their point to you, Mr. Speaker, so you are aware of all the facts they believe are relevant to that point before you rule on it, just as it is important for members to hear other members out when they bring a motion before saying no, because they do not even know what they are actually saying no to.

**The Speaker:** I will answer that and then I will come back.

I want to remind hon. members of the prerogative of the Speaker. Once Speakers have heard enough that they figure they can rule on it or make a decision then they can cut it off. Sometimes it does get into debate and is more about getting a message across.

With respect to unanimous consent motions, we have already ruled on that and have asked members to ensure they have everything covered before bringing them forward. We have seen that abused in the past. I am not saying the hon. member for North Island—Powell River was abusing it; I am just saying that it has been abused in the past, which has ruined it for the people who are putting them forward now.

If members want to make a speech, I would ask them to wait until they have time during the session when we have speeches or even during question period. However, unanimous consent motions were used poorly in the past, so I want to remind hon. members why we do not allow them to go on and on. Sometimes they have been used more as a method to clandestinely get their message across. That is what we are trying to avoid, because it eats up time and we cannot get the business of Parliament completed. That is the reason why and that is why I encourage everyone to talk among themselves if they have a unanimous consent motion.

Every Tuesday the House leaders come together. I encourage them to talk tomorrow and maybe give some instruction to the Speaker with respect to how they would like that handled. I would appreciate the guidance of all the House leaders.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

● (1520)

*[English]***GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 30 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in relation to the motion adopted on Wednesday, November 2, regarding humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, entitled “The Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists and Media Organizations”.

*[Translation]*

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

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development in relation to Bill C-226, an act respecting the development of a national strategy to assess, prevent and address environmental racism and to advance environmental justice.

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House without amendment.

\* \* \*

*[English]***PETITIONS**

## ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to table a petition on behalf of constituents from Courtenay, Cumberland and Royston in my riding.

The petitioners cite that the current electoral system in Canada states that a party can win a majority of seats and all the power with less than half the popular vote; that proportional representation ensures majority governments have an actual majority of the voters' popular vote backing them; that many other countries, such as Germany, Italy, Ireland, New Zealand and the Netherlands, have progressed from a first past the post system to a proportional representation system; and that many American states are seeking to implement ranked choice voting so that all votes are calculated.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to move to a proportional representation system to bring credible representation to Canadians, something the Liberals promised in the last election. They also cite the important advantage it would have for the economy, the environment and for tackling inequality.

● (1525)

## SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place to speak to an issue of great concern to my constituents, as we live in a coastal area where single-use plastics and marine contamination of plastics is a major issue.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to strengthen current lax regulatory definitions of single-use plastics to include more harmful items and close loopholes that currently allow single-use items to be classed as more durable with the notion people will take a plastic fork home and wash it in some cases. They call for the removal of the exemption that allows banned products to continue to be manufactured and exported, to move to a clearer and staged action plan that would really eliminate single-use plastics by the year 2030 and for these regulations to be brought forward and in force six months after they are published.

## GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today from Canadians from across the country who are concerned about Bill S-233 and Bill C-223. They are concerned these would cost the government an enormous amount of money. They are also concerned about government cheques disincentivizing people from working and maintaining a job and that taxes would have to be astronomically raised to pay for these bills. The petitioners therefore call on this Parliament to vote against Bill S-233 and Bill C-223 and any other legislation that encourages a universal basic income.

They also call on the government to end the carbon tax and reduce inflation that reduces peoples' purchasing power, and they call for the government to approve any new and existing pipeline proposals and get Canadian energy to tidewater while stimulating job growth in Canada and Alberta.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 777, 782, 786, 792, 793, 796, 798, 799, 803, 804, 809, 810, 812, 823, 827 to 829 and 832.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Text]

Question No. 777—**Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to the government's ArriveCAN application: (a) what is the government's explanation for why the application has a disproportionately high volume of ratings on Google Play and the Apple App Store, compared to almost every other app in the world; (b) has the government taken any action that would have had an impact on the number of ratings, and, if so, what are the details of any such action, including any amounts spent related to each action; and (c) is the government aware of any third party taking any action that would contribute to the amount of ratings, and, if so, what are the details of what the government is aware of?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, the ratings for the ArriveCAN application are voluntarily provided by the users of the application. Since the launch of the app in April 2020, there have been more than 30 million submissions. As of September 26, 2022, there were 608,333 ratings for iOS and 243,015 ratings for Android, totalling 851,348 ratings, which is approximately 2% of the total number of users. The CBSA is not in a position to comment about the number of ratings of other applications on the Google Play store or the Apple App Store.

With regard to part (b), the CBSA has not taken any action that would have had an impact on the number of ratings.

With regard to part (c), the CBSA is not aware of any third parties taking action that would contribute to the number of ratings.

Question No. 782—**Mr. Luc Desilets:**

With regard to the former Ste. Anne's Hospital's Residential Treatment Clinic for Operational Stress Injuries (RTCOSI) for veterans, temporarily reopened by the Centre intégré universitaire de Santé et de services sociaux de l'Ouest-de-l'Île de Montréal as a mental health unit: (a) is Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) funding the care and stay of residents in the new clinic; (b) what role did VAC play in the closure of the RTCOSI and its recent reopening as a mental health unit; (c) why are the 15 beds in the mental health unit being offered to non-veterans instead of veterans; (d) what measures are being taken by VAC to reassign these 15 beds to veterans; and (e) does VAC have staff or a dedicated office for overseeing the delivery of health services to veterans at Ste. Anne's Hospital?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, since April 2020, the Centre intégré universitaire de Santé et de services sociaux de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, or CIUSSS-ODIM, has been using the unoccupied Residential Treatment Clinic for Operational Stress Injuries, or RTCOSI site, a space they own and operate, to meet provincial needs that they are funding. The CIUSSS-ODIM also redeployed some of the RTCOSI staff to Ste. Anne's outpatient operational stress injury clinic, which remained open through the pandemic, and to other provincial services at their own cost.

With regard to part (b), the CIUSSS-ODIM, with concurrence from Veterans Affairs Canada, suspended admissions on April 7, 2020, for safety reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision was informed by a member of the Ste. Anne's medical authority, who communicated that the sanitary measures at the RTCOSI were not at the required level and thus created an increased risk of COVID to veterans attending the RTCOSI and elderly veterans living at Ste Anne's Hospital. The decision took into account that the program was made up of clients from different regions and provinces who shared accommodations, were treated in groups and travelled in and out of the province of Quebec. To ensure client needs were met when admissions were suspended, all clients on the wait-list were referred to other clinical services and all referring

agencies, including Veterans Affairs Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Department of National Defence, were notified. The CIUSSS-ODIM have used the unoccupied RTCOSI site, which is a space they own and operate, to meet provincial needs.

Regarding part (c), the CIUSSS-ODIM has been using the unoccupied RTCOSI site, which is a space they own and operate, to meet provincial needs that they are funding. Before admissions were suspended in April 2020, the Veterans Affairs Canada-funded RTCOSI at Ste. Anne's Hospital was a 10-bed unit. It did not treat psychiatric emergencies and did not admit patients in crisis. The RTCOSI mainly offered stabilization and did not focus on treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

Between April 1, 2016, and March 31, 2020, approximately 75% of VAC clients attending inpatient treatment programs received these services at specialized inpatient treatment programs other than the RTCOSI. While this has not been available at the RTCOSI, many of these specialized inpatient treatment programs offer concurrent services for mental health, operational stress injuries, or OSIs, and addiction needs. In addition to providing services for OSIs, including PTSD, many of these inpatient programs are exclusive to, or offer customized services or components to, military members, veterans and first responders. Some also offer specific services for women and the LGBTQ2+ community and provide services in both official languages. Their services are supported by multidisciplinary teams that include psychiatrists or general practitioners, addictions medicine specialists, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, nurses and others. The length of stay ranges from four to nine weeks or more and includes individual and group treatment; 24-7 nursing care; family components; peer support groups; integrated care such as yoga, fitness, art therapy, nutrition and sleep; discharge planning; and aftercare resources.

Regarding part (d), no veteran is left without the care, treatment and services they need. Since the RTCOSI became inactive, Veterans Affairs Canada ensured that all veterans were immediately referred to the services attending to the care and treatment they needed, near or in their communities. Veterans Affairs Canada continues to work closely with the CIUSSS-ODIM in regard to future plans at Ste. Anne's Hospital. The safety and well-being of veterans continues to be Veterans Affairs Canada's top priority as well as facilitating access for veterans to the best evidence-based treatments and services.

*Routine Proceedings*

Regarding part (e), Ste. Anne's Hospital delivers many services to Veterans Affairs Canada clients, including outpatient services for operational stress injuries and long-term care. Veterans Affairs Canada funds the delivery of health services for veterans based on identified needs. The Ste. Anne's OSI clinic is part of the Veterans Affairs Canada-funded network of OSI clinics across Canada, operated by provincial health authorities. The CIUSSS-ODIM operates and oversees the services offered to the clients of Ste. Anne's Hospital. Veterans Affairs Canada's field operations division works together with veterans and their families to identify needs and provide options for appropriate resources and services.

Question No. 786—**Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the government's approach to China and Taiwan: has the government made any plans related to how it will respond to a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, and, if so, what are the plans?

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

As a Pacific nation, Canada is committed to being a reliable partner in the Indo-Pacific. Canada will always look for ways to work with partners to advance common interests for peace and security. Canada's defence and security engagement is increasing across the region, including through frequent naval deployments and participation in exercises and training activities such as Operations Neon and Projection, and a growing and consistent contribution to the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Canada continues to monitor all major regional and global political developments, including those across the Taiwan Strait.

Canada is concerned about possible actions or incidents that could result in further escalations across the Taiwan Strait. Canadian officials have communicated to China concerns over the situation in the region and have worked with our partners in the G7 and multilaterally to call for restraint. The department will continue to monitor cross-strait developments closely and will respond appropriately to future challenges. Canada remains focused on supporting constructive efforts that contribute to peace, stability and dialogue across the Taiwan Strait.

While remaining consistent with our one China policy, our government will continue our multifaceted engagement with and on Taiwan, which includes collaborating on trade, technology, health, democratic governance and countering disinformation, while continuing to work to enhance peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

Question No. 792—**Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the Substance Use and Addictions Program, since its creation in 2016: (a) what applications for funding have been denied, including, for each proposed project, the (i) organization, (ii) project title, (iii) description, (iv) primary focus, (v) location, (vi) contribution amount sought from the Government of Canada, (vii) project duration, (viii) reason the funding was denied; (b) what approved applications have received less funding than requested, including, for each proposed project, the (i) organization, (ii) project title, (iii) description, (iv) primary focus, (v) location, (vi) project duration, (vii) contribution amount sought from the Government of Canada, (viii) approved contribution agreement amount from the Government of Canada, (ix) reason a lesser amount of funding was approved; and (c) how much funding has been applied for compared to the total amount approved to date?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, information containing project names, titles and other such specific details is not included in this response to adhere to the principles set out in the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act on protecting sensitive, third party data. The information being provided is structured around budget allocations received in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Data regarding funding sources prior to 2019-20 is not being provided, as it is not systematically captured and therefore cannot be retrieved and presented in this form in the allotted timeframe for this request.

The substance use and addictions program, or SUAP, is a federal contributions program delivered by Health Canada that provides financial support to provinces, territories, non-governmental organizations and key stakeholders to strengthen responses to drug and substance use issues in Canada. Each application submitted to SUAP undergoes a rigorous assessment process to ensure that it addresses the priority areas identified. Only projects that meet pre-established criteria and a range of factors, including geographic distribution, are selected for funding.

In response to part (a) of the question, in 2019 there were 189 proposals, requesting \$344.93 million, that were not selected for funding. However, 38 of those proposals were noted as having merit and were retained for future funding consideration. All applications received were evaluated using a robust set of criteria that considers evidence, value for money, project sustainability and geographic distribution. In addition to this, a variety of other factors, such as alignment with health and social priorities, demonstrating a realistic work plan and sufficient organization capacity to deliver project objectives, were taken into consideration in order to determine where available funding would best be allocated. Advice on funding decisions was also sought from experts in various policy fields and other levels of government, and by external stakeholder groups.

The reasons for not selecting proposals are determined through this process based on funding availability and the required criteria. \$10 million was also transferred to the Province of Quebec as per the existing agreement between Health Canada and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

In 2020, no project proposals were denied through this process.

In 2021, 306 proposals were not selected for funding, representing a total funding ask of \$290.73 million.

*Routine Proceedings*

All applications received were evaluated using a robust set of criteria that considers evidence, value for money, project sustainability and geographic distribution. Regional distribution of funding was considered against the formula used for Health Canada's 2018 emergency treatment fund, which accounted for both population and regional substance-use impacts. In addition to this, a variety of other factors, such as alignment with health and social priorities, demonstrating a realistic work plan and sufficient organization capacity to deliver project objectives, were taken into consideration in order to determine where available funding would best be allocated. Advice on funding decisions was also sought from experts in various policy fields and other levels of government, and by external stakeholder groups.

The reasons for not selecting proposals are determined through this process based on funding availability and the required criteria. A reserve list of 138 of these 306 proposals that showed merit were retained in the inventory for future funding consideration. \$24 million is also earmarked for the Province of Quebec, to be redistributed to projects in its jurisdiction.

In response to part (b) of the question, information on approved applications that have received less funding than requested is collected only during the calls for proposals. In 2019, the original amount requested for these proposals was \$36.08 million; the total amount of approved funding for these applications was \$32.25 million, and the approved amount was lower than the requested amounts due to various considerations, such as ineligible expenditures, available funding amounts and, in some cases, shorter budget cycles.

In 2020, the original amount requested for these proposals was \$26.71 million; the total amount of approved funding for these applications was \$15.9 million, and the approved amount was lower than requested, since the project timelines had to be adjusted from a four-year to a two-year time frame.

In 2021, the original amount requested for these was \$56.7 million; the total amount of approved funding for these applications was \$59.8 million, and the approved amount was higher than the requested amounts due to adjusted project timelines to reflect the available funding period.

In response to part (c) of the question, information on how much funding has been applied for compared to the total amount approved is collected only during the calls for proposals. The total amount of funding requested for the 2019 call for proposals, or CFP, was \$407.7 million. Funding of \$32.25 million in 2019 and \$15.9 million in 2020 added up to a total of \$48.15 million in funding stemming from CFP 2019. The total amount of funding requested for the 2021 CFP was \$350.53 million, and the total amount funded was \$59.8 million.

Question No. 793—**Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the recommendations made by the Expert Task Force on Substance Use to Health Canada in its May 2021 and June 2021 reports: (a) which recommendations does the government fully accept; (b) which recommendations does the government not accept in whole or in part; (c) for recommendations the government does not fully accept, what is the rationale for the disagreement; and (d) what steps have been taken to date to implement the recommendations?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of**

**Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada's approach to substance use harms, including the overdose crisis, has been guided by the Canadian drugs and substances strategy, or CDSS. This strategy takes a comprehensive, collaborative and compassionate public health-focused approach, covers all substances and lays out our framework for evidence-based actions to reduce the harms associated with substance use across the areas of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery.

In 2021, the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction established an expert task force on substance use. Its mandate was to provide Health Canada with independent, expert advice on the federal government's drug policy, as outlined in the CDSS, and potential alternatives to criminal penalties for simple possession of controlled substances while maintaining support for community and public safety. The task force delivered two reports to Health Canada with 29 recommendations on the government's drug policy, the CDSS, and alternatives to criminal penalties for simple possession of controlled substances.

The government agrees with the spirit of the task force's recommendations. The government is assessing the suite of recommendations and their policy implications to inform its current work and the advancement of a comprehensive drug strategy, as per the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health's mandate letter. While this work continues, and recognizing the urgency of the overdose crisis, the government is taking immediate action where it has existing powers and authorities.

Since the onset of the overdose crisis, the Government of Canada has responded quickly to implement a wide range of measures to help save lives and meet the needs of people who use drugs, with investments, as of October 2022, totalling more than \$800 million. These actions align with the intent of the task force's recommendations. Key highlights of recent federal actions include but are not limited to the following.

*Routine Proceedings*

The government is investing in the full spectrum of supports for people who use substances, including prevention and public education programs to raise awareness of the harms of substance use, such as the “Know More Opioids” experiential marketing tour aimed at youth and young adults to inform them about the harms associated with opioid use and how to respond to an overdose, national advertising campaigns to reduce harms and stigma around opioids and substance use and raise awareness of the Good Samaritan law, and the “Ease the Burden” public education campaign to raise awareness and reduce harms associated with the use of opioids and other substances and stigma, especially for men in physically demanding jobs; supporting provinces and territories and community-based organizations in scaling up key lifesaving measures in harm reduction and treatment, such as the substance use and addictions program; and launching the development of national mental health and substance use standards for quality of care.

The government is also providing British Columbia a time-limited exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act related to the personal possession of small amounts of certain illegal drugs, supported by rigorous monitoring and third party evaluation; reintroducing Bill C-5, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the CDSA, which, if passed by Parliament, would require police and prosecutors to consider diverting people to treatment or other services instead of laying charges for possession offences; launching a new education campaign addressing stigma for men in the trades and providing further support for an awareness campaign for opioids and anti-stigma training for law enforcement; establishing committees such as the People with Lived and Living Experience Council and the expert advisory group on safer supply to engage directly with people impacted by substance use, including people who use or have used drugs, people in recovery and people with loved ones impacted by substance use, an approach that incorporates their perspectives, experience and knowledge in the development and implementation of federal policy and programs; funding research into alcohol-related best practices and supporting community-based approaches to alcohol use, focusing on harm reduction, treatment and prevention, as well as funding the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction to update the low-risk alcohol drinking guidelines to be released in fall 2022; introducing the 2022 proposed tobacco product packaging and labelling regulations, which would see Canada become the first country to place warnings on individual tobacco products; and supporting the scale-up of safer supply by investing directly in 27 safer supply pilot projects and helping to build evidence around this promising practice.

The Government of Canada continues to assess the expert task force recommendations as it reviews its substance use policies and programming to inform its current work programs and actions.

**Question No. 796—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to firearms and crime statistics held by the government, broken down by year since 2009: (a) how many fatal shootings, excluding suicides, in Canada, were from (i) legally, (ii) illegally or improperly, registered firearms; (b) how many legally registered firearms were being operated by someone with a legal firearms licence; and (c) how many illegal or improperly registered firearms were being operated by someone with a legal firearms licence?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for part (a), Statistics Canada has limited information on the registration status of recovered firearms that are used in homicides. Statistics Canada is unable

to provide a definitive answer on the exact number of homicides committed with registered firearms versus unregistered firearms.

For parts (b) and (c), Statistics Canada does not have data on the legal registration status of firearms used outside of homicides.

**Question No. 798—Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:**

With regard to medical assistance in dying (MAID) and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), since 2016: (a) how many times has a (i) VAC employee, (ii) third-party contracted by VAC, advised or suggested that a veteran consider MAID; (b) what is VAC's policy related to its (i) employees, (ii) contractors, suggesting MAID to veterans; and (c) on what date did the policy in (b) come into effect?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as directed by the Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada is conducting a thorough internal investigation on what occurred in August 2022 regarding Veterans Affairs Canada and medical assistance in dying, or MAID. This occurrence is isolated to a single employee and is not indicative of a pattern of behaviour or a systemic issue.

Veterans Affairs Canada issued a directive to staff on this issue after what occurred in August 2022 regarding MAID.

Veterans Affairs Canada employees are not mandated to discuss, provide advice or suggest to veterans anything on the issue of MAID. This service is not within Veterans Affairs Canada's scope of work. Veterans Affairs Canada's direction to its employees is that, if a veteran is seeking advice or assistance in pursuing MAID, the employee must refer the veteran to their primary care provider.

**Question No. 799—Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to the government's decision to keep various travel restrictions, including the mandatory usage of the ArriveCAN application in place during the 2022 summer travel season: does Destination Canada or the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance have any estimates on the amount of tourism revenue lost and the lower number of American tourists as a result of this decision, and, if so, what are the estimates?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Destination Canada does not typically measure the impacts of a specific public health measure.

**Question No. 803—Mr. Richard Martel:**

With regard to the government taxation policies and the statement by the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance during Oral Questions on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, “That is real money in the pockets of real Canadians”: what is the minister's definition of a real Canadian?



**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are facing rising costs and difficult decisions about how to afford the groceries they need or rent at the end of the month. These affordability challenges are driven in large part by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global supply chains and by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Government of Canada has continued to introduce supports to help Canadians through this cost of living crisis.

The comments by the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance explain that these supports, and the individuals who receive them, should not be viewed as merely abstract statistical or financial data points but real, material supports that have a tangible impact on the lives of Canadians across the country.

For example, Bill C-30 would provide additional support to the roughly 11 million people and families who already receive the goods and services tax or harmonized sales tax credit, GST/HST credit, including approximately half of Canadian families with children and more than half of Canadian seniors.

It would mean up to an extra \$234 for single Canadians without children and nearly \$500 in the pockets of couples with two children. Seniors would receive an extra \$225 on average. This builds on a package of supports that the Government of Canada has already announced. These supports mean a couple in Thunder Bay with an income of \$45,000 and a child in day care could receive about an additional \$7,800 above their existing benefits this year.

As another example, a single recent graduate in Edmonton with an entry-level job and an income of \$24,000 could receive about an additional \$1,300 in new and enhanced benefits, or a senior with a disability in Trois Rivières could receive over \$2,500 more this year than they did last year.

In short, the support measures have the potential to provide real and significant benefit to individuals across the country.

**Question No. 804—Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan): (a) what is the total amount of project funding announced by the agency since its inception; (b) what is the total amount of project funding where the funding has actually been transferred to the recipient since the agency's inception; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by year; and (d) what are the details of all projects which have been funded by the agency to date, including, for each project, the (i) location, (ii) date of announcement, (iii) project description, (iv) amount of funding being provided by PacifiCan, (v) percentage of total project costs represented by the amount in (iv), (vi) start date, (vii) expected completion date, (viii) amount of PacifiCan funding actually delivered to the recipient to date, (ix) recipient?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all contracts over the \$10,000 amount and all grants and contributions contribution agreements of any dollar amount are proactively disclosed on this website: [open.canada.ca](https://open.canada.ca). All contracts are proactively disclosed on a quarterly basis.

**Question No. 809—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to performance audits or similar types of assessments related to passport processing times which were completed or ongoing between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021: what are the details of each audit or assessment, including, for each, the (i) start and end date of the time period audited or assessed, (ii) summary and scope of the audit or assessment, (iii) findings, (iv) recommended

### *Routine Proceedings*

changes to improve processing times, if applicable, (v) changes actually implemented, (vi) entity responsible for conducting the audit or assessment?

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the internal audit services at Employment and Social Development Canada did not complete a performance audit or similar types of assessments related to passport processing times between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021.

**Question No. 810—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:**

With regard to the request made by Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) to the government to list noma on the World Health Organization's (WHO) list of neglected tropical diseases: (a) what is the government rationale for (i) supporting, (ii) not supporting, the request; and (b) if the answer in (a) is affirmative, what are the details, including the dates, of how this support has been communicated to the WHO?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the questions, the Government of Canada is supportive of a review by the World Health Organization's strategic and technical advisory group, or WHO STAG, for neglected tropical diseases, or NTDs, to determine the suitability of noma for inclusion on the WHO's list of NTDs.

The Government of Canada signed the Kigali declaration in support of the implementation of the WHO's NTD road map, 2021-30, in June 2022, in support of efforts to eliminate tropical diseases, including noma. The government also recognizes the opportunity of the WHO STAG review of NTDs to raise the profile of this rapidly progressive and often fatal infection of the mouth and face.

Regarding part (b), in Canada's statement on May 26, 2022, to the World Health Assembly's Committee A on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, including oral health, the government supported the call for the WHO STAG to review and consider the suitability of noma for inclusion on the NTD list, highlighting the importance of access to primary health care and basic services to help prevent the disease.

On September 26, 2022, Canada's Minister of Health signed a letter to the Minister of Health of Nigeria, indicating that the Government of Canada supports a review by the WHO STAG on NTDs to determine the suitability of noma for inclusion on the WHO's list of NTDs. Nigeria may include this letter in the dossier they intend to submit to WHO in support of the review.

**Question No. 812—Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the public service, and broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: (a) as of September 23, 2022, how many employees were working (i) in person, (ii) at home, (iii) in a hybrid situation; (b) of those employees working in a hybrid situation, what is the breakdown by the number of days per week in the office versus from home; and (c) excluding those who normally work from a mission abroad, how many employees in (a)(ii) are working from a location outside of Canada?

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**Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, deputy heads each have the authority to determine how their employees will work, and decisions regarding hybrid work arrangements are being made in each individual department and agency. The information requested is not systematically tracked in a centralized database. TBS concluded that producing and validating a comprehensive response to this question would require a manual collection of information that is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

Across government, organizations are now implementing their plans for a hybrid workforce, which will see most employees scheduled to work both on site and off site. TBS continues to support deputy heads in their transition to hybrid work models by providing guidance and best practices to promote a coherent approach while respecting the different operational realities of federal organizations.

To further support the implementation of hybrid work, “Guidance on optimizing a hybrid workforce: Spotlight on telework”, available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/staffing/guidance-optimizing-hybrid-workforce-spotlight-telework.html>, has been prepared as a tool for departments. This guidance contains overarching principles, steps to follow and key considerations for organizations, managers and employees when implementing a hybrid approach to work.

**Question No. 823—Mr. Alex Ruff:**

With regard to the government's response to Order Paper question Q-701, which stated that the new front of packaging labelling requirements will produce a direct benefit valued at \$2.33 billion over 15 years: what is the detailed breakdown, including the methodology used, of the \$2.33 billion figure, and how the government came up with that number?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the details of the cost-benefit analysis are included in the regulatory impact analysis statement published with the regulations amending the food and drug regulations (nutrition symbols, other labelling provisions, vitamin D and hydrogenated fats or oils) in the Canada Gazette, part II, on July 20, 2022.

The regulatory impact analysis statement can be located at the following address: <https://canadagazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2022/2022-07-20/html/sor-dors168-eng.html>.

**Question No. 827—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to the NEXUS program: (a) what is the current number of backlogged applications; (b) what is the cause for the Canadian offices to remain closed, while the American offices are open; (c) when will the Canadian offices re-open; (d) in 2019, how many times did a traveler use a NEXUS line at a Canadian (i) point of entry, broken down by type (land, airport, etc.), (ii) airport security screening location, broken down by airport; and (e) if the information in (d) is not tracked, what are the government's estimates?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a) of the question, as of September 27, 2022, the NEXUS interview backlog was approximately 331,700.

In response to part (b) of the question, Canada and the United States are in discussions about the reopening of Canadian enrolment centres. These discussions are focused on clarifying legal pro-

tections for U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers while they are working in Canadian enrolment centres.

As regards part (c) of the question, Canada and the United States are in discussions about the reopening of Canadian enrolment centres. The CBSA will take a national approach to reopening all enrolment centres at the same time.

Concerning part (d)(i) of the question, in fiscal year 2019-20, there were 6,961,000 NEXUS passages at the 21 land points of entry where NEXUS is offered, and 2,692,000 air passages at nine Canadian airports.

In answer to part (d)(ii) of the question, the CBSA does not gather the information requested, which falls under the responsibility of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, or CATSA.

**Question No. 828—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to the non-budgetary loans, listed on page 306, Section 9 (Loans, investments and advance) of the 2021 Public Accounts of Canada, Volume 1: (a) which loans to foreign governments currently outstanding had interest rates based on the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR); and (b) for each loan in (a), what are the details, including the (i) country, (ii) amount of the loan, (iii) purpose of the loan, (iv) length of payback period, (v) year when the loan is expected to be paid off, (vi) previous interest rate formula used based on LIBOR, (vii) new interest rate formula following the phasing out of LIBOR?

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Export Development Canada concluded that due to statutory prohibitions and confidentiality, specifically when administrating the Access to Information Act and the Export Development Act, a comprehensive response to this question is not possible.

**Question No. 829—Mr. Tako Van Popta:**

With regard to the September 6, 2022, announcement by the Prime Minister that the federal government will provide a \$1.4 billion loan to build nearly 3,000 homes on traditional lands in Vancouver's Kitsilano neighbourhood: what are the details of the loan, including the interest rate and the timeline of the repayment plan?

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response the question, in processing parliamentary returns, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or CMHC, applies the principles set out in the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and, therefore, cannot disclose the information requested as this information is not publicly available and deemed confidential as per agreement terms.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 832—Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to consultations undertaken by the government further to the “Just Transition” for energy workers, since 2021: (a) how many unique submissions were received; (b) how many and what proportion of submissions were from (i) energy industry workers, (ii) human resources or skills training professionals, (iii) environmentalists; (c) of the submissions received from environmentalists, what proportion of respondents demonstrated expertise in either the energy sector or skills training; (d) what proportion of submissions mentioned a variation on the theme of a brain drain of skilled workers leaving Canada for energy-producing jurisdictions; (e) what proportion of submissions mentioned which other economic activities demand skills comparable to those of energy workers; and (f) what proportion of submissions mentioned the compensation offered by so called green jobs for which the “Just Transition” would retrain energy workers and whether that compensation is comparable to that of the energy sector?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada acknowledges the importance of, and the need for, a global clean energy transition. While this transformation will take time, the government is committed to the bold action required to decarbonize Canada’s energy and natural resources sectors while creating unprecedented economic opportunities and good jobs for Canadians in every region of the country.

This global shift to a low-carbon future can be accomplished without phasing out Canada’s oil and gas sector. The cause of climate change is not fossil fuels themselves but the carbon emissions associated with producing and burning them. Canada’s challenge is to aggressively reduce those emissions, because hydrocarbons will continue to have a role to play in a net-zero economy.

Canada’s oil and gas sector is part of this shift. For example, the Pathways Alliance, which is composed of companies accounting for more than 90% of the oil sands’ annual production, has committed to being net zero by 2050. The government is working with the industry to cap its emissions as outlined in Canada’s 2030 emissions reduction plan, which indicates that the government is developing measures to cap oil and gas sector emissions at current levels and ensure that the sector makes an ambitious and achievable contribution to the country’s 2030 climate goals while reducing emissions at a pace and scale needed to align with net-zero emissions by 2050.

In addition, the government is establishing joint partnerships with each province and territory, through regional energy and resource tables, to identify and accelerate opportunities to transform their traditional resource industries and advance emerging ones. Through these regional tables, the government will also engage with indigenous partners and enlist the expertise and input of union partners, municipalities, industry, workers, experts and civil society, to advance the top economic priorities by aligning resources, timelines and regulatory approaches.

Central to seizing this moment is ensuring that Canadians are at the centre of everything the government does to achieve a net-zero future. After all, there is no low-carbon economy without skilled and well-trained workers.

This people-centred approach goes to the heart of a just transition: an equitable, inclusive and sustainable transformation of every sector of the economy and every region of the country to make sure all Canadians have what they need to succeed in the rapid shift to a net-zero world.

This is why the government is committed to moving forward with comprehensive action, including sustainable jobs legislation, to support workers and communities as Canada transitions to a low-carbon economy.

The government has released a discussion paper and encouraged Canadians to provide their feedback. These public consultations were launched in July 2021 and included 17 three-hour virtual round table sessions with stakeholders from across the country, including labour organizations, industry, academia, non-governmental organizations, youth and experts in skills, training, and diversity and inclusion. While those consultations have concluded, the government is still compiling input from the provinces and territories and Indigenous partners.

Regarding part (a) of the question, the Just Transition inbox received approximately 30,000 email submissions as of September 27, 2022, of which approximately 29,000 originated from five letter-writing campaigns.

Regarding parts (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f), the purpose of these consultations was to gather feedback from Canadians on proposed elements of sustainable jobs legislation, including guiding principles and a proposed sustainable jobs advisory body. Submissions were received via email as opposed to a contact form and Canadians were not asked to provide any personal or professional details with their specific feedback.

Feedback from the written submissions was summarized and aggregated. Therefore, producing a comprehensive response is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

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[English]

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the government’s response to Questions Nos. 775, 776, 778 to 781, 783 to 785, 787 to 791, 794, 795, 797, 800 to 802, 805 to 808, 811, 813 to 822, 824 to 826, 830 to 831 and 833 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Text]

**Question No. 775—Mr. Dane Lloyd:**

With regard to the report from the Mass Casualty Commission entitled "Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments after the Mass Casualty", dated June 13, 2022: (a) what instructions did RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki give to RCMP officers in Nova Scotia with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020; (b) were any written communications exchanged between RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki or her staff and Supt. Darren Campbell with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and, if so, (i) what was the date of those communications, (ii) who participated in those communications, (iii) what specific instructions or advice were provided in those communications; (c) were any written communications exchanged between RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki or her staff and Lia Scanlan, then Director of communications for the Nova Scotia RCMP with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and, if so, (i) what was the date of those communications, (ii) who participated in those communications, (iii) what specific instructions or advice were provided in those communications; (d) were any instructions, directions, or advice given by the then Public Safety Minister, Bill Blair, or by staff in the Minister of Public Safety's office to RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and, if so, which individual or individuals provided such instructions; (e) were any instructions, directions, or advice given either by the Prime Minister, staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, or by officials in the Privy Council Office to RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and, if so, which individual or individuals provided such instructions; (f) what, if any, undertakings or promises were made by RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki to either the then Minister of Public Safety, Bill Blair, the Prime Minister, staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, or officials in the Privy Council Office, with respect to releasing specific information about what types of weapons were used in the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020; (g) were any communications materials or plans developed after April 19, 2020, by the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the Office of the Prime Minister, or the Privy Council Office, which discussed both the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and the Regulations Amending the Regulations Prescribing Certain Firearms and Other Weapons, Components and Parts of Weapons, Accessories, Cartridge Magazines, Ammunition and Projectiles as Prohibited, Restricted or Non-Restricted, registered on May 1, 2020, and, if so, on what date or dates were those materials or plans developed; (h) were any communications materials or plans developed after April 19, 2020, by the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the Office of the Prime Minister, or the Privy Council Office, which discussed both the mass shootings in Nova Scotia on April 18 and 19, 2020, and Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms) from the 2nd Session of the 43rd Parliament, and, if so, on what date or dates were those materials or plans developed; and (i) were any digital or analog recordings made of any conversations between RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki and any other staff at the RCMP, and, if so, (i) where are these recordings, (ii) were they deleted, (iii) were they deleted in accordance with statutory government practice regarding the preservation of records, (iv) can they be recovered, (v) what efforts are being made to recover said recordings?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 776—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to the government purchases of military equipment meant to assist Ukraine, since the beginning of 2022: what are the details of all contracts related to such purchases, including, for each, (i) the date, (ii) the vendor, (iii) the amount, (iv) the description of goods or services, including the volume, (v) whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process, (vi) the delivery date for products or services?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 778—Mr. Greg McLean:**

With regard to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rental Construction Financing Initiative announced as part of budget 2016, as of September 16, 2022: (a) how much has been spent, by fiscal year, on (i) administering the program, (ii) promoting the program, (iii) investments in individual projects, broken down by federal electoral district; (b) what are the specific locations, by street ad-

dress, where housing projects have been funded within the Calgary Metropolitan area; (c) what are the details of all contracts over \$5,000 related to the program, including, for each contract, (i) the date, (ii) the amount, (iii) the description of the project, (iv) the duration of the contract, if applicable, (v) the vendor, (vi) the file number, (vii) whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bid process; (d) what is the current occupancy rate of each of these projects; (e) what percentage of these units are used for short-term (defined as a term not exceeding 30 calendar days) rentals on Airbnb or other similar platforms or sites; (f) what measures are in place to ensure that the units continue to qualify for, and are being used as, social housing; and (g) what metrics are being used to measure the success of the program and to what extent have these metrics been achieved?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 779—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to government submarines: (a) what are the reasons for the extension of the Victoria Class Submarine In-Service Support Contract (VISSC I) contract to Babcock; (b) what are the top 10 risks related to extending this contract, including how it aligns with the requirements under the Financial Administration Act for fair competition; (c) what potential impacts does the government anticipate as a result of the contract extension on the potential bid for VISSC II; (d) what are the top five impacts this contract extension might have on potentially undermining a competitive process in the planned procurement for VISSC II; (e) how will this be mitigated under the Financial Administration Act; (f) what is the total amount of funds spent so far by Canada on the VISSC I contract, broken down by year and supplier; (g) how many new sub-mariners have been (i) recruited, (ii) trained in Canada, in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and how many hours have each spent on a submarine in each year, from 2019 to 2022; (h) how many sub-mariners does the government intend to recruit over the next 10 years, and what plans does the government have to maximize training opportunities and sea days; (i) how many days at sea has each sub-mariner had since 2018, broken down by submarine and year; (j) does the government view submarines as an essential part of the Royal Canadian Navy fleet; (k) what is the value to the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Navy and NORAD of submarines in comparison to frigates, in terms of costs and operational effectiveness; (l) what does the government intend by planned engagement in 2022-23 within the industry as part of CAF QUAD Charts, including (i) the future capabilities it is consulting on, (ii) who the government intends to consult, (iii) the areas or issues the government intends to consult on with industry and governments, (iv) the specific timelines for consultations; (m) does the government view submarines as an essential part of NORAD contributions, and, if so, how are they essential; (n) does the government intend to acquire nuclear or conventional submarines; (o) has the government ruled out increasing the size of the submarine fleet from four to 12, and what are the areas of planned operations; (p) what are the proposed costs of future submarines in terms of (i) acquisition, (ii) operations, (iii) training, (iv) facility infrastructure; and (q) what are the top 10 risks with respect to the current fleet?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 780—Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to expenditures by the Department of National Defence or Global Affairs Canada relating to visits to Canada by senior members (senior officers and generals or higher ranking officers) of foreign militaries, since January 1, 2016: what are the details of all such trips where expenditures were incurred, including, for each, the (i) dates, (ii) reason for the visit, (iii) country of military member, (v) number of senior military members visiting Canada, (v) rank of military members, (vi) total expenditures incurred to date related to the visit, broken down by type of expenditure (flight, hotel, meals, etc.), (vii) who approved the expenditure?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 781—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:**

With regard to Health Canada's planned phase-out of using strychnine to control Richardson ground squirrels on March 4, 2023: (a) has the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, or departmental officials from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) made any representations to Health Canada regarding this matter, and, if so, what are the details; (b) has AAFC conducted studies or analysis on how this measure by Health Canada will negatively impact certain agricultural industries, and, if so, what are the details, including findings of any studies or analysis; (c) did the Minister of Health consider any negative impact on agriculture that the regulation would have when approving the measure, and, if not, why not; (d) did Health Canada seek any feedback from AAFC or the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food prior to making the decision to phase-out strychnine, and, if so, what are the details, including what feedback was given; (e) will the (i) Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, (ii) Minister of Health, ensure that a full analysis on the impact such a ban would have on farmers is conducted and considered before any related regulations come into effect; and (f) what, if any, data does AAFC or any other department collect related to the negative impacts of phasing out strychnine?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 783—Ms. Lesly Lewis:**

With regard to the ArriveCAN application: (a) what are the details of all memoranda or other documents received by any minister, ministerial office or senior official related to the ArriveCAN application, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) sender, (iv) title, (v) type of document, (vi) summary, (vii) subject matter, (viii) file number; (b) of the items in (a), which ones contain any reference to the "Known Traveller Digital Identity" program, or the "Digital Identity Program"; (c) what are the details of the government's long-term policy objectives with regard to the application and any plans to expand its use beyond travel; (d) has the government done analysis on making it mandatory for all cross-border travel beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, and, if so, what are the details, including the findings of the analyses; (e) what (i) privacy, (ii) constitutional, risks, has the government identified with regard to expanded and ongoing use of the application; (f) which international organizations and their institutions has the government submitted Canadians' personal information to, as per the application's privacy notice; (g) what kind of personal information and how has this information been shared to the organizations in (f); and (h) under which conditions are Canadians' information shared with the organizations identified in (f)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 784—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the special immigration measures and program announced by the government for Ukrainian migrants following the start of the further Russian invasion on February 24, 2022: (a) how many people have come to Canada under these measures; (b) how many applications to come under these measures are currently in process; (c) how many applications to come under these measures have been rejected; (d) what is the average processing time for applications through the program; (e) how many of those accepted under the program were (i) women, (ii) under 18 years old, (iii) over 60 years old, (iv) men between the ages of 18 and 60; (f) what is the complete demographic breakdown of those accepted under the program; (g) how many of those accepted through the program were living outside of Ukraine prior to February 24, 2022; and (h) what is the breakdown of (g) by country where they were living?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 785—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to Global Affairs Canada and the Tigray region of Ethiopia: (a) how much money did the government spend on international development for people in the Tigray region between September 1, 2021 and September 1, 2022; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by programs and projects which received the funding, including how much each program or project received; (c) what is the government's position on the recent resumption of fighting in Tigray; (d) what is the government's position on the air raid that hit a kindergarten in Tigray on August 26, 2022; (e) did the government release any statements or make any representations to the Ethiopian government regarding (c) or (d), and, if so, what are the details, and, if not, why not; (f) is the government considering sanctions against any person or entity in Ethiopia in relations to actions taken in Tigray, and, if so what persons or entities are being considered; (g) has the government made any offers to the Ethiopian government or any other party to mediate in the conflict in Tigray, and, if so, what are the details; (h) what is the government's understanding of the situation related to whether or not the Eritrean army is active in Tigray; (i) has the government made any representations to the government of Eritrea regarding the conflict; (j) is the

government considering sanctions against any person or entity in Eritrea in relations to actions taken in Tigray, and, if so, what persons or entities are being considered; and (k) has the government spoken or raised questions about the situation in Tigray in any international forum, and, if so, what are the details including, for each instance, (i) the date, (ii) the forum in which it was raised, (iii) who spoke or raised question, (iv) summary of what was asked or said?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 787—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the government's response to this year's report from the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, on human rights abuses in Xinjiang: (a) what is the government's position on the report and its conclusions; (b) does the government acknowledge that Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in China are facing an ongoing genocide; (c) does the government acknowledge that Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in China are facing crimes against humanity or other international crimes; and (d) does the government plan to state what specific international crimes are being committed against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims, and, if so, when will the government be making such a statement?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 788—Mr. Luc Berthold:**

With regard to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the Canada Recovery Benefit, broken down by each program: (a) what is the number of individuals who received notices from the government asking them to repay an amount received under the program; (b) what is the cumulative dollar amount of the repayment notices; (c) of the individuals in (a), how many have repaid the amount owed; (d) what is the cumulative dollar amount (i) collected, (ii) still outstanding, of the repayment notices; and (e) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by reason for the notice (double payment, income too high, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 789—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the creation of a Canada mental health transfer to assist provinces and territories expand the delivery of mental health services: (a) what stakeholders have government representatives met with since November 22, 2021; and (b) on what dates were meetings in (a) held?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 790—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to formal consultations conducted by the government with small business owners about the government's Clean Fuel Regulations, since 2018: what are the details of each such consultation, including (i) the date, (ii) which business owners were consulted, (iii) who conducted the consultation, (iv) how the consultation was conducted (round table, survey, etc.), (v) a summary of the input received by the government?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 791—Mr. Robert Kitchen:**

With regard to the National Parole Board and offenders who have been granted parole since January 1, 2016: (a) how many offenders granted parole were the subject of an arrest warrant following their release from custody; (b) of the offenders in (a), how many are still the subject of an arrest warrant or otherwise unlawfully at large; (c) what is the recidivism rate for violent offenders granted parole since January 1, 2016; and (d) for violent offenders who reoffend after being granted parole, what is the average and median amount of time between being granted parole and reoffending?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 794—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the federal electoral district of Courtenay—Alberni, between the fiscal year 2012-13 and the current year: what are all the federal infrastructure investments, including direct transfers to municipalities, regional district associations or First Nations, national parks, highways, other entities, broken down by fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 795—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to firearms seized by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), including any instances where the CBSA is working with another Canadian agency or a law enforcement entity: (a) what is the total number, broken down by year from 2009 to the most recently available, of firearms seized (i) at Canadian land borders, (ii) at all ports of entry other than land borders, (iii) by the CBSA as part of an investigation, outside of a port of entry; (b) broken down by each part of (a), how many of the firearms were (i) registered to Canadian firearms owners or Canadian firearms businesses, (ii) registered to American firearms owners or American firearms businesses, (iii) registered to firearms owners or firearms businesses outside of Canada and the United States, (iv) unregistered or untraceable; and (c) of the unregistered or untraceable firearms in (b)(iv), how many originated from (i) inside Canada, (ii) inside the United States, (iii) neither inside Canada nor inside the United States?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 797—Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to Mifegymiso, since January 1, 2016: (a) what studies have been conducted by, or on behalf of, Health Canada on the side effects of Mifegymiso, including (i) the date, (ii) the methodology, (iii) who conducted the study, (iv) the location, (v) the findings; and (b) what data has been collected on the side effects of Mifegymiso, broken down by (i) each of the known side effects of Mifegymiso, (ii) Health Canada's estimate on the number of Canadians affected by each of the known side effects of Mifegymiso?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 800—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the government's participation at the World Economic Forum and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance's role as board trustee of the organization: (a) what are the details of all documents received by the minister, ministerial staff or government officials to support the minister's role as board trustee, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) sender, (iv) title, (v) type of document, (vi) summary, (vii) subject matter, (viii) file number; (b) what are the details of all documents or correspondence the minister has received from representatives at the World Economic Forum since 2019, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) sender, (iv) title, (v) type of document, (vi) summary, (vii) subject matter; and (c) what are the details of the meetings the minister has had with representatives from the World Economic Forum in her capacity as Minister of Finance or Deputy Prime Minister since 2019, including, for each meeting, (i) the purpose, (ii) the agenda items, (iii) the names and titles of individuals in attendance, (iv) the date, (v) the location, (vi) whether the meeting was in person, virtual, or hybrid, (vii) the decisions made, if any?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 801—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:**

With regard to private security companies being hired or contracted by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) for the enforcement of quarantine rules, since February 1, 2020: (a) which companies did the PHAC hire or contract; (b) for each company in (a), what was the (i) start date, (ii) end date or anticipated end date, of the quarantine enforcement; (c) what is the total amount spent to date on quarantine enforcement by private security companies; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by company; (e) what recourse is the PHAC making available to individuals who are harassed or mistreated by a private security officer or firm who is acting on behalf of the PHAC; (f) how many instances of complaints about an officer or firm in relation to quarantine or testing rule is the PHAC aware of; and (g) what is the breakdown of (f) by month and by type of complaint or alleged incident?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 802—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA): (a) how many CEWS recipients were in arrears or had an amount owing related to (i) GST/HST remittances, (ii) other re-

quired tax payments, when they received funding under CEWS; (b) what is the dollar amount of owed taxes in (a)(i) and (a)(ii); (c) how many CEBA recipients were in arrears or had an amount owing related to (i) GST/HST remittances, (ii) other required tax payments, when they received funding under CEBA; and (d) what is the dollar amount of owed taxes in (c)(i) and (c)(ii)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 805—Mr. Larry Maguire:**

With regard to briefings that Canadian government and military officials have received from the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF) of the United States Office of Naval Intelligence, since 2016: (a) on what dates did Canadian embassy staff receive briefings from the former head of the UAPTF, John F. Stratton; (b) on what dates did the Royal Canadian Air Force receive briefings from the US National Intelligence Manager for aviation on the issue of Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon; and (c) what are the details of all other briefings received from the UAPTF, including, for each, (i) the date, (ii) who gave the briefing, (iii) who was briefed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 806—Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to Global Affairs Canada and Nigeria: (a) how much money did the government spend on international development for people in Nigeria between November 4, 2015, and September 1, 2022; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by programs and projects which received the funding, including how much each program or project received; (c) what is the government's position on the human rights violations committed by Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa and Fulani militants, and the ongoing reports of Nigerian Christians being victims of abduction, murder and imprisonment, and their villages targeted for destruction, including (i) the abduction of 14-year-old Leah Sharibu, (ii) the abduction of Alice Ngaddah, (iii) the abduction of the Chibok girls on April 14, 2014, by Boko Haram, (iv) the March 24, 2022, attack in Nigeria's Kaduna State, (v) the June 5, 2022, attack on St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Ondo State, (vi) the June 19, 2022, attacks on St. Moses Catholic Church and Maranatha Baptist Church in Nigeria's northeastern Kaduna state; (d) did the government release any statements or make any representations to the Nigerian government regarding (c), and, if so, what are the details, and, if not, why not; (e) is the government considering sanctions against any person or entity in Nigeria in relations to actions taken in (c), and, if so what persons or entities are being considered; (f) has the government made any offers to the Nigerian government or any other party to assist in ending the human rights violations, and, if so, what are the details; and (g) has the government spoken or raised questions about the situation in Nigeria in any international forum, and, if so, what are the details, including, for each instance, (i) the date, (ii) the forum in which it was raised, (iii) who spoke or raised question, (iv) the summary of what was asked or said?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 807—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to Deputy Minister Working Groups and working groups which report to a deputy minister or equivalent: (a) how many such groups exist as of September 23, 2022; and (b) what are the details of each group, including, for each, (i) the title or name, (ii) the purpose, (iii) the number of members, (iv) the titles of members, (v) the number of meetings the group has had since January 1, 2022, (vi) whether or not the group issues reports, (vii) the date and title of the last report, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 808—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and the 4-year post-payment verification plan identified in the 2021 Spring Report of the Auditor General: (a) how many recipients of payments under the CERB have been identified as fraudulent or otherwise ineligible; (b) what dollar amount of payments were received by the recipients in (a); (c) what amount of money has been recovered to date in relation to the recipients in (a); and (d) of the recipients in (a), from how many have funds been (i) partially, (ii) fully, recovered?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 811—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:**

With regard to the commitment of the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship in January of 2022 to eliminate backlogs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by the end of the current year: (a) what are the current backlogs, broken down by immigration stream or program; (b) will the backlogs be eliminated by the end of the year; and (c) if the answer to (b) is negative, when will the backlogs be eliminated?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 813—Mr. Greg McLean:**

With regard to the discussion document entitled "Options to cap and cut oil and gas sector greenhouse gas emissions to achieve 2030 goals and net-zero by 2050", released in July 2022, as of September 26, 2022: (a) what recommendations have been received from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources, as referred to under section 8 (Guiding principles) of the document; and (b) which specific inefficient fossil fuel subsidies the government is looking to rationalize, as outlined on page 15 of the document?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 814—Mr. Brad Redekopp:**

With regard to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, broken down by province and territory, and fiscal years from 2018 to present: (a) how many work permits have been processed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and are expected to be processed for 2022-23; (b) of the permits in (a), how many of those migrants have come to Canada to fill jobs; (c) what employment sectors have those jobs been in; (d) what is the expected duration of the work permits for the migrants in (b), in each sector; (e) what was the average processing time for work permits in each employment sector; (f) what was the average wait time between application, processing and arrival time in Canada to begin employment, for each economic sector; and (g) is the government providing new opportunities for these migrants to become permanent residents?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 815—Mr. Brad Redekopp:**

With regard to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, broken down by province and territory, and fiscal years from 2018 to present: how many Labour Market Impact Assessments have Employment and Social Development Canada (i) undertaken, (ii) completed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 816—Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to government spending on foreign aid, since 2016: (a) has the government provided any funding to entities which are currently on the Public Safety Canada's terrorist entity list, and, if so, what are the details, including the (i) date, (ii) entity, (iii) amount, (iv) purpose of funding, (v) program under which funding was provided; and (b) what specific measures are in place to ensure that foreign aid money does not end up financing terrorism?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 817—Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to the government's response to Order Paper question Q-704: (a) which official signed the statement of completeness for the response and on what date was the statement signed; (b) who determined that it was not possible to determine whether or not Global Affairs Canada (GAC) consults Public Safety Canada's terrorist entity list prior to providing any foreign aid funding within the three-month period between when the question was placed on the Notice Paper and the response was tabled; and (c) is the Minister of Public Safety concerned that GAC was unable to determine whether or not it consults the terrorist entity list prior to providing any foreign aid funding?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 818—Mr. Ben Lobb:**

With regard to the government's ArriveCAN application: (a) what specific data is collected through the application; (b) what departments, agencies, government organizations, or third parties have access to or receive the data, any subset of the data, including anonymized data and any data transferred at a later date; (c) broken down by each entity in (b), (i) what type of data is shared, (ii) is the data anonymized, (iii) what is the data used for, (iv) what is the number of travellers data

available to the entity; (d) where is the ArriveCAN data stored; and (e) where does each entity that has access to or receives the data store their data?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 819—Mr. Ben Lobb:**

With regard to the government's COVID Alert and ArriveCAN applications: (a) were the applications written using open source code, and, if not, why not; and (b) what is the code or the URL of the code for each application?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 820—Mr. Ryan Williams:**

With regard to the size of the public service, and broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: what was the total number of employees or full-time equivalents as of the start of the (i) 2015-16, (ii) 2022-23, fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 821—Mr. Ryan Williams:**

With regard to usage of the government's Airbus CC-150 Polaris aircraft, since April 1, 2022: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or estimate, (viii) amount spent on fuel?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 822—Mr. Ryan Williams:**

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since April 1, 2022: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or estimate, (viii) amount spent on fuel?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 824—Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada: what was the amount and percentage of all lapsed spending in the department, broken down by fiscal year from 2012 to present?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 825—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the Known Traveller Digital Identity (KTDI) prototype or pilot project announced by the government in January 2018: what are the details of all memoranda and briefing notes provided to the Minister of Transport or the minister's office about the KTDI, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) subject matter, (vi) summary of contents, (vii) file number, (viii) type of document?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 826—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to the Natural Resources Canada's consultations on "Just Transition" and involving "15 roundtables with experts, unions and industry", as mentioned on the department's website: (a) how many stakeholders attended roundtables on these consultations, as of the end of August 2022; (b) what are the details of those who attended each roundtable, including, for each event, the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) full list of stakeholders attending, including their names and organizations represented, (iv) full list of government representatives, including their names, titles, and which department or agency they were representing, (v) list of others in attendance; (c) how many stakeholders at roundtables indicated support for phasing out energy sector jobs in Alberta; (d) how many stakeholders indicated a lack of support for phasing out energy sector jobs in Alberta; and (e) how many submissions from roundtables voiced concern with the government's current policies related to jobs in Alberta?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 830—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to the increases in the federal carbon tax or price on carbon on April 1, 2023: what are the government's projections on the impact the increases will have on (i) food prices, (ii) farm input costs, (iii) inflation?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 831—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to government officials and correspondence units drafting letters or correspondence for members of Parliament or senators to use in their dealings with constituents, stakeholders or other Canadians, since 2016, and broken down by department or agency: what are the details of each instance where such a letter or piece of correspondence was drafted, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) topic, (iii) summary of contents, (iv) name of the parliamentarian the item was prepared for?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 833—Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to Canada's subscription to shares of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: (a) how does Canada measure return on investment for the shares; (b) what is the value of dividends received by Canada further to its ownership of shares in the bank; (c) what is the resale value of Canada's shares on September 27, 2022; (d) how many and which projects has the bank funded to date; (e) of the projects in (d), how many and which (i) underwent a gender-based analysis, (ii) underwent an equity, diversity, and inclusion analysis, (iii) adequately and meaningfully consulted with any indigenous communities which could be affected by the project, (iv) meet the criteria of the Impact Assessment Act, (v) involve slave labour; (f) how many Canadian firms have been contracted for work on each of the projects in (d), broken down by each project; (g) what is the dollar value of work contracted to Canadian firms in (f); and (h) how many and which full-time equivalent jobs have the projects in (d) created for Canadians, broken down by project?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand at this time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (for the Minister of Finance)** moved that Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to begin debate on Bill C-32, which seeks to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement and budget 2022.

• (1530)

[English]

As in countries around the world, the Canadian economy is facing a period of slow economic growth. The global challenge of high inflation with higher interest rates and cost of living increases have left many Canadians worried. Some are worried about whether they can continue to pay their bills, and some are wondering whether Canada's future will be as prosperous as our past. Our message to

Canadians is simple. We hear them, and we stand with them. We will get through this difficult period together, and we will come out the other side stronger, together.

The good news is that no country is better placed than Canada to weather the coming global economic slowdown. We have an unemployment rate near its record low, with 500,000 more Canadians working today than before the pandemic. We have the strongest economic growth in the G7 this year and the lowest net debt and deficit-to-GDP ratios in the G7. Less than two weeks ago, we saw our AAA credit rating reaffirmed. We have a talented and resilient workforce, and we are a country to which skilled workers around the world want to move. On top of that, we have key natural resources and innovative ideas that the global economy needs. These are the foundations of strength on which we will get through this difficult time.

[Translation]

However, in this period of uncertainty, it is important to exercise restraint and remain cautious budget-wise. That is why our government continues to pursue a tight fiscal policy to keep reducing the federal debt-to-GDP ratio.

[English]

Even as we face global headwinds, the investments we are making today will make Canada more sustainable and more prosperous for generations to come. We are working hard to make life more affordable for Canadians. Building on our affordability plan, which was announced this summer, we are putting money back into the pockets of those who need it the most.

With Bill C-32, we are moving forward with an important measure to make life more affordable for a group of Canadians heavily affected by rising prices: post-secondary graduates with student loans. With the passing of this bill, the federal portion of all Canada student loans and Canada apprenticeship loans would become permanently interest free, including those being repaid. This measure would provide financial relief to young Canadians across the country, helping them to make ends meet and ensuring that their investment in themselves and their education was the right decision to make.

[Translation]

I am already looking forward to the effect this measure will have on young Canadians. There is no doubt that it will help many young people balance their budgets and invest in their future. It will also help give our businesses and business owners the skilled workers they need to continue to prosper.

[English]

Last week, I met with student apprentices, and they were delighted to hear about this move that we are making in their future.



Another area where I know Canadians are looking for support is the cost of housing. No one will be surprised if I say that our government believes that everyone should have a safe and affordable place to call home. Unfortunately, that goal is increasingly out of reach for far too many Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Housing prices have skyrocketed over the past few years and many people are concerned that rent will also go up because of the impact high interest rates will have on the mortgages of rental property owners.

We know that some Canadians need help. That is why, with Bill C-32, the government is introducing an ambitious range of measures designed to build more houses and make housing more affordable across the country.

[*English*]

We are lowering taxes for new homebuyers so they can put their money in a place to call home. To help young Canadians afford a down payment faster, Bill C-32 would move forward with the new tax-free first-home savings account. This account would allow prospective first-time homebuyers to save up to \$40,000 tax-free toward their first home. Bill C-32 would also double the first-time homebuyers tax credit to provide up to \$1,500 in direct tax relief to homebuyers starting in 2022.

We would introduce a refundable, multi-generational home renovation tax credit. We are also moving forward in Bill C-32 with measures to crack down on house flipping. By doing so, we would ensure that investors who flip homes pay their fair share, which will play a role in lowering housing prices for Canadians. In short, we have a plan to make home ownership in this country more affordable, especially for young people.

As we continue to provide targeted support for Canadians, we are also hard at work to advance a robust industrial policy that will deliver stable, good-paying jobs. We have to seize opportunities in the net-zero economy, attract new private investment and provide the key resources the world needs.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

Without a doubt, an investment in our country's future is also an investment in our workers. That is why the 2022 fall economic statement makes investments in workers to grow Canada's economy, create good-paying jobs and tackle Canada's investment and productivity challenges.

[*English*]

For example, we are proposing to expand the accelerated tax deductions for business investments in clean energy equipment. This will be important as our government moves forward with Canada's first critical mineral strategy. This strategy recognizes that critical minerals, including those found in my own home province of Alberta, are central to major global industries and clean technologies. To build on this, we would also introduce a new 30% critical mineral exploration tax credit for specified mineral exploration expenses incurred in Canada.

### *Government Orders*

There is also a measure in Bill C-32 that I am particularly proud of, and that is the creation of the Canada growth fund. We first announced this fund in budget 2022, and we are now taking concrete actions to make it a reality with Bill C-32. With it, we could help attract billions of dollars in new private capital required to fight climate change and create good jobs at the same time. The \$15 billion from us would attract in \$45 billion, for a fund of \$60 billion, and this growth fund would also help to attract scale-up companies that will create jobs, and drive productivity and clean growth. It would encourage the retention of intellectual property in Canada, while capitalizing on Canada's abundance of natural resources.

[*Translation*]

The fund will be launched by the end of this year, and the government will take steps to put in place a permanent, independent structure for the fund in the first half of 2023.

[*English*]

It is also important to continue supporting our small businesses, which create jobs across the country. That is why we are proposing through this bill to cut taxes for Canada's growing small businesses by phasing out access to the small business tax rate more gradually, with access to be fully phased out when taxable capital reaches \$50 million rather than \$15 million.

While we support our growing small businesses, we are also moving forward with the Canada recovery dividend to ensure large financial institutions that made significant profits during the pandemic help support Canada's broader recovery. With the passage of Bill C-32, we would impose a one-time 15% tax on taxable income above \$1 billion for banks and life insurers' groups because it is important to ensure that large financial institutions pay their fair share.

[*Translation*]

In a time of great challenge and uncertainty in the global economy, it is important for Canada to have a clear plan for moving forward.

[*English*]

That is precisely what we have with the 2022 fall economic statement and Bill C-32. This bill includes great measures to build an economy that works for everyone, to create great jobs and make life more affordable for Canadians.

*Government Orders*

My call to all members of the House is to come together and support the positive, constructive and necessary measures in this bill, support tax relief for home owners, support financial relief for post-secondary graduates and support a strategy to grow our economy and maintain Canada's competitive advantage. Canadians are looking to us to put politics aside and ensure the quick passage of this important legislation.

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things I want to pick up on is the fact that we are clearly in an economic crisis, with Canadians struggling across the country just to put food on the table and heat their homes. They are struggling to get by. The answer from the government, time and time again, is to spend more money, when this spending is the very thing that is causing the inflationary crisis to begin with.

On this side of the House, we believe we should be measuring our success based on the results of the dollars we are spending, not just on how many dollars we can spend. When will the minister and the government recognize that, take action, stop the spending and ensure we can get things back on track for Canadians who are struggling?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, I say to my hon. colleague that he can take a look at the numbers. We had an economy that was producing better than was even projected in budget 2022, and that is thanks to the hard work of Canadian businesses. Therefore, we took a prudent approach to paying down our deficit, which is much lower than predicted in the budget, and we invested money targeted to those Canadians who most need the supports at a time when they most need it.

We are investing in the economy so it will grow. We listened and responded to those Canadians who need it the most. We are making sure we have fiscal firepower for the future, and we are growing our economy so it works for everyone.

• (1540)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleague to explain something to me. The word “inflation” comes up 115 times in the document, but there is no mention of concrete measures. I am thinking about seniors, who keep taking hit after hit. There is nothing here for them. It never ends.

Why is that? What does that have to do with the inflation we are seeing now and the looming recession?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, we are clearly in an inflationary cycle. That is no secret. It is happening here in Canada, and it is happening in Germany, in France, in the United States and in the United Kingdom. It is important to note, however, that inflation here in Canada is among the lowest in the world, as are our interest rates.

What we have done for seniors is make sure all the benefits and supports they get, such as old age security, are indexed. They get their payments quarterly, not annually. That means there is a quarterly adjustment for inflation.

We will work with our counterparts the world over to slow inflation. In the meantime, we will invest in Canadians who need it most where they need it most.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to ask the minister if he could talk more about the Canada growth fund and how it will increase the under-represented groups of indigenous peoples and women in the trades.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, the whole point of the Canada growth fund is not only to crowd in private capital so we can actually green the economy, but also to make sure we are taking a smart approach to how we work with under-represented groups. It is not just the Canada growth fund. The investment tax credits that we are proposing on both clean hydrogen and green energy programs are focused and have a labour provision.

For example, in the clean hydrogen tax credit, 40% goes to those companies that are going to not only pay a good salary but also have apprenticeships. Across the board, we are focused on making sure indigenous peoples, people of colour and people who are under-represented in the workforce are part of these investments.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the riding of Waterloo includes two universities and a college, so there are numerous students. I remember when I graduated from the University of Waterloo, I had Canada student loans and Canada student grants. After I graduated, I had six months to pay them back, but interest started to accumulate the day after I graduated. This took a really big toll.

Since then, many students have been asking for the removal of interest. Most recently, I met with the president of Conestoga Students Inc., who asked when the government would be able to deliver on this commitment. I would like to hear from the minister how quickly we can actually implement this commitment if we see swift passage of this legislation.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for putting her finger on the number one question: How soon can we get this legislation passed through the House?

We can see that in the new year, probably April, and moving forward, we will no longer have student loan interest on the federal portion of student loans and apprenticeship interest. This would benefit not only students at Conestoga, but students at universities, colleges and technical institutes across the country. I met with Polytechnics Canada last week, and they were thrilled to hear that this was our plan and that it was going to be part of Bill C-32.

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To all the businesses operating in my hon. colleague's riding and to all members of the House, we are going to work with the banks to make sure that credit card fees get reduced. If the banks do not come to the table before the end of December this year, we are going to pass legislation in the new year to get credit card fees reduced, because it is what small businesses are asking of us. We are responding to post-secondary students and to small business owners.

• (1545)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say to the hon. minister that it was very disappointing that during Veterans' Week, the fall economic statement ignored the need for veterans to have their spouses, if they married over age 60, recognized as actual surviving spouses so they can receive the benefits they would have received as a widow or widower after the death of their spouse who served this country. This was ignored in the budget. I noticed that survivors' benefits are dealt with, if we are looking at the multi-generational home renovation tax credit, as is what happens to that benefit for a surviving spouse, but there is nothing for our veterans if they married over age 60.

Would the government be open to amending this bill to end this injustice to our veterans and their families?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her insight. Of course, if this is a policy distortion, we will certainly take a look at it.

On the whole, we have to be mindful of the fact that the fall economic statement is in itself a very thin document. It is a prudent approach. We are paying down the deficit. We are focusing on growing the economy and helping Canadians who need it the most. Budget 2023 will be a whole other cycle. However, I take my hon. colleague's point and will definitely look into it.

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the fall economic statement, there is a specific line item solely related to my riding, and that is "Support to Rebuild the Village of Lytton". It indicates that funds previously allocated in June to PacifiCan are being transferred to Industry Canada.

Why has the government decided to delay the funding to Lytton over a period of what seems to be five years? When the announcement was made in June, there was no indication that the village of Lytton would receive anything but a lump sum payment from the Government of Canada. If we could have some clarification on that, it would be very helpful.

Second, when can the village of Lytton expect to receive the first payment through Infrastructure Canada?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, I take the hon. member's point directly. My sense is the change from PacifiCan to Industry Canada, as I am a minister in the IC portfolio, is actually for speed and coordination on the ground.

I am happy to meet with my hon. colleague after this session to give him specific details and to work with him directly to ensure that the citizens of Lytton are able to get the money they need to rebuild their community. I will take up that matter personally.

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent to split my time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have only been here for a year, but I have been driving all over the city and I still cannot find the money tree. I do not know where it is, but the government spent \$100 billion of added debt before COVID and spent \$500 billion of debt during COVID. Forty per cent of the money spent during COVID was not even related to the pandemic. That is not from us. That is from the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Annually, spending is now 30% higher than it was prepandemic. The only answer that this government has to any problem is to spend, spend, spend. Every six months, its members come back to the House and say they found fiscal restraint and do not worry. However, they just keep moving the spending line up; they just shift it up on the graph. Every time they do, they say, "Wait. From here going forward, we are only going to increase spending by 1% or 2%", but when the real tally comes in at the end of the year, spending is up 6% or 7%, as it has been for every single year.

By the way, this spending profile, the 1% to 2% by which the Liberals are saying spending will grow, does not include new money for pharmacare. It does not include new money for the disabilities act we are passing in the House. It also does not include any new money for long-term health care. After a pandemic, one would think the government would want to give provinces additional money to spend on health care. We are seeing health care systems crumbling across the country, and the Liberals campaigned in 2015 on increasing health care funding long term.

The government initially said not to worry; it can spend because interest rates are so low. The Governor of the Bank of Canada said not to worry because interest rates are going to stay low forever. It was people on this side of the House who asked what happens if interest rates go up. Now we are going to spend more next year in interest on the debt than we do on national defence. We are going to spend almost as much on interest on the debt than we are transferring to the provinces through the Canada health transfer, which is what they spend on health care. Members can let that sink in. In 2024, the government is going to spend \$24 billion more, for a total of \$54 billion, on interest on the debt.

This is also a government that said inflation was not going to happen. It initially said that we would have deflation. The Deputy Prime Minister even went on TV and asked for people to please send her their ideas so Canadians could spend the cash they have in their bank accounts. I wonder if she still feels the same way.

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The Liberals are now slowly sleepwalking us off a cliff. We are walking into economic uncertainty, and they refuse to admit that the world has changed. They are also committed to raising taxes. In the face of economic uncertainty, we are the only country in the world to raise taxes. We are going to raise the carbon tax and are going to raise EI premiums. By the way, I hope members do not like beer, because in June of next year, the excise tax on beer is going up 6.3%, which is incredible.

All the while, the government has also been growing the size of government. It has added 10,000 to 12,000 new full-time equivalent people every single year since 2015, yet services are going down. People cannot get a passport, cannot get immigration papers and cannot get a new pilot licence. Transport Canada will not even re-view medicals for people who want to become air traffic controllers. It is incredible.

What is the Liberals' answer? Well, it is okay; they will just spend more money. There is \$400 million more in this economic statement for the CRA to hire more people, and I hope they are going to be answering the phone. In 2017, the Auditor General said that out of 50-some-odd million phone calls that went to CRA, 27 million got a busy signal. That is incredible. I hope those new individuals are not going to be auditing small businesses and middle-class Canadians across the country to make up for the spending hole that the government put us in.

Let me talk about the interest on student debt for a minute. The government is now going to give interest relief on the debt of students, which some might think sounds like an okay idea. However, here is the issue: We are in a deficit. The government is going to spend \$500 million a year on taking interest away from the debt of students who are in post-secondary education.

• (1550)

The government's role should be making sure that additional students go to post-secondary education, not giving people a break who are already there. The government should be playing at the margins to increase the number of people, if they can go, who can afford to go to post-secondary education. It should not be giving that money to people who are already there, as this \$500 million a year is money we will not have. Do members know who gets the economic benefit of going to post-secondary education? It is the student.

In fact, Alex Usher, who is a very well-known post-secondary education expert, has tracked that students graduate with about the same amount of debt as they did in the early 2000s. That number has not gone up. It has been anywhere between \$23,000 and just under \$30,000 every year since the early 2000s.

This is not the United States. I know the government likes to import all of the U.S.'s problems here, but we do not have a student debt problem like they do in the United States. We can surely find better uses for this \$500 million. Maybe we should give grants to low-income people who are not going to post-secondary education but who could afford it if they had more support. Instead, we are just going to give it to people who are already there for a problem that does not even exist. It is also expensive.

Dental care featured quite prominently in the House in a previous debate and also in the economic statement, so it is worth spending a couple of minutes on that now.

The government is going to spend almost \$100 million in administrative costs to write cheques to people. It is going to use the same process that it used to give out the CERB, which relies on a self-attestation. Two results will occur: There will be fraud or there will be very little use of the program because people will be worried given what is happening now. They are getting calls from the CRA saying they need to give money back for the CERB.

The Auditor General is reviewing the process that the government used for the CERB and has not reported back her findings. I suspect that the government wanted to rush the dental care bill through this chamber before the Auditor General had a chance to tell us what she thought about the process for the CERB. Even the Parliamentary Budget Officer has serious concerns with the fraud that can happen.

I listen to a very good podcast called *All-In*. There is a guy on it, David Friedberg, whom I agree with maybe the least, who always says there is room for nuance in everything. He says that everything is not black and white, it is not elite or populist and it is not left or right. He is encouraging us to embrace nuance, but the government wants people to believe that if they are against the dental care plan, they are somehow against kids getting healthy smiles. If the government was really interested in that, it would have taken the same \$100 million, given it to the provinces to increase the provincial programs' eligibility criteria and used the exact same funding mechanism that already exists.

Thinking that people on this side of the House are not interested in healthy smiles is not what this is about. This is about process. This is about efficiency. We are going to spend \$100 million in money we do not have to set up a cheque-writing scheme that is going to be used for a few years. It is incredible. This is all happening while service levels are going down and employee and staff costs are going up. Canadians do not have any more patience with this high-spend, high-tax Liberal government.

In closing, I would like to say that the government seems more interested in wealth redistribution schemes than it does in growing the economy. That is pretty clear. Every program is taxed more, put in a pot and then given away to Canadians at their choosing. The Liberals hold strings over the provincial governments, which is very paternalistic, and meddle in a bunch of provincial affairs, saying they have to spend money on this and have to spend money on that, instead of just getting out of the way, giving more money to the provinces and letting them do their jobs.

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• (1555)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess I am not surprised that Conservatives are against freeing up important money that students are going to be seeing as a result of not paying interest payments if the fall economic statement is adopted. However, I am surprised at the willingness and candour with which Conservatives are willing to say they are not in favour of that.

The member talked specifically about how those who are currently students are the ones who are going to see the economic benefit of going to post-secondary school. Has he thought about comparing the economic benefit of when my parents and his parents went to secondary school? Thirty or forty years ago, all someone had to do was go to secondary school and they were pretty much assured of getting a decent job that would enable them to provide for themselves and their family. They would have a good kick at the can, so to speak.

We now have a situation in which secondary school is not enough. Most people need post-secondary to come close to getting the same quality of employment that my parents and the member's parents were able to get a few decades ago.

Can he reflect on the fact that as there is more demand for people to go to post-secondary, the government should perhaps start playing a role in helping provide that education?

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Mr. Speaker, we do not have a student debt problem in this country. About 65% of the working-age population have post-secondary education. It is wrong to ask 100% of the working-age population to subsidize that 65%. The government should have taken the same amount of money or half the amount of money and put it toward grants for low-income students who are not otherwise able to attend post-secondary education. That would have been a far better use of \$500 million a year.

• (1600)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the economic update mentions inflation no fewer than 108 times. Inflation means financial hardship for most people given that wages do not keep up with rising consumer prices. Historically, high inflation has meant that a recession is on the way. One usually follows the other. A recession means that many people will lose their jobs. The economic update and the bill do absolutely nothing to improve employment insurance, which is outdated and discriminates against 60% of claimants.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on this oversight in both the bill and the economic update.

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Mr. Speaker, yes, sometimes inflationary readings indicate economic uncertainty. The government's own numbers were projecting 3.1% growth next year, and now it is projecting only 0.7% growth. There are economic challenges on the horizon. The government wants to talk about making the EI system better. We abandoned the EI system during COVID because it was inadequate. I would ask the government where the reforms are that

it promised on the EI system to cover more individuals. I agree with the member's comments, and I thank her for her contribution.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard many of the Conservatives in today's question period speak about their concerns with the cost of living increasing and Canadians' ability to keep putting food on the table. I have also spoken about this. The concerns from constituents in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith are about not being able to keep putting food on the table.

It is interesting, however, that we are not hearing from the Conservatives about the big grocery chains that are profiting. Loblaw's was profiting \$1 million a day at a certain point this year, as one example.

Would the member support the government's extending the Canada recovery dividend to big box stores that are clearly benefiting from people's hardship and put this money back into the pockets of those who are struggling most?

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that growing the size of the government is going to fix the inflation problem. I support the NDP opposition day motion, which called for a study on greedflation with respect to grocery stores. I hope we do not pre-judge the end of that study. I am looking forward to that study being done, as well as the one by the Competition Bureau. It is very important work. Any companies that are price gouging should be held accountable, and we should be looking at other industries too. I would welcome the study of other industries before we start saying whether we would agree to additional taxes at this time.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the costly coalition strikes again. The fall economic statement gave us a window into the government's ongoing spending problem and the uncertain economic future that Canadians are bracing for. Liberal-made inflation continues to be a reality for Canadians and their families, while Liberal spending continues at a record pace.

After this Prime Minister spent more than all prime ministers before him combined, the finance minister had an opportunity to get her government's spending under control, listen to Canadians, stop new taxes and cancel the tripling of the carbon tax. There was hope that the finance minister would hear the plea to follow the wisdom of the Conservative leader that a dollar of savings would be found for every new dollar spent.

This update shows that the Prime Minister's addiction to spending shut her down. What is unfortunate is that it means Canadians will continue to pay record prices for groceries, gas and home heating. It means mortgages, loans and rent will all cost more, and it means Canadians continue to fall further and further behind.

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It is like our country is being pulled back into the days of Pierre Trudeau, a prime minister who also inherited an excellent fiscal position and stable economy but then spent everything in the treasury and more, adding billions to the national debt. One deficit after another increased Canada's debt by 1,000%, and the deficit in his last year in office was over \$37 billion, which is roughly \$90 billion in today's money and eerily like last year's deficit. Canadians were also hit with high Liberal-made inflation and high interest rates caused by that spending. As a result, it took 13 years for the federal government to be pulled out of the deficit tailspin left by that government.

We are seeing the same pattern re-emerge as this Prime Minister adds hundreds of billions of dollars to the national debt. Liberal-made inflation continues, and interest rates caused by his out-of-control spending are rising. The Liberal government took over from the Conservatives, who balanced the budget and left the finances in good shape. Conservatives shepherded Canada through the 2008 recession without record-high spending or inflation. The inflation rate under the previous government never reached 4%, despite the recession and wars in the Middle East.

In contrast, before even one COVID case was detected in Canada, the Prime Minister had already added \$110 billion to the debt. He then proceeded to spend and spend and spend, to the tune of half a trillion dollars in just the last two years. Liberals told Canadians that their enormous spending spree was to protect people from COVID. We learned that almost half of the \$500 billion was actually not even related to pandemic measures and supports. Even the part of those hundreds of billions of dollars that was COVID related is also very questionable.

In budget 2022, the government continued to add to the debt with a \$90-billion deficit as it announced \$30 billion in new spending. This was at a time when inflation was at 6.7% and climbing, and stakeholders such as the Conference Board of Canada warned that new spending on this scale would add further fuel to this inflationary fire.

Since fiscal year 2014-15 and all the way to 2020-21, the government's program expenses have increased by 113%. The bureaucracy has also grown to almost 400,000 employees, costing taxpayers \$60.7 billion. The government loves to claim it was creating jobs, but it turns out it did it for its bureaucracy, using money it got from Canadians struggling with Liberal inflation. What the government's economic update does not show Canadians is how the Liberals plan to return to fiscal stability or how they will rein in their spending. It instead reannounces several billion dollars from the 2022 budget and adds over \$6 billion in new spending.

The PBO, economists and the Conservative leader have all warned the government that its out-of-control spending is driving up inflation. Now Canadians are getting hit from the left with inflation, as well as being squeezed by higher interest rates hiked by the same Bank of Canada that has kept printing money for the Liberals to spend.

Hard-working Canadians and their families are not even getting by, and any support the government proposes is evaporated by inflation, taxes, and higher mortgages and rents. Grocery inflation is at a 40-year record high as prices increased 11.4% in September.

That has led to one in five Canadians skipping meals and forced 1.5 million people to visit a food bank in just one month. One-third of those food bank users are children.

It is not only grocery inflation that is eating up Canadians' paycheques. Home heating bills are also soaring. Natural gas prices were hit with 37% inflation, and other fuels increased by 48.7%.

• (1605)

The solution proposed by the finance minister is for families to cancel their Disney+ subscription. How out of touch does one have to be to tell Canadians that billions and billions of inflationary spending is a good thing and they should not worry if they cannot afford to eat, heat their home, or go to work, because cancelling their \$14-a-month subscription will fix everything.

This is from a minister who makes way more than the average Canadian, kept her job during the lockdowns, voted to keep COVID measures in place long after the rest of the world opened up, and fed the Prime Minister's spending addiction with taxpayers' money. People in my riding and many parts of Canada cannot even afford Internet, let alone Disney+. They choose between heating their homes, feeding their kids, and paying for rent or their mortgage.

I grew up in an immigrant family that had very little. We knew, though, that if we worked hard and kept dreaming of a better future, we could one day achieve the Canadian dream. I know that through hard work and the grace of God, I am lucky to be standing here in this place, representing the community I grew up in and knowing my family is going to be okay.

That is not a luxury that many other Canadians and newcomers have. In a developed country like Canada, it should be possible for anyone, no matter where they come from or what their last name is, to work hard and get back what they are willing to put in. Unfortunately, the reality today is that dream is gone.

Conservatives have stood in the House week after week, demanding on behalf of Canadians that the government stop new taxes and cancel its plans to triple the carbon tax. Even after the Bank of Canada's governor said the carbon tax added to inflation, and even after the inflation numbers showed home heating costs increasing by ridiculous amounts, the costly coalition voted against our motions and responded to questions with condescending statements that ignored Canadians' pain.

Liberals insist that spending more money and raising taxes is the solution to the fire they started. The left also loves to talk about so-called greedflation, but the real greed here is the profits the government is making off the empty stomachs of Canadians. The government is now making more revenue as inflation drives up the tax dollars the government brings in.

Canadians are hurtling towards a long, cold and hungry winter, and the other side does not look encouraging, yet the minister wants everyone to believe that Canada will be fine while all the spending, inflation and high interest rates wreak havoc on our economy. The government and the Liberal insiders might be fine, sitting on all the taxpayer money, but the people who paid those taxes are already paying the price.

Even more frustrating for Canadians is that this update had the opportunity to do what is right and stop the out-of-control spending, the taxing and the virtue signalling, yet none of that was done. Savings were not found to pay for new spending. The tripling carbon tax, payroll tax, second carbon tax and inflation tax continue targeting Canadians while loading up government coffers.

It is time to stop flooding the economy with government money and create more of what Canadians' money buys: more homes, more energy and more food here at home. With the Conservative leader as prime minister, a Conservative government will remove gatekeepers. We will build more homes and affordable energy projects and let Canada's world-class agriculture sector grow the food the world needs. Canadians are out of money, and the costly coalition is out of touch. While the Liberals continue to fail Canadians, Conservatives will fight to restore the Canadian promise and make hard work mean something again in this country.

For these reasons and more, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

the House decline to give second reading to Bill C-32, an act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022, and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, because the bill brings in new inflationary spending that is not matched by an equivalent saving, and does not cancel planned tax hikes.

• (1610)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I always get a kick out of it when Conservatives say they left this House in good fiscal order at the end of Stephen Harper's reign.

They are clapping when I say I get a kick out of it, and it is really interesting, because if we actually look back over Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper, there were only three budgets that were balanced in the entire 13 or so years that they were in power for.

More importantly, when he talks about how they balanced this budget in 2015, they did it by selling off shares of GM at bargain prices, by slashing EI and by slashing veterans services. They did all that so they could "balance the budget". They thought that when

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they went into the election in 2015, that would inspire people to bring them back into power. Of course, we know that never happened, because people saw right through it.

Can the member reflect on whether he thinks it was a good idea for the government of the day to balance the budget by slashing veterans services and EI, and by selling off the shares of GM at bargain prices?

• (1615)

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the member for Kingston and the Islands. He finally admitted it. The Conservatives actually balanced the budget. Let us give him a round of applause, everybody.

I thank him for admitting that, something that his government—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. parliamentary secretary is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the member said, "round of applause, everybody". He should know that he cannot talk to other members in the House. He can talk only to you.

I am more than willing to accept and recognize the fact that they balanced the budget in 2015 on the backs of veterans.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That really is descending into debate. If we get another round, I will make sure I acknowledge that the member can ask another question or maybe a follow-up.

The hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Mr. Speaker, going back to the point, the Conservatives know how to balance a budget. They know it does not balance itself.

They also know that they do not need to spend on the backs of Canadians like the government did, like giving \$237 million to a Liberal insider MP and jet-setting around the world while the country is falling apart.

We know what responsible leadership looks like. We know how to balance a budget. They need to get on board, do the same and stop causing pain to Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments.

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I believe that his motion indicates that this economic statement was a useless endeavour, that it should have been part of a plan in a budget, and that the government should have been able to predict inflation with the data we already had last spring. This economic statement would have been useful had it included at least three things. First, it should have increased seniors' benefits because they are the ones mainly affected and they are unable to earn additional income. Second, there should have been significant health transfers because that is where we have difficulties. Finally, there needs to be a complete overhaul of EI because inflation could be a sign of a coming recession and, as a result, job losses.

Given that six in 10 workers currently do not have access to employment insurance, would my colleague be prepared to include measures that would support the overhaul of EI?

[English]

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Mr. Speaker, we tried to give immediate supports and help to seniors, those who are on fixed incomes. We put many motions forward in the House just in the last two months, including one cancelling the carbon tax and one calling for no new tax increases.

It is too bad the costly coalition does not believe in doing that. It does not believe in helping our seniors and those on fixed incomes, like the disabled. The coalition voted against it. We keep putting these common-sense solutions in front. If one was asking us today what we could do immediately, we would say to axe the carbon tax and put more money back into Canadians' pockets.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, unfortunately, I was quite disheartened to hear the member's characterization of the spending as an addiction to spending. My constituents suffer from real addictions that we have to talk about these days.

However, I want to talk about the need for recovery. It is quite critical, now more than ever. The question is this: Where do we recover these costs from? Does the member not agree that it is better to recover from large corporations that are benefiting from the poverty of Canadians?

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Mr. Speaker, there is a simple way to help recover the cost. It is getting out of the way of our world-leading energy sector, letting it unleash its potential and having more revenues come in.

Right now, what we are seeing is that the government's coffers are being filled up on the empty stomachs of Canadians. It is benefiting from inflation, and it is too bad that the NDP keeps propping it up and letting it do it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to seek unanimous consent from the House to share my time with my distinguished colleague from Mirabel.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the member have unanimous consent to share his time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1620)

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, part of an MP's job is to acknowledge the achievements of people from our riding. I am going

to take a few seconds to talk about an important event that took place on the weekend.

There was a tournament of our national sport, the Canadian Hockey Enterprises Canadian Cup, in Saint-Constant, in my riding. Teams from Ontario and Quebec came to play, along with a local team, Arsenal Cadet D2 from the Jacques Leber school. Under the masterful guidance of Yann Hallé and Matt Grenon, our local team won the tournament. That is outstanding news.

I could list the players who truly put all of their talent on display, but it was a team win. I would first like to say that the goalies really put up a brick wall, letting in just two goals in five games and posting three shutouts. The defence held firm. No one was getting by them. The offence used all their energy to create scoring chances. All this combined helped Arsenal win. The players lifted the trophy in front of parents and friends who were extremely proud of their heroes. Congratulations to the Arsenal players for playing so well.

Now I will turn to Bill C-32. That is what we are here for, and I get the feeling people are eager to hear what I have to say about it, so here goes.

I want to go over what led to the introduction of Bill C-32. They say that opportunity makes a thief. They also say that heroes are born in times of crisis, and history has proven that to be true. We have witnessed truly difficult times, and we have seen extraordinary people, in both thought and deed, emerge.

To be honest, I am a very hopeful guy. I am optimistic by nature. People even stop me on the street to say so. I have pondered this difficult economic situation, with inflation at its highest point in 30 years and the looming threat of recession. People who take an interest in economics know how rare it is for these two conditions to occur simultaneously. It is very rare, and the situation is critical.

The health care system is broken everywhere in Canada, including in Quebec. ER doctors recently said we have hit the breaking point. This is serious. ER doctors on the ground working with people say things are really bad.

The rigours of inflation have hit seniors especially hard because they are on fixed incomes. These people were expecting help.

In addition, six out of 10 people do not have access to employment insurance. This system is so bad that CERB had to be created during the COVID-19 crisis because the system was unable to fulfill its mandate. In addition, employment insurance is what is known in economics as an automatic stabilizer. That means that when the economy is bad, employment insurance helps people who are in financial distress. We thought that the Liberals were actually going to do something about it and that the stage was set.



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We were looking forward to the economic statement. Someone said to me that it was going to be as sensational as a kangaroo on a trampoline. It was set to be quite a show. I asked him if he was sure. Well, so much for the kangaroo. These are extraordinary times, but the statement was a massive flop. That reminds me of something else.

I went to a baseball game this summer. There was a peewee player who weighed at least 200 pounds and had a moustache. When he went up to bat, the pitcher threw some balls and everyone was sure he would hit one out of the park. He took a swing, hit a 10-foot grounder and basically staggered to first base. The defence was not at its best, but when the player got to first base, no one told him that he had not done well. He was patted on the back, and what he did was somewhat comparable to what the government has done.

The Bloc Québécois has taken stock of what the government has done, the short 10-foot ground balls, and we do have to pat it on the back, not because it has impressed us, but because what little it has achieved is not so bad.

• (1625)

Given the circumstances, we expected 100% and we got 3%. Hooray for the 3% and for the effort. That is what we can say to this government.

What is in this document? Nothing spectacular, but the government does use the word “inflation” 115 times. It was excited. It decided that it was not going to do anything about inflation, but that it was going to do an incantation. The government decided to talk about inflation so much that people would think that it is going to do what needs to be done about it. That is an old, outdated strategy, but the government thinks that it is enough to say “inflation” while gathering around the fire.

In the end, we see that nothing is happening. Simply saying a word over and over is not going to change anything. The government needs to take action, but as we have seen, it is not doing so. The government is staying static, and it is business as usual. That is what this government always does. Regardless of the situation, regardless of whether the issue falls within its jurisdiction, the government does nothing. Things have gotten to the point where, when it finally does do something, we are shocked because we are not used to it.

We can see that the government has dusted off some legislative standards and is serving up the same old thing when it talks about giving back money through the goods and services tax credits. It says that is good news. Last week in the House, the Liberals were applauding and cheering, and one of them even almost sent his glasses flying in the excitement.

That is an okay measure, but the Bloc Québécois had been calling for this to be done for a whole year. The Liberals dragged their feet, but at least they did it. It is the least they could do. It is a grounder, but it is still worthwhile.

What did the Liberals do for seniors? I did not say that because we are also dealing with a shortage of workers. We are not asking them to do something about the shortage of workers because they are way too mixed up. The Bloc Québécois is saying that we need

to encourage those who are retiring to re-enter the workforce and give them tax exemptions. We need to tell them that if they want to go back to work, we are there to help, but that they are not being forced into anything. If they do not want to go back, that is not a problem.

What they are doing, what they have said several times, is that they will solve the worker shortage in a very simple way, namely, by giving nothing to seniors aged 65 to 75. Sooner or later, those seniors will have so little money that they will be forced to go back to work, and that will help solve the worker shortage. That is pure nonsense. That is not how it works. It must be an incentive. It should not be forced on them because these people do not have enough money to make it through this period of high inflation. The government does not understand this.

The Liberals have been telling us for seven years that something needs to be done about EI, that we have to wait and something is in the works. We have been waiting for seven years, but nothing has been done. They will not tell us anything. It seems that something is brewing, but no one will tell us what that might be.

It would have been easy to fight inflation intelligently. Inflation, among other things, is a result of supply chain issues. It is a result of our dependence on fossil fuels. That is a problem for us, which means that we are dependent on the fluctuating prices of fossil fuels, including oil. That is very easy to understand. We need to move toward clean energy, but the Liberals are incapable of doing so. They are encouraging oil companies to continue to produce. Canada is the only G7 country to increase its greenhouse gas emissions and they are happy.

I will end with something very simple. I was saying that we expected a lot and that the Liberals did nothing about employment insurance and health transfers. They would rather bicker. It is futile and they are bickering. A fat lot of good that does us.

However, they did do something very important and I am sure that, when I talk about it in my riding, people will say that this is quite the government. The Liberals implemented a Canada-United States agreement on the treatment of public servants who go to the moon. It seems that this is a far-sighted government that talks about what will happen on the moon but has no idea what is happening on earth.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the Bloc and the Conservatives talk about inflation. They cover their ears or close their eyes when it comes to what is happening in the world around us. It is almost as if the pandemic was not there or there was no war taking place in Europe. Do the leader of the Bloc, the Bloc party in general, the leader of the Conservatives or the Conservative Party in general not recognize that there are things happening around the world that have had an impact on inflation?

In Canada, we believe we can do more, and we have been providing supports for Canadians. We understand the cost of groceries and the hardships Canadians are facing, and that is why we bring forward legislation and budgetary measures to support Canadians.

*Government Orders*

Will he not at the very least acknowledge that when we make the comparison, we are better off than the U.S.A., England and many of the European countries? Could he provide his thoughts on that aspect of inflation?

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

Last week in my riding, I tried to use the Liberal argument. A 68-year-old pensioner told me that the price of everything had gone up. I tried the liberal technique. I looked him in the eye and said, “Sir, it is worse everywhere else.”

It does not work. These people have needs. They have expectations of the government. We have to help them. We can tell them that it is worse elsewhere, but they do not care. The Liberals have the tools. They just lack the will, unfortunately.

[*English*]

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his analogies about sports. It was so nice to hear him talk about that. It brings some excitement into the House.

The member talked a little about what this economic statement is, and it is really just a reannouncement of spending. It was interesting to hear the Liberals use the word “spending” today instead of the word “investments”. I also appreciate the member mentioning the word “inflation”, because I did not realize it was used only 115 times in the economic statement.

However, the members talked about a senior he had seen and looked straight in the face. I would like to hear more of how that senior responded to the inflationary cost of their home heating, which is anticipated to be coming this winter.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, if we are talking about this person in particular, there is a very simple solution. We have been talking about it for years. The member for Shefford does great work trying to bring the government to its senses. It is not complicated. We do not need to draw a picture to make the government understand it.

The Liberals have created two classes of seniors. How did they come up with that idea? Are they going to get a Nobel prize for that sort of thing? They say that there are two classes of seniors, those aged 65 to 75 and those older than 75. Where does that come from?

Given that inflation affects seniors aged 65 to 75 as well as those over 75, why are they treating seniors differently?

We are trying to make them see sense and we may end up succeeding. That is why we are asking questions. Is there a government economist capable of understanding that?

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

Today, during the debate on Bill C-32, the Conservatives proposed getting rid of the carbon tax on home heating in order to make life more affordable for Canadians.

In Quebec, where the majority of heating is electric, this would have almost no impact on families who are struggling to make ends meet.

Does my colleague agree that eliminating the GST on home heating would be a better way to help Quebecers and Canadians?

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Mr. Speaker, in Quebec, fortunately, we use electricity most of the time for heating.

It is simple: When we talk about the carbon tax, that does not apply to Quebec. In Quebec we have the carbon exchange. It is not the same thing. It is not just the term that is different. The entire system is different. When we hear them talk about that, we have very little interest in what they have to say because it does not really affect us.

The thing that surprises me the most is to see the Conservatives from Quebec get worked up into a lather about getting rid of the carbon tax. I do not get it, because that does not affect them at all.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Taxation; the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Public Safety; the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, Sports.

[*English*]

The Chair would like to take a moment to remind members of the purpose of adjournment proceedings. The late show is a vehicle for brief exchanges on matters initially raised during question period for which a member remains dissatisfied with the response provided, and members themselves select which of their questions they want to raise again during the adjournment proceedings.

Both the member raising the issue and the minister or parliamentary secretary responding are expected to address the matter for which notice was given. As such, members should not be surprised if they are interrupted by the Chair in cases where their interventions are off topic.

Continuing debate, we have the hon. member for Mirabel.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say that it is with great enthusiasm that I rise today, but for me to be truly enthusiastic, I would have had to see something new in the economic update. There really was not much there. As my colleague from La Prairie said earlier, it merely dusts off and updates some old legislation. It is an implementation act and a very long document, but there is not much in terms of real content.

*Government Orders*

There is one new aspect, though. Once again, as my colleague mentioned earlier, we are doing something we did not do last March when the budget was presented. We are talking about inflation more than anything else. The word “inflation” appears in the document roughly 110 times and is referred to ad nauseam. There is also the prospect of a recession now and, for the first time, the document includes an official forecast of a slowdown for two consecutive quarters. This is an extremely important observation. We are talking about inflation and we are anticipating a recession.

As my colleague from La Prairie said, the situation is such that we are being told that inflation is very serious, and the Prime Minister is doing what he likes to do when he goes on a trip to India: He dresses up as a sorcerer, a magician or whatever, and thinks that repeating it 10, 20, 50, 100 or 120 times will make the problem disappear. However, the people struggling with inflation every day in their homes do realize that 80% of all the money announced and spent in this budget update had already been announced either in Bill C-30 or Bill C-31, or still in the last budget or one-off announcements. That is why there is almost nothing in there.

Part of what is new is that it provides for workers to access certain benefits, to which they are already entitled, a bit sooner. People in Saint-Colomban, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac or Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines who are facing inflation and are afraid of losing their jobs will look at this and surely see that it is largely a rehash.

What should have been proposed? The last election campaign was my first. One of the highlights of the campaign was when the Liberal Party went to the public for ideas. The Liberals called the election even though they did not know what to do. They did not even have a platform. They went door to door and had nothing to say. One suggestion in their suggestion box could have been to fulfill the promise they made seven years ago, which was to make major reforms to the employment insurance system.

Workers are sometimes overcome by life's misfortunes. They may have to go through a recession and face COVID-19 while paying for groceries that now cost 10% more. Currently, not even one in two workers qualifies for EI even though they have paid into the system every paycheque, and their employer has paid into the system every paycheque. The government must reform the system. However, we know that a Liberal promise is basically only good for being torn up and thrown away, much like the motions we vote on in the House.

This government does not know how to listen. Even when it takes a step forward, it fails to implement its very own measures. The Bloc Québécois asked for 50 weeks of benefits for people with serious illnesses, such as cancer, who need treatment for long periods of time. If people are undergoing chemo and not applying for jobs, I think it is fair to say they are not trying to rob the system. The Liberals thought 26 weeks of benefits was fair. That measure was voted on in the House and is ready to roll out, but to this day, workers are not getting even one extra week because cabinet has not passed the order in council. It has been 18 months and still no order in council. That is the very definition of a lack of political will, a lack of empathy for people, a lack of respect for Parliament, a lack of consideration for members of the public, for Quebecers, for Canadians, for workers and for sick people. The Liberals' ap-

palling failure to take action on employment insurance is a manifestation of all those things.

I had hoped there would be something in the statement about climate change, at least. The energy transition is an opportunity to transform our economy, an opportunity to invest, innovate and export. We have to unlock that potential.

● (1640)

The Prime Minister could not even be bothered to go to COP27. He is known for his judgment, so he surely had something less important to do. He did not go to COP27. We said to ourselves that at least the Minister of Environment, who is a reasonable guy, would go to COP27. Since the Prime Minister was not going with him, the minister was lonely and said he would invite some friends. He called the Royal Bank of Canada, one of the largest financial backers of oil projects, western Canadians and oil people. It seems that there was partying going on in Egypt at the Canada pavilion. Oil spill shots were served, people were standing on tables at midnight or 1 a.m. and they sang *O Canada* after 3 a.m. It seems that the oil people and the environment minister were really partying.

Now, the minister is saying that it was very important to invite them because they have a role to play in the transition. My colleague from La Prairie would say that it is like inviting Dracula to a blood bank. Those are his words.

My grandfather, who was a very wise man, used to say, “Tell me what company you keep and I will tell you who you are”. Today, we know who the Liberals are, and it is reflected in the budget update. The Liberals tell us that they are supposedly going to eliminate subsidies to oil companies, which is not the case, because they are only eliminating some of them. One positive aspect, though, is flow-through shares.

However, the government is subsidising small modular nuclear reactors. These reactors are only being sent to Alberta and the north to be used at oil sands processing facilities to produce more oil.

Does anyone know of any person, city or street in Canada that needs a small nuclear power plant on a skateboard on a street corner? Does anyone think they are for domestic use? No, these are oil subsidies. That is what the government is shamelessly doing. I wonder how the Liberals wake up in the morning feeling good about themselves when they say one thing and do the opposite. I would have a hard time with that and would struggle to look in the mirror every morning even just to shave. Maybe that is why the environment minister has a beard. Perhaps he struggles to look in the mirror to shave.

There is nothing for health care. As the Minister of Health said, this is a futile debate, and the money is not important. He wants to pay his doctors with love and sunshine. I hope he has good genes. He says that funding is not important, because the provinces have money. This is the new strategy. The provinces have been helping people with inflation by sending cheques, so that means they have money.

*Government Orders*

We look at the budget statement, in which the Liberals claim that they will reduce the federal debt to GDP ratio from 45% to 37% in a few years. They tell us that they have the money.

The week when the Liberals told us that the provinces have too much money, they announce in their statement cheques to reimburse the goods and services tax. They announce measures, but the provinces do not have the right to do anything at all. Essentially, what the Liberals are telling us is not to spend any more money on education or child care, not to help our seniors any more, not to build any more roads, to give up on public transit and certainly not move into an energy transition because as soon as we spend one penny, we will be told that we should have invested in health. According to their argument, which is flawed and preposterous, we should close down schools to prove to them that we truly need money for health. It is plain to see how the federal government is part of the problem.

Ottawa has money to subsidize the oil companies. It has money for that. Today, it had money for a military intervention. It can give money to Asian countries to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, as announced today. There is money in Ottawa.

There is money to undermine our public dental plans for children. They have money for that. There is money for GST rebate cheques, to lower the second tax bracket for people who make \$90,000, \$100,000 and more. That is what they call the middle class because they assume that people cannot count. There is money for permanent facilities on Roxham Road for Liberal donor friends. They have money for that.

The Liberals need to stand up, show some backbone, meet with the health ministers and get the money out.

• (1645)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are many aspects of the fall economic statement that I thought the Bloc would in fact support. We can talk, for example, of the Canada growth fund, an investment that, using our tax system, is going to ensure that we have a greener economy. I would think that is an aspect the Bloc would support.

I get it. There are some other aspects. Bloc members will say that sustainable development in their natural resources is not possible. The Conservatives will say we are not doing enough and we are neglecting the areas that the Bloc would argue we should neglect more.

Do Bloc members actually support the fall economic statement, or will they be voting against it?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, we have already said that we are going to vote in favour of it because the bar has gotten so low with the Liberals that we are now saying that they could have done worse. I hope they are happy with that. That is the highest compliment I can pay them today.

Having said that, this government is the world's foremost green-washing champion. It is easy for the Liberals to call this or that a

green transition fund, except that the reality is that the growth of the oil sands industry out west is still central to the future of the Canadian economy for them.

I am not criticizing them for having a rotten economic statement from top to bottom. What I criticizing them for, as I have since I was elected, and what I criticized them for prior to being elected, is their profound lack of ambition for the future of Quebec and Canada.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is one element of this bill that barely scratches the surface of the problem of tax havens and the \$30 billion that leaves Canada every year. The government is proposing measures that will recover roughly \$600 million out of the \$30 billion. That does not go far enough, in my view.

I would like to ask my colleague a question on this topic. In his opinion, is it enough to reclaim 2% of the \$30 billion of taxpayer money that goes to tax havens every year?

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, I know those are big numbers, but in the grand scheme of the federal government's budget, \$600 million rounded up is zero. Recovering \$600 million is a drop in the bucket when it comes to a problem as big as tax evasion and tax avoidance.

Not to mention that the government actually encourages it. I asked the Minister of National Revenue about KPMG. In the U.S., charges have been laid for tax evasion and avoidance schemes, but, in Canada, there has been no investigation, no digging and no desire to make the truth or any information at all known to the public. The government actually seems to be doing its utmost to prevent an investigation.

This despite the fact that the minister legally has the power and the right to investigate. On behalf of the Government of Canada, the Minister of National Revenue is basically telling corporations that want to steal from Canadian taxpayers to go right ahead and help themselves.

• (1650)

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, would my colleague go so far as to say that this economic statement is futile?

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, is it futile? It is not nearly as futile as what the Minister of Health said.

Then again, there was an opportunity here. In fact, a budget is presented every year, in March, and there are updates and implementation bills, like the one before us today. The government has the opportunity to put forward more measures, to implement them quickly, but also to present them to the public. When we are dealing with a budgetary or quasi-budgetary exercise like the one we are debating today, the public pays more attention, journalists pay more attention.

The fact that this opportunity was completely wasted and this statement mostly recycles old items shows just how tired and uninspired this government is.

*Government Orders*

[English]

**EXTENSION OF SITTING HOURS AND CONDUCT OF EXTENDED PROCEEDINGS**

## NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that with respect to the consideration of Government Business No. 22, at the next sitting of the House a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that the debate not be further adjourned.

\* \* \*

**FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by talking about a meeting I had a few minutes ago before I entered the House. It was with two remarkable young people in Canada, Shay Larkin and Andrei Marti. They are two kids who represent Kids For a Cure from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. They are here on Parliament Hill with their mothers, Marsha Larkin and Annelise Brown. Our rules do not permit me to say they are in the gallery, so I will not do that, but this is—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would like to say, as a type 1 dad, that it is good to have them in the gallery.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your help in circumventing the rules. That is very kind and much appreciated.

They are here for a cure and for more funding so we can get the cure for juvenile diabetes. This is extremely important and we welcome their presence on Parliament Hill. This is a sign of the kinds of investments that need to be made, but they are, sadly, not being made through the fall economic update.

There are a number of things in the update that I think we can all support. First is the NDP drive for years to take the interest off apprenticeship and student loans. The NDP has pushed on this for years. Members will recall that when COVID hit back in 2020, on March 13 I was pleased to rise in the parliamentary press gallery to push the government, along with my NDP caucus colleagues, to remove the interest on student loans and to freeze repayment during the COVID pandemic.

To the government's credit, it did move in that regard, but it had not taken the move that so many student groups and students across the country, as well as the NDP caucus, the member for Burnaby South and I, had been pushing for years: that the government should not be profiting anymore from student loans. This is the debt that students undertake in this country for apprenticeship and student loans to gain the skills that will contribute to a vital economy in this country. The government should not be profiting from that,

and it is something the NDP has been pressuring this Parliament and the government on for many years. We have finally achieved it, and the interest on the federal portion of student and apprenticeship loans will be eliminated. That is a welcome action, subject to the NDP pushing this consistently and constantly in Parliament.

Also, the government finally took action on what has been a profound loss on behalf of Canadians, and that is the massive amounts of money made by large corporations and the ultrarich in Canada that is taken overseas. The member for Burnaby South, who is our leader, and the NDP caucus have been calling for years for the government to put in place fair tax rules so that everybody pays their fair share. The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that it was \$25 billion a year under the former Harper government and is now over \$30 billion a year. That is money that could be spent on so many other things, but instead it goes to overseas tax havens and tax loopholes.

For Shay, Andrei and their parents, imagine the investments we could make to find a cure for juvenile diabetes. Instead of having \$30 billion going offshore, we could have substantial investments in our health care system and in research. This would make a big difference in finding a cure. It would make a big difference in the quality of our health care system. It is \$30 billion that is lost, and this is a minimum. As we know from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, which always admits there is a certain margin, the conservative figure, meaning a modest underestimate of the final amount of money that goes to overseas tax havens and tax loopholes, is now over \$30 billion a year.

Given that context, what would the government do? Would the government step up and curb that? The member for Burnaby South called for an excess profits tax, such as we had in the Second World War. During COVID, this was something the NDP repeatedly raised. In the Second World War, at the height of crisis, an excess profits tax was put in place that allowed companies that were benefiting from increased profits to pay their fair share in contributing to the war effort.

● (1655)

As a result of that, Canadians were able to play such an important role in bringing an end to the massive hatred and genocide that was engendered by Nazism and fascism in Europe. That was absolutely fundamental.

The NDP have called for an excess profits tax. The NDP have called for a windfall profits tax, as we have seen oil and gas companies making windfall profits. The big grocery giant chains have been making windfall profits with inflation, raising their prices far beyond, which has engendered the term “greedflation”. That is a result of the fact that we have companies now profiting from inflation by jacking up their prices even more than what the inflation figures would actually justify. That greedflation has promoted and forced incredible hardship on Canadian families from coast to coast to coast.

*Government Orders*

We called for an excess profits tax. We called for a windfall profits tax. Ultimately, Liberals stepped up in this fall economic statement. They stepped up. Again, the figure is over \$30 billion a year. Given the hardship that Canadians are facing and the importance of putting in place investments that will make a difference in their lives, in this corner of the House, the NDP have been fighting hard.

We have succeeded in getting dental care in place, and we know now that families will be able to pay for their children's dental work for kids 12 and under. Next year it will be youth 18 and under, seniors and people with disabilities. We forced a rental supplement that will be paid out to well over a million Canadians who are struggling to pay for their rent right now, and we forced a doubling of the GST to make sure that over 12 million Canadians who have lower incomes will actually have the wherewithal to put food on the table. These are all things that we forced.

We believe that our role is to continue to push Parliament and the government to provide supports to Canadians who are really struggling at this tough time. To do that, we need to make sure we close the loopholes and stop the hemorrhaging of tax dollars by big corporations and the ultrarich's overseas tax havens. As I mentioned, the figure is \$30 billion.

I am asking a rhetorical question, but what percentage would colleagues think a responsible government, in a time of crisis, would actually start to curb that hemorrhaging of money to overseas tax havens, those windfall profits, those excess profits? What percentage would it be?

Mr. Speaker, if it were you or I running our household expenditures, I do not think we would be talking in the single digits. I think we would be talking about the idea that we all need to contribute, at this critical time, to the effort to provide Canadians with supports, including those for seniors and people with disabilities. The disability benefit and all of those things need to be put in place. At \$30 billion, one would want to take a substantial proportion of that because that is money that could be helping Canadians but is being taken from Canadians and taken overseas.

Did the government take 20%? No, it did not. Did it take 15%? No, it did not. Did it take even 10%? That would be a very modest amount of money, which should be paid into public coffers to help all of us, the commonwealth in this country.

The fact is that Canadians pay their taxes assiduously, honestly, with integrity every year. Small businesses file their tax returns. People with disabilities file their tax returns. Families file their tax returns. People file their tax returns. They pay their fair share to provide that support that all Canadians can hopefully benefit from. Big corporations and the ultrarich do not do this.

One would think that 10% would be a relatively small amount but the government did not even go there. It did not go to 9%, 8%, 7%, 6% or even 5%, 4% or 3%. The sum total of the government's attempt to curb massive overseas tax evasion, windfall profits by the banks and big corporations, is a tax that will bring in about 2% of that amount. It applies to banks and life insurance groups, and that is it. It is 2%.

• (1700)

There is a real problem with Bill C-32. Yes, there is the NDP influence. New Democrats pushed proposals that would make a difference in the lives of Canadian students, and there are the other elements that we brought to bear over the course of the last few weeks, including the doubling of the GST credit, ensuring dental care and ensuring rental supports. All of those things do make a difference.

However, above all, this fall economic statement is a lost opportunity. It is a lost opportunity for Shay and Andrei and all of those activists in Kids for a Cure, who are looking for support for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. It is a lost opportunity for those seniors who are struggling to make ends meet and really need support for an increase in their pensions. It is a lost opportunity when we compare, as far as student loans are concerned, the significant measures taken by the Biden administration in the United States to what we see here. Eliminating interest is an important NDP initiative, but it falls far short of what is actually needed.

Last spring, in the budget, the NDP forced significant investments in housing so that they start to build the housing required to make sure that every Canadian has a roof over their head at night and has that right to housing, and we are going to see the product of that in the coming year or two. However, we still have a long way to go. This fall economic statement is, again, a lost opportunity because there is not that increase in investments that could have made such a difference.

It is a lost opportunity when it comes to taking the GST off home heating. Members will recall that just a few weeks ago, on a Conservative opposition day, we proposed an amendment that would have taken the GST off of home heating. To the surprise of all of us, because in 2019 the Conservatives campaigned on taking the GST off home heating, when the NDP made that proposal for the amendment, they said no, which kind of flies in the face of it. When they make commitments on the campaign trail, they should keep them in the House of Commons. The Conservatives chose not to keep that commitment in the House of Commons. Therefore, this was another lost opportunity in the fall economic statement.

Above all, the issue of tax fairness in this country is becoming a huge and growing problem. We have needs to be met. We have an infrastructure deficit. We have Canadians who are struggling to make ends meet. We really need to have a tax system that ensures that everybody pays their fair share. We know that regular families do. We know that seniors do. We know that people with disabilities do and students do. They file their tax returns. They pay what they owe. We grumble sometimes when we do that, but we understand that there is something better and that is why we make those contributions.

We want to build a better country. We want a country where everybody can benefit and where nobody is left behind. We want to build a country where there is housing for everybody.

*Government Orders*

The member of Parliament for Nunavut has been an incredible campaigner and incredibly outspoken on the dearth of housing in Nunavut and the housing crisis up there. For a fraction of that \$30 billion that goes offshore every year, we could be providing supports so that the people of Nunavut actually get the housing they deserve. These would be supports for housing for people right across the country and indigenous-led housing developments right across the country because, in so many first nations communities, housing is simply not there. We can provide housing for everybody in this country.

We can provide supports for everybody, including a disability benefit, which the NDP campaigned on. We continue to push the government to actually establish that benefit, and not just talk about but put in place, so it starts helping people today, including people with disabilities.

• (1705)

As members know, as we have seen the growing food bank line-ups across the country, more than half of those people who are lining up are people with disabilities. We can provide those benefits now with tax fairness. We have the wherewithal to make those investments in housing and to make those investments to ensure that people get a basic level of income to allow them to live in dignity. We can provide the supports for our health care system so that we can ensure we are moving to an even better health care system.

The architect of our health care system, Tommy Douglas, always believed that it was the funding that was so essential. What we have seen under previous governments, both Conservative and now the current Liberal government, is an erosion of that funding, which has led to a deterioration of our public health care system, an institution that Canadians hold dear. We have to make sure that we are reinvesting in health care, and that includes reinvesting in research, which brings me back to Shay Larkin and Andrei Marti, who are here on the Hill to talk about more money for research to find a cure for juvenile diabetes.

There are many other advocates who come to the Hill who need funding, and sometimes remarkably small amounts compared with the \$30 billion that we blow away every year to overseas tax havens to help the ultrarich and big corporations increase their profits. However, often for a very small fraction of that money, we could have breakthrough cures for a whole range of diseases.

We can do that in this country. We should be able to do that in this country. We should be able to provide the funding to renew our infrastructure across the country. We should be able to find the funding to ensure that we can provide post-secondary education and apprenticeship training in the whole range of areas where we have skills shortages. We should be able to do all of those things, but that starts with tax fairness. Other countries have put in place windfall taxes and excess profits taxes. They have closed loopholes. They have ensured that they actually cut off that flow of money out of their country, which is really, in a sense, the theft of taxpayers' money.

The money that we keep as a commonwealth, that we put together collectively to ensure the health and well-being of all of our citizens, should be used properly. It is not supposed to be on a beach in the Bahamas. That money is supposed to be helping that senior in

Smithers, British Columbia. That money is supposed to be helping in Iqaluit with the dearth of affordable housing that we have. It is supposed to be funding the Nanaimo infrastructure that we are seeing. It is supposed to be funding, in New Westminster—Burnaby, supports for the Royal Columbian Hospital and Douglas College. These are all the things we can achieve when we have fair taxes.

Are there good things in the fall economic statement? Yes, and the NDP is proud to have pushed for those things and succeeded in getting them. However, does this fall economic statement fall short of what is needed? Absolutely, and there is a need for tax fairness that goes far beyond taking 2% of what is going to overseas tax havens. We can do that. One day there will be an NDP government in this country. When there is, we will see the kind of fair tax system that can make such a difference for all Canadians.

• (1710)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member for New Westminster—Burnaby can speak to one of the comments that was made by a Conservative colleague, the member for Simcoe North, earlier. He said, “we do not have a student debt problem in this country.” I would argue that we do have a problem when it comes to education in this country. The problem is that more and more is being expected of young people now when it comes to education. However, more importantly, it is expected that they will bear the financial burden of it.

Four or five decades ago, one could get a publicly funded high school education and have a meaningful career afterwards that provided for oneself and one's family. Nowadays, a bachelor's degree is not even enough. People are expected to get a master's degree and further post-secondary degrees. However, it is all being done on the backs of their having to pay for it. Whereas, when it was my parents and their friends who were getting educated in high school, they could leave high school and get a good job, and they did not have to pay for it because the public system paid for it.

Does the member not agree that we do have a problem when it comes to education in this country and that we should be pushing for more government support to give people the quality of education needed to get meaningful employment afterwards?

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I completely agree, but first the government needs to take action on tax fairness. It cannot continue to hide in its shell and refuse to take action, with this hemorrhaging of tax dollars going overseas. It needs to take the steps. The NDP has laid out what it needs to do. All it needs to do is follow NDP leadership, and we will have those resources to start to renew the education sector.

*Government Orders*

It hurts the families tremendously, but it hurts many of the families because young people cannot go into those chosen professions. They cannot go \$100,000 into debt or \$120,000 into debt, so it means we end up losing the youth who go through the programs, have huge debt loads afterward, and end up basically having a mortgage on a future that takes 10 or 15 years to pay down. In my case, that is how long it took.

It also means we have skill shortages in every crucial area across the country. We are feeling it most acutely in the health care field, with the shortages of nurses and doctors. That is related to student debt.

**The Deputy Speaker:** My public service announcement for this evening will be that the quicker we ask questions and the quicker we can answer them, the more people can participate in these great debates we are having. Those last two were very long.

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the fall economic statement there is a specific line item for Lytton, British Columbia, in my riding of Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon. In June of this year, the Government of Canada made a special announcement, in which it put forward \$77 million for the rebuild of Lytton. In the fall economic statement, the government extends the payment periods over five years and transfers the funds from the Pacific economic development agency to Infrastructure Canada.

In the consultations the NDP had with its coalition partners, was there any mention of the specific case of Lytton, and does the NDP agree that Lytton, British Columbia should get the money up front for the rebuild versus having it doled out over a five-year period?

• (1715)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the issue of Lytton, what is most important is what works for the people of Lytton. That means a staged rebuilding of that community, which I know the member feels very strongly about, and so do I. It is also an indication, and this is important, about the reality of climate change.

Lytton is not the only community that has been destroyed by the reality of climate change as it continues to increase in its severity, whether we are talking about hurricanes in Atlantic Canada, flooding across the country, the atmospheric rivers that have poured down and cut the Lower Mainland of British Columbia off from the rest of the country, or the heat bombs that killed, as the member knows, in that tragic summer, over 600 people in the Lower Mainland, including 60 in my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby.

As a House, each member of Parliament needs to contend with the fact that climate change is a reality. We have to act accordingly. That means ending oil and gas subsidies, and it means putting money into clean energy so we can make the just transition to ensure we are preparing for this challenge of confronting climate change.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to come back to a question that my colleague from Mirabel got a few minutes ago about the \$600 million to fight tax evasion.

That seems like fantastic, wonderful news. However, for the past two years, many of us have been asking the Minister of National Revenue about the billion dollars the government invested to fight tax evasion and tax havens. How much did we get back? We know that Quebec managed to recoup more than Canada did from tax evaders.

Is that \$600 million really good news, or is it just more smoke and mirrors to try to convince people that the government is going to recover money from the right pockets?

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. It is ridiculous to talk about \$600 million when we are losing \$30 billion. That is 2%.

We have been talking about tax havens, the Panama papers, the Bahamas papers and the Paradise papers for years. Thousands of Canadians are mentioned. Even today, if we were to ask the government, how many of them it has gone after, how many have been forced to pay back the money they owe Canadians, we would find that the answer is not one of them.

The Conservatives completely failed in that regard, and the Liberals are doing the same.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I want to first give the member a special “welcome back”. I missed him while he was away.

I also appreciate that he shared the important policy initiatives that could have been covered in the fall economic statement, including with respect to addressing housing in Nunavut.

I want to ask the member this. Does he agree that any economic policy that comes out of any government needs to focus on the people and not just on numbers? I am thinking specifically about the lack of comprehensive EI reform and the good work the NDP does to protect workers.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Nunavut. I enjoy working with her tremendously. She is such a fighter for the people of Nunavut and has made such a difference.

If the government would step up when it comes to funding housing, and particularly funding northern housing, we would be making even more progress. That is the reality. The New Democrats are the worker bees in the House of Commons. We work hard, as members know. One of the things we have laid out is how to get things done, solutions.



Certainly, when it comes to Nunavut and housing, the solutions are there. The member for Nunavut has laid them out. The government just has to follow the NDP leadership. Fortunately, it did so when it came to dental care, the rental supplement and the doubling of the GST credit. Those are all welcome initiatives, but it needs to do more, such as with respect to the reform of employment insurance, so that when a person loses their job they have access to it. The member is right; that is absolutely fundamental. This needs to be another area where the government simply follows the NDP leadership.

Tragically, the Conservatives do not see the need for employment insurance, so it could get worse. We are suggesting that the Liberals make things better by following the NDP leadership and putting in place what we suggest, to ensure we have employment insurance when Canadians need it, when they lose their job.

\* \* \*

● (1720)

### POINTS OF ORDER

#### AMENDMENT TO BILL C-228 AT COMMITTEE STAGE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to Bill C-228, an act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, standing in the name of the member for Sarnia—Lambton.

Without commenting on the merits of the amendments proposed at the committee stage, I would like to draw to the attention of members an amendment that raises some procedural difficulties.

The amendment in question would add subparagraph 136(1)(d) (d.001) to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. It is found in the new clause 4.1 of the bill. The amendment would seek to protect termination and severance pay in the case of a bankruptcy. This amendment, in my view, seeks to expand the scope and principle of the bill as set at second reading stage. Moreover, the amendment is a new concept that was not contemplated in the bill at second reading and therefore should be removed from the bill for consideration at report stage and third reading stage.

When the member for Elmwood—Transcona proposed the amendment, the chair of the committee ruled it inadmissible. For the benefit of members who do not sit on the finance committee, I will quote the ruling. It states:

My ruling is that Bill C-228 amends the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to provide for the solvency of pension funds in case of bankruptcy. The amendment seeks to create new categories of payments to specific former employees that would have to be paid by a bankrupt, which is not envisioned by the bill.

As *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, states on page 770:

An amendment to a bill that was referred to committee after second reading is out of order if it is beyond the scope and principle of the bill.

In the opinion of the chair and for the above stated reason, the amendment brings a new concept that is beyond the scope of the bill, and therefore, I rule the amendment inadmissible.

A majority of the members on the finance committee voted to overturn the ruling of the chair and then proceeded to vote to adopt

### Government Orders

the amendment, which is now found in the bill as reprinted by the House on November 3.

I submit that the ruling of the chair of the finance committee was correct and that our procedures must be respected. As a result, the proper course of action to address this matter is to order a reprint of the bill without the offending amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will have a look at that, do some research on it and come back to the House as quickly as is practical.

\* \* \*

### FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, an act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure it is to rise and share some thoughts on a very important piece of legislation.

Over the years we have talked about things the government can do to make a difference in the lives of Canadians, whether we are talking legislative changes or budgetary measures.

What we have before us is a hybrid. We have legislative measures that have significant budgetary impacts on houses and homes across all regions of our country. It is a piece of legislation that I would like to think all members, upon reviewing and taking into consideration all the benefits within it, should be voting in favour of.

I was somewhat disappointed by the Conservative Party's amendment. I believe it does not give any merit to the legislation, and I would suggest it is just not necessary.

I would like to think that when we talk about what takes place here in Ottawa, from a government perspective, from the perspective of members of the Liberal caucus, it is about making an economy that works for all Canadians. That is a priority that we all take very seriously.

That is the reason, when we take a look at the fall economic statement, I want the people I represent and indeed all Canadians to see clearly what it is all about. I want them to see that we have a government, a Liberal caucus, that understands the hardship that Canadians are having to play today.

I have often made reference to the issue of inflation. Even when I made comparisons to other nations, it is not good enough that Canada's inflation is lower than that of countries like the U.S.A., England and many European nations.

*Government Orders*

Canadians want us to respond in a way that is going to be favourable to addressing what is happening here in Canada, whether it was the budgetary announcement made by the Minister of Finance months ago or, more recently, the fall economic statement that was issued just prior to the week we spent in our constituencies or doing constituency work, wherever we might have been.

Inflation is a serious issue. I am concerned about the price of margarine, and of groceries in general, and the impact it has, especially when the holiday season is around the corner. Many will go out and have to purchase all sorts of items, as Canadians from coast to coast to coast recognize and celebrate the holiday season.

For many it is going to be that much more costly. I understand the impact. That is why I started off by saying members should take a look at what the Government of Canada has been doing since the presentation of the budget, since the presentation of a series of legislative actions that are designed to support Canadians during this difficult time.

Yes, we had a worldwide pandemic, and we have a war that is taking place in Europe. Both of them combined have had a profound impact on the issue of inflation.

When we talk about what we can do, we look for leadership and ideas from within the House. I have made reference to it before, and I will continue to do so, whether it is today or into the future.

• (1725)

We have a Prime Minister who wants members of Parliament to look at what is happening in our constituencies and bring that to the floor of the House of Commons, into the standing committees and into our caucus discussions to have those discussions among ministers. I believe, whether in the budget of 2022 or the fall economic statement, we will find those consultations, those reports and those comments. I know I have been canvassed on numerous occasions from different departments, and I am somewhat of an opinionated person. That is hard to believe, but I can tell members the thoughts and ideas I share originate quite often in the constituency I represent.

I look at the many different leadership roles that are played within this chamber. We had the Minister of Finance answer some questions today. That is something I have also made reference to. If members had been listening to the answers, they might feel a little more comfortable in knowing this legislation would go a long way in meeting the needs of our constituents. Then, there is always some free advice provided on the issue of leadership, which I truly believe we have seen consistently, virtually from day one, with this Prime Minister and the government, whether it was with the tax break for Canada's middle class back in 2015, the tax increase for Canada's wealthiest 1%, or the growth of social programs.

There was the GIS and the Canada child benefit, and the supports for small businesses, seniors, people with disabilities, students and many others all the way through the pandemic. Yes, we did spend a great deal of money, and we listen to the Conservatives today criticizing the government by asking why we borrowed so much, yet they voted in good part for the money we borrowed, which they now criticize.

There has been inconsistency coming from the Conservative bench. They stand up, speaker after speaker, often just to criticize the government, and that is fine. That is their role, I guess, but there is a need to hold the official opposition to account for some of the things it does. When it comes to financial matters, and that is what we are talking about today and have been talking about them for a long time, we have been talking about the issue of inflation.

The leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, in one of his very first economic statements, and I remember it well, because he was talking about inflation, talked about how the Government of Canada needs to do something on inflation, and he shared his idea. Do members remember it? I remember it well. It was that one of the ways to fight inflation was to invest in cryptocurrency and Bitcoin. The Minister of Finance gave a fairly good articulation of the impact of the advice provided by the leader of Canada's official opposition party. It was somewhat ill-advised, I would suggest.

We think of our seniors, and the Conservatives criticize us and say we are not doing enough for seniors, which is not true. They say that, yet if those seniors they cite had followed the advice of the leader of the Conservative Party, depending on how much they invested, they would have lost anywhere from 30% to 60%, and even higher than that. A senior who had invested \$10,000 following the advice of the leader of the Conservative Party would have been lucky if they had \$4,000 left from that \$10,000 in their savings.

• (1730)

I think it is valid when the Minister of Finance asks the leader where the apology is. Where is the withdrawal? I do not quite understand it. Did the leader of the Conservative Party actually invest in cryptocurrency? Let us get a show of hands. How many of the Conservative members of Parliament followed the advice of the leader of the Conservative Party and bought cryptocurrency? If we canvass the House, we are not seeing any hands. They might be a little embarrassed to raise their hands.

Today, the Conservatives are quoting the Governor of the Bank of Canada, the very same governor the leader of the Conservative Party said he would fire. One day he is going to fire the Governor of the Bank of Canada, but today they are quoting the Governor of the Bank of Canada. Do they support the institution of the Bank of Canada? Other prime ministers have, including Stephen Harper.

These are the types of things we should all be concerned about. It is about contrast. If we listened to some of the Conservative members' speeches, what did they say? They said that when it comes to the government's legislation to forgive the interest, to get rid of the interest on student loans, they took exception to it. We had a member who stood up and said it was a dumb idea. That is the essence of what he was saying.

Are we to understand that the Conservative Party of Canada does not support students and does not understand the impact that interest is having on student loans? This is a great way to support students in every region of our country, especially now, when they have to deal with inflation. The Conservatives do not support that.

*Government Orders*

The Conservatives say that not all the funding the Liberals spent went toward the pandemic. Of course it did not. Why? We have record amounts of dollars going toward health care. We are talking about additional hundreds of millions of dollars. Is the Conservative Party now saying that the money should not be spent, even though it and the Bloc will say we need to spend more and give more money? On the one hand the Conservatives say to give more money, but then they criticize us because we spent more money that was not related to the pandemic.

Let us talk about the issue of health care. Canadians should be very concerned about the Conservative Party. I believe a vast majority of Canadians understand and want to see national leadership on the health care file.

The member for Avalon brought forward a resolution dealing with long-term care, because he is right in his assertion that the federal government has a role to play. We have the Canada Health Act. There is a role. I am concerned that the Conservative Party is not much better than the Bloc when it comes to health care.

• (1735)

That is unfortunate for people like me and many others who reflect what Canadians want, which is a national government that has an interest in health care. That is why we negotiated agreements with the different provinces and territories. That is why we are recognizing long-term care. That is why we are investing in mental health. That is why we are looking at ways to save on pharmaceutical costs.

We understand that health care is important to Canadians and the federal government has a role to play. We are not just an ATM. In fact, if we go back to the seventies, we would find that there was an agreement that took cash out of the system in favour of tax point shifts, which premiers actually wanted.

Now we have a government that continues to support health care, because it is the right thing to do. It is what Canadians want us to do. However, they should be concerned by the Conservative Party of Canada. We could fast-forward and take a look at child care. Again, there are hundreds of millions going into the billions of dollars. Yes, I agree, that is a lot of money. However, we are investing in Canadians.

We recognize that bringing in a national child care program is costly, and it was not directly pandemic-related. However, Canadians would benefit by it, and it has been proven. All one needs to do is to take a look at the province of Quebec, which initiated the idea. Much like other issues on health care, one province brings it forward and the national government takes the idea and expands it so that it benefits all Canadians. We are seeing the same thing here with child care.

Canadians need to be aware. The Conservative Party of Canada does not want it. It is going to get rid of it. These are the types of differences between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. We could even go to more recent things. Let us look at the dental legislation that we passed. We are saying, as a government, that we want to be able to support those who are 12 years and younger by providing some dental insurance. That is going to be money in the

pockets of individuals, and it would assist them in getting dental work for children.

Do members realize that one of the biggest reasons for admissions into our hospitals today from a child's perspective is due to dental work? Indirectly, we are actually helping provinces on the health care file. By investing in dental care, there will be fewer children going into our hospitals. That is not to mention that it is the right thing to do. However, it is another initiative that the Conservative Party voted against. It is hard to believe, but Conservatives do not support children under the age of 12 receiving that.

There are more direct grants that I have not had time to talk about. I have not even talked about some of the other benefits, whether it is the doubling of first-time homebuyers tax credit or the multi-generational home renovation tax credit. I love that program. I could speak for half an hour plus just on that one program and how our communities would benefit. If I had leave from the chamber I would do just that, but I am already being told to wind up. I cannot believe it.

There is the anti-flipping tax. This is incredible. If members want to talk about housing-relating issues, this is in the legislation. We should be passing this. There are increases for taxes on banks. That is something that is critically important. There is a doubling of so many things that are positive.

However, I will sit and hope to get a question or two.

• (1740)

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I know the member opposite cannot believe it is not butter, but we know that this fall economic statement is not the real thing either.

The government is purposely engineering a famine by increasing the cost of fertilizer on farmers and the cost of fuel on farmers. It has manufactured a climate emergency and that is the rationale for the Liberals' tripling the carbon tax. No matter how much the costly coalition steps on the gas to accelerate to net zero, we are never going to get there because there simply are not the minerals available on the earth to make these batteries and all these things that they think are going to get us to net zero by 2050. I just wonder when this person is going to look at and take a hard read of the Finnish study that shows that net zero is an impossibility.

• (1745)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there is a lot in there that I would like to be able to attack. However, the biggest thing that I have to address is that the member said that the Prime Minister and the government, my Liberal colleagues, are manufacturing a climate emergency. Seriously, does the Conservative Party really believe that our government has manufactured a worldwide climate emergency? Why are they even meeting at COP? That is absolutely incredible.

*Government Orders*

This is a government that recognizes that the climate is changing. I can only encourage my colleagues and friends within the Conservative Party to sit down with the member and explain that it is worldwide and it is not because of this government that there is a climate emergency around the world. We like to think that we are actually making our communities better through many of the initiatives within this budget.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I acknowledge that, in principle, Bill C-32 is about implementing economic provisions. First of all, I want to say that my colleague's comments towards his opposition colleagues are mean, nasty and pure rhetoric.

The opposition members are clearly stating that the government is missing some good opportunities and avoiding big challenges that it could have attempted to address. I will give one example found in this statement, an example of a ridiculous measure that demonstrates it has failed to address major challenges. The statement indicates that the government will work on a Canada-U.S. agreement for compensation for government employees who go to the moon. What a fine and urgent priority.

Does my colleague believe that it is important and pertinent to work on an agreement on compensation for government employees who go to the moon?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I am sorry if the member feels that I have hurt his feelings and I am being too harsh on the opposition, but at times it is necessary to be harsh on the opposition and some of the things that the members say.

The member talks about housing issues in the legislation. The Bloc members talk about the cost of housing, and I will use it as an example because I made reference to it. Within the legislation, there is the anti-flipping tax. When we talk about initiatives that are necessary for the federal government to continue to demonstrate leadership on the housing file, this is one example where we are looking at ways homes are being used for the marketplace as opposed to being used to live in. Are there things we can do? Yes, there are. Within this legislation there are at least one, two or three good solid policy ideas.

I am glad that the Bloc members are voting in favour of the legislation, but I would reinforce that just because they are in opposition does not give them right to make irresponsible policy announcements.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I always enjoy how loudly the member speaks. I never have to wear an earpiece. In fact, if I do it actually hurts my hearing, so perhaps we should have a warning when he speaks in the House.

In all honesty, I represent a large rural and remote riding and, in some of my smallest communities of 3,000 people, we are seeing homelessness reach a state that I never thought possible. Part of the reason is that there is no non-market housing, housing that is really reflective of the need, so that when people get there they are only

spending about 30% of their income, which we know is best for everyone.

With all of the discussions the member was having, why is there not an investment in getting that housing out the door so that people can have that respect they so well deserve?

• (1750)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. When I think of housing programs, a number of initiatives come to mind right away. The rapid housing initiative is one example. We have indigenous housing commitments from the government. There are programs that are both urban and rural. One of my favourite ones is housing co-ops. I am a big advocate for housing co-ops. We now have a government that is committed to looking at ways to increase the number of housing co-ops.

Habitat for Humanity is a fantastic organization. We have a national government that is investing in Habitat for Humanity. Many initiatives were taken to support Canada's housing industry and it goes right back to when we made the multi-billion dollar commitment in a national housing strategy, which is a first in Canada, a number of years ago.

**Mr. Han Dong (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in this fall economic statement, I was looking for measures to support Canadian youth. In my riding of Don Valley North, we have Seneca College, and I have spoken to many young people. They have reasonable anxieties about getting through school, coming out and looking for a job, finding a place to live, having a family themselves and eventually owning a home.

Can he share with the House some of the measures in the fall economic statement that will help young people in Canada?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, when we look at the needs our communities have, and if we want to be able to assist young people, one of the best ways we can do that is to take a look at the loan capacity students have had to go through over the last number of years.

We want to say to our students that we will directly help them by not having them pay interest on loans. That is going to give students and apprentices in every region of our country the opportunity to save money. That money is going to assist them, not only with the issue of inflation that we are dealing with today, but also into the future. We are making schooling that much more affordable.

We have a responsibility to work with provincial jurisdictions. Supporting students by coming up with this particular fall economic statement and Bill C-32 is one of the ways Ottawa can demonstrate leadership.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we could swear just by the member's comments in his speech across the way that everything was just great, but it is not.

**An hon. member:** It is.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, he just said that it is. He heckled me and said it is. I have an article by Kelly Hayes entitled, “Northerners are hitting the cost of living breaking point”. We are seeing a skyrocketing amount of people who have to use food banks in the territories.

If everything is just good, what does the member have to say to northerners, when clearly it is not great for them?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I think it is really important that we recognize that in every region of our country people are having a difficult time. I recognize that. That is one of the reasons we will find Liberal members of Parliament consistently advocating for supports that will help citizens in all regions of the country where the demand is high. It is one of the reasons we have been so successful in lifting hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty. It is one of the reasons we have seen initiatives such as helping over three million seniors over the age of 75 in dealing with inflation, no matter where they live in Canada. There is a lot in here and we continue to work hard every day to make a positive difference so Canadians have better lifestyles.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies.

A staggering \$1.2 trillion is how much debt the finance minister tells us we will be up to our necks in by just next year. The Liberals have doubled our national debt since they came to power. The Prime Minister has incurred more debt than all prime ministers who came before him. The Liberals have doubled the debt, they have tripled the carbon tax and, to make matters worse, they have quadrupled people's mortgage payments, because Liberal inflation has led to Liberal interest rate hikes.

A favourite quote of mine is from Winston Churchill, who famously said, “Gentlemen, we have run out of money; now we have to think.” Well, it turns out the Prime Minister not wanting to think about monetary policy has had absolutely devastating consequences for Canadians.

The Conservatives had two simple asks: one, no new taxes, and two, no new spending unless it is paid for with equal savings. However, the Liberals did just the opposite. They are going to triple the carbon tax and increase spending by \$21 billion. That is their brilliant plan to combat inflation. It is obvious that a Prime Minister who does not mind spending Canadians' hard-earned tax dollars on a swanky \$6,000 hotel room and a finance minister who defines belt tightening as cancelling her Disney+ subscription just do not get it. However, do members know who does get it? It is everyone else.

This economic plan does nothing to address Canada's cost of living crisis. With a \$40.1-billion increase in revenues just this year, this statement shows that inflation is not only increasing the cost of living but increasing taxes on Canadians. Instead of giving Canadians much-needed relief during this time, the costly coalition seeks to profit off increased inflation.

Canadians are out of money and the Prime Minister is out of touch. Members opposite do not seem to know the facts. Do they

not know that interest payments on our debt will double this year, costing nearly as much as the Canada health transfer? Do they not know that Canadians continue to cut their diets, and mothers are putting water in their children's milk because they cannot afford 10% annual food inflation? Do they not know that home prices have doubled over the last seven years, forcing young Canadians to live in their parents' basements? Do they not know that food bank usage has soared to an all-time high, recording 1.5 million visits in just one month? No, they do not know, but the Conservatives know what it will take to solve this inflation crisis. Let us stop creating more cash. Rather, we should create more of what cash buys.

If I had to sum up the fall economic statement in one word, do members know what word I would use? I would use the word “deceptive”. It is deceptive because its central theme is this farcical tale that tough times might be ahead of us, but hey, Canada is on the right track, our fiscal policy is sound and at least we are doing better than everyone else. It is deceptive because it portends to be fiscally responsible when it is not. It is deceptive because it portends to rein in spending when it does not. It is deceptive because it portends to rein in inflation when it does not. It is deceptive because it portends to offer relief to Canadians when it does not. It is deceptive because language like “economic slowdown” belies the reality of a looming recession.

Now, we know that the Liberals are experts at shirking responsibility. Inflation is not their fault. Blowing up people's mortgage payments is not their fault. If one cannot get a passport, it is not their fault. If we cannot afford gas, groceries or home heating, that is not their fault either. Who do they blame? Well, it is Putin, of course, the war, supply chains, COVID or corporate profiteering. It is never their fault. They will blame anything. However, when we pose the question asking whether inflation was caused by a failed domestic monetary policy that ballooned the money supply by 27% in two years from \$1.8 trillion to \$2.3 trillion or by massive deficit spending, they will say no, that is not it; it is the war. Do members not see that it is Putin?

● (1755)

This is what is happening. The cost of government is driving up the cost of living. Half a billion dollars in inflationary deficits means more money chasing fewer goods, which drives up the cost of everything. Inflationary taxes drive up the cost of goods. The more the Liberals spend, the more things cost. Their argument that inflation was not triggered by domestic policy simply stretches credulity.

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In recent weeks, experts from across the country have presented the government with an uncomfortable truth: The inflation crisis is in fact a domestic crisis. After doubling our national debt, now the finance minister says it is time to be fiscally responsible. It is time to turn off the taps, and more spending would, in her words, “force the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates even higher. It would make life more expensive, for everyone, for longer.”

Remarkably, in the same statement, she increases spending anyway, by \$21 billion. By the way, spending is already way up. In 2020, just before the pandemic, federal program spending was \$338 billion. Now the finance minister says in 2023 it will be \$437 billion, a whopping 29% increase in spending over prepandemic levels.

When it comes to COVID, I will offer the Liberals a bit of an olive branch. The pandemic necessitated a certain degree of spending, which Conservatives voted for. However, the problem is, of the \$500 billion they spent in deficit, over \$200 billion had absolutely zero to do with COVID. Even before 2020, in the good old days of sunny ways, the government added a staggering \$112 billion to our debt.

I understand why the Liberals do not want to think about this. When Canadians realize how badly their tax dollars have been mismanaged, make no mistake, they will hold the government to account.

Here is another uncomfortable truth. For far too long, Europe was content with getting its energy from a brutal despot, but today that is no longer an option. Now the continent prepares for a winter that can only be described as hellish. We could have been there for them. However, the Liberals once again dropped the ball. While Canada sits upon the most ethically produced supply of natural gas on the planet, our friends in Europe are being held for ransom, begging to buy overpriced blood natural gas from Putin.

We could have been there for them, but the Prime Minister decided not to invest in exporting our natural gas. We could have been there for them, while creating good-paying Canadian energy jobs. We could have been there for them while generating revenue for Canadians, but the Prime Minister did not want to think about developing Canadian natural resources, and now Europe is paying the price. Canada does not get the sale, and Putin rakes it in, all the while funding his brutal war.

It is frustrating to see the Liberals being so inflexible and so ideological that they refuse to accept this fact almost 10 months into this brutal war. Talk about choosing posturing over prosperity.

I wish I had something positive to say about the fall economic update. I wish I could commend the government for exercising even an iota of the fiscal discipline that it claims to have suddenly converted to. This so-called fiscal discipline is relative only to the massive spending over the last two and a half years. Just about anything is a success when working with such a low benchmark. It is the financial equivalent of gorging on Halloween candy, minus a few chocolate bars here and there, and telling the world that the diet is “going well”. Ironically, when Conservatives propose fiscal responsibility, Liberals brand it austerity. When Liberals feebly try to do the same, it is called fiscal discipline.

We have been trying to reach across the aisle for months now. Just a few weeks ago, it looked like we had seen some progress when the finance minister endorsed our “pay as you go” approach to her cabinet colleagues. However, there is not a word of that policy in the update. When will the government commit to a real plan to balance the budget and stop adding fuel to the inflationary fire?

It goes without saying that \$1.2 trillion is a lot of money to owe. Right now, I say that Canadians have 1.2 trillion reasons to reject the Prime Minister's failed economic policy.

• (1800)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I had a chance to have a round table with seniors in Guelph last week, and I wonder whether seniors in my colleague's riding are seeing some of the same things around grocery prices.

The cost of living is really hitting hard. One of the seniors said to me that one of the pricing set-ups in the grocery store is where one pays \$4 to buy one item but if they buy two, they pay only \$3. Grocers are making extra money on seniors, single people and students, people who do not need the two items but only one.

Could the hon. member talk about how the fall economic statement might be able to help some of the seniors in his riding?

• (1805)

**Mr. Marty Morantz:** Madam Speaker, unfortunately I have bad news for the member. The fall economic statement is going to make things far worse for seniors in his riding and all of our ridings. The reason is that the government spent \$500 billion in a very short period of time and printed a lot of that money it make it happen. That is the petri dish for triggering inflation.

Conservatives had two simple asks in the fall economic update. We wanted no new taxes and no new spending unless it was paid for by commensurate savings within existing budgets. The fall economic update did neither of those things. In fact, it went the opposite way and increased taxes and spending. Additional spending at this point on the order of \$20 billion or more is going to trigger even more inflation and make it much harder for seniors across Canada to make ends meet.

*Government Orders***POINTS OF ORDER***[Translation]*

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we have here a Liberal government that is unable to deliver passports or issue old age security cheques on time to people who reach retirement age. The Liberal government is also unable to guarantee security for workers through EI. These are all things that are part of its legislative agenda or its current jurisdictions, yet it wants to lecture the provinces and Quebec on health, saying that it knows the truth. I find that rather astounding.

I would like my Conservative colleague's opinion on two things. The Conservatives have already agreed on increasing health transfers to the provinces and Quebec with no strings attached and on increasing old age security starting at 65. We already agreed on this, but since the arrival of the new leader, there has been talk of tightening spending.

I would like a clear answer.

*[English]*

**Mr. Marty Morantz:** Madam Speaker, I will agree with my colleague on one thing, which is that so many things are broken. It seems like the government could not create a program that it could not bungle so badly. Canadians cannot get passports. They cannot get through to the CRA.

The worst is the inflation. The failed monetary policy of the government by a Prime Minister who does not want to think about monetary policy has caused inflation, which is really hitting Canadians hard. More than that, it is enriching the pockets of the government. Kitchen cabinets are looking pretty bare right now, but the Liberal cabinet is pretty flush with all the new tax revenues inflation has granted to it.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, during this debate I have heard from a Conservative that he was opposed to removing interest on student loans and that there was in fact not a student debt problem in Canada. I beg to differ. Students in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith would certainly disagree with this statement as they try to get an education to contribute to our society and are penalized with interest rates that are just not feasible. At the same time, the Conservatives are proping up rich CEOs.

I am wondering if the member can clarify if he is in support of a Canada recovery dividend to ensure that these big box stores are being taxed appropriately and that money could go back into the pockets of those who need it most.

**Mr. Marty Morantz:** Madam Speaker, removing interest from student loans is a laudable goal, but we have to put things in context of the times in which we live. The government has spent and is in deficit over \$500 billion in the last two years. Now is the time for an iota of fiscal responsibility. We need to rein things in a little so that we can afford to do the things that my colleagues in the NDP want to do, but we are not at that spot right now.

It reminds of Margaret Thatcher's old saying, "the problem with socialism is that eventually you run out of other people's money". That is what has happened. We have run out, and it is time for a little fiscal discipline.

## AMENDMENT TO BILL C-228 AT COMMITTEE STAGE

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, with respect to the point of order that was raised earlier by the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader on the private member's bill, Bill C-228, let it be known that, when the amendment regarding severance was introduced, the chair ruled it out of order. The chair's ruling was then challenged and the majority of the committee voted to overturn the decision of the chair and to approve this amendment.

It is the Conservatives' opinion that the decisions of committees are not to be overruled by the government of the day. Therefore, as the Speaker considers the matter, we would ask that you uphold the independence of committees from outside control.

● (1810)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I appreciate the hon. member's point of order. I will certainly take it into consideration and we will come back to the House if need be.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies has the floor.

\* \* \*

**FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the time to debate Bill C-32, the fall fiscal update, as Canadians are hearing it. Sadly, the Liberals had a huge opportunity to help northern Canadians heat their homes and stay out of the food banks, but unfortunately, it does nothing to help northerners stay warm or buy groceries.

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Let us start first with Yukon. The Yukon Party up there does a great job of really keeping its own Liberal government to account. A member of the Yukon Party, Wade Istchenko, speaks to what we have been saying in the House on the Liberal carbon tax. He said, “while this Liberal government promotes their federal counterpart's crippling carbon tax, everyday Yukoners sitting down with their families are trying to figure out how to finance this month's oil bill and buy groceries at the same time.”

The member from Winnipeg North says that everything is grand, and he even repeated it for me, but clearly it is not in the territories.

Cutting Disney+ does not do much to cover the \$1,800 home heating fuel bill, so Yukon has become an unaffordable place to live under the Liberal government. I would like to mention that \$1,800 is the first payment of many to heat our homes for the winter. It is not just Conservatives in Ottawa who are saying this. Members of the Yukon Party are agreeing that it is a huge problem to pay bills in the north. The Liberals have done nothing to address that with Bill C-32.

I will move now to Northwest Territories. We hear that the carbon tax is great. We even heard this evening that Canadians get thousands more back than they ever contribute. It is hogwash, and we all know it.

Another article's headline reads, “Bill to change N.W.T. carbon tax rebates would hurt remote communities the most, say MLAs.” Again, it is supposed to all be coming back, and more, but here is the truth on the ground in Northwest Territories.

The article continues, “The change comes in order to comply with new federal regulations that, in addition to increasing carbon prices, prohibit carbon tax rebates that directly reduce the impact of the carbon tax.”

I heard a member say, “What?” Again, Liberals talk a big game about supporting folks and how they are going to see most of their money back, and more, but they are actually getting in the way of a rebate that would see some of this federal carbon tax money get back to residents of Northwest Territories.

The article goes on, “Questioning the minister, Jackie Jacobson, MLA for Nunakput, said he understands 'the federal government is forcing our government's hand,' but argued 'there has to be a way that the [Government of Northwest Territories] can draw a line to stop rising costs for the residents in Nunakput.'”

This is quite a different story than what we have heard. We are hearing from these guys on a daily basis that things are grand, and the NDP beside us here just goes along with it and says that everything is grand, while it is clearly not on the ground in the north. It is not good on the ground across the board in Canada for all Canadians, but especially in the north.

I will talk a bit about housing. In a recent announcement in Yellowknife, the Liberals announced more money for housing in the north. It sounds great on the outset, but how many times have we heard the announcements made but saw zero outcomes on the ground?

I was up in Nunavut and Inuvik, where I asked about this, and I have asked this question in the House before. I asked how many

houses had been built this year, after the promises made by the Liberal government. How many houses were built in Nunavut? Zero were built.

We have announcement after announcement after announcement, yet zero houses and residences are getting built for the people in the territories. Promises do not matter. The member across the way from Northwest Territories will know that promises do not go very far when it is -20°C, -30°C or even worse, -40°C, especially when one does not have a place to live.

● (1815)

The promises come, but the impacts of just inflation are real on the ground. We see promises made for houses to get built, but this is what happened in Nunavut. An article from the CBC, related to inflation, states that in one case, inflation led to delays and to a contractor “backing out of a 10-unit Taloyoak project because the housing corporation took so long to award the contract, with building costs spiking in the meantime” due to inflation.

The article continues, “Kusugak also insisted the \$10-million bid for a 16-unit project in Iqaluit was, in fact, withdrawn by the company that placed it.” Why was that contract retracted or rescinded? “All housing tenders this year have been cancelled because of high costs”, or inflation.

This is all while the member from Winnipeg says that there is nothing to see here and everything is grand. Well, it is not. Whether it is carbon tax and home heating or it is lack of housing in the north, the Liberal government is absolutely failing.

For my final couple of points, we talked about the cost of living. I got to see this first-hand. In a grocery store in Nunavut or Inuvik or wherever we go, a jug of milk costs us a lot of money. It is seven to eight bucks, and up there it is 20 bucks. That is just a carton of milk. We can look at ketchup or Kraft dinner, and Kraft dinner is almost \$4 a box, but everything is grand according to the Liberals across the way.

Another article is entitled “Northerners are hitting the cost of living breaking point”. This is in Northwest Territories. The article says, “The Salvation Army in Yellowknife says it has helped 1400 more people this year compared to 2021”. It is kind of puzzling because, again, according to the Liberal government, everything is great, while we have seen this massive spike in people visiting food banks across the territories.

The article also quotes the organization's executive director:

The general comment is that food price increases, along with other household costs, [are] making it increasingly difficult to maintain bill payments.



As recently as today, I have heard from other non-profits that are expressing the same concerns. They too are seeing an increase in the need for food among other supports.

I will repeat it: If everything was grand, why are we seeing more visits to the food banks? It is not just in urban settings. I am talking about the territories specifically, and I will get a bit more specific with the numbers. We are almost getting to the 10% mark with respect to residents of the territories having to visit a food bank.

The final article that I will quote is titled “A really alarming crisis: Iqaluit’s food bank now feeding 500 people a day, many of them children”. It states:

In October of last year, the Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre was serving about 150 meals per day. Blais, the food bank’s executive director, says they’re now serving more than 500—well beyond their capacity.

The article goes on:

Food Banks Canada’s latest report estimates more than 6,200 people across the three territories accessed their local food banks in March 2022 alone, and nearly a third of them were children.

They were at 6,200, and that was in March. We know things have gotten a lot worse. Even the Deputy Prime Minister is acknowledging that we are in for a tough road ahead. Many of our northerners are already seeing this. That number of 6,200 alone, as of March, pointed to a 36% increase in the number of people who have needed to access a food bank.

I started off by saying that Liberal promises in this economic update do not help northerners. The update simply does not help them stay warm; it does not help them buy groceries, and I wish it would.

• (1820)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, earlier we heard the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke say she believed the climate crisis that the world faces is a climate emergency that was manufactured by the Prime Minister. I wonder if the member would agree that the climate emergency is all a hoax that is being put on by the Prime Minister, as the member from Pembroke has alluded to.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I would ask the member across the way a question in return: Why did he not ask about how we can help northerners stay warm and buy groceries?

[Translation]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He talked about two things that caught my attention: the situation of seniors and food banks.

The government often answers that it helps seniors by helping food banks. I think it is an absolutely degrading shortcut to tell seniors that all they need to do is line up at the food bank.

That is a fact. Food bank workers in my riding are reaching out to me to say that the number of seniors requesting food hampers is growing. Is it not time the government realized that something needs to be done to improve their financial situation?

I do not want to get into the issue of the carbon tax because what seniors’ groups in Quebec are asking for in the way of help is for the government to improve old age security, which has not been in-

### Government Orders

creased for long enough. They also want the Liberals to do away with their proposal to increase the OAS only for those aged 75 and up.

The government is essentially failing half of seniors. All those between the ages of 65 and 74 have to go to food banks because they too are being affected by rising inflation.

[English]

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, seniors are impacted even more so, especially during these trying times with Liberal inflation and the lack of respect and attention they have been given in Bill C-32. When we look at the visits to food banks, in the territories we are getting close to the 10% mark. Seniors are part of that group. It is sad to say that the government simply does not respect them.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): Uqaqtittiji,** the member neglected to mention the profits that were being made by grocery stores in the north, so I will mention very quickly that The North West Company, which is a grocery store in the north, including in the northern communities he mentioned, has had increases in sales of 2.4%. It profited by \$13.2 million, or 63.9% more than pre-pandemic figures. It also reported an increase in the dividend payments it will be giving to its shareholders.

Does the member agree that the Canada recovery dividend needs to be extended to these big box stores that are clearly contributing to the hardships people are facing?

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, the member sees the reality of the expenses that the people in Nunavut incur simply to buy groceries. I was up there and I saw the numbers.

I think the question really should be directed to the government, because it delivers the nutrition north program. It needs to look into some of the allegations and the facts the member noted. I absolutely respect that the funds that are supposed to be going to nutrition north should actually make it to the people who need the food, rather than to the companies that profit from it. However, it is a good question to put to the government, and I hope it will answer the member’s question.

**Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate that the member came to the Northwest Territories and the other territories to visit us. I would encourage more MPs to come and see our part of the world.

I would point out to the member that there is more to the Northwest Territories than just Yellowknife and Inuvik. He should go into some of the smaller communities, where he would see the many houses that are being erected.

Would he recognize that for the first time in our history, indigenous housing is supported through our government? During the 10 years that the Conservatives were in power, the dark decade of no housing was established. Does the member recognize how that has contributed to the crisis we have experienced over the last while with housing?

*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (1825)

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, the fact remains that 1,400 more individuals in the Northwest Territories are visiting food banks than they did the year before. That is on the member and the government he belongs to. I would challenge him with this: He really needs to talk to the person who sits down in the chair opposite and he needs to do more for northerners, especially in his own territory.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak to the fall economic statement presented earlier this month by the Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister. The statement comes at a critical moment when we know Canadians are already deeply concerned about the accelerating realities of a changing climate, they are already deeply concerned by the economic fallout of a pandemic and they are also now worried about the impact of the international phenomenon of inflation impacting their monthly budgets.

In short, inflation is a global phenomenon caused by COVID-related supply issues and Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine, and it is making the goods and services Canadians rely on more expensive. Those rising costs have meant that people are having a difficult time making decisions on how they are going to make ends meet each month. Our government recognizes these concerns, and we are not waiting to act on those.

Our affordability plan is already under way, and earlier this month Canadians began receiving double GST credit payments, support that is making a difference for over 11 million households in need. There is up to \$234 more for singles without kids, \$467 for a typical family of four and \$225 more on average for seniors. That is money in their pockets right now to help them put food on the table and pay their bills. Additionally, our legislation to extend dental care to kids and to provide rent support to renters is making its way through Parliament as we speak.

The fall economic statement now goes further, introducing measures to help Canadians in need, and today I would like to share some of the key initiatives in that statement that I believe will support my constituents back home in Halifax and, indeed, the constituents of all members in the House.

The first of those is eliminating interest on student loans. My city is home to many students and higher education students at universities like Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, the University of King's College, NSCAD University, the Atlantic School of Theology and the Nova Scotia Community College. In fact, in 2021, Halifax boasted 35,556 students across all of its educational institutions.

These are young people who have made the decision to get an education so that they can pursue a career of their choice, one that keeps them inspired and employed and allows them to build the future they want for themselves and for their community. However, the cost of tuition has risen steadily over the years. The current generation is in the position where paying tuition has sadly become a prohibitive burden at a time when their careers should be all about opportunity, not about the cost of living and certainly not about debt.

We know some students are fortunate enough to have families that can cover the cost of their education, but there are many more who are not able to rely on their families to cover that expense. That is where federal student loans come in. They are a way for the government to ensure that, if a young person wants to go to college or university, they can do so. This is a necessary support the government ought to extend in the pursuit of levelling the playing field for Canadians of all backgrounds, yet we know the interest that accrues on these student loans means that paying them back can take a very long time and the cost grows the longer they take to pay it back.

That raises an important moral question: Why should the government profit off the backs of middle- and low-income students through student loan interest payments that other more fortunate students do not need to take on?

Beyond the moral question, it is also simply poor economic policy. The government should not be holding back our young graduates at a time when we need to be growing our workforce and getting these young people launched productively into the economy. Therefore, the fall economic statement is permanently cancelling interest on federal student loans, including those currently in repayment. How about that? This change will help recent graduates who have been facing the prospect of paying back their loans with interest in a time when many people are struggling to make ends meet.

When this was announced, I received a number of letters from recent grads in my riding. I have the permission of the authors of just two of those to read them here to illustrate what this means for the folks on the ground in the beautiful city of Halifax. Here is the first one: "I am writing to express my—

• (1830)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member will have to save that and keep the House in suspense.

The hon. member will have five minutes the next time this matter is before the House.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

### TAXATION

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in certain respects it has been a weird fall. Right now, as colleagues know, we are in Adjournment Proceedings, which is when we can follow up on questions asked earlier in question period.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

A few weeks back, I asked about the government's plan to triple the carbon tax, therefore increasing the cost of gas, groceries, home heating and other goods that increasingly feel out of reach for many Canadians. In these times, the finance minister's way of saying that she feels their pain is to acknowledge that she has also had to make sacrifices by cancelling her Disney+ subscription. If that cancellation gets her out of the fantasy world she has been living in, then I think it is a good thing. Ironically, though, video streaming services are one of the only things that will not be affected by carbon tax increases.

Earlier this fall, I asked a question of the government about its carbon tax plans and I inserted into my question some of the lyrics from *Bohemian Rhapsody*. This is because shortly before the Prime Minister had gone to London, ostensibly to attend the Queen's funeral. He had stayed in a hotel room that cost \$6,000 a night and stayed up late singing *Bohemian Rhapsody* in a bar somewhere. One could get a lot of Disney+ for \$6,000 a night, but of course this was taxpayers' money. If I had spent \$6,000 a night of someone else's money on a hotel room, I would have at least had the decency to stay in and enjoy it.

I put some *Bohemian Rhapsody* lyrics into my original question and it got a lot of attention on social media, I think, for three distinct reasons. First, it may have been the question itself. Second, there was an unexpected camera angle. Third was the fact that a member of the parliamentary press gallery thought the question was so lame that I should be shot like a horse. This suggests to me that he knows as much about the care of animals as he does politics.

This series of events was so unusual that it left me wondering:

Is this the real life? Or is this just fantasy?  
 Disney+ pushed aside; that's the finance minister's new reality.  
 New vacation highs, flying through the skies for free.  
 Liberal caucus plots, I have some sympathy.  
 Foreign ministers have been easy come, easy go  
 Little high, little low.  
 Foreign interference doesn't really matter to them.

Mama, a journalist just threatened to kill a man.  
 (Wait, he's not a journalist.)  
 Mama, a Liberal staffer with a press gallery pass just threatened to kill a man.  
 (Of course, I don't mean literally a Liberal staffer but figuratively. He's not literally a Liberal staffer.)  
 Mama, my career had just began, but Dale Smith wants to blow it all away.  
 If I'm not back again this time tomorrow.  
 Carry on, carry on.

I see it is late and my time is almost gone, so I will conclude my remarks there and await the government's fandango of a response.

**Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as the Canadian economy faces a period of slower economic growth due to the global challenge of high inflation and higher interest rates, our government understands that many Canadians are worried. They are certainly not relieved by the speech they just heard, but it is important to remember that inflation is a global phenomenon. It is a lingering result of the COVID pandemic.

Despite the Conservative leader's continued attempts to minimize the effects of the war in Ukraine, inflation has been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and by the supply chain challenges that are affecting people and businesses, frankly, right around the world. For-

tunately, there is no country better placed than Canada to weather the coming global economic slowdown and thrive in the years ahead. Indeed, Canada has the strongest economic growth in the G7 so far this year, and we have maintained our position as the G7 country with the lowest net debt and deficit-to-GDP ratios. Our country has a AAA credit rating, a recognition of our strong fiscal position. Canada also has an unemployment rate near its record low, as 500,000 more Canadians are working today than were before the pandemic.

While Canada's inflation rate is less severe, at 6.9%, than that of many of our peers, like the United States, at 7.7%, the United Kingdom, at 10.1%, and Germany, at 10.4%, we appreciate that this will continue to be a difficult time for many Canadians. That is why we are moving forward with our affordability plan, which includes targeted measures worth \$12.1 billion. It is already putting more money back into the pockets of the most vulnerable Canadians and those who need it the most. While the Conservatives continue to oppose these compassionate measures, we will continue to be there for Canadians with support that has been carefully designed to avoid making inflation worse.

For example, individuals and families receiving the GST credit started receiving an additional \$2.5 billion in support earlier this month. Despite Conservative efforts to oppose and block our compassionate plan, with Bill C-31, we are proposing to create the Canada dental benefit for children under 12 and families with annual incomes under \$90,000 who do not have access to a private dental plan. Following the fall economic statement, we are also moving forward with Bill C-32 to make the federal portion of all Canada student loans and Canada apprentice loans permanently interest free, including those currently being repaid.

Canadians can count on our government to continue running a tight fiscal ship. I would like to remind my hon. colleagues that all of these support measures are targeted, fiscally responsible and continue to reduce our debt-to-GDP ratio.

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 while putting money back into the pockets of most Canadians. I would like to remind my hon. colleagues that unfortunately climate action is no longer a theoretically political debate. It is an economic necessity.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Canadians all know that the Conservatives do not have a serious plan to tackle climate change, which means they also do not have a plan to grow the Canadian economy. Earlier this month, the Parliamentary Budget Officer published an analysis showing that climate change has negatively impacted and will continue to negatively impact the Canadian economy. Our plan makes life more affordable, grows the economy, fights climate change and puts Canada in a great position to benefit from the growing global opportunity that is global growth and from the creation of hundreds of thousands of good-paying, sustainable jobs.

• (1835)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, it is clear that the parliamentary secretary has not cancelled his Disney+ subscription, because he still seems to think money grows on trees.

I will put the following points to him. The Governor of the Bank of Canada has said that inflation here in Canada is being caused by domestic policy. The same has been said by the former governor of the Bank of Canada and future leader of the Liberal Party, Mark Carney.

The government's proposal to triple the carbon tax and increase the cost of vital necessities such as gas, groceries and home heating is not going to help tackle inflation. The government's plan is to raise taxes on goods that are vitally necessary for Canadians and to balloon government spending, in the vast number of cases, on things totally unrelated to measures that Canadians can see, touch and feel, such as \$54 million for the ArriveCAN app, \$6,000 a night for a hotel room for the Prime Minister and an ineffective infrastructure bank. The government is taxing Canadians, causing inflation and making life less affordable.

**Mr. Terry Beech:** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by complimenting the creativity of the member opposite. He can apply that comment to whichever part of his two speeches he likes.

While there are still some difficult days ahead for the global and Canadian economy, Canadians can count on us to continue supporting those who need it the most. Our affordability plan and the other measures announced in the fall economic statement are highly targeted and fiscally responsible.

We will continue to work hard to build an economy that works for everyone, to create good jobs and to make life more affordable for Canadians. We will continue to pursue policy that ensures Canada remains the best place in the world to live, work, thrive and raise a family.

• (1840)

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as we have heard many times in the House, the public safety minister claims that the government's use of the Emergencies Act was done at the request of law enforcement.

What we have heard from this side of the House and what we have heard from the police of jurisdiction is that the police did not ask the government to invoke the Emergencies Act. We have heard today that CSIS director David Vigneault has said that at no point did the service assess that the protests in Ottawa or elsewhere con-

stituted a threat to the security of Canada. Cabinet was fully briefed on all of these details, that police had not asked them to invoke the act and that there had not been deemed a threat to national security. However, the minister continues to mislead Canadians, spreading disinformation.

It is incredibly troubling that the government, ministers of the Crown, would use an emergency for political gain. That is what we saw with the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was an emergency situation. There was a new virus, and people did not know what was happening. One of the first things the government tried to do, in an unprecedented move, was to give itself the power to raise taxes and to spend money without parliamentary oversight for a period spanning two years. That is what it did in the face of an actual emergency.

When we had an unprecedented situation, where Canadians had taken to the streets and the Prime Minister disagreed with what those protesters were saying, the government claimed that was an emergency and invoked never before used powers, claiming that it was done on the advice of law enforcement.

However, whether it was the Ottawa police, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the military police, no one, no police service asked the minister or the government to invoke the Emergencies Act. The rest of the information around the discussions and the decisions were not the subject of the question I asked the minister.

He claimed police asked him to invoke the act. We know that is not true. We have a convention of ministerial accountability. When a minister is misleading or untruthful, there is a convention that the minister resigns. Why has the minister not done that?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, I am pleased to speak to the Government of Canada's extensive consultation leading up to the use of the Emergencies Act.

I will remind my colleagues that, in early February, disruptions and illegal blockades at Canada's border crossings had halted international trade and supply chains right when Canada's businesses were striving to take part in an ongoing global economic recovery. These illegal activities had shut down small businesses due to safety concerns. The City of Ottawa, the City of Windsor and the Province of Ontario had all declared states of emergency. We had also observed illegal blockades in Alberta and Manitoba.

At the time, we maintained close contact with law enforcement, and provincial, territorial and municipal officials to share information and expertise, with the collective goal of ending these blockades peacefully. Invoking the Emergencies Act was a difficult, but necessary, decision for our government to make for the good of Canada. It was not taken lightly, but factors in the length of these illegal blockades, as well as the volatile and unpredictable environment at the protest sites, were considered.

I will remind my colleagues that the reasons for issuing the declaration of a public order emergency are set out in a public document of explanation, as required in subsection 58(1) of the Emergencies Act. The document explains in detail why the Emergencies Act was invoked and is available for everyone to read, in line with our commitment to full transparency on this important issue. Furthermore, the houses of Parliament were provided with a document, which is also public, that documents all the consultations we undertook before invoking the act.

These documents highlight that, between the end of January and February 14, the escalation of the threats across the country had been regularly communicated by provinces, territories, municipalities and police of jurisdiction to the federal government. These partners requested the federal government's action in supporting police of jurisdiction to address the threat. It was within this environment that the Emergencies Act was invoked in mid-February. The decision to invoke the Emergencies Act was made after careful consideration of all other possible solutions to address this ongoing situation.

The Emergencies Act provided law enforcement with the additional tools to do their jobs and bring an end to the blockades safely and peacefully. Law enforcement was able to prohibit public assemblies that may reasonably be expected to lead to a breach of the peace, prevent adults from bringing children to these areas and prohibit people from travelling to these assemblies. They were also able to clamp down on the use of provisions of property in support of an unlawful assembly, such as diesel for illegally idling trucks that were creating a blockade. We were also able to designate new protected sites or no go zones. This tool was instrumental in helping us bring an end to the blockades safely.

These actions, done in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities and law enforcement, were a measured, comprehensive response to the threat to our communities' safety and security. The Government of Canada recognizes that it has a great responsibility to keep its citizens and communities safe. Through the temporary, time-limited use of the Emergencies Act, we fulfilled that responsibility and safely brought an end to the illegal blockades in our communities.

• (1845)

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Madam Speaker, let us be clear that the Minister of Public Safety said that police had requested that the government invoke the Emergencies Act. I did not hear anything from the member opposite to corroborate that statement, but we have heard in public, in committees and at press conferences from the police is that they did not say what the minister has said they asked for.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

The question is this: Who is not telling the truth? Is it the head of the RCMP, the head of OPP, the head of the Ottawa police or the minister? Has there been some type of collusion, a conspiracy, against the Minister of Public Safety, or is he simply not telling the truth?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, if the member did not hear me, it is because he chose not to listen. I will repeat what I just read to the member so that hopefully it will settle in a little better this time.

I said, "These partners requested the federal government's action in supporting police of jurisdiction to address the threat." If the member wants to split hairs between the exact wording of what was said, he can do that to his heart's content, but as I stated, the police jurisdictions were requesting support from the federal government.

[*Translation*]

### SPORTS

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, allow me to go back in time a bit.

The creation of an independent body for handling complaints in sport is the result of a request from the Bloc Québécois. On April 28, 2021, my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert moved a motion calling on the House to ask the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to undertake a study on the urgent need to establish a mechanism to receive complaints from athletes. On January 21, 2022, my colleague from Drummond and I wrote to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Minister of Sport to explain why it should be mandatory for national sport organizations to sign on to this mechanism.

Then, on April 5, 2022, Sport Canada announced the creation of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner, or OSIC, which we welcomed. However, the OSIC is clearly an unsatisfactory response to the widespread consensus in sporting, political and media circles. The House of Commons called for an independent public inquiry to investigate the issue thoroughly. The motion it unanimously adopted read:

That the House call for an independent inquiry into Hockey Canada's handling of the events of June 2018, in order to determine whether this was an isolated event or whether there are deficiencies in Hockey Canada's handling of reported complaints of sexual assault, sexual harassment and other types of misconduct.

I would like to go over a few facts. We learned that the Minister of Sport was informed in advance, on May 24, 2022, by Hockey Canada that there would be an article in the newspapers about an out-of-court settlement with a young victim concerning allegations of gang rape by eight hockey players in June 2018 in London. I would like to commend the stellar journalist Rick Westhead for writing that article.

I then moved a motion in the House to summon Hockey Canada representatives to appear before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. We know the rest. On October 5, I asked the Prime Minister to confirm when he would launch a public judicial inquiry into the issue of abuse in sport.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

A motion was adopted unanimously by the Liberals, the Conservatives, the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and the Green Party, so when will this inquiry be launched?

More than six months later, athletes from several disciplines are reaching out to parliamentarians to talk about the different kinds of abuse they endured. There is a growing consensus. We are coming to realize that we must examine more than just Hockey Canada. We must shed light on the toxic culture that is polluting our sports, and examine how federations handle complaints and how they treat their athletes. The concrete recommendations that will be made will result in real change.

An independent inquiry will finally allow us to get to the bottom of this issue and will result in concrete recommendations that can be applied to all sport federations. This inquiry will bring everyone together and ensure that everyone is on the same page. It is important to harmonize the practices of national sport organizations and make them coherent.

To learn from the past, we need to understand what happened over the last few decades. We need to look at what worked and what did not. Ultimately, the goal is to come up with a mechanism that works and a strong and trustworthy organization. We know this mechanism is still overseen by people closely associated with sport organizations, and the toxic culture that takes over at times can shake people's confidence.

Athletes need to have faith in an organization that is dedicated to defending their rights, which is not the case at this point in time. I want to emphasize that athletes need a recognized, rigorous, credible organization that can ensure their complaints are handled by an independent individual.

How do we achieve that dialogue? There can be no reconciliation as long as athletes can see or feel the power imbalance created by national sport organizations and Sport Canada's inaction, as recognized in July.

Now, a public inquiry—

• (1850)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He has only four minutes for his speech. He will then have another minute to get an answer.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport.

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue for his question.

I would also like to thank the other members of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for the important work they do in promoting a safe sporting environment.

[*English*]

As a society, we in Canada have a shared responsibility to promote and ensure a safe sporting environment for all.

[*Translation*]

Last month, we learned that Hockey Canada's CEO and its entire board of directors were stepping aside. Although we are pleased to hear that, we expect the interim board of directors to be made up of people who want to make real changes.

[*English*]

We have tremendous admiration for our athletes, coaches and volunteers in sport federations. From international competitions to neighbourhood activities, sport is a positive force in our lives. That is why we, as a government, have worked really hard to ensure that partners, including athletes, take strong action to protect Canadian athletes and other Canadians by promoting an environment where all of us and them can safely engage in sport.

An example of that action is the funding we provided in budget 2019 to enable Canadian sport organizations to promote accessible, ethical, equitable and safe sport. We are also proud to provide an investment of \$16 million over three years to support the newly created Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner. This is an important step to challenge the culture of silence and to provide a clear and reliable way for all participants in sport to report incidences of maltreatment and to be heard and supported. This independent mechanism will gradually become mandatory for all national sport organizations.

In fact, in 2017, I was asked by the former minister of sport to be part of a working group. One of the things that my colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue mentioned was quite salient. In fact, we made some recommendations in that working group for what is now called the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner. One recommendation was that we create an arm's length, independent organization, a mechanism by which we can trust that sport organizations will rely on an ethical framework. We demanded that it be fully funded by the federal government. We also demanded, at that time back in 2017, that it be mandatory for all national sport organizations. I am proud to say that today, in 2022, all of those things are true.

In response to the determination that Hockey Canada created those two separate accounts that my colleague referred to, the Minister of Sport very quickly froze funding to that national sport organization to be reinstated only after an audit has been prepared and completed and it has signed on as a full member of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner. More recently, this summer, the Government of Canada announced that Sport Canada was working on new requirements to ensure organizations that receive federal funding meet specific governance, accountability and safe sport standards.

We would also like to note that these new measures are only part of the solution. The responsibility of ensuring a safe sport environment must be shared by all leaders and stakeholders in the field, from community sport to competitive sport, from young ages to provincial, national and international sport.

Our government will continue to engage provincial and territorial partners to drive alignment, which is essential to achieving that change in culture that we all strive for. I would also add that the change in culture needs to happen in other areas, and not just in sport.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

We firmly believe our society can transform the culture of sport and provide positive examples of sporting life. Our government is committed to continuing its work in that regard.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, the problem is that athletes seem to no longer trust the organizations that manage their sport.

The Prime Minister reiterated that from his seat in response to my question on October 5. When will he launch this independent public inquiry that will put an end to the mistreatment in sport and mismanagement by the organizations that are meant to facilitate athletes' enjoyment of their sport? This includes Canada Soccer, Canada Artistic Swimming, Water Polo Canada, Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton, Gymnastics Canada, Boxing Canada, Rowing Canada, Alpine Canada and Rugby Canada, which have all experienced problems.

As parliamentarians, we have the obligation to ensure that our athletes and our children are not denied their rights when they practice the sport they love. Sports organizations have failed in their duty and it is because they turned a blind eye to the misconduct and failed to act in the interest of protecting athletes and our children that the House is seized with this issue this evening.

In keeping with what we learned from the Dublin commission of inquiry into doping, recommendations need to be made regarding the needs of the survivors and there need to be repercussions. When will there be an independent public inquiry?

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden:** Madam Speaker, I really appreciate the engagement from my colleague. I appreciate it because he is passionate and he clearly cares about athletes.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

At the same time, I was an athlete. I talk to athletes about this issue every single day. Somebody comes to me in my new capacity as parliamentary secretary for sport almost every single day to discuss these important issues. Without that experience that the then minister of sport provided me back in 2017, I do not know that I would be here as a member of Parliament.

I would also challenge the notion that we are continuing to fail. We are not failing. The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner is stood up. It is a system that was designed for athletes and by athletes. It is not a system that sprung from a bureaucracy. This is a system that Canada can be proud of. Since June, the cases the member opposite mentioned and listed have all received attention from the office, and progress is under way.

That is not to suggest that more work is not absolutely necessary. That is true. There is always more work to be done, but I am proud of the progress thus far.

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

The conference was also an opportunity for ministers to assess progress toward making sport safer. Since the Red Deer declaration—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have to interrupt the member.

I just want to take a moment to remind members that, when they are speaking, they have to give the interpreters a chance to convey the message so everyone can understand. People are trying to pack more words into limited time, but I want to remind members that, when they are giving a speech, they have to make sure they give the interpreters at least a little flexibility so they can do their job.

The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for speaking French and I would also like to sincerely thank the interpreters. I am sorry. It is a fascinating debate and I will constantly strive to improve for them.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted.

Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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





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