



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 151 No. 253
Wednesday, November 22, 2023

Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*English*]

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

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

VIVIAN SILVER

Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, born and raised in Winnipeg, Vivian Silver left her mark on her hometown, our country and people around the world. She dedicated her life to the pursuit of peace, working tirelessly to build bridges between Israelis and Palestinians.

She helped found numerous organizations for the betterment of all peoples, one of which was the Arab-Jewish Center for Empowerment, Equality and Cooperation. In recognition of all of her work, she was the co-recipient of the Victor J. Goldberg Prize for Peace in the Middle East.

She was a very busy woman doing good and she was also a wonderful mother and grandmother, said her two sons, Yonatan and Chen.

Since her disappearance from her home on Kibbutz Be'eri, I had the chance to speak almost daily with Vivian's nephew, a dear childhood friend of mine in Winnipeg, and I heard first-hand the pain her family was experiencing during the madness of the past few weeks.

A close friend of Vivian said this of her recently: "I have to hope that the life she lived and what she worked for will sow the seeds of peace and that somehow it will come around as part of her legacy and as part of who she was, that it is achievable."

I hope that everyone in the House can join me in a celebration of Vivian's life and the change that she dedicated it to achieving, in order to make the world a better place.

May her memory be a blessing.

* * *

LOIS FOWLER

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently, Canada lost one of its finest, with the passing of Brandon's Lois Fowler. From being a loving mother, grandmother and wife to being a successful real estate agent, Lois is best known as one of Canada's curling greats. Lois was a four-time Manitoba provincial champion and always made us proud every time she represented us at the Scotties.

She even won the provincial mixed championship, when she played on the team skipped by her son Rob. In 2015, she wore the Maple Leaf and won gold at the world senior women's curling championships, with husband Brian as coach.

Lois inspired generations of young woman to get involved in the sport and her legacy will be felt for years to come. To her husband Brian and children Rhonda and Rob, please know how much Lois meant to our province and to Canada.

She was amazing in so many ways, always competitive but never fierce. She easily made lifelong friends no matter where she went.

As a friend, I will miss her. May she rest in peace.

* * *

[*Translation*]

DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November is Diabetes Awareness Month. It is important to remember that one Canadian is diagnosed with diabetes every three minutes.

[*English*]

Yesterday, I met with Raina Smith, an extraordinary 12-year-old and leader from Orléans. Raina has lived with type 1 diabetes since she was five years old. We discussed the important role that governments can play to raise awareness to combat diabetes in Canada.

Raina was telling me about the challenges she faces in school and in her daily life. Her mom Sonia shared with me the pressure of the hardship parents sometimes face in ensuring that their kids living with T1D have access to proper equipment, to help them with this disease.

Statements by Members

I want to thank Raina for her courage, advocacy and determination. I reassured Raina of my continued support and advocacy, to combat this disease.

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[Translation]

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF FEMMES D'ICI ET D'AILLEURS

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the organization Femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs. That represents 10 years of hard work, love and dedication to the Longueuil community. We celebrated the strength and resilience of Zainab Akkaoui, the director of the organization, and all these women who have found room there to grow and thrive.

Since its creation, Femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs has been a beacon of hope and support for many women from various backgrounds who have faced complex challenges related to migration, cultural diversity and the issues involved in adapting to a new environment. This organization embodies the essential values of solidarity, inclusion and gender equality. It provides a warm welcome, a shoulder to lean on and an invaluable support network for women and their families. May this decade be just the prelude to a long series of success and achievements for a more inclusive world.

I wish Femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs a very happy 10th anniversary.

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QUEBEC'S ELECTRIC AND SMART TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

Ms. Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Propulsion Québec has been fast-tracking the development of Quebec's electric and smart transportation industry since 2017 to reinvent mobility with an eye to the future.

I am proud that Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions is supporting projects that promote the economy of tomorrow, including funding in excess of \$2.8 million to help Propulsion Québec innovate and develop the electric transportation industry.

The electric manufacturing sector currently provides over 9,300 quality jobs in Quebec. Propulsion Québec is proud of its contribution to the transportation sector's decarbonization for a greener and more sustainable economy in Quebec and Canada.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians renewing their mortgages at today's rates will see an increase from 2% to 6% or higher. The IMF warns that Canada is the most at risk among G7 countries for a mortgage default crisis. What do we get? We get \$20 billion in new inflationary spending.

The Liberals have decided again to spend on the backs of Canadians, keeping inflation and interest rates high. They risk a mortgage meltdown on \$900 billion of mortgages renewing over the next three years. They continue to attack \$3 trillion of resources

that would fuel, feed and secure the world; that would end dollars for dictators; and that would bring powerful paycheques to our people.

After eight long years, when Canadians get the carbon tax election they have been longing for, common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, balance the budget, deliver real leadership and end the NDP-Liberal gravy train.

* * *

● (1410)

DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 968 finger pricks, 3,178 insulin injections and 256 hours of sleep lost is what nine-year-old Paloma from my community of Vaudreuil—Soulanges has already experienced since being diagnosed just 454 days ago with type 1 diabetes.

People would think that would make her tired and frustrated, but not Paloma. Instead, she and her mother, Leana, have been taking action. She walked into my office last Tuesday and shared that, because of advancements in research of type 1 diabetes, nine-year-olds like her can live fulfilling lives, experience all the joys their classmates experience and, yes, lace up and take to the ice with their fellow Storm teammates.

[Translation]

She came to ask us, as parliamentarians, to learn more about type 1 diabetes and commit to providing more support for the advanced research efforts of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

[English]

Paloma, together, one day we will find a cure.

When we do, Paloma will have played a big role in getting us there.

* * *

MEMBER FOR CARDIGAN

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to honour the Minister of Agriculture. November 21 marked the 35th anniversary of his election to the House of Commons, making him the longest-serving MP ever for Prince Edward Island. It is a great achievement.

As a witness to history, the minister has seen a great deal of change and progress here in the House and in his Cardigan riding. He has had 11 straight election victories. It is a remarkable record and a real testament to the trust invested in the member by the people of Cardigan. His love for Prince Edward Island is very well known, and his legacy in Cardigan and across the province will continue to pay dividends for many decades to come.

Statements by Members

Personally, I have learned from the minister that it is essential for public representatives to always act on the guidance of constituents, while keeping a steady eye on the future and potential opportunities. We owe a debt of gratitude to the minister's sage and adroit understanding of changing times, and his remarkable ability to positively navigate both today's and tomorrow's challenges.

I congratulate him, and his trusted partner and adviser, Frances.

The Speaker: Just as an aside, I served the hon. member as a page when he was first elected in 1988.

The hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

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LEBANESE INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, Canadians with Lebanese ancestry are remembering our roots and celebrating our heritage. The modern Lebanese state was founded 80 years ago today.

Of course, we Lebanese have been around a lot longer than 80 years. Lebanon has seen empires come and go over the past several thousand years. The first Lebanese immigrant came to Canada in 1882, seeking and finding a better life. Thousands more followed to this land of limitless opportunity.

We Lebanese pride ourselves on making a positive contribution wherever we are. Canada has benefited from the skills and energy of those Lebanese who have made this country their new home. Today, as we celebrate the birth of modern Lebanon and Lebanese Independence Day, I invite all Canadians to celebrate with us.

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SIKYONG OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a wonderful occasion it is today to welcome Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration to Ottawa.

Elected as Sikyong in 2021, he is the voice of the Tibetan people around the world, including right here in Canada. He also served as the speaker of the Parliament of the Central Tibetan Administration.

I think of the thousands of Tibetans across our communities in Canada. The vibrant culture of the Tibetan people enriches the social fabric of our country. The Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre is located in Etobicoke—Lakeshore, something I am very proud of, and the goals of the centre and Tibetan Buddhism in general reflect a respect for life and harmony that transcends all cultures.

Non-violence and peace are universal aspirations for all humanity, and the Sikyong embodies those values. I have had the pleasure and honour of meeting him on several occasions, including today.

I want to thank him for all his hard work, and I appreciate all his efforts. He has our commitment that we will stand with him and the people of Tibet.

Tashi delek.

• (1415)

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight long years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians have made it clear they cannot afford any more. However, we should not to worry: Here comes the government with its fall economic statement. Canadians everywhere were no doubt rejoicing that the same people who brought them the \$54 million ArriveCAN app and the \$8 million luxury barn for the Governor General were here to save the day.

What did the NDP-Liberal mini-budget deliver to Canadians? It delivered \$20 billion in new inflationary spending; inflationary deficits for decades to come; a housing hell where Canadians are taking out 90-year mortgages just to be able to afford a home; and an eye-watering one-third of a trillion dollars just for interest payments, which is more than what the government is paying for health care or the military.

It is clear that, after eight years of waste and incompetence, the NDP-Liberal government is not worth the cost.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CARBON TAX

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister announced more than \$20 billion in new inflationary spending that will keep inflation and interest rates at levels Canadians cannot afford.

The people of Beauce are once again disappointed by this government's inability to control spending. None of the Conservatives' common-sense demands have been met, one of them being the cancellation of any further increase in the carbon tax.

After eight years, it is clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Who else is not worth the cost? I would say it is the Bloc Québécois, which continues to prop up the Liberal government by supporting drastic carbon tax hikes.

I am amazed that the Bloc claims to care about Quebecers, yet supports a second carbon tax that will raise the price of gasoline by up to 20¢ a litre. The party has been asking only for additional health transfers. Does it realize that next year, the government will spend more on servicing the debt than on health transfers?

Despite it all, the Bloc-Liberal coalition continues. Neither of these parties is worth it. It is time for them to get out of the way so common-sense Conservatives can get our country back on track.

*Statements by Members**[English]***LEBANESE HERITAGE MONTH**

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks a historic occasion as we proudly raise the Lebanese flag on Parliament Hill for the first time, marking the inaugural Lebanese Heritage Month in Canada.

*[Member spoke in Arabic]**[English]*

This momentous event holds even greater significance, as it coincides with Lebanon's 80th Independence Day.

[Translation]

Every November, we encourage all Canadians to join us in celebrating Lebanese culture and traditions.

[English]

My special thanks go to my mother, children, grandchildren, brother, sisters and all family and friends who travelled here to share in this celebration, as well as to His Excellency Ambassador Fadi Ziadeh for the tremendous partnership he has shown leading up to today.

*[Member spoke in Arabic]**[Translation]*

Long live Canada and long live Lebanon.

[Member spoke in Arabic]

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*[English]***HOUSING**

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is National Housing Day. The NDP demanded immediate action to stop housing profiteering, a non-profit acquisition fund and major funding and below-market financing for social and community housing in the fall economic statement. However, the Minister of Finance failed to deliver.

Delaying the funds to the NDP's key housing measures for another two years makes the Liberals' claim that they want to see more homes built faster a joke. It undermines the Bank of Canada's view that housing investment is not inflationary spending and can even drive down the high cost of living.

The fall economic statement also offered nothing new to support women, seniors or veterans, nor to support indigenous, Inuit and Métis peoples.

Canadians do not have to choose between the Liberals, who just disappoint, and the Conservatives, who think building social housing and co-ops is a Soviet-style takeover of housing. New Democrats will at least double Canada's community housing stock and put a stop to housing profiteering.

It is time for Ottawa to work for everyday people and not just wealthy CEOs.

*[Translation]***SOCIAL ECONOMY MONTH**

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec, the dreary November days are chased away by a colourful celebration that speaks to all of us. November, in Quebec, is Social Economy Month. It is an opportunity to celebrate all these businesses that make up our economic fabric.

Quebeckers all have their favourite not-for-profit organization. Virtually everyone is a member of a co-op. We all know a mutual. We all have confidence in these local businesses that give meaning to the economy, either for its workers, its artisans or its consumers, and for good reason.

The social economy is having a business sense and knowing how to share one's success by not leaving anyone behind. Back home, the social economy is Valspec, Jardins de la Résistance, Cré-Actions, Coop CSUR and its eco-local market. It is also Coup de pouce des moissons and the Lac-Saint-François national wildlife area.

To the Bloc Québécois, the social economy is above all a source of pride.

I wish everyone a good Social Economy Month.

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● (1420)

*[English]***THE ECONOMY**

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's false hopes update can be summed up as follows: prices up, rents up, photo ops up, taxes up and time is up. Conservatives will be voting no confidence in the Prime Minister's fall economic statement, because he is not worth the cost.

Liberal-NDP spending has caused 40-year highs in inflation and the most rapid interest rate hikes in Canadian history, putting Canadians most at risk in the G7 for a mortgage default crisis. After eight years, the only new housing measure in the update was to change the housing department's name. Two million Canadians are going to a food bank in a single month, yet the Prime Minister still plans to quadruple his carbon tax scam on gas, groceries and home heating.

A common-sense Conservative government will bring home lower prices by axing the carbon tax scam, bringing home powerful paycheques by balancing the budget so interest rates and inflation can come down, and bringing homes people can actually afford by incentivizing municipalities to build.

Our common-sense Conservative leader will turn hurt into hope for all Canadians. Now let us bring it home.

* * *

MEMBER FOR CARDIGAN

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the member for Cardigan, Frances and the entire MacAuley family. He is a man who has served his constituents and all Canadians with honour, wisdom, good humour, decency and just plain common sense.

This week, he is celebrating the 35th anniversary of his first election to the House. He has won 11 consecutive elections, and it is no surprise. He was born in St. Peters Bay in Prince Edward Island, and he has never forgotten where he came from. The good people of P.E.I. clearly know this. He is an Islander to the core. Before entering politics, he worked as a farmer and a businessman.

Among his many roles in cabinet, he has served as solicitor general, minister of labour, minister of veterans affairs and, on two separate occasions, minister of agriculture.

[Translation]

I want to thank him for the many years of service he has given to Canada.

[English]

We are all fortunate that this Islander came our way 35 years ago. The Liberal Party, the House and Canada are better for it.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we just heard media reports about a terrorist attack at the border in Niagara. Two people may have been killed and a third injured.

Can the Prime Minister give us any information about this terrorist attack?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the situation in Niagara is very serious. There was a vehicle explosion at the Rainbow Bridge border crossing.

We are still talking with authorities and keeping the U.S. involved through the Canada Border Services Agency, Transport Canada and the RCMP. I was briefed by the national security and intelligence adviser and the Minister of Public Safety.

All the necessary information is being gathered as we speak. We are providing the necessary support while communicating with the Americans. I can confirm that border crossings at the Rainbow

Oral Questions

Bridge, the Whirlpool Bridge, the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge and the Peace Bridge have been closed. Additional security measures are being deployed at all our border crossings across the country.

The situation is extremely serious, and we will continue working on this matter throughout the day.

● (1425)

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have just heard media reports of a terrorist attack with an explosion at the Niagara crossing of the Canada-U.S. border. At least two people are dead, and one person is injured. It is the principal responsibility of the government to protect the people. Can the Prime Minister give us an update on what he knows and what action plan he will immediately implement to bring home security for our people?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a very serious situation in Niagara Falls. There was a vehicle explosion at the Rainbow Bridge crossing. I have been briefed by the NSIA and the Minister of Public Safety. CBSA, RCMP and Transport Canada are all fully engaged in providing the necessary support. There are a lot of questions, and we are following up to try to rapidly get as many answers as possible. We are in close contact with U.S. officials, and we will continue to work closely with them. We will continue to be engaged. We will provide updates.

The update I can give right now is that there are four border crossings that are closed: the Rainbow Bridge, Whirlpool Rapids Bridge, Lewiston-Queenston Bridge and Peace Bridge. Additional measures are being contemplated and activated at all border crossings across the country. We are taking this extraordinarily seriously. I will have to excuse myself now to go to get further updates and work on this very serious situation.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after all the experts warned this government that spending was driving up inflation and interest rates, the government added another \$20 billion to our country's inflation. That means higher taxes, higher inflation, higher interest rates, higher rents and higher mortgage payments.

Will the government finally reverse its inflationary policies so that Canadians facing record payments on their mortgages can keep their homes?

Oral Questions

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a good day with good news for people who want to buy a new home. The fall economic statement included measures to build thousands of homes from coast to coast to coast. We are also going to build 30,000 homes through the apartment construction loan program. There are also new measures for adoptive parents in this fall economic statement.

This is good news for Canadian households and for everyone who wants an affordable life here in Canada.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is up? Rent is up. Rates are up. Taxes are up. Debt is up. Time is up for the current government. After eight years, it is not worth the cost and now this Prime Minister takes on another \$20 billion of inflationary spending. This will bring up the interest payments on our debt to a record-smashing \$51 billion a year. With two million Canadians eating at a food bank every month and many facing the loss of their home, why will the Liberals not cancel this inflationary scam and replace it with a plan to balance the budget and bring down interest rates and inflation?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's fall economic statement demonstrates the next phase in our plan to make sure that we have an economy that works for everyone. The International Monetary Fund is predicting that Canada's growth will lead the G7 in 2024. We have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. While we are building housing, while we are moving on with our clean tax credits and while we are making sure that adoptive parents can have the benefits they need, do people know what is up? It is the end of support of the Conservative Party for Ukrainians in this country and in Ukraine, as the Conservatives vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal. I say shame on them.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, actually what is up is that the Prime Minister has once again betrayed Ukraine. He betrayed Ukraine when he gave Putin that big turbine to pump his gas and fund his war. He betrayed Ukraine when he refused to sell Canadian gas to break European dependence on Putin. He betrayed Ukraine by failing to vet someone celebrated in the House who turned out to be a Nazi. He is betraying Ukraine with this terrible agreement to force a carbon tax on Ukrainians that would destroy their ability to fight a war and rebuild their economy. We would axe the tax and stand unequivocally with Ukrainians in their fight for freedom.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1430)

The Speaker: I would ask the member for St. Albert—Edmonton to please restrain himself.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if that were true, the members of the official opposition would have voted in favour of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, an agreement that I will note the Government of Ukraine asked Canada to do with them in a time of utmost need when they are facing an illegal war of aggression from Russia. Instead of supporting Ukrainians, instead of truly standing up for their fight for freedom, they voted against it on a red herring.

Canadians need to ask what the Conservatives are doing. There is only one party that has betrayed Ukraine and that is the Conservatives.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I hope that things will go as smoothly as possible at the border, particularly in the current global context.

That being said, yesterday, the government delivered an economic statement. Smile, good people. Bring out the marching band and have a parade. You are saved. The problem is that there is no substance to the economic statement. There is absolutely nothing in there. The Liberals are failing businesses, seniors and the homeless.

Are we to understand that things are only going to get worse before they get better?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. We are also very concerned about the situation at the border, and we will be monitoring it very closely.

With regard to yesterday's fall economic statement, it is very clear that we are going to continue our partnership with the Government of Quebec, which is going to match the \$900 million that we have allocated to housing. The green economy tax credits will also include biomass, which is very important for Quebec.

Yesterday's economic statement is good for Quebeckers and Canadians. It is good for everyone.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government has been rehashing the same \$900 million for two years now to try to look good. That announcement certainly predates yesterday's economic statement. That response only underscores how vacuous the economic statement is.

We have a saying where I come from that goes something like this: If you cannot help, at least do no harm. The government is creating a department of housing, infrastructure and communities. It is more like the department of interference and intrusion. There is no money involved, just massive interference.

If the government cannot help, will it at least stop doing harm?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, it is a pleasure to work with Quebec.

I recently signed an agreement with Minister Duranceau, my counterpart in the Government of Quebec, that provides for funding of \$900 million from the federal government and the same amount from the Quebec government. The agreement aims to build an additional 23,000 housing units. It is an opportunity for us to work together.

I will continue working to build housing throughout Quebec and across the country.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deep concern about the incident we just learned about at the Rainbow Bridge crossing between Canada and the United States. I want to acknowledge the work of the first responders. We also want to express our deep concern for those who, as reports have indicated, may be injured and for the potential fatalities as well.

What is the update on Canada's assistance in the investigation and any other steps to support those who have been impacted?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are deeply concerned about what we have all learned recently happened at the Peace Bridge between Canada and the United States. As the Prime Minister mentioned, this happened very recently. He and the Minister of Public Safety are being updated as we speak.

We will share information with the House, and indeed with all Canadians, as we get more information, but at this time, we want to express our deep condolences to the people and families who have lost loved ones. We will continue to be engaged in this very serious and worrisome matter.

* * *

● (1435)

[Translation]

HOUSING

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, if someone wanted to hear the Prime Minister talk about his plan to make life more affordable, they had to pay \$1,700, or \$850 if they were under age 35. That is \$850 to hear him tell young people struggling with the cost of rent to wait another two years for affordable housing.

Why does the Prime Minister think it is okay to make people wait two years for affordable housing?

[English]

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful that the hon. member raised affordable housing for young people. So many young people

Oral Questions

are taking advantage of the first home savings account. Just the other day, I was talking to a young woman in my riding. She and her partner have saved, doing so with tax-free savings, and just moved into their first home. There is an uptick on this. More and more young people are able to do this, and it is changing a lot of lives.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, who is not worth the cost after eight years, promised us that all the money he was adding to the debt would never cost anything because interest rates were low.

Now we know that the amount the government is going to spend next year to cover interest on the debt has doubled to \$52 billion. That is more than we spend on health care and twice as much as we spend on the military.

Why is the Prime Minister taking money from soldiers and nurses and giving it to bankers?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we tabled our fall economic statement, which shows the very solid foundations of our economy.

I would like to come back to what the Conservative leader himself is proposing. The Conservatives' austerity plan does not resonate with either Quebeckers or Canadians. I would like to know why he refuses to say what he will cut. Will he cut help for seniors? Will he cut support measures for families and children? Will he cut dental care? That is what Canadians want to know.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister was doubling our national debt, adding more debt than all previous 22 prime ministers combined, he claimed there would be no cost because interest rates, he said, were low, but those low interest rates are gone and the debt is still here. Yesterday, we learned that interest on the debt has gone up by over 100%, to \$52.4 billion. That is more than the \$52.1 billion we spend on health care and double what we spend on the military.

Why is the Prime Minister taking money from nurses and soldiers and giving it to bankers and bondholders?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we tabled the fall economic update, which shows the solid foundations of our fiscal frame and shows that we were able to maintain fiscal responsibility while being compassionate and being there for Canadians.

Oral Questions

We are building more homes and we are building them faster. We are changing competition laws in order to stabilize prices in this country. What the Conservatives are proposing are cuts and austerity. They want to claw back supports to families and claw back supports to our seniors. That is not what Canadians need and that is not what Canadians deserve.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, fear and falsehoods are the only things the Liberals can use to distract from their disastrous record. They are the ones clawing back from seniors and families with their quadrupling of the carbon tax. It is the first time in Canadian history we have seven million people who are skipping meals because they cannot afford to eat, and two million people, a record-smashing number, are now eating at food banks.

There is a common-sense solution, which is Conservative Bill C-234 to take taxes off the farmers who feed us. Will the Prime Minister back down again, stop fighting this common-sense bill and stop taxing our farmers so that our people can afford to eat?

• (1440)

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are the government that decided the retirement age should go back to the age of 65 from the age of 67, which was a decision that side of the House made when its leader was in Davos, Switzerland, but let us stay in Europe for a second to talk about the appalling decision of these so-called Conservatives to turn down a free trade agreement with a beacon of democracy such as Ukraine.

What is up with that party? That is what Canadians want to know, and no one is buying this carbon tax excuse. What is up?

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the pathological obsession these Liberals have with carbon taxes has now reached a level that is sick. This is how sick they are on the carbon tax. They would use Ukraine's vulnerability in the middle of the war to impose their destructive carbon tax on the people of Ukraine and make it harder for them to rebuild after the war. We already know that the Prime Minister was used as a tool for Russian propaganda when he brought a Nazi into the House of Commons.

Why is he trying to damage the Ukrainian economy with a destructive carbon tax in this terrible deal?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only ones who are not supporting Ukraine are the Conservatives. Let us be clear. The Canada-Ukraine free trade deal does not impose a price on pollution on Ukraine. Why is that? It is because Ukraine already has a price on pollution. It has had it since—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Mary Ng: Ukraine can fight the war and fight climate change. We are here to support it because the Conservatives are not.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if it were already there, they would not have needed to put it in the deal. We negotiated the free trade deal with Ukraine. We support free trade with Ukraine. We are the only party that supports a real trade agreement with Ukraine that would include supplying it with Canadian-made defence equipment, which they voted against yesterday. They voted against supplying Ukraine with clean Canadian energy that would empower their economy.

Let us get this straight. They are against selling Canadian munitions to fight the Russian attackers, but they are in favour of imposing a carbon tax on Ukrainians. That is nuts.

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is bad enough that that party is the only party in the House that does not believe in climate change. It does not believe in fighting the good fight against climate change, but on top of that, when Ukrainians are dying, literally, on behalf of freedom-loving people of the world, fighting fascism, totalitarianism and an illegal invasion, at this critical moment, what have Conservatives chosen to do? They have chosen to abandon Ukrainians in their hour of need. Canadians will remember this moment, and we will never forget that shameful party.

• (1445)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it really is a pathological obsession for a party to look at its starving people, the two million people in Canada who have to go to food banks every month and the seven million people who are hungry in Canada, and then say that the misery from its carbon tax is not enough here in Canada and that they need to export it by imposing it in a pre-existing trade agreement.

When I am Prime Minister, we will have a real free trade agreement with Ukraine that would help it win and rebuild, but would have no carbon tax. We will axe the tax here and make sure anyone in the world who wants to axe the tax has the freedom to do so.

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when the vote was happening on the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, I was sitting with the ambassador of Ukraine and Ukraine's prosecutor general. We were talking about the pressing needs of the Ukrainian people, and how we could address those pressing needs and their concerns in their hour of need.

For the past 18 months, I have been pleased to say that we had a bipartisan approach to addressing Ukraine. Unfortunately, that evaporated into a puff of smoke with the very decided and methodological vote taken by the Conservatives.

Oral Questions

On this side, when we say that we stand with Ukraine, we mean it, and when we say *Slava Ukraini*, we mean it even more.

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[Translation]

FINANCE

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is fascinating. I asked a question about yesterday's economic statement, and the answer I got had to do with an announcement that was made two years ago. That in itself is proof that there is nothing in the economic statement. Why did the government present an economic statement, then? When I was young, I was told, "if you have nothing to say, then say nothing".

We are talking about serious issues here. What is the government saying to seniors who are struggling to buy groceries and to the municipalities that are struggling to house people? Is the government saying that it is going to create another more expensive, more complicated department with a longer name?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the economic statement that we presented yesterday, we are investing more in housing co-operatives in Quebec and across Canada.

We are doubling down on the fight against rental properties like Airbnbs, because we know that Quebec has very strong local regulations, and we want to support that. We also know that there are families that are still struggling to make ends meet. That is why we are going to amend our competition laws. That is real action.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we did not need an economic statement to tell us this kind of information, especially considering that in 2026, when the money becomes available, there is no reason to believe that the Liberals will still be sitting on that side of the House anyway. A lot will happen between now and then, and other budgets will get made.

What was the point of this whole business except to waste our time? The distress felt by people, businesses, seniors and the homeless is no less today than it was yesterday. Why waste Parliament's time?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague is having a hard time understanding the purpose of an economic statement. It is not a budget; it is an economic statement. We tabled it to be transparent with Canadians and to show them how far along we are with our plan. Yesterday, we also announced that we would be removing the GST from psychotherapy. We announced that we would be cracking down on international roaming fees. Our economic statement contains measures that will also help Canadians.

• (1450)

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have lineups at our food banks that, if we were to put the images in black and white, we would assume they were images from the Great Depression. We have never seen two million people going to a food bank in a month. We never had seven million people eating less than is healthy, but that is the starvation we have as a result of eight years of the Prime Minister.

There is a common-sense Conservative bill, Bill C-234, that has passed through the Senate. The Prime Minister's ministers are panicking and begging senators to block it. Will the Prime Minister tell his senators that they have go-ahead to pass this common-sense Conservative bill so that our farmers can feed our people?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we would think that after two decades in this place, the member opposite might know that the Senate is independent of this place.

However, there was a time when Canadians could look to Conservatives for a little bit of leadership on fighting climate change. Brian Mulroney was—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am having trouble hearing the hon. member. I will ask the hon. member to start again from the top so that I can hear.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, we would think that after two decades working here, having had no other job before that, I might add, the member opposite, the leader of the Conservative Party, would know that the Senate is independent of this place.

There was a time when Canadians could look to the Conservatives for leadership on climate action, back when Brian Mulroney led the fight against climate change and when my neighbour, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, staked his entire leadership campaign on a carbon price. Now, the leader of the Conservative Party is using climate action as a wedge to justify its shameful vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

Ukraine already prices carbon, and the Conservatives are out of air.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's comedy routine will not make up for the fact that Canadians cannot afford to feed themselves.

The Prime Minister is in a bind again. He was already bullied by his Atlantic caucus into panicking and bringing in a temporary pause on home heating taxes, but only for some. Now his environment minister is threatening to resign if there are any more carbon tax carve-outs.

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister stop allowing himself to be bullied and threatened by his radical environment minister and axe the tax on our farmers so that Canadians can afford to eat?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only thing radical in the House is the leader of the Conservative Party's constant climate denial.

As I just mentioned, the Conservatives are trying to use climate denial in an attempt to justify their shameful vote against the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement yesterday. However, I have news for the Conservatives, Ukraine already prices carbon, along with other European countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Great Britain, Denmark, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. A lot of them believe in pricing carbon.

They all ran on that promise, and the member for Wellington—Halton Hills staked his entire leadership campaign on it. Conservatives need to get with the program.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal's program is hunger and homelessness for Canadians. Fortunately, we have a common-sense Conservative solution, which would take the carbon tax off of our farmers. That is the tax the Liberals want to quadruple.

However, the Prime Minister is in a panic because his environment minister said, "As long as I'm the environment minister, there will be no more exemptions to carbon pricing". In other words, if this bill passes, his Minister of Environment will resign.

Why will the Prime Minister not simply accept the minister's resignation now and let the bill pass so Canadians could feed themselves?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know what it means when they hear the words "common-sense Conservatives". It means cuts to the programs and services they rely on, which ultimately hurts Canadians.

Let us put some facts on the table. Since we came into office in 2015, we have lifted 650,000 children, 2.7 million Canadians, out of poverty. Canada now ranks sixth for child poverty in the world. When the Conservatives were in office, when that leader was in office, Canada ranked 24th in the world when it came to child poverty.

We continue to support Canadians. We will stay on the facts. We will not cut services like the Conservatives would.

● (1455)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what they are doing is cutting the food budget of families by raising the tax on the farmers who feed us.

Again, there is a common-sense Conservative bill that passed through the House of Commons, against the great protest of the Prime Minister, who still wants to quadruple the tax. We are simply asking him to tell his environment minister to resign and let his Liberal-appointed ministers pass the bill.

What will he pick? Will he pick allowing Canadians to feed their families around the kitchen table, or will he keep his crazy environment minister around the cabinet table?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I would like to remind all members that it is important to use language, when it is directed at a particular member, that is neither disruptive nor demeaning.

I will ask the hon. minister to respond.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will happily tell the Leader of the Opposition what we on this side pick. We pick supporting Canadians in their time of need. We pick fighting climate change, which we know is an existential threat. We pick ensuring that we are supporting people who are seeking their freedom around the world.

What we are seeing in the United States is right-wing politicians who are turning away from Ukraine and turning towards Russia. I can only assume that is what we are seeing here in Canada, right now, as the members opposite are the only ones in Canada who are not standing with Ukraine. Canada stands with Ukraine, and everyone, except the Conservative Party, does.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the fall economic statement missed the mark on addressing the housing crisis facing indigenous people. According to the last census, over 300,000 indigenous people are not living in suitable housing. Approximately the same number are living in buildings that need major repair. After eight years of Liberals, they have neglected and ignored the strife and the struggle of indigenous people and have delayed action on the housing crisis.

What is the Prime Minister's excuse?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sincerely thankful for the NDP's concern for the well-being of indigenous people across Canada and for the recognition of the need to continue to make the investments necessary to improve the housing situation impacting communities in every part of this country.

The reality, though, is that we are making historic investments in affordable housing for Canadians generally, and specifically for indigenous people across this country as well. In previous budgets, we have put \$4 billion on the table for distinctions-based funding for indigenous communities and an additional \$4.3 billion to address indigenous housing needs in urban, rural and northern environments across this country. We will continue to do what is necessary to support indigenous peoples when it comes to housing.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised Canadians in 2021 that he would impose an emissions cap on oil and gas producers. It has been two years of delay and disappointment. Families, municipalities, small businesses and the industrial sector are investing in low-carbon solutions, but oil and gas emissions continue to rise unchecked. That does not look like climate leadership to me.

Will the Prime Minister commit to releasing the oil and gas emissions cap framework with a 2030 target in line with science before COP28?

• (1500)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing to talk about how we fight climate change and not whether we fight climate change, constantly debating with the Conservatives whether climate change even exists. I agree with the leader of the NDP. Establishing a cap on oil and gas emissions is one of the key commitments of the government's emissions reduction plan.

Canada's oil and gas companies have proven repeatedly that they can innovate and develop new technologies and more competitive business models, and we will continue to work with them on reducing their emissions with an emissions cap.

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FINANCE

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the government announced new measures that will support homeowners and the middle class, and increase housing construction, all measures the Conservatives will vote against, just as they voted against cutting taxes on the middle class and any investment in affordable housing. In fact, the Conservatives eliminated 800,000 affordable homes the last time they were in government. Canadians know that the only thing they can count on is that the Conservatives will abandon them in their time of need, just as our brave Ukrainian allies found out yesterday.

Can the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance please tell Canadians why the Conservative Party should instead change course and support the measures in the fall economic statement?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we did table the fall economic statement, which is the next step in our plan to build more homes right across the country and to build them faster, to crack down on short-term rentals and Airbnbs by supporting municipalities and their own regulations, and, of course, to strengthen competition laws in this country in order to stabilize prices.

That was our plan, and it took only minutes for the Conservative leader to call it “disgusting”. What is actually disgusting is that the Conservative leader refuses to tell Canadians what he is going to cut.

Oral Questions

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has come to light that the Prime Minister will spend 15 billion tax dollars, which is \$1,000 for every single family in Canada, on a grant that will pay for 1,600 replacement workers to come in and displace union jobs in Windsor, in a battery plant there.

The Prime Minister is desperately claiming that he had no choice in the matter. Why does he not open up the contract so all Canadians can see whether there were any guarantees that this massive \$15-billion grant would actually lead to Canadian and not foreign paycheques?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a little bit rich coming from a political party that not only does not stand for auto workers and does not stand for Canadian workers at all, but also has no interest in a green economic plan like we have. The Conservatives have not been with workers. They have not been with the auto sector. We are building battery plants in parts of this country. We are building a green economic plan.

Let us look at the facts: One temporary foreign worker has been approved.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yes, and there are 1,600. That is 1,599 more, at least, foreign replacement workers who will be coming to use the 15 billion tax dollars that the Prime Minister is making Canadians pay for a single plant. In fact, here I have an advertisement for a position as an electrode quality engineer that states that the skills required include being bilingual in English and Korean. That is true of countless of the job advertisements.

Will the Prime Minister release the contract on this \$15-billion deal to see whether any of the money is going to go to Canadian workers or whether it is all going to foreign replacement workers?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the official opposition's misinformation cannot hide the transformational nature of this investment and investments like it across the country. Let us be extremely clear and focus on the facts, which are that there are 2,500 permanent jobs in the Windsor area to operate the plant and 2,300 Canadian jobs to construct the plant. Those are the facts.

He is risky and reckless, and he is just dealing in pure misinformation.

The Speaker: I would like to remind members to use language that does not impugn the member's use of information.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my information comes from the Windsor police, who had a visit from the South Korean ambassador to set up the arrival of 1,600 South Korean replacement workers who will displace union workers in Windsor. Unions are up in arms as the government is displacing their workers to bring in replacement workers from abroad.

If anything I am saying is wrong, why does the government not just announce that it will release the contract to show any guarantees there are that the jobs will go to Canadians?

• (1505)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts and let us look at an authority in this matter. Dave Cassidy, president of Unifor Local 444, called out the disinformation from the Conservative Party as absolutely false and baseless. There is simply no justification for what the ambassador of South Korea has suggested. Instead, the facts are that there are 2,500 Canadian jobs to operate this plant and 2,300 Canadian jobs to construct this plant. Those are the facts. Those are the investments.

We are building for the future. Everything else is just risk and recklessness from the Conservatives.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is risky and reckless is to spend \$15 billion, which works out to \$1,000 for every family in Canada, for a project that will employ foreign replacement workers. Those workers will displace our union jobs in this country, in other words, our money for foreign workers. That is according to the police from Windsor and the local Windsor municipal government.

Those are the facts, and if the Prime Minister has any other facts he would like to share, why will he not just give us the contract?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us get real. The Conservatives have never been for workers. They do not understand that the fight against climate change creates prosperity for generations to come. These once-in-a-generation investments in a Nexstar facility are bringing 2,500 permanent jobs to Windsor, which is bringing back the auto industry. It is beyond me how the Conservatives can somehow spin this negatively—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will ask all members, please, to take the floor only when they are recognized by the Speaker, so we can make sure we have order in the House.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Joliette.

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HOUSING

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the economic update proves once again that the Prime Minister does not understand the word “emergency”. The housing crisis is an emergency. Nevertheless, not only will the new funding be inadequate,

but there is not a single new measure that will take effect before 2025, in other words, after the next election. The only thing the Prime Minister is offering is money starting in 2025 if people vote in a Liberal government.

When will he understand that what we need today is money for housing, not election promises?

[*English*]

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with my hon. colleague, and I would encourage him to read the entirety of the fall economic statement. There are a number of measures that take effect very quickly, some in the next number of weeks and some in the next number of months. He must be referring to our recapitalization, though, of certain programs that are actually helping get homes built now.

We continue to have funds on the table. In fact, just last week, we landed agreements worth \$4 billion that are going to see nearly 12,000 new homes constructed right across this country at prices that ordinary people can actually afford. We are now locking in long-term investments that are going to provide certainty to builders so they can continue to build the homes that are necessary to defeat the housing crisis.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would encourage him to have a look at the tables that say “zero” for this year and “zero” for next year.

People had better brace themselves, because this winter is going to be very long. It is going to be long for anyone who cannot find housing, because there is no new money for housing until 2025. It is going to be long for anyone who becomes part of the 5% increase in homelessness, because there is no emergency funding. It is going to be long for media workers who are faced with job losses, because there is no emergency funding for them either. It is going to be long for our SMEs, which will not survive the winter if the deadline for repayment of the Canada emergency business account is not pushed back from January.

The time to take care of these people is now. It is not in the spring, and certainly not in 2025. What is the Prime Minister waiting for?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member. Investments are necessary to address the housing crisis. On top of the new measures included in yesterday's document are other investments that our government has already announced.

For example, we signed an agreement with the Province of Quebec to the tune of \$1.8 billion just to support investments in affordable housing. We will continue making the investments necessary to end the housing crisis across the country.

• (1510)

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister had a chance yesterday to cancel his plan to quadruple the carbon tax. It is important to understand how much he wants to raise taxes on Canadians. He wants to raise the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. That will raise the cost of heat and gas, and also of food, because when we tax the farmers who make the food and the truckers who ship the food, we tax all who buy the food.

Will the Prime Minister finally tell us how much it will cost the average family when he quadruples the tax, and will he call an election on the carbon tax so Canadians can decide for themselves?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the agri-food sector is affected probably more than any other sector by climate change. In a year when we saw increased floods, more frequent storms, soil erosion, sporadic and unpredictable rainfall, and fires across this country that devastated rural communities, driving people out of their homes and causing destruction, it is really disappointing that the Conservatives still do not believe in climate change.

All of those impacts result from climate change, and a price on pollution is working to reduce our emissions and fight the fight.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not working. The Liberals have missed every emissions target but one in the year that the economy was entirely locked down. The Liberal government ranks 58th out of 63 in the world, and its own environment commissioner says it will not meet its emissions targets, yet the Liberals still go ahead with the carbon tax, which has proven not to work. They want to quadruple the tax, including on farmers, who have no other choice than to use traditional hydrocarbons to power their machinery, their barns and their drying.

Once again, how much will the carbon tax cost the average Canadian farmer when the Prime Minister quadruples it?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives were concerned about the cost of food and the cost of fuel, they would stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, because it is Russia's illegal war of aggression that is driving up global food prices and global fuel prices. However, they are ideologically committed to ignoring climate change and doing anything they could to possibly fight it, so much so that they threw Ukraine under the bus and voted against the very agreement that the Ukrainian government has asked Canada to support. Conservatives need to give their heads a shake and stand with the people who are fighting for freedom around the world.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is the minister who stood and had a photo taken with a Nazi that helped Russian propaganda all around the world.

Oral Questions

The question was about the carbon tax cost on the average Canadian farmer. I have here a power bill from Enbridge for a farm in my riding that has \$11,000 in carbon taxes alone. That is today. Now the Prime Minister wants to quadruple the tax on Canadian farmers, which will drive up the cost of production, drive food growth out of this country and drive prices up for everyday Canadian families.

Once again, how much will the average farmer pay in carbon taxes once the Prime Minister implements his plan to quadruple the tax?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is unbelievable is that the Leader of the Opposition, who claims to stand for freedom and who claims to stand for democracy, will do everything he can to ideologically oppose fighting climate change, including not standing with Ukrainians, who are facing an illegal war of aggression by Russia that is driving up food and fuel prices around the world.

If he truly cared about supporting Canadian families and Canadian farmers, he would support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and would not abandon them in their time of need.

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[Translation]

HOUSING

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in yesterday's economic statement, the government announced measures to support housing co-operatives. There are 1,130 co-ops in Quebec, representing more than 22,000 housing units. The Leader of the Opposition referred to co-ops as Soviet-style housing. That shows his contempt for this type of housing.

Can the minister explain to Canadians the impact that yesterday's measures will have on housing co-ops across the country?

• (1515)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel for her hard work and her question.

People need more housing, and co-ops are part of the solution. That is why we announced yesterday that the GST will be removed from new co-op rental housing. We also announced that we will be strengthening the co-operative housing development program. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who despises co-ops, we support them and the people who live in them.

*Oral Questions***CARBON PRICING**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's tax on the farmers who produce the food and on the truckers who transport the food is a tax on everyone who eats food. The Bloc Québécois wants to radically increase taxes on farmers. There will be more costs for farmers in Quebec.

How much will the second carbon tax cost each farmer in Quebec?

[*English*]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition and his party do not even have a climate plan. In this day and age that is certainly very reckless.

Last Monday, I had the privilege of dealing with Lisa Thompson, the Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, and we announced a \$25-million plan to deal with climate change and deal with innovation.

I can tell the Leader of the Opposition that, one, he needs a climate plan, and two, this government will continue to support our farmers to make sure they stay on the cutting edge and become more profitable. If we do not deal with climate change, we will add to the price of food.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' idea of helping farmers is putting an \$11,000 tax on one farm for one month. Now they want to quadruple the tax on Canada's farmers. That will do nothing except send food production to more polluting foreign countries and force us to burn more diesel to transport it all the way back to Canada. Why do they not bring home food production and axe the tax on farmers?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, number one, we have a climate plan, and we will continue to deal with the climate plan. If we do not deal with climate, we will increasingly put up the price of food.

We have invested in farmers right across this country. We are going to make sure farmers and ranchers stay on the cutting edge. We deal with climate change because if we do not deal with climate change, like every country in the world is, we will continue to raise prices in the world.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, they still do not have a plan to fight climate change. What they have is a plan to quadruple a tax that has failed to fight climate change, giving Canada the 58th ranking out of 63 countries, missing every target but one in eight years and on track to missing their targets in 2030. They should stop distracting from the real agenda here, which is to take money away from farmers, from food and from the necessities of Canadian life.

Will they, yes or no, announce their support for the Senate passing the common-sense Conservative bill, Bill C-234, to take the tax off the farmers who feed us?

Mr. Adam van Koevreden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, who knows a thing or two about farming and climate change? It is the farmers who work in the breadbasket of the world, Ukrainian farm-

ers. Who asked Canadian parliamentarians to vote for the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement? Ukrainian farmers did, and so did the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and President Zelenskyy himself.

Ukrainian farmers are betrayed by this federal government. They are the people who grow—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1520)

Mr. Adam van Koevreden: Mr. Speaker, Canadian farmers are betrayed by the Conservatives. My apologies for the misstep.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, economic reconciliation is a major part of the federal government's work to build a strong and sustainable economy. Yesterday, the government announced its fall economic statement.

Can the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations inform the House on measures that support economic reconciliation?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Scarborough—Agincourt for her tireless advocacy and her hard work.

The number of major projects with potential for indigenous equity ownership is anticipated to grow significantly over the next decade, and we are working with indigenous partners to increase access to the affordable capital that indigenous communities will require to make these opportunities a reality. This will make projects more economically feasible for indigenous communities by decreasing the cost of capital. The indigenous loan guarantee program is a step in the right direction by the federal government on the path to economic reconciliation.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, in the fall economic statement, the Liberals showed that they are ending critical programs and services that indigenous peoples rely on. These decisions will keep indigenous peoples in poverty. This is at a time when the first nations infrastructure gap stands at \$350 billion.

Oral Questions

When will the government use the empathy it expresses and reconcile that with the funding so desperately needed to lift indigenous peoples out of poverty?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the advocacy of the member opposite to continue our work to close the infrastructure gap and to seek true reconciliation with indigenous people. That is a journey we have been on since 2015. In fact, services for indigenous people were flatlined for over a decade with the previous Conservative government. We have seen an increase of 168% in investments in indigenous communities, and we are not going to stop.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, imagine the horror, the nightmare of leaving home with a crying newborn in the back seat, making a way through smoke, hardly being able to see and trying to find an evacuation route from fires. This was the situation for thousands of people in the Northwest Territories this summer, yet through climate inaction and through a failure to fund essential infrastructure in the north, Canadian communities will experience this more often.

When will the Prime Minister follow through on commitments for essential infrastructure, especially for evacuation and fire preparedness in our north?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the devastating wildfires in the Northwest Territories caused an extremely large evacuation and impacted many homes. I visited the area. I am speaking with my counterpart on what the actual needs are. I also visited indigenous communities. Infrastructure, including roads and even telecommunications lines, is the topic we are currently discussing. We will make sure that the north gets the support it needs.

The Speaker: That brings an end to question period.

I see that there are a number of members rising on points of order.

The hon. minister.

• (1525)

Hon. Patty Hajdu: Mr. Speaker, during question period, I heard in one of the questions from the Leader of the Opposition his reckless use of the word “crazy” as a pejorative for one of our cabinet ministers. The use of the word “crazy” is offensive and stigmatizing and, for so many Canadians—

The Speaker: I thank the minister for raising this issue. The Speaker already made a statement regarding this and the importance of, when we are referring to individual members, treating all members with respect and dignity.

Also on a point of order, I recognize the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House to adopt the following motion, which is supported by the members for Mirabel and Louis-Saint-Laurent:

Given that the construction of the Mirabel airport led to the expropriation of thousands of families in 1969; that the families who lost their home, their land and their community following this expropriation are traumatized by this unspeakable pain; and that, with the end of commercial flights, the Mirabel airport is now closed to the public; that this House officially apologize to the residents of Mirabel who were expropriated in 1969.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That the House, in view of the joint statement by the respective Premiers of Quebec and Ontario, dated November 7, 2023, regarding the federal government's public procurement of the CP-140 Aurora replacement, call on the government to formally proceed by notice of tender before awarding any procurement contract for the new Canadian multi-mission aircraft.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, just in response to the point of order from the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, I do want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that on February 23, 2016, that member used the same word in quite the same context.

The Speaker: That is falling into debate. I thank the member.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During QP, the leader of the Conservative Party referred to the environment minister as “crazy environment minister”. We are going through a mental health crisis in this country. I would like the member for Carleton to apologize to this House and apologize to people struggling with mental health across this country.

The Speaker: I thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for raising this point of order. The Speaker did point out, during question period, the importance of using language that is respectful with respect to individual members of this House.

We are going to be moving on.

On a point of order, I recognize the hon. member for Madawaska—Restigouche.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Speaker, it has become impossible to hear questions and answers here, especially the answers. The heckling always comes from the same part of the House. There is supposed to be decorum around parliamentary language.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Speaker, this perfectly illustrates my point. Parliamentary language has changed here. Some of our colleagues have started being rude, showing no manners, and bullying. That is heckling.

I believe that, as parliamentarians, we all have the right to clearly hear what other colleagues have to say in their answers, without feeling intimidated. In due course, I would like to know the position of the House on respect for decorum and parliamentary language. Things have gotten out of control.

● (1530)

The Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Madawaska—Restigouche for his intervention.

As you all know, the Chair has already shared its observations and guidance on how members can behave in a more respectful manner while having passionate and focused debates here in the House.

I know that today, as is often the case on Wednesdays, there are a number of members, of all political persuasions, who are a little more passionate than usual, if I may say it that way. However, I agree that it is important that we all respect each other. When a member is speaking in the House, we must remain quiet and let the member express their thoughts. It is very important.

In this particular case, the Chair did hear the member's response. However, I encourage all members to exercise a lot more discipline so that everyone can be heard here in the House of Commons.

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. With respect, I think if you examine the proceedings today, you will see that the point of order raised by the member for Winnipeg Centre is about the use of the term “crazy”, referring to someone's mental health as a pejorative.

It does not matter who it is applied to in this House. Her point of order was about the use of that term as a pejorative. I think you, Mr. Speaker, may have inadvertently confirmed that negative term in your ruling.

I would like the Speaker to examine those records, because I think we need to make sure that in this House, we respect all those Canadians who are struggling with mental health issues and not use mental health as a pejorative in this House.

The Speaker: I thank the member, and I will take a closer look at the point of intervention from the member for Winnipeg Centre.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As you are examining this question, I would encourage you to examine the statement by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca on June 14, 2014, using the same word.

The Speaker: I thank all members.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1535)

[Translation]

COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM ACT

The House resumed from November 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-316, An Act to amend the Department of Canadian Heritage Act (Court Challenges Program), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: It being 3:28 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-316, under Private Members' Business.

Call in the members.

● (1545)

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

*(Division No. 451)***YEAS**

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Garon
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gill

Private Members' Business

Gould	Green	Caputo	Carrie
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Chambers	Chong
Hanley	Hardie	Cooper	Dalton
Hepfner	Holland	Davidson	Deltell
Hughes	Hussen	d'Entremont	Doherty
Hutchings	Iacono	Dowdall	Dreeshen
Idlout	Ien	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Jaczek	Johns	Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Joly	Jones	Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Jowhari	Julian	Ferreri	Findlay
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Gallant	Généreux
Khera	Koutrakis	Genuis	Gladu
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Goodridge	Gourde
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Gray	Hallan
Lametti	Lamoureux	Hoback	Jeneroux
Lapointe	Larouche	Kelly	Khanna
Lattanzio	Lauzon	Kitchen	Kmiec
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Lemire	Lightbound	Kurek	Kusie
Long	Longfield	Lake	Lawrence
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Lehoux	Leslie
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor	Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Liepert	Lloyd
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Lobb	Maguire
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Majumdar	Martel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty	McKay	McLean	Melillo
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod	Moore	Motz
McPherson	Mendès	Muys	Nater
Miao	Michaud	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Miller	Morrice	Perkins	Poilievre
Morrissey	Murray	Redekopp	Reid
Naqvi	Ng	Richards	Roberts
Noormohamed	Normandin	Rood	Ruff
O'Connell	Oliphant	Scheer	Schmale
O'Regan	Pauzé	Seebach	Shields
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon	Shiple	Small
Powlowski	Qualtrough	Soroka	Steinley
Rayes	Robillard	Stewart	Strahl
Rodriguez	Rogers	Stubbs	Thomas
Romanado	Rota	Tochor	Tolmie
Sahota	Sajjan	Uppal	Van Popta
Saks	Samson	Vecchio	Vidal
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay	Vien	Viersen
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe	Vis	Vuong
Serré	Sgro	Wagantall	Warkentin
Shanahan	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Waugh	Webber
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné	Williams	Williamson
Singh	Sorbara	Zimmer — 111	
Sousa	Ste-Marie		
St-Onge	Sudds		
Tassi	Taylor Roy		
Thériault	Therrien		
Thompson	Trudeau		
Trudel	Turnbull		
Valdez	Van Bynen		
van Koeverden	Vandal		
Vandenbeld	Vignola		
Villemure	Virani		
Weiler	Wilkinson		
Yip	Zahid		
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 206		

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Calkins

PAIRED

Members

Fry	Gaudreau
Housefather	Khalid
Lantsman	Mendicino
Morantz	Morrison
Perron	Rempel Garner
Sarai	Sheehan — 12

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

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

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 13 minutes.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

• (1550)

*[English]***PETITIONS**

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition on behalf of my constituents.

I rise for the 26th time on behalf of the people of Swan River, Manitoba, to present a petition on the rising rate of crime. The NDP-Liberal government has neglected Swan River and its 4,000 rural residents, who have been impacted by a wave of criminals in the community. Four individuals in Swan River were responsible for over 300 offences in just 18 months, and 53 of those were violent offences.

The rural community is calling for action in the form of jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders. The people of Swan River demand that the Liberal government repeal its soft-on-crime policies, which directly threaten their livelihoods and their community. I support the good people of Swan River.

PAKISTAN

Mr. George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents and other Canadians have brought forward a petition regarding the people of Pakistan.

Pakistani Canadians are becoming increasingly concerned about reports of political turmoil and uncertainty in Pakistan following the unjust removal of a democratically elected government and the subsequent arrests of Imran Khan and members of his party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. There have been reports of abductions, enforced disappearances and torture regarding political activists, their families and other state opposition.

The petition calls upon the subcommittee on international human rights to immediately begin a study of human rights violations, particularly towards minorities and human rights groups in Pakistan; the Government of Canada to implement sanctions on corrupt Pakistani military officials who have been involved in human rights violations; the government to work with the IMF to use its influence to tie loans to the condition that free and fair elections occur; and the government to implement a foreign agent registry to protect Canadians from foreign interference. The petitioners call for all these measures to continue until democratic institutions and human rights have been restored in Pakistan.

OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present a petition from citizens of Saanich—Gulf Islands and a number of others, who are very concerned about the fate of old-growth forests. This is e-petition 4277, with nearly 2,000 signatories; they are looking for action to protect old-growth forests and noting that the Species at Risk Act calls for protection of the ecosystems and habitats of species identified as threatened.

The petitioners note that these species are particularly threatened by industrial logging through old-growth forests. The petition goes into some detail about the specific types of blue-listed species that are only found in high-elevation, old-growth yellow and red cedar forests and specific types of lichen.

The solution that the petitioners point to is that the Government of Canada, using the tools that exist, such as the Species at Risk Act, can move to protect rare species of lichen important to ecosystems and immediately require that British Columbia uphold and enforce protections for these species across all Crown lands.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

The first is from a number of Canadians who are calling to the attention of the government the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most recent report, which has warned against repeating temperatures over the next two decades that will bring widespread devastation and extreme weather. They also bring to the government's attention that this impacts Canada today, with increased flooding, wildfires and extreme temperatures.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to move forward immediately with bold emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that are comprehensive in scope and realistic in achieving the necessary targets that Canada has set to reduce emissions by 2030.

FOOD SECURITY

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is certainly a lot closer to home. It is being presented on behalf of Collins Bay Public School in Kingston.

The individuals who signed this petition are calling to the attention of the government that Canada is the only G7 country without a national school food program. They also remind the government that the 2022 budget reaffirmed mandate letter commitments to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, directing them to work with provinces, territories, municipalities, indigenous partners and stakeholders to develop such a program.

The petitioners are, therefore, calling on the government, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to prioritize funding for a national school food program through budget 2024 for implementation in schools by fall 2024.

• (1555)

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to present a very well-timed petition; a motion on this very issue is before the House.

The petitioners make a very strong case. They note, first of all, that the record-low voter turnout in the last Ontario election of 43% demonstrates increasing voter disengagement and that distorted results from the most recent federal election illustrates the need for electoral reform. They also note that citizen assemblies have considerable legitimacy and public trust, given that they are, by their very nature, non-partisan, truly randomly selected representative bodies of citizens with no vested interest in the outcome.

The petitioners point out that citizen assemblies allow for more nuanced public deliberations than do simple yes or no referenda. They also say that citizen assemblies have been used successfully in Australia, Belgium, France, Ireland and Scotland, and the list goes on. They say that a citizens assembly on electoral reform would give citizens a leadership role in building consensus on a specific model for electoral reform in this country, but it would need to be established as soon as possible to enable its recommendations to be adopted in advance of the next federal election.

As a result, the petitioners call on the House to establish a citizens assembly on electoral reform; to mandate that the assembly craft a specific, detailed design for an electoral system tailored to Canada's needs that would make every vote count; to complete its work within the next 12 months; and to collaborate across party lines to table and pass legislation to enact the changes recommended by the assembly in advance of the next federal election.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present today.

The first petition is from Canadians across the country who are concerned about the human rights protections of people living in Turkey, Pakistan and Bahrain. The petitioners note that Turkish, Pakistani and Bahraini officials have committed gross human rights violations, including against thousands of Turks and eight Turkish Canadians. They say that Turkish officials have killed hundreds, including Gokhan Acikkollu, and wrongfully detained up to 300,000 people; they say that multiple human rights abuses are happening across Turkey.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to closely monitor the human rights situation in Turkey; to sanction Turkish officials who have committed these gross violations against Canadians and killed Gokhan Acikkollu; and to call on the Turkish, Pakistani and Bahraini governments to end all human rights violations in their respective countries.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I have is from Canadians from across the country who are concerned about the fact that over 300 babies die every day in this country, given the Morgentaler decision.

Routine Proceedings

Since then, there is no protection for preborn human life in this country. Canada is one of only two countries in the world where this is the case, with North Korea being the other one. Over 98% of these deaths could be prevented by having better laws in this country.

The heartbeat of a human being starts when the baby is five weeks old.

Therefore the folks who have signed this petition are calling on the Government of Canada to create and strengthen preborn human rights in this country.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I have is from Canadians from across the country who are concerned about the comments of Louis Roy, of the Quebec college of physicians, when he recommended to a committee here in this place that euthanasia be expanded to babies from birth to one year of age. This proposal for the euthanasia of children is deeply disturbing to the Canadians who have signed this petition and they want to emphatically insist that infanticide is always wrong.

The folks who have signed this petition call on the Government of Canada to block any attempt to allow for the euthanasia of children.

• (1600)

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I have is from Canadians from across the country, who are concerned about certain charities being targeted based on their views and forced into a values test. The petitioners note that the Liberals have promised to deny charitable status to group with views they call dishonest. This could jeopardize the charitable status of hospitals, houses of worship, schools, homeless shelters, food banks and many other organizations.

They also note that the Liberals previously used a values test to discriminate against groups applying for the Canada summer jobs grant.

The petitioners are asking the House of Commons to protect and preserve the application of charitable status rules on a politically and ideologically neutral basis, without discrimination on the basis of political or religious values, and they ask for no more imposition of a values test.

They also ask for the affirmation of their freedom of expression as Canadians.

PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I have is from Canadians from across the country, including many of my own constituents, who are concerned about the consent and age verification of those depicted in pornographic material.

S. O. 52

Petitioners ask for the government to follow recommendation 2 from the 2021 Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics report on MindGeek, which required that all content-hosting platforms in Canada confirm consent and age before uploading this content.

Bill C-270, the stopping Internet sexual exploitation act, adds two offences to the Criminal Code. The first would require age verification and consent prior to distribution. The second requires the removal of that material if consent is withdrawn.

As such, the petitioners are calling on the House of Commons to quickly pass Bill C-270, the stopping Internet sexual exploitation act.

FIREARMS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I have to present is from Canadians from across the country who are concerned about the health and safety of Canadian firearms owners. The petitioners recognize the importance of owning firearms and they recognize that owning firearms is an important part of Canadian heritage. However they are concerned about the impacts to hearing loss caused by the noise levels of firearms and the need for noise reduction.

These petitioners acknowledge that sound moderators are the only universally accepted health and safety device that is criminally prohibited in Canada. Moreover, the majority of G7 countries have recognized the health and safety benefits of sound moderators and insist or allow for them to be used in hunting, sport shooting and for reducing noise pollution.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to allow legal firearm owners to purchase and use sound moderators for all legal hunting and sport shooting activities.

PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the last petition I have to present today comes from Canadians from across the country who are concerned around the use and consent and the age verification of those depicted in pornographic material. They are calling on the House of Commons and the Government of Canada to quickly pass Bill C-270, the stopping Internet sexual exploitation act, which adds two offences to the Criminal Code.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

INFRASTRUCTURE GAP FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

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

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I rise to request an emergency debate on an issue of great importance to first nations and indigenous peoples across the country. The infrastructure gap for first nations was recently revealed to be almost \$350 billion. This figure does not include gaps for Inuit and Métis communities. Underfunding to indigenous peoples has resulted in a crisis. It is an emergency, as indigenous peoples all across Canada are suffering. It must be debated as such.

The infrastructure gap means indigenous peoples will continue to suffer in overcrowded, unsafe homes and they will not be able to handle emergencies such as wildfires. It means crumbling schools, and it means Jordan's principle funding that will soon run out. It means boil water advisories that persist in 28 communities. We need investments now.

As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to indigenous peoples in this country. We must come together to demand answers from the government on how it plans to bridge these gaps. The fall economic statement ignores the years of recommendations by auditors general, parliamentary budget officers, the TRC and MMIWG, just to name a few. Billions of dollars in Indigenous Services Canada programs will sunset. These programs will not be renewed. This is funding that communities rely on and it must be renewed. Further, there are still plans to reduce departmental spending and downsize staffing by over 1,000. This will affect service delivery and add to the already unacceptable backlogs. The status quo cannot continue. We cannot afford to wait any longer to lift indigenous communities out of the entrenched poverty the government forces them into.

An emergency debate would allow parliamentarians to get answers from the Minister of Indigenous Services regarding why her department refuses to commit to ending this infrastructure gap by 2030.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you to support this request for an emergency debate so we may come together as parliamentarians and demand funding that indigenous peoples desperately need.

• (1605)

SPEAKER'S RULING

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA LABOUR CODE

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.) moved that Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the labour movement has been saying that replacement workers are wrong for longer than this country has existed. People in the labour movement have been telling us that replacement workers distract from the bargaining table and prolong disputes and that the use of replacement workers can poison the relationship between an employer and workers for generations after.

We listened to workers and I am very proud to say that on November 9, we tabled Bill C-58, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012.

Some people have asked why now. Why should Canada ban replacement workers now? Just because it is the way things have always been done does not mean it is the way that things should be done. The option of replacement workers is something that many of us have taken for granted over our lives. However, should a worker's right to meaningfully withhold their labour be surrendered to the possibility of being replaced? Is a bargaining table where one's bargaining powers are fundamentally limited a fair bargaining table? Are replacement workers part of how we ought to handle labour relations in the 21st century? The answer to all those questions, I would argue, is no.

[Translation]

Bill C-58 will prohibit the use of replacement workers in federally regulated workplaces. Violators will be fined \$100,000 a day.

[English]

This bill is unlike others that have come before this House in years past. Unlike previous legislation to ban replacement workers, this bill was borne of tripartism. It is the result of employers, workers and government all coming together, sitting at the same table to discuss an important issue in Canadian labour relations.

[Translation]

This legislation will improve labour relations in Canada. It will provide greater stability and certainty for all Canadians.

Government Orders

• (1610)

[English]

I personally sat in on the consultations with employers. I sat in on the consultations with labour and I sat in on consultations with employers and labour together because I knew this bill had to be forged through a true tripartite approach. The consultations were messy at times, but they forced people to listen to one another. It was not just employers and unions sitting at two sides of a table, shouting at one another. It was employers, unions and government sitting side by side, working together to build better legislation.

[Translation]

These consultations were not easy. They were tense and sometimes difficult, but they allowed the parties to reach an agreement.

[English]

This bill's improvements to the maintenance of activities process are a direct result of that work. A maintenance of activities agreement is how employers and unions come to agree on what work must be done during a strike or a lockout. It is a truce in the midst of a dispute to protect the health and safety of Canadians and prevent damage to property and to the environment so that there is a job site to come back to when the negotiations have inevitably concluded.

In the federal sector, employees and their employers know that so much of their work impacts the health and safety of all Canadians. We are talking about the movement of critical medical supplies across our supply chains, the sharing of emergency information through telecom services and the maintenance of sensitive transportation infrastructure. All of these services, if not supported and maintained, can harm the health and safety of Canadians.

Right now, parties are not required to have a maintenance of activities agreement or even to come together to determine whether they need one. With this legislation, employers and unions will have to come together and determine what work needs to continue during a strike or lockout, if any. We are setting clear timelines on this. After they give notice to begin bargaining, unions and employers will have 15 days to come to an agreement. If they cannot come to an agreement, the Canada Industrial Relations Board will come to one for them within 90 days. This is important. It means more certainty and predictability in collective bargaining for businesses, for unions and for employers alike.

[Translation]

Stability and certainty are guiding everything we are doing.

*Government Orders**[English]*

We have heard from our colleagues across the aisle, some of whom have suggested we pass and bring this bill into force in the next six weeks, but when making one of the most significant changes to federal collective bargaining that Canada has ever seen, we cannot be rushed.

Bill C-58 will change the bargaining table. It will change the role of the Canada Industrial Relations Board and it will fundamentally change how labour relations operate in this country. We are asking the CIRB to resolve issues around replacement workers on new and predictable timelines, to resolve maintenance of activities disputes within 90 days if parties cannot do it in 15. So they need to staff up. They need to strengthen their processes. They are already telling us what they need because the purpose of the CIRB's creation was to take labour disputes out of the court system, to free up the court system and allow labour disputes to be processed in reasonable order.

We are building up the CIRB to stay true to that mission. It is the only way we will make this legislation work. It is a massive change and they need time. All parties need time to prepare and adapt to their new requirements and obligations, and to formulate new strategies for the bargaining table, so that this legislation makes the positive impact that we know it can and should make for stability, for certainty.

To those who have questioned if this bill will in fact result in that, who have raised concerns with these changes, I understand. As union leaders told me after we tabled this bill, in a bit more colourful language, this is a big deal. It is disruptive; it is a change, but I can tell colleagues right now that it will bring more stability, more balance and more certainty to how we collectively bargain in this country because we are bringing the focus back to where it belongs: the table.

Just look at the bill. Look at the improvements that will benefit businesses, unions, employers and the public alike. One does not have to look far to understand what it means. As we speak, workers at the Port of Quebec are on the front lines of this issue. They have been replaced and they have been on the picket line for over one year. Those workers on the front lines every day are ongoing proof for why we need this kind of legislation because replacement workers prolong disputes.

[Translation]

Workers at the Port of Québec are facing this problem at this very moment.

They have been replaced for over a year now. Replacement workers prolong disputes. The longshore workers are on strike, as is their right, but the replacement workers have disrupted negotiations.

● (1615)

[English]

For 14 months, longshore workers have been on strike there, exercising their constitutional right to do so, and for 14 months, replacement workers have been operating the port. That is 14 months of earning less than their salary, with no benefits, no coverage and

no work. How quickly could this dispute have been resolved, how long could we have had a permanent and resilient agreement between the union and the employer, if replacement workers had not been an option and if the only option had been sitting down at the bargaining table to negotiate a deal that works for everyone?

Long, drawn-out disputes like this can bring out the worst, because workers are left in impossible situations, choosing between standing up for their rights and putting food on the table for their family. In fact, this is why other jurisdictions have decided to bring in legislation to ban replacement workers. When the Government of Quebec brought in its legislation to ban replacement workers in 1977, it was to stop the violent confrontations to which strikes and picket lines were leading in that province. In 1993, the Government of British Columbia passed similar legislation to address the increasingly hostile relationship between employers and the labour movement.

What happened in Quebec and B.C. after that legislation was passed? There were less frequent strikes. In B.C., there was no discernible impact on the number of strikes. Over the past close to 30 years, strike activity in the province has never gone above the 1993 numbers. In Quebec, while transitions in Quebec's economy in the 1970s did cause a brief uptick in strikes, they have declined ever since.

[Translation]

Strikes are less common in Quebec, even with its legislation banning replacement workers.

[English]

To those who still say this bill would result in more strikes, I will remind them where the state of play stands at the federal level. We are very fortunate to have the absolute best mediators at the federal labour department. The federal mediation and conciliation service has resolved 96% of labour disputes within the last year, without a work stoppage. It is the gold standard. Ninety-six per cent of the time, most Canadians never hear about labour negotiations at federal workplaces across the country. There might be tense negotiations and they might be messy, but they are settled at the negotiating table, and that is thanks in part to our federal mediators. It is only 4% of the time that federal labour negotiations enter the public conversation.

I am often seen in the media repeating the same message I always do, which is to focus on the table. Every single time, others will be on the same evening news I am on, repeating the same message they always do, which is to bring out back-to-work legislation and to bring out replacement workers. They ask why the feds will not step in.

We have to remember that striking is a last resort for workers. Nobody wants to lose their benefits and live off strike pay. It is an anxious, uncertain time for anyone. Collective bargaining can be hard work, but it is always the answer. Our economy depends on employers and unions staying at the table to do the work and reach the best and most resilient deals. Bill C-58 would keep parties focused on the bargaining table. That is how we find stability and certainty in our supply chains and our entire economy. Every industry and bargaining table is different, but our goal in all of them is the same: to keep parties focused at the table, create a more predictable process and remove the distractions. That is what this legislation would do for businesses, employers and unions alike.

This is not just the smart thing to do; it is also the right thing to do. It is something labour has been asking for since before we were even a country. The reactions I have heard from labour leaders over the past 13 days speaks to how much the bill really means to them. As Gil McGowan of the Alberta Federation of Labour said, “This is Canadian politics at its best. This is Parliament working for workers.” As Bea Bruske, head of the Canadian Labour Congress said, this is a vital way to increase fairness for workers.

[Translation]

As Magali Picard of the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec put it, this bill changes Canada's collective bargaining landscape.

[English]

As the Fish, Food & Allied Workers said in my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador, with this bill we would be doing away with “a regressive, anti-worker practice that has long eroded collective bargaining rights.”

Last year, we passed a bill to give workers in federally regulated sectors 10 days of paid sick leave, because we learned a lot from COVID when it came to sick leave. If we, as a government, were going to be asking people to stay home for two weeks when they became sick, we had to give them the ability to do so. That bill passed in the House with unanimous consent, because we all agree workers should never have to choose between getting paid and getting better. Members will recall that, at the time, workers in the United States were striking over their ask of one day of paid sick leave to stay home from work when they are sick. In Canada, workers now get 10 days, and that passed unanimously.

When the time comes, I hope every member of the House, Liberals, New Democrats, Bloc members, Greens and Conservatives, will stand up and vote to keep collective bargaining free and fair.

● (1620)

[Translation]

This legislation is needed to keep labour relations strong in Canada, to keep employers and unions at the bargaining table, and to ban replacement workers.

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the issue of replacement workers, as we know, it has been in the news that the ambassador from South Korea has been talking to officials in Windsor about bringing in up to 1,600 re-

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placement workers at the Stellantis plant in Windsor. In fact, they would be taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers.

I wonder whether the minister would comment on this. Is there anything in the bill that would change the fact that the current government signed the contract that allows taxpayer-funded replacement foreign workers to come into Canada?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, that is comparing apples to oranges. Once again, we see from the other side of the House some ability either to divert attention from or to completely obfuscate two absolutely separate issues.

What we are talking about are replacement workers who are being used as what is otherwise known in the parlance as scabs, in federally regulated sectors during the collective bargaining process during a strike or lockdown. What the hon. member is talking about is completely and utterly different.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right when he says that Quebec's anti-scab legislation has made it possible over the past 46 years to negotiate as equals and ensure that no strikes have dragged on.

He also talked about the 14-month strike at the Port of Québec. Given that it is so urgent that we pass Bill C-58, I would like to know why he waited 14 months to do anything and why he took action to resolve the disputes in Vancouver but not in Quebec City.

Second, why wait another 18 months after the bill receives royal assent to be able to enforce the law, which will not apply in any way to longshore workers, because there is no retroactivity?

[English]

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, first, let me say that the reason we are sticking with 18 months is that it is precisely the number that was recommended to us by the Canada Industrial Relations Board and also agreed upon with our mediator service. They are the ones who are going to have to do the refereeing, as it were. They are the ones who are going to have to bring parties together to achieve a deal.

What they did was speak to the minister and various members who had been involved in creating the piece of legislation before us, and told them that everything they said about how important and how big this legislation is, and that the unions have been asking for it for so long, is absolutely true. They also said that the people who were involved in bringing the people together to come to agreements to ensure stability and certainty in our economy need that time to train and to get the resources they need in order to be able to do their jobs. That is precisely the number they gave us, 18 months, which is the number we will listen to.

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Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian middle class was built on the union movement, and we can see the Canadian middle class rise with union density. To the extent that we have seen a decline in union density, we have also seen a decline of the middle class.

The right to strike is fundamental to the union movement. If workers do not have the right to withhold their labour, they do not have leverage in bargaining. It is why unions have been calling for anti-scab legislation for so long and why they needed it not just in the case of lockouts, which is what the Liberals started talking about after decades, but also in the case of strikes. Therefore, I am very pleased today to see legislation that would ban replacement workers both in the context of lockouts and in the context of strikes, because that is how to fight for powerful paycheques for Canadians.

However, I am concerned about an 18-month coming-into-force period after royal assent. We know that sometimes, government officials ask for a long time to implement things, but when pressed, can do it much faster. Indeed, when it came to Quebec and B.C., we saw relatively swift implementation of their anti-scab laws. Will the minister go back to his department and press it to ensure that we could put the law into force much faster than 18 months after royal assent?

• (1625)

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, let me take the opportunity to thank the hon. member for his professionalism and the great thought that he brought to the negotiations that brought this piece of legislation to bear. I can say that I personally learned a great deal from the hon. member and from his experiences in the labour movement, and that they informed this legislation. I think he knows, too, of the great experience, fortitude and talent not only of the CIRB but also of our federal mediators. I do listen to them when they give me a number and when they back it up with their experience, talent and their record. With their 96% success record, I listen to them.

If we could get it done sooner, I would happily do so, but I will not do that until I am sure and confident that the federal mediators and the CIRB themselves are confident and sure. The stability and certainty of our supply chains is too important, and we have to acknowledge just how big a deal this really is.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the hon. minister for his leadership during the recent strike at the port. Many of the workers from my constituency wanted to thank him. I also want to thank him for bringing the legislation before us, which was long overdue.

The minister mentioned certainty, stability and balance. Could the minister tell us how the bill would help workers while at the same time help the economy move?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am thankful for the member's guidance and counsel, as well as for that of many members of the B.C. caucus whom I relied upon during a prolonged strike that happened with longshoremen in B.C. ports. It is one that eventually came to a successful conclusion under tremendous pressure for back-to-work legislation and tremendous pressure in other ways. We stuck to the table, and we insisted that parties

stick to the table. I believe that now we have a more resilient and healthier deal. I do not think I need to tell the hon. member, but I will tell the House that we are digging deeper to see whether there is anything systemic we could change in that particular workplace environment with 32 ports, to make sure that this does not happen again and that the collective bargaining process is held intact.

To answer the hon. member's question about stability and certainty, I would point, first and foremost, to the maintenance of activities agreement, which does not exist right now, which would oblige both parties to come to an agreement on the essential things that need to be done in order to maintain the workplace, to maintain the environment and to make sure there is a healthy workplace to return to. They would have two weeks to do that once the bargaining process begins, and if they do not succeed, it would be done for them through the CIRB in 90 days.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the sense of urgency I am hearing from the minister and from other members of the governing party, if I am honest, I feel like we have seen this movie before. We heard the exact same words with respect to the Canada disability benefit. There is all this talk about urgency and parties that agree. Then, the coming-into-force date is at least 18 months away. Colleagues have asked about this already, and I think it is an important question and an important point that the minister should not simply share that parties asked for this date; I would hope that he would have asked follow-up questions about the specifics of why 18 months is required.

Can the minister share with Parliament the specific steps that were shared with him for why 18 months is required? If he does not have that, is he open to amendments to move this along more quickly once the bill comes into force?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, I will tell the hon. member that I have witnessed the incredible talent, fortitude, patience and, ultimately, effectiveness of our mediators and of the CIRB on multiple occasions. Some occasions did not make headlines but came close to doing so. For instance, there was a potential WestJet strike that almost happened on the May long weekend.

The tact and ability of the mediators and the CIRB are amazing, but are based on a certain number of rules. I give credit to them, and also to union negotiators and the negotiators of the employers, many of whom know one another and get along quite well with one another. They all have jobs to do. They play a game of chess based on a certain number of rules. We would be upending that chessboard. It would change all their tactics and all their strategies. The people who have to referee those tactics and strategies, in order to make sure that the supply chains of this country remain intact, certain and stable, need to be given the time and the resources. I have complete faith and trust in them. They have shown their abilities time and time again.

Government Orders

• (1630)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns with the legislation.

I was involved in the chemical industry and the nuclear industry. In strike situations, it can be unsafe to not have replacement workers or some people to come in to keep the facility running correctly.

I noticed that in the legislation, the federal unions are not included. Why is there a difference between what they want to impose on federally operated unions and on the public sector unions? Could the minister address these concerns?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Mr. Speaker, it is because my jurisdiction is the private sector and the part of the private sector that is regulated by the federal government, which is telecommunications, banking, ports, rail and airlines. That is my remit, and that is the part of the code I am responsible for.

I think the maintenance of activities portion of this legislation should give the hon. member some comfort in knowing that they will have to answer those questions. They will have to make sure that essential services are looked after, and for the first time, they will be obliged to do so.

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GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 30—PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-56

NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, with respect to the consideration of Government Business No. 30, at the next sitting of the House, a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that debate not be further adjourned.

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CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today. I will start off by saying I will be splitting my time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable. Normally, our shadow minister for labour would be leading the debate on this, but he is dealing with—

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to cut the member off quickly. As it is the first round, the hon. member would have to ask for unanimous consent to allow the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable to share his time.

I take it the hon. member is asking for consent. I ask all those against the hon. member's moving the motion to please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. Those who had the joy of sitting on the finance committee and listening to me speak for 18 hours while the Minister of Finance would not show

up to defend her budget know I can go for 18 hours if members would like. I appreciate—

The Deputy Speaker: We have a point of order from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow the member to speak for 18 hours.

The Deputy Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Those who oppose that will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: I am hearing a few nays. The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets has the floor.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the support from the member for Kingston and the Islands. I know that he loves to hear from me. I am disappointed in the member for Winnipeg North. There seems to be a division in the caucus on this issue.

As I was saying, our shadow minister for labour would normally lead off on this bill in second reading, but he is back home because he has had a death in his family. As the shadow minister for industry, I have been asked to lead off.

I would like to lead off by following up on the point that the member for Sarnia—Lambton made during the minister's intervention that the bill does not cover the Government of Canada, but the industries of the Government of Canada. I appreciate that the member is sticking to his knitting, but it is not unusual for the government to amend multiple bills or do omnibus bills if it truly believes in something. I think this is a bit like the shoemaker's children in that it is asking private sector companies regulated by the federal government to abide by a law that it is not asking public servants to abide by.

On the issue of replacement workers, the minister spoke quite at length, as is his right as the lead speaker and sponsor minister on the issue of replacement workers, so I would like to speak to replacement workers.

We know that one of the most critical things now is that the Parliamentary Budget Officer has indicated that a record subsidy to three large multinational auto companies has been brought in by the government. It is already \$6 billion over its budget, or its claim of what the subsidy is, to over \$43 billion over a six-year period for some of the largest foreign multinationals there are.

In doing so, the government has refused to release what those contracts are. The reason that pertains to replacement workers is that one of those multinationals has already sent their ambassador from South Korea, who I do not believe is freelancing, as I do not think ambassadors for South Korea freelance. The ambassador was in Windsor meeting with senior officials, the mayor, the chief of police, and telling everyone that Windsor had to get prepared for 1,600 replacement workers for the Stellantis plant replacing the Canadians that the minister said would be hired.

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I will throw out what the Minister of Industry said. To be clear, it was not the Minister of Labour, as I do not believe that the Minister of Labour has spoken on this. He may have outside the House but not inside the House. However, the Minister of Industry said, “Today’s announcement is great news for Canadian jobs” and the Prime Minister echoed the same thing. He said, “By working together, we are creating thousands of new jobs, making a difference in the lives of people now and making sure that future generations have a clean environment to live in.”

I think that folks who heard that announcement thought that the Prime Minister was talking about southwest Ontario and Windsor, but it turns out he was talking about working together to create thousands of new jobs for people in South Korea, using \$15 billion, in that instance, of taxpayer money. As our leader has said, there are 15 million households—

• (1635)

The Deputy Speaker: I believe we have a point of order from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, this is the first speech from the Conservatives in this debate, and we are talking about the anti-scab legislation the minister has tabled and spoken to. However, this member is talking about something completely unrelated. He is talking about Stellantis, which is regulated by the Province of Ontario, concerning the workers there, and not by the federal government. He is nowhere near discussing the bill.

I am really hoping that you, Mr. Speaker, can encourage him to come back to the substance we are debating today and to be relevant.

The Deputy Speaker: Considering the hon. member has 20 minutes, I will ask him to tie it all together as best as he can.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member for Kingston and the Islands does not want us to talk about the fact that the government, once again, is hypocritical and inconsistent in applying its philosophy on replacement workers. It not applying it not only to federal government workers but also to the contracts it signed with Canadian taxpayers.

Since the minister referred to replacement workers multiple times within his speech in the context of people doing other people’s jobs, talking about replacement workers is what this is about. That is the way the minister introduced it and spoke to it. If I irritate the members for bringing up the fact that they did not have the courage to sign contracts with foreign multinationals that would prohibit foreign replacement workers from being employed in these plants and instead allowed it and did not make sure that taxpayer-funded foreign replacement workers were not part of the contracts they signed, then they have left themselves open to this problem.

Do the members of the government know who is disappointed by this? It is all Canadians who believed the government when it said it was protecting Canadian jobs in the unionized auto industry. All the unions that represent the auto workers in southwestern Ontario—

• (1640)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Mégantic—L’Érable has a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, if you were to canvass the House, I am sure you would find unanimous consent to allow my colleague to share his time with me on this matter.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

It is agreed.

Let us go back to the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, who I believe wanted to speak for 20 minutes, but who must now finish his speech in under 10 minutes.

[*English*]

He has three minutes left to get his thoughts out.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, now that the member has considerably less time, I wonder if he might hurry up in becoming relevant to the bill.

The Deputy Speaker: I guess we have had a rough afternoon.

Since the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets only has three minutes, he will have to tie some of these things together and come to the crux of the discussion here today.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I will come to the crux of the issue. I know the member had the joy of sitting and listening to my 18 hours in the finance committee, so I am sure he will appreciate these three minutes. Where do I go?

More replacement workers are a potential not only in the NextStar plant in Windsor, but also in the Volkswagen contract. I have had the privilege of reading the Volkswagen contract, and what is not in the Volkswagen contract, which is apparently a mirror of these things, is a prohibition on replacement workers being put into these taxpayer-funded plants.

I know members on the other side have been questioning this issue. The Government of Canada’s website has a job bank and there are about 20 jobs advertised for Stellantis. It says on it who can apply for these jobs, including Canadian citizens and permanent residents or temporary residents, but, more important, other candidates with or without a valid Canadian work permit. It is right on the government website. The ambassador for South Korea has been telling us that there are going to be replacement workers at this plant.

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I would ask about the other contracts the government has signed. A South Korean company is part of the Ford contract in Quebec to produce cathodes for the EV business. Can the government share with us that contract to make sure replacement workers are not being used and that the government got guarantees? Can the members share with us that in the Volkswagen contract there is a clause that says that replacement workers from outside of Canada will not be used for those jobs? It is incumbent upon the Liberals to come clean on those issues.

We have been asking for that clarity and transparency from the government. I do not believe it says in any of those contracts that the Government of Canada has the ability to prevent those contracts from being made public. If the Liberals are so opposed to replacement workers, as the minister said, why do they not show Canadians that they put their money, taxpayer money, where their mouth is and actually ensure that only Canadians will be employed in these unionized jobs in the auto industry? They are unwilling. In fact, Liberals voted against that in the industry committee last night.

I would like to know from the Liberals on the other side of the House what they are hiding. Is it that they have put clauses in these contracts to allow the replacement workers from other countries in these auto businesses? The Minister of Labour is so desperately trying to prohibit these replacement workers in federal institutions, but is signing contracts to spend \$15 billion to \$30 billion of taxpayer money to allow replacement workers from other countries in these auto businesses.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first elected in 1988 in the Manitoba legislature, I have always believed it is important to see anti-scab legislation. I am very grateful and proud of the fact that our current Minister of Labour has ushered in important legislation that will have a profoundly positive impact on labour from coast to coast to coast. This is not only good for labour; it is good for all Canadians.

I hope that provincial jurisdictions across Canada will join the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia in recognizing that the best way to support labour is to have good legislation. That is exactly what this anti-scab legislation is. I hope to see other provinces follow suit and look at what the federal minister is providing: good, strong leadership on a very important labour issue.

The member can provide his thoughts on what I just said and whatever else he would like.

• (1645)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, the great benefit he is seeking from all levels of government with this legislation would be more credible if he would support our desire, and that of NDP members, frankly, who voted to release these contracts publicly last night, which the Liberals stopped, to see that the company has put their money where their mouth is and is not going to allow foreign taxpayer-funded replacement workers in the good, unionized auto jobs in this country, which they purport to be trying to protect.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are all quite happy to see Bill C-58 tabled.

The bill addresses major inequity between what Quebec workers under provincial and federal jurisdiction experience. I would remind the House that Quebec passed similar legislation in 1977.

Since we are dealing with a minority government, the only problem is that we are talking about 18 months before the bill is implemented. Eighteen months is a long time. By then, we may well have had two more minority governments.

I would like my colleague to comment on this. What does he think about the delay, which I find huge?

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I think the government will probably take longer than 18 months to release the contracts on the deals that have been done. I do not know why we would want to do that in the auto business. I would remind the member from the Bloc that two of the subsidies in the auto business, where replacement workers can be brought in through the agreement, unless we are shown that it is not in the contracts by releasing them, are in Quebec. One of them, in fact, is in the leader of the Bloc Québécois's riding. I would think they would want to know that the Northvolt plant has the ability, potentially, to bring in Swedish workers. If the Liberals want to dispute it, they can release the contracts. The other one, which I mentioned earlier, is for EV battery parts and is with a South Korean company. Let us make sure that it is not doing that as well.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the fall economic statement yesterday, the government projected that, over the next year, unemployment is going to be up by 1% in Canada. I absolutely agree with the member that investments in battery plants have to lead to good union jobs here, although he did not say "good union jobs". I will give him the opportunity in a moment.

What I am concerned about is that he did not talk about the legislation, and he is using replacement workers in a very different sense than the sense relevant to the legislation. If the Conservatives want to coin a new term, that is their business, but they should not do it to conflate issues and distract from the fact that they clearly do not want to talk about bringing home powerful paycheques for Canadian workers by protecting their right to strike with anti-scab legislation.

Would he now like to take a moment to talk about replacement workers in the relevant sense, who are people who take the job of someone out on strike or in a lockout, and tell us what the Conservative position is on this bill? He has not even talked about the content of the bill yet despite us being almost at the 15-minute mark.

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Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, what brings home powerful paycheques and powerful union paycheques are contracts to build auto plants that do not involve bringing in replacement workers from South Korea, Sweden and other countries in Europe.

Perhaps the hon. member should defend the unionized auto jobs and the 7% unemployment rate that exists in Windsor. The government is refusing to ensure that those good-paying union jobs go to auto workers in southwest Ontario.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, during the debate pursuant to Standing Order 66 on Motion No. 41 to concur in the tenth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair and at the conclusion of the time provided for debate or when no member rises to speak, whichever is earlier, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred pursuant to Standing Order 66.

● (1650)

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

[*Translation*]

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

(Motion agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: Before we continue, 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, Public Services and Procurement; the hon. member for Regina—Wascana, Oil and Gas Industry; the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Persons with Disabilities.

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CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets for standing up in the House of Commons and raising the important issue of the replacement workers who will be hired at the Stellantis battery plant in Ontario. This is a matter that concerns us greatly for several reasons. Since Bill C-58 deals with the labour force, the unionized workers of this country, we have a golden opportunity to highlight this Liberal government's lack of perspective and clear commitment toward unionized workers.

Why do we say this? Unfortunately, we recently learned that in the contracts the government signed for battery projects, contracts that involve very large contributions from Canadian taxpayers, there seem to be no guarantees about several things. There is no guarantee that the jobs will be for Canadian workers. There is no guarantee that the natural resources used will be from Canada. There is no guarantee that these resources will be processed here. When I say there are no guarantees, I am assuming there are none, because I have not seen the contracts, though I would like to.

Under the Stellantis contract, the company will be getting \$15 billion. This breaks down to \$1,000 per Canadian household. When each family in Canada files their income tax return next year, it could be said that \$1,000 of what they pay the federal and provincial governments will be going to Stellantis.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît on a point of order.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, despite the respect I have for my colleague, he knows full well that he is completely off topic. We are debating a bill about anti-scab legislation. He is taking advantage of this, with the Chair's full knowledge, to debate a topic that is being dealt with at the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology. I believe he should take parliamentarians seriously, be rigorous, and debate the bill we are seized with today.

The Deputy Speaker: As always, members are allowed to stray from the subject, perhaps far too far. I would ask the hon. member to make sure his speech remains germane to the subject at hand.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's remarks.

I will make a very direct connection. Bill C-58 states that the Liberals will implement the legislation in 18 months. Once again, the Liberals are making a promise they will not keep.

I want to demonstrate here in my speech to all my colleagues that the current government's word is not worth much, so I want to look at what they have written on paper and see what that will prove. That is why we are anxious see the contracts of the Stellantis plant and of Northvolt, whose plant will be built in the Bloc Québécois leader's riding, Beloeil—Chambly.

In the Volkswagen contract, what kind of commitments were made to ensure that Canadians' money will be given to Canadian workers? That is our concern in the case of Stellantis. We absolutely must have access to these contracts, and given the magnitude of public funds involved—

● (1655)

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert on a point of order.

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Mr. Denis Trudel: Mr. Speaker, I think that the Chair ruled earlier. She gave the member a break, but he is taking advantage. That was two minutes ago and he is still hammering on about Stellantis, which has nothing to do with the extremely important bill we are now debating.

The Deputy Speaker: As always, we try to provide some leeway. At the same time, I am trying to do my best to ask the member to make a connection between the two matters he is attempting to raise.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, the important thing is to know if these contracts and bills being introduced today are of any value to Canadians. That is a very good question we must ask ourselves.

Unfortunately, what we have realized, what we have seen and what we have discovered is that 1,600 jobs at the Stellantis plant are reserved for foreign workers to replace Canadian workers who could have been hired to do the work. We know because the company itself contacted the chief of police and the municipal authorities to say they needed places to house 1,600 foreign workers to replace the workers. That is really alarming.

Let me continue. In the call for tenders, to show the extent to which—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Elmwood—Transcona on a point of order.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I think that one of the important questions raised during this debate is whether the Conservatives actually know what a replacement worker is. We are starting to wonder whether they even understand the term.

Perhaps our colleague could just reassure us that he does in fact know what a replacement worker is, notwithstanding the spin that the Conservatives are putting on the term today in the House of Commons.

The Deputy Speaker: I would say that that is a good question to bring up when we get to questions and comments. Nevertheless, I will ask the member to resume debate on Bill C-58 and try to explain the connection with the Stellantis issue, if possible.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I absolutely do not believe the Liberals intend to implement this bill in 18 months' time. They want to get through the next election and let the debate die down on its own. That is the reality.

How can I be sure about that? I see it when I look at the contracts that have been signed but that we have not seen, the contracts that will allow for a third of the employees hired at Stellantis to come from overseas. If anyone does not believe me, if people and the NDP are not worried, I for one am very concerned about what is happening.

Let us consider the criteria in the job postings that have been published. Candidates applying for the position of general affairs specialist will have to be fluent in Korean. The company is looking for an electrode quality engineer. These are well-paid jobs. The job posting says that bilingualism in English and Korean is preferred. The plant down there is not even asking for a little bit of French.

What about the plant that will be built in the riding of the leader of the Bloc Québécois? Does the leader of the Bloc Québécois want to know whether the spinoffs of the plant that will be built in his riding will provide jobs to his constituents?

Is anyone making sure that the union jobs created through the contract the federal government has signed with these multinationals will go to Quebecers?

Will there be the same requirement for knowledge of French for these jobs, or is the company going to demand knowledge of Swedish? Is it going to ask for knowledge of German for the other plant, over in Ontario? It is very worrying.

This is why it is absolutely necessary that we get to see these contracts. We cannot take the Prime Minister's word for it. He underestimated the cost of this project by several billion dollars before the shovels even hit the ground. He said the project would break even in five years. We now know that it will take 20 years.

As for this government's plans to implement Bill C-58 in 18 months, I will believe it when I see it. In my opinion, what worries Canadians now is whether the money that Canadian families are giving the government is being used to fund good union jobs for Canadian workers.

• (1700)

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope you will reread that speech if you have time after your workday is done, because what you just saw was a perfect example of a Conservative member from Quebec feeling uneasy about his party's position.

Quebec has long-standing anti-scab legislation. The federal government does not. Now a bill has suddenly come along, and this member is ill at ease with his party's position. He would not be able to look his constituents in the eye and tell them he opposes anti-scab legislation. He is making all kinds of excuses.

Now, I am going to ask him a very simple question. Should the Conservatives form the next government, will the Conservative Party introduce a federal anti-scab bill?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I have the interests of all Quebecers at heart, particularly those of voters in the riding of Beauce—Chambly.

Let me quote the Bloc Québécois leader, who said Northvolt's involvement in his riding "could help Vallée-du-Richelieu develop a whole innovative, high added-value supply chain".

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I would like the government to show us, in the contract, the guarantees it secured regarding workers. Will the workers be Quebecers? Will francophone Quebec workers be able to participate and be hired? What about the natural resources? Will the company be able to get them from Abitibi? What about processing? I was mayor of a mining town, and I saw our materials get processed all over the world, without a cent staying in this country.

These are valid questions, and I am very proud to tell Quebecers I am here to defend their interests.

[English]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I know my friend from Mégantic—L'Érable is an honourable member, so I was rather confused when neither he nor the speaker before him addressed any of the content of the bill and seemed to not understand the definition of “replacement workers”.

I wondered why, as an honourable member, he would try to conflate these two ideas and distract from the matter at hand. I then realized that it is because his party has never supported the rights of workers and has voted against precisely this kind of legislation on numerous occasions. In fact, in 2016, his colleague, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent, said in the House:

If we pass this bill, it would prevent companies...from hiring replacement workers during disputes and upset the balance of power at the negotiating table. Let us not forget that striking workers can always go work somewhere else. However, under the bill, [businesses] would not be able to hire people from outside.

In our opinion, this disrupts the balance of power...

Could the member help the House understand whether that is still his party's position and whether he will be voting for the bill before us?

• (1705)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I can see that the member of this costly NDP-Liberal coalition is worried, because he just referred to a bill from 2016 that is still not in force. He thinks that this government will now do what it says it will do with Bill C-58. Personally, what worries me are the jobs that will be available tomorrow in the Richelieu region.

Could this government be transparent for once and clearly prove to all Canadians, with documentary evidence, that it has taken the necessary measures to ensure that jobs created with Canadians' money will be jobs for Canadians?

[English]

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was amazing that neither he nor the Conservative member who spoke before him mentioned the legislation we are talking about today. This really emphasizes the Conservative position on unions and reminds me of a statement by Mark Hancock, the national president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, who said about the member for Carleton winning the Conservative leadership:

It's too bad that, unlike [the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle], [the member for Carleton] does not hold American citizenship, because he would be right at home as Governor of a state like Alabama.

[The member for Carleton] is a career politician who has been collecting a six-figure salary on the public's dime since he was 24, and he's spent every minute of

his time in office fighting against fair wages, good pensions and a better life for working people....

His leadership will be a disaster for working people in Canada.

Could the member comment on the statement?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, what really worries me is how the Prime Minister can have much contempt for Canadian workers and show them so little respect, while his government plans to hand over Canadian families' money to South Korean workers at the Stellantis plant.

How can we be sure he has not signed the same type of agreement with the two other battery plants in Canada that will also receive a great deal of public money? The only way is for us to see the contracts.

What is the government so afraid of? Why is it so unwilling to show Canadians these contracts? It is simply because it has not done its job.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to share my time with the member for Beauport—Limoilou.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak this evening in support of Bill C-58. I will say from the outset that I am very proud that the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of the anti-scab bill. We have been asking for so long that it be passed quickly. We urge all parties in the House to do whatever it takes to pass it as quickly as possible. We will be very pleased when the bill truly passes, including in the Senate, and the government hastens to implement it.

I am sure that my colleague from Beauport—Limoilou will provide more details on this than I will. The longshore workers at the Port of Québec are currently on strike in her riding. They have waited long enough. They saw that their right to strike was not being respected because ports are under federal jurisdiction.

I have to say that Bill C-58 is the culmination of a lengthy undertaking. It constitutes a major step forward for workers. They earned it. This bill should have been passed a long time ago. It restores the balance of power between employers and employees in labour disputes once and for all.

The use of scabs has been banned in Quebec since 1977. It is now 2023, and there are still unionized employees in Quebec who work for federally regulated businesses who do not have the same rights. It is as though we have two categories of unionized workers in Quebec. We therefore have a tendency to forget that the use of scabs is completely archaic. We must allow all workers to assert their rights in a labour dispute. We cannot really tolerate the use of scabs. We are wondering why it took the government so long to introduce this bill, given that it has been in office since 2015.

In every sector under federal jurisdiction, when there is a labour dispute and when workers use their ultimate pressure tactic, when the workers choose and use their right to strike, the employer can simply resort to using scabs. That means the power relationship is broken in favour of the employer. The power is given to the employer. There is an imbalance in the bargaining relationship, the power relationship. It is completely unfair. In 2023, it makes absolutely no sense.

We are talking about people who work for railway companies, airlines, the banking sector, and the ports across Quebec and Canada. We know that currently in Quebec there are many workers on strike. Imagine if scabs were used to replace the 420,000 workers on strike in Quebec. That would upset the balance that allows workers to assert their rights. That would be completely unacceptable. That is why we think it is high time to implement Bill C-58 as soon as possible.

The bill was introduced by the government. We have to assume that they will vote in favour of it. We also know that the NDP supports it. The Bloc Québécois is also on board. That means three parties agree that the bill should pass. Normally, based on the usual legislative process, if the bill makes it to committee, we should be able to pass it by Christmas. The three recognized parties in the House that are publicly advocating for the bill's passage need to get to work to pass it quickly.

As I said earlier, everyone except the Conservatives agrees that we need anti-scab legislation. I would be remiss if I did not mention the speech by the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, who is from Quebec. He did not say a word about his position, as a member from Quebec, on the whole issue of scabs.

• (1710)

I can say that this came as a great surprise to me, because he is usually a very diligent MP. It is clear here that he is just toeing the party line and avoiding taking a stand.

I am probably coming off as a little impatient. Frankly, I am stunned that we are debating such an important bill today, so many years after Quebec passed similar legislation.

All the same, I would like to remind my colleagues that this is not the first time we have debated such a bill in the House of Commons. In 1990, a certain MP for Richelieu, who is now the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel and our one and only dean in the House, introduced a bill on this subject. At that time, there were five Bloc Québécois MPs; they were recognized as independent MPs. All that to say, it has been a long time. This is not our first attempt. Thirty-three years ago, the dean of today's House intro-

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duced an anti-scab bill. Members can understand my impatience. I think it is amply justified.

Over the years, 10 other anti-scab bills have been tabled by Bloc Québécois members, on top of those tabled by NDP members. That is quite a number of times that we have worked together to try and create modern legislation to govern the working relationship between union members and employers.

I will take a moment to commend the members who have teamed up with workers and unions over the years. Bernard St-Laurent, a former member for Manicouagan, introduced a bill in 1995. Osvaldo Nunez did so in 1996. Ghislain Fournier, another former member for Manicouagan, did so in 1998, 2001 and 2002. He was quite determined and introduced his bill three times.

I am also thinking of Monique Guay, a former member for Laurentides, with whom I had the opportunity to sit. She introduced her bill in 2002. I am thinking of Roger Clavet, a former member for Louis-Hébert, who introduced his bill in 2004. Richard Nadeau, a former member for Gatineau, tabled one in 2006. I am also thinking of Mario Laframboise, a member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, who introduced his bill in 2010.

People have put a great deal of effort into this issue. Obviously, I am thinking of my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville, who introduced her own anti-scab bill this year, Bill C-276, to put pressure on the current Liberal government, which was being slow to keep its promise.

The Bloc Québécois wants this bill. We are working tirelessly with workers to get it passed and, above all, to get it implemented.

Given that background, I cannot understand why the government decided provide for an 18-month delay before this bill comes into force. I find that very hard to accept. Anyone who cares about workers cannot understand why this bill, which was long awaited by unionized workers, most members of the House, and especially the Port of Québec strikers, will not come into force until 18 months after it receives royal assent.

I sincerely hope that we will be able to convince the Liberals to drop that provision, which makes no sense, and that we will all be able to agree that the dignity of our striking workers is at stake.

I will close by saying that, if we go through the process quickly in the House, then there will be work to do in committee. I hope that the members of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities will rise to the occasion and unite to give our unionized workers their dignity. They have been deserving of this bill for a long time.

• (1715)

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for expressing her opinion so clearly, unlike our previous colleague who was having a really hard time getting to the point.

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The right to strike can be compromised when an employer is able to use scabs. How will the proposed amendments help all federally regulated workers in Quebec and Canada benefit from a strong right to strike?

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Sherbrooke is a member from Quebec. She knows full well that unionized workers in Quebec who have a collective agreement have the right to bargain and to strike.

A strike is not the primary outcome in bargaining. Labour tends to avoid striking, using it as a last resort. The last thing a worker wants when they use their tool of last resort is for the employer to have the privilege to say that the employees can go on strike, but it will bring in replacement workers, which it has the right to do as a federally regulated employer.

The bill seeks to fix that, but I strongly encourage my colleague from Sherbrooke, since she is a member from Quebec, to convince her government to remove the clause that provides for an 18-month delay before the legislation comes into force.

• (1720)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, earlier on we heard two Conservative MPs speak. For 30 minutes or so they had one job, and that was to state whether they were in favour of hiring scabs or not. They refused to do so.

Does my colleague think that the MPs were on strike because they did not want to speak in favour or was this a lockout imposed by the Conservative leader?

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I think this deserves a lot of thought.

It is true that it is disappointing. We have seen our Conservative colleagues do this on a number of issues. I would like to believe that, deep down, the Conservatives from Quebec want to vote in favour of the bill. It is too bad that the boss, the one running the show, does not want that. We have to make major compromises in life when we are in politics. It seems that we even have to ride roughshod over our principles and our hearts, because when we heard the two Conservative members speak, we did not get the feeling they would be supporting the bill.

I still have hope. I am a Sagittarius and therefore an eternal optimist. I sincerely hope that the Conservatives will wake up, get up to speed, modernize and say that this bill is a really good deal for unionized workers.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was all ears when my colleague spoke. I want to tell her about Monday, November 13. I was at the Port of Québec with my leader, the member for Beloeil—Chambly, and we met with workers who have been on strike for over 14 months. They confirmed that Conservative MPs from Quebec City have yet to visit them on site. That worries them a great deal, because there are all kinds of polls and deals lurking on the horizon. They are wondering what is going to happen to them.

That is when we came up with the idea of asking the government to cut time as much as possible on this bill so that we can get it

passed before it is too late. I would like my colleague to comment on the possibility that we may not persuade the government to shorten the 18-month deadline in question. That could potentially leave us with a Conservative government that would pull the plug on this bill.

I would like to hear my colleague's opinion on that.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, let me be quite clear. If this bill is not passed and implemented before Christmas, or when the House returns, I share my colleague's opinion that it will never be implemented.

I do not want to be unkind to the government, but we have some concern that it may have introduced the bill only to clear its conscience, thinking that the conditions attached to it would scuttle any chances of the bill being passed. The bill's failure to pass would then come as a relief to the government, which never really wanted it to pass in the first place. It was only putting on a show.

I am relying on the government's Quebec members to flatly refuse to have two categories of union members. We encourage everyone to vote for the bill and, most of all, to shorten the 18-month timeline.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for sharing her time with me.

In 1977, 46 years ago, the Government of Quebec passed anti-scab legislation. Anti-scab legislation has been around for as long as I have been alive. It was meant to force employers to negotiate in good faith. Keep in mind that before this legislation was passed, employers had no compunction about hiring new workers while their regular employees were on strike or locked out. Because of this practice, employers had no interest in negotiating to improve working conditions or salaries, since strikes or lockouts had no impact on the company's bottom line.

For 46 years, no strikes or lockouts have dragged out in Quebec, except for those involving federally regulated businesses. It turns out that we have an example of that right now. Over 14 months ago, the Société des arrimeurs de Québec locked out its longshore workers at the Port of Québec. They are not on strike; they are locked out. Because this business's activities fall under federal jurisdiction in Ottawa, it has the right to use scabs, who do not have the required health and safety training. Therefore, every day, they walk right by qualified workers. It is unbelievable that Quebec workers are not protected by the current laws in the area where they live and work, when there have been laws in place for 46 years.

This is another example of Quebec being forward-thinking, compared with the rest of Canada. In the case of the Port of Québec longshore workers, it is not just about protecting these workers, it is also about protecting the public. I would remind the House that scabs have no training in health and safety or in the transshipment of goods. In recent months, there has been an increase in incidents related to red dust and nickel, which pose a danger to the lung health of the people of Beauport—Limoilou and may even reduce their life expectancy in the event of prolonged or repeated exposure.

On top of that, ammonium nitrate is being transported through the Port of Québec. Ammonium nitrate is a product used in fertilizer manufacturing, but it can be highly explosive under certain conditions. The Valero refinery is right across from the Port of Québec in Lévis. A simple spark could lead to a disaster that could extend all the way to Lévis. Hiring scabs, also known as replacement workers to sound better, poses a real danger to the workers themselves, to the surrounding population and to Quebec's economy. If a serious accident were to occur, it could potentially bring operations at the Port of Québec to a halt. In Quebec, 80% of our goods arrive by the river.

The workers are simply asking for better living conditions. If Canada were not 46 years behind Quebec, the lockout at the Port of Québec would never have lasted 14 months.

When the minister replied to me a few weeks ago that anti-scab legislation was going to be introduced, but that it had to be drafted in such a way as to protect the bargaining power of employers at the Port of Vancouver and the Port of Montreal, I was somewhat dubious. How could encouraging employers to negotiate in good faith hurt them?

Quebec's experience shows that anti-scab legislation improves negotiations without giving more leverage to either party. That makes things more equal than they are at the moment. That is a little message for our Conservative friends, although "friends" may be stretching it.

The minister's response a few weeks ago was very telling. The one he gave me today is also very telling. He mentioned Montreal and Vancouver, as if those are the only two ports in Canada. I should point out that a few months ago, the government did not negotiate for long with the Port of Vancouver to get the workers back to work. However, it has never negotiated with the Port of Québec. It is keeping mum and carefully ignoring what is happening in Quebec City, regardless of what the minister is saying today.

Has the government ever had an opportunity to make up for lost time by passing anti-scab legislation? Yes, it has had at least 11 opportunities to do so, and that is just counting Bloc Québécois bills, not even those of the NDP.

• (1725)

When I am told that we need to think about Vancouver and Montreal, that is fine. However, we see that the government is able to move quickly to resolve issues in the rest of Canada, but it does not do the same for Quebec City.

In 2022, two bills were introduced to put an end to the use of scabs, a shameful, unethical practice from another century. The Government of Canada is saying that it is very urgent that we pass anti-scab legislation, but did it move either of those bills up on the schedule? No, it did not. It had to introduce its very own bill. Because of all that, I have a hard time believing that the government really thinks that this is urgent.

Let us look at what the government's Bill C-58 says. We will vote in favour of the bill. There will even be a letter signed by a whole host of academics from across Canada who support the bill. It will be out in a few days. I spoke with some of those academics

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and they noticed the same flaws that I am going to mention. It is important that we talk about that in committee, so that we can fix as many of the flaws as possible.

For the first flaw, subclause 9(5) states that the employer can use the services of any contractor other than a dependent contractor or any employee of another employer if they were already hired before notice to bargain collectively was given, to perform the same duties as or substantially similar duties to the duties of an employee in the bargaining unit. The services of that contractor or employee can continue to be used in the same way once the strike or lockout is over.

That means that before giving notice to bargain collectively, the employer can hire someone to do the same work as the unionized employee. Of course not a lot of employers are going to say that, since a collective bargaining notice is coming, they are going to hire people and have a surplus of workers, but when there is a lockout they will have enough people. There are not a lot of employers who can afford to have a surplus of labour because that costs a lot of money. Nevertheless, some might see this loophole. This is a flaw that does not respect the spirit of the law. We agree, but there may be some who will try. My advice is to ensure that no employer can use this loophole in Bill C-58.

The second hitch or problem is that Bill C-58 is not retroactive. This bill will have zero impact on the workers at the Port of Québec. The employer will be able to continue using scabs indefinitely, until its employees are sick and tired of waiting for a job, work and a salary coming in. It just does not make sense. This bill must be retroactive.

Here is the third problem. If an employer has several operating sites, but only one is on strike or locked out, it can take workers from the site that is on strike or locked out and send them to one of the other sites. That is not right. The Quebec law addresses this. An employer cannot transfer employees from one location to another. This should also be included in the Canadian legislation.

Now, let us talk about effective enforcement. That is the fourth problem. It is so urgent to implement this bill that the government wants it to come into force 18 months after it receives royal assent, because the negotiators need a lot of time to sit down at the table and negotiate. It seems that they need training for this.

Take Quebec, for example. It has been an expert in the field for 46 years. Let us calculate the time it takes to complete each step in the process of passing a bill. First reading does not take very long, only a few minutes. Second reading takes a few hours. At the committee stage, things can slow down. Third reading takes a few hours. Then the bill moves on to the Senate for first, second and third readings, committee deliberation, and so on. All that time can add up to weeks, if not months. On top of that, we have to add another 18 months. Is this a joke? No one is going to get me to believe that the negotiator is incapable of sitting down at the table.

That much time is an eternity. All of this leads me to believe that, even though the government calls the situation an emergency, it thinks that workers, especially workers at the Port of Québec, can be easily fooled with smoke and mirrors and will believe anything.

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Canada's delay in protecting workers' rights, the flaws in Bill C-58 and the timelines imposed show that federally regulated workers living in Quebec would be better off if Quebec was an independent country sitting at the table with other nations.

• (1730)

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate my colleague. I am not sure why, but I feel like talking to her about the end of her speech, which I found interesting.

Here we are, discussing a bill on scabs when a similar bill was passed in Quebec 46 years ago and has been in force ever since. Quebec is the province in Canada with the most social housing, the highest rate of unionization, the highest rate of working women and the lowest rate of child poverty. All this is thanks in part to early childhood centres, which were created by Pauline Marois in the days of the Parti Québécois. Quebec is the province that is most effective at fighting climate change. Quebec is inspiring Canada in a whole host of areas.

I would like to hear more from my colleague. Would we not be better off becoming our own country? Canada could continue to draw inspiration from us once we are on our own.

• (1735)

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Madam Speaker, I can only agree with everything my colleague said, of course.

When a nation is independent and uses its power, that only makes it want more because it sees all the potential it has. That is what is happening with Quebec.

Following Quebec's example is no better or worse than following the example of Scandinavian countries, Germany, England, or other countries. Canada would simply have a closer neighbour to emulate, instead of looking for examples on the other side of the Atlantic.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the response from the Conservatives is a bit surprising. They seem to be more focused on contracts than the legislation.

In recognizing the legislation, the member made reference to the province of Quebec and the province of British Columbia, and the federal government is now bringing forward anti-scab legislation. I think that sends a very powerful and positive message to labour in all regions of the country.

Would the member agree that other jurisdictions should look at duplicating what B.C., Quebec and now Ottawa are moving forward with?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Madam Speaker, yes, they should definitely follow the example of Quebec and British Columbia.

Ottawa should do so by reducing the time it will take to implement the bill. The 18-month wait makes no sense. We should follow the example of these two provinces because we are currently avoiding negotiations that are not happening.

With anti-scab legislation, both parties are forced to sit down, and it is not true that workers have the upper hand. This gives them leverage that they do not have when there are scabs. The employer also has leverage when it comes to working conditions and wage conditions. The negotiation process is fairer and more equal, and that benefits everyone.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague is right. Quebec has been a leader in this area, as in many others. It passed anti-scab legislation 46 years ago, and British Columbia followed its lead. Let us not forget that British Columbia also has this type of legislation, and the sky did not fall in on either of those economies. On the contrary, labour disputes are shorter and there is less tension, less violence and a better balance of power for workers.

The member spoke a lot about the Port of Québec, where 81 longshore workers have been locked out for 14 months. That is outrageous, but it is not the only lockout. A lockout just started at Vidéotron in Gatineau, and there are already rumours of Vidéotron using replacement workers. The situation at Vidéotron in Gatineau may just be a preview of what will happen at all of the Vidéotron locations in eastern Quebec.

Before the bill comes into force, and I hope it will before 18 months have passed, will the Bloc Québécois speak out against the use of replacement workers and scabs in Quebec by Vidéotron and Pierre Karl Péladeau?

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Madam Speaker, these rumours circulate every time a strike happens in a federally regulated workplace.

They circulate because the federal government has no anti-scab legislation. If such a situation were to happen, the current legislation would not apply because it is not retroactive. This scenario must be avoided. The bill should include a retroactivity clause. We have to ensure that the bill comes into force as soon as possible, far sooner than 18 months from now. It does not take 18 months to learn how to sit down at a negotiating table.

• (1740)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and emotion that I rise in the House to speak about an anti-scab bill introduced by the government. Other political parties have tabled many similar bills in recent years. They have always been rejected by the Conservatives and Liberals. Today is an historic day. Thanks to the work we have done, there is now a bill that has a good chance of being passed and becoming law.

Today is a great day for workers in Quebec and across Canada. It is a great day for workers' rights. Workers will have the opportunity to respectfully negotiate decent collective agreements and better working conditions, with a real balance of power at the bargaining table.

Let us enjoy this moment. Generations of men and women have supported unions and fought to have federal anti-scab legislation. We are getting there. This is it. We are almost there. I think we need to celebrate this moment as a major victory for all workers. It is also a major victory for all the generations of New Democrats who pushed and worked to ensure that these rights were heard and respected.

I would like to thank my team here in Ottawa and my team in Montreal for all the work they have done on this file. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the entire NDP caucus, both the current caucus and those that came before it. They worked extremely hard to get here. I would also like to thank the NPD leader, who has always been very supportive of this issue.

Let us savour the moment. This is a first in the history of this Parliament. We will be able to work hard so that Port of Québec longshore workers, Vidéotron employees, Port of Montreal workers and all employees in the federal sector who are subject to the Canada Labour Code will never again have to experience situations where scabs take their place during a labour dispute that then lasts longer, becomes more tense, costs everyone more and violates workers' rights.

Let us work together so that what is happening right now at the Port of Québec and what may happen at Vidéotron never happens again. In the future, let us protect the rights of workers in this country.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

The House resumed from October 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-275, An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act (biosecurity on farms), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill C-275 and, specifically, to the support it would provide our farmers.

We know that Canadian farmers face hardships. These include issues with supply chains and the rising costs of production; the threat of environmental hardships, such as natural disasters caused by climate change; and the risk of harmful and deadly animal disease. These are compounding everyday struggles. The possibility of someone illegally entering farmers' property amplifies these hardships, causing stress to the farmer, their family and their animals.

Bill C-275 would protect Canadian farmers and their animals by making it illegal to enter a place where animals are kept if, in doing so, a person could reasonably expose the animals to a disease or toxic substance. The bill would provide Canadian farmers with the reassurance that they no longer have to worry about potential biosecurity breaches from individuals entering their property illegally. They could instead focus on their daily work to maintain the health of their animals and to help feed the country.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food studied this bill. The committee heard from a number of stakeholders, in-

cluding farmers and industry associations representing the agriculture and agri-food sector. It was clear from their testimony that farmers are committed to protecting the health of their animals. Their livelihood depends on it. Indeed, that would characterize the vast majority of farmers.

However, I would be remiss if I did not point out some of the criticisms of the bill raised by those who are concerned about animal cruelty. There are people who have expressed concerns in that regard. They point out that, in Canada, it is rare to see cameras in slaughterhouses, something that is commonplace in Europe, for example. They also point out that whistle-blowers in an operation, where they see something untoward, would be exposed to potential risk by measures such as these.

I am from Prince Edward Island, and probably the most serious biosecurity case encountered in P.E.I. did not relate to animals but, as one might predict, to potatoes. In 2014, there were sewing needles found in potatoes and in french fries in various locations throughout Prince Edward Island. The angst this caused the agricultural community was absolutely incredible. It also necessitated some very substantial investments by farmers to essentially X-ray potatoes going through the processing line in order to combat this and reassure the public their food was safe.

Our government recognizes the importance of farmers and has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to them and the agriculture and agri-food sector. I want to take a moment to describe some of the ways we have supported the Canadian agriculture sector over the past year, beginning with budget 2023.

The Canadian agriculture industry is world class and the backbone of our economy. In fact, Canada exported nearly \$92.8 billion in agriculture and food products in 2022. The government has made a number of significant investments to continue expanding the sector's reach. For instance, through budget 2023, our government created the dairy innovation and investment fund, providing up to \$333 million over the next 10 years. The fund is intended to help the Canadian dairy sector increase its competitiveness and adapt to new market realities.

We know the dairy sector is a vital pillar of rural communities and a key driver of the economy. There are 9,739 farms and 507 dairy processing plants across Canada, employing more than 70,000 Canadians. In 2022, the dairy sector generated \$17.4 billion in sales.

Even though I am from Prince Edward Island, I represent an urban riding. I can remember, when I was first elected, being summoned to a meeting with dairy farmers with a couple of my rural colleagues. My immediate reaction was to ask why I needed to be at the meeting, because there were no dairy farmers in my riding.

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● (1745)

It was very quickly pointed out to me that ADL, which is a milk and cheese processor, employs many of my constituents. That was a good lesson for a young member of Parliament: While much of the wealth is generated in rural areas, it often emanates from rural into urban areas. We are all interconnected. That needs to be borne in mind.

I would like to offer a tip of the hat to Chad Mann and the good people at Amalgamated Dairies Limited, who are truly national and international leaders in the production of milk and cheese. We are immensely proud of them. They are actually owned by producers. It is a business that we need to promote as a key element of the economy in Prince Edward Island and that the Government of Canada can, must and should continue to support.

The sustainable Canadian agriculture partnership was launched this past April. It is a five-year agreement between the federal and provincial and territorial governments. It includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities. For instance, the federal AgriMarketing program provides approximately \$130 million to the agriculture sector to increase and diversify exports to international markets and seize domestic market opportunities.

The SCAP includes an additional \$2.5 billion in cost-shared programs and initiatives that are funded among all orders of government. This includes, for example, support for AgriRecovery in cases of emergencies.

Speaking of AgriRecovery in support of emergencies, natural disasters can have a devastating impact on our agriculture industry. We have seen it up close in Prince Edward Island, more often than we would like in recent years, including, most recently, hurricane Fiona. There have been a number of catastrophic floods, droughts and hurricanes that have resulted in millions of dollars in losses.

Our government recognizes the hardships that farmers face from these natural disasters, and we are here to support them. The AgriRecovery framework is designed to support producers with the extraordinary costs they incur because of an emergency and to get them back into production.

That is why, in October 2023, we announced \$365 million in federal-provincial funding to provide relief to farmers and ranchers in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan as a result of the extraordinary costs they have incurred because of this year's extreme weather conditions. This funding covers up to 70% of costs incurred during these disasters. This includes moving livestock, so they can be fed and watered, replacing and repairing damaged fencing, and unforeseen veterinary costs.

I would like to close by indicating that our government recognizes the importance of supporting farmers. We are investing significant funding to support our farmers and producers. This would enable Canadian farmers to maintain their world-class reputation and continue to provide Canadians with the first-rate products we have come to expect.

Our government is always hard at work to promote the work of our farmers in the agriculture sector through a wide range of activities, initiatives and funding opportunities. We have demonstrated

that we are consistently here for our farmers, in good times and in bad.

Bill C-275 is another tool to provide further support for farmers and to ensure the safety of their animals, a subject that preoccupies the vast majority of them. This is a commendable objective that deserves our backing.

● (1750)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Madam Speaker, first I would like to say that I am aware we still have a long way to go to improve how livestock are often treated. We must speak out against intensive livestock farming done without any concern for animal welfare. We have to implement practices worthy of a modern world.

Our ancestors showed us how to be kind and have respect for the lives of farm animals. We must monitor any misconduct and punish people accordingly. Animal rights groups are right to be concerned. However, we must not defend animal rights by demonstrating illegally, which only makes things worse. Before I get into it, I would like to say that we all make life choices. Food is part of that, based on our values and food traditions. Generally speaking, we should be eating local food that comes from ethical and sustainable agriculture, and we should show moderation in how much we eat, especially when it comes to food of animal origin. That is a rule we should live by at all times.

In the same vein, a society that treats its animals badly and disrespectfully does not take much better care of its humans. That idea is going to form the foundation of the rest of my speech. I would like to take advantage of the fact that we are indirectly talking about animal welfare to say thank you to all the pets that have been part of my life or still are. I am sure many of my colleagues here will agree that the relationship we have with our pets is unique; it is like no other feeling.

Although they go by many names, I am convinced that pets make families happy, just as Copain, Patof, Flocon, Hiver, Roxy once did for me, and as Abricot, Capi, Dalida, our little newcomer, Ma Dalton, Luna, Marjolie, Berlioz and Iba still do. I want to take this opportunity to thank pets for the affection and unconditional loyalty they give to their respective families. Pets bring happiness to families and single people alike, and there are the positive effects that pet therapy has on people with psychological difficulties.

Although not directly related to the subject of this bill, I wanted to highlight my love for animals and also my concern for all aspects of animal welfare in our society. I am very concerned about respect for animal life and welfare at home and on livestock farms. Legal protection of the animal world is a fundamental principle.

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In that regard, this bill engages the same willingness to do better, despite any perceptions that its wording may elicit. The Bloc Québécois will support Bill C-275 in principle, particularly to curb a growing phenomenon across North America and the rest of the world. I am referring to break-ins at farm buildings to protest livestock conditions. As unhealthy as they may sometimes be, there is no excuse for committing offences that often endanger the very animals we seek to protect. This bill is a step in the right direction, although a number of points will have to be clarified to determine whether this addition is consistent with Canada's federal animal health legislation and Quebec's existing animal welfare legislation.

We firmly believe that it is not up to the federal government to impose its laws on Quebec, even in an area of shared jurisdiction, when the division is relatively clear. The Bloc Québécois recognizes that demonstrations with dramatic gestures are a growing problem, that they should not be trivialized and that they must be better regulated. This is not a debate about freedom of expression. No one is questioning this right to demonstrate against abuse, which must be denounced. However, when the act of protest itself leads to mischief, that may not be the best way to express one's opposition.

I do not think this bill is meant to condone animal abuse. We all have a responsibility to speak out against such situations. Extremes often lead to excesses, which is when laws like these are really necessary. It is more a question of recognizing that property-owning families have suffered and continue to suffer from these crimes, and that they live in fear of new offences being committed. It is also about making people aware that biosecurity standards must be met on farms in order to protect the safety of animals and herds.

It makes it an offence to enter, without lawful authority or excuse, a place in which animals are kept if doing so could result in the exposure of the animals to a disease or toxic substance that is capable of affecting or contaminating them. There is nothing offensive or upsetting about that.

• (1755)

The Bloc Québécois's concern over this bill is that the penalties for contravening the new offence are enforced under the Health of Animals Act and not under the Criminal Code, which is a federal responsibility. Then, the enabling legislation, the Health of Animals Act, was not directly designed to support animal welfare, despite its title. It was instead drafted to protect animals in a perspective of human consumption and to try to contain the chance of zoonotic diseases, diseases that are transmitted from animals to humans.

The federal government has limited power with respect to the scope of application of such a bill. That is why it would be interesting to have more information in committee on the bill's functionality and application. Protecting animal welfare, including that of livestock, is primarily a provincial jurisdiction. Every province and every territory in Canada has legislation on animal welfare. Provincial and territorial legislation often have a broader scope; they focus on a series of interests related to animal protection.

Some provinces and territories have laws or regulations that govern specific aspects of animal welfare or target certain species. All of the provinces have animal welfare legislation, but they do not all have legislation dealing specifically with this offence. In recent

years, several provinces, including British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta, have created or strengthened laws to punish people who break into a slaughterhouse or farm. Quebec does not yet have such legislation, and instead court action is taken under the Criminal Code or the Civil Code. We must therefore avoid getting involved in a situation that might be construed as us telling Quebec what it should do. It is not up to the federal government to impose its laws on the provinces.

When strangers come into contact with animals or their habitat without taking the appropriate precautions to avoid contamination, the risk of disease increases tenfold. Every such contact is a risk and requires the application of biosecurity measures. Intrusions that cause a disease outbreak in a farmer's herd jeopardize their livelihood because sick animals cannot be consumed and must be isolated. If the disease spreads outside the farm, the consequences can be catastrophic. The best example of this is the avian flu, which is often transmitted through contact with migratory birds. It should be noted that pigs are very sensitive to stress and, when they are in captivity, their environment needs to be controlled both in terms of temperature and noise. For example, noise and stress can cause sows to get up abruptly and then kill the piglets when they lay back down. How can a person think that holding these animals hostage, as it were, will serve a cause? One has to wonder.

If we want to change mindsets and get people to eat less meat, because limiting meat consumption is also beneficial for the environment and reduces greenhouse gases, we need to find other ways to do it. Balancing supply and demand, adding these variables to education programs and improving information and awareness are just some of the ways we can profoundly change the course of history.

Some members in this House may not agree because they deny the concept of ecosystem imbalance and the role of human neglect in animal welfare and they believe that climate change is made up. As we all know, freedom of expression is a precious value for the Bloc Québécois, and people have every right to protest and make their views known. However, we cannot condone protests involving illegal acts that may cause harm to both producers and animals. Breaking and entering is simply not the way to go about it.

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Asking questions about best practices and the best ways to change consumer mindsets is also a good way to protect animals. I would like to point out that in Quebec is once again well ahead of the game. It is home to a number of livestock farms that are winning awards of excellence in animal welfare. For example, Ferme Karona in Plessisville, central Quebec, won Agropur's 2021-22 animal welfare award. The farm is a true wonder. I commend the owners, Pierre, Odrey and Pierre-Olivier Caron, who breed Holstein cows and are recognized as master breeders, the most highly prized honour in the livestock industry. The title is conferred by Holstein Canada on livestock producers who breed and raise animals under the most comfortable conditions and in compliance with good breeding habits and practices based on health and longevity. The cows are free ranging and live on a fine sand surface more comfortable than a living room sofa. All this is happening right here in our own backyard. Obviously, when breeders improve their behaviour, the number of offences committed to protest animal abuse drops. I encourage people to follow their example.

● (1800)

There is probably room for a constructive discussion on this issue. The debates between the parties were all about the details. I hope there will be more reflection to find better solutions. I would especially like to see Quebec used as a model, once again, in order to improve the health and the lives of animals.

[English]

Mr. Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in support of Bill C-275, an act to amend the Health of Animals Act, biosecurity on farms, which was introduced by my friend and colleague, the member for Foothills.

Like my Conservative colleagues who have spoken to this piece of legislation already, I am also an extremely strong supporter of our agricultural sector. I actually grew up on a family farm near Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. I wear it on my sleeve that I am just a regular farm kid who happened to find his way into the House of Commons.

I understand that many members of Parliament, and many Canadians, have not had the chance to visit a farm for a variety of reasons related to how they live their lives or where they live. I appreciate my hon. colleague from Charlottetown previously stating that, as a new MP, he had to recognize that urban MPs need to understand the interconnectivity between where production may take place and the processing done often in urban areas. At the end of the day, all Canadians eat. I applaud him for that and I encourage all my urban colleagues to try to understand by visiting a farm somewhere near their area.

Many others, who may be animal rights activists or vegans, may not want to experience a farm. For those who probably never will visit a farm, I would like to explain what it is like to visit a livestock operation. I have had the chance, prior to being elected and since being elected, to visit many farms.

The first question someone will be asked is if they have been to another farm recently because the transfer of diseases between farms is potentially a terrible challenge. Beyond that, someone is immediately asked to put on a suite of biosecurity measures like gowns, foot covers, hats, goggles and gloves, to make sure they are

not endangering any of the flock or herd of animals on the farm. Livestock producers and all farmers care about the health of their animals. Animal welfare is critical. If we ask any producer, they will say the health and well-being of their animals is of utmost importance to them.

Relating to the bill specifically, its central provision is that it makes it an offence for a person, without permission, to enter a place where animals are kept, if their doing so could reasonably be expected to result in the animals being exposed to a disease or a dangerous substance. This is so that individuals and organizations will be deterred from entering farms without permission. It also changes the financial and non-financial penalties associated with doing so.

Some outside the agricultural sector may ask why these changes are necessary. Let me tell everyone why. Radical animal rights activists have been staging protests on private property, such as farms and processing plants, for far too long. I can assure people they are not putting on all that protective gear to protect the welfare of those animals. The groups that do not want to see this bill pass might deny this claim, so I will give a few examples.

On March 9, 2019, 15 activists trespassed on Webstone Holstein Farm, a dairy farm near Elmira, Ontario, even removing a deceased calf in the process.

On April 28, 2019, 65 individuals staged an occupation of the Excelsior Hog Farm in Abbotsford, British Columbia.

On September 2 of the same year, dozens of protesters, without permission, planted themselves inside a barn at the Jumbo Valley Hutterite Turkey Farm near Fort Macleod, Alberta.

On December 7 of the same year, 11 activists occupied Porgreg farm, a pig-breeding facility in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec.

The disruptive nature of these protests is the reason that many provinces, including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and P.E.I., have passed bills that strengthen provincial laws as they relate to trespassing on farms. However, in provinces where these laws are not present, farmers are largely left to fend for themselves when it comes to creating a playbook for protecting biodiversity and handling trespassers on their property. This legislation aims to fix that.

The fact of the matter is that individuals and groups staging protests are far from being animal saviours. They are more than likely exposing animals to dangerous diseases and substances.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2022, the agriculture and agri-food system employed 2.3 million people, or one in nine jobs in Canada, and generated \$143.8 billion, roughly 7% of Canada's GDP.

• (1805)

An activist who, even accidentally, introduces a disease at a farm could have a staggering effect on these numbers, in addition to the fact that it would threaten our food security here in Canada and around the globe. Let us take, for example, African swine fever, ASF. It has yet to be detected in Canada, thank goodness. It was first found in China in August 2018, leading to the death of about half of that country's pigs and a quarter of the entire world's pig population between 2018 and 2019.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, CFIA, notes that in 2022, Canada exported just over \$4.8 billion in pork to 77 different countries, as well as the fact that the industry contributes 88,000 jobs and generates \$24 billion for our economy. For my province and my home riding, this is a very important issue as it relates to the hog sector. We have 138 sites producing pigs in my riding alone.

Manitoba is the second-largest producer and exporter of Canadian pork, employing 22,000 Manitobans across the various sectors involved with the industry. It is interconnectedness that matters here, in the sense that two million tonnes of feed is purchased by this sector from local grain growers, representing about half a billion dollars. Over 40 new barns have been expanded to enhance their environmental sustainability and animal care since 2017. This is a \$2.3-billion industry for Manitoba that must be protected. The threat of radical animal rights activists putting that economic impact in jeopardy is worth tackling.

If ASF were to be detected in Canada, and to reach the same scale it had in China, the pork industry would simply be decimated, just like the numbers we saw in China. I cannot stress enough how devastating these losses would be, not just for those in the agricultural sector, but that interconnectedness. For the rest of the processing industry and those involved in shipping these processed products, it would have a major impact.

Protecting our economy and the global food supply is the main reason why this bill is so important, although another, and somewhat understated, goal of this legislation is to protect the mental health of farmers. Farmers have a very stressful life. They work long hours in sometimes very extreme conditions. They have an increasingly extremely high debt burden and are price takers, not price makers. In fact, the Canadian Mental Health Association states that "stress, mental health issues, and suicide are higher among farmers as compared to the general population." When radical animal rights activists illegally enter farms on the private property that they are located on, they unnecessarily threaten farmers' physical and mental well-being by adding to the long list of stressors that our Canadian farmers already face. This is unfair, especially considering that farmers are, quite literally, the people who feed our country and the world.

I have taken a few minutes to talk about what this bill does, but I would also like to focus on what it does not do. I know there are some criticisms out there that are unwarranted. The first thing it does not do is limit a person's ability to protest peacefully. Second, it does not prevent whistle-blowers in any way. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 2(c), protects an individual's right to peaceful assembly. If people take issue with the way farmers raise

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their livestock, they are free to protest in accordance with all applicable laws on public property instead of private agricultural land. To the second point, this bill does not, as some might lead people to believe, prevent whistle-blowers from speaking out. Whistle-blowers are the employees. They are the family members. They are professionals who work and are legally permitted to be on the private property where these animals are being housed. Simply put, trespassing activists are not whistle-blowers. They are more like trouble-makers.

At the end of the day, this is a good piece of legislation that will protect biodiversity on farms and farmers' mental health. It has support from a vast number of organizations from the agricultural sector, including the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Cattle Association, the Canadian Pork Council and Dairy Farmers of Canada. While I could give quotations about their support and stand here all day expressing why they think this is important, I would just like to thank them for all the work they have done in supporting this legislation, as well as all the good work they do to represent our Canadian farmers. Like those stakeholder groups, I hope that we are able to turn this common-sense bill into law as soon as possible.

I will just conclude by saying that for the well-being of our farmers, our economy and our food supply, I hope members of this chamber will join me in voting in favour of Bill C-275.

• (1810)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to start off by reflecting on a tour that the Minister of Agriculture and I had last week. We had the opportunity to tour the Maple Leaf Foods processing centre on Lagimodiere Boulevard. It is such an impressive facility, and members will understand why I use it as an example.

With respect to Manitoba's pork industry, one only needs to take a tour of a facility of that nature to see literally hundreds of people hard at work providing a quality product. In this case, it is bacon. Do members realize that half of all the bacon produced and eaten here in Canada comes from that particular factory? I very much appreciated that the Minister of Agriculture came to visit Winnipeg and toured the facility. Fantastic hospitality was provided to the two of us, recognizing how important the hog industry and the pork industry are to the province of Manitoba.

With respect to the legislation we are talking about, let me bring a direct link to it. Some individuals are very concerned, specifically farmers, producers, manufacturers and processors. There are a litany of opportunities for people to be engaged within the pork industry. Let me give some examples of that.

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I had the opportunity to tour a hog barn, and the first thing I thought of when going into the hog barn was that I would be seeing lots of hogs. I was not disappointed; I saw lots of hogs. There were over 10,000 hogs in one barn. However, what surprised me was that when someone walks into the barn, the very first thing they do is put on a smock, take a shower and use all sorts of cleansing materials to make sure they are all washed up and in a state to take a tour of the facility. The second thing they see is the computers and technology used to make sure of the quality of the product, from the day a piglet is born to the day it is hauled out of the barn. It is a very impressive sight to witness. In this case, we heard about the age of the pig from the time it enters the barn and the type of food being processed.

It was interesting that earlier that week, I had a tour with the Minister of Agriculture in Portage la Prairie. In Portage la Prairie, just north, is Roquette, which is the largest pea manufacturer in the world. Parts of crushed yellow peas are used for feed, so we can get a sense of how that particular product is used as feed where I had taken a tour. Imagine the jobs there, the jobs on the hog farm and the jobs at Maple Leaf, not to mention the indirect jobs.

In Manitoba, thousands of Manitobans are employed in the hog industry. There are even more indirect jobs. We can drive out to the plant in Brandon, where there is a workforce of over 1,200, or to the Lagimodiere plant I visited, where there are over 1,500 workers. There are other plants, and they are not just in Manitoba. Whether looking at parking lots or visiting homes, we see consumers. They go to restaurants, they buy furniture and they buy vehicles, all of which are the residuals of jobs.

As I indicated, the pork from this plant is ham and bacon, the best bacon in the world. That bacon is circulated throughout the country and plays a very important role in our food chain. If we bring it all the way back to this particular piece of legislation, what farmers are asking for is that the legislation protect not only their interests but the interests of the food we produce.

• (1815)

As I pointed out, when I took the tour, it was critically important that anyone going into these facilities had taken the appropriate means to be there. Unfortunately, there are some in society who might not understand how important that is. When they enter a facility or even get close to a facility, which is private property, that puts it into jeopardy, potentially, and causes a great deal of harm, whether it is to the farmer, the animals themselves or our food chain.

When I look at the legislation being proposed today, I know the government is going to be supporting it, because the government understands, as we have witnessed, the importance of the food supply, which is not just for the province or even the country. Canada has now entered into more trade agreements than any other G7 or G20 country in all the different regions of the world. That in itself is one of the ways to ensure that we continue to supply food products.

If I were to stay with the hog industry and use it as an example, I could go to Neepawa, which employs close to 1,000 employees at the plant. It might be over 1,000. Over 95% of its product is exported to Asia. Again, if we follow the line, it goes right back to the

hog producer and those barns. That is why, whether it is hogs, cattle or chickens, these farm products and animals play a very important role in our critical food supply system. They are not just for Manitoba and Canada but indeed the world.

It is those comments that I wanted to get on the record this evening. I give a special shout-out to Maple Leaf, but necessarily limited to it. Whether it is the communities of Winkler, Neepawa, Brandon or Winnipeg, not to mention the rural communities raising hogs, I know all contribute to a hog industry in Manitoba that all of us can be proud of, one that creates literally thousands and thousands of jobs and that provides good-quality food around the world.

• (1820)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Foothills has the floor for his right of reply.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank all colleagues who took the opportunity not only tonight but throughout this process to speak in support of this very important legislation, which is an amendment to the Health of Animals Act, Bill C-275.

There has been overwhelming support for this bill from Canadians across this country, and certainly from farmers, producers and the entire agriculture sector. I cannot thank them enough for helping me craft this legislation, for improving it at committee and for championing it through the legislative process. To farmers, ranchers and producers across the country for their encouraging phone calls and letters, I give a heartfelt thanks.

Perhaps it is fitting if I take a few minutes to read an excerpt from an open letter by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, which represents more than 200,000 families across Canada. It states:

The amendments proposed under Bill C-275, would provide targeted intervention against the on-farm food safety and biosecurity risk by limiting the access of unauthorized entrants to animals and farms. The proposed amendments to the Health of Animals Act offer an avenue to further strengthen our overall food system by enhancing the measures in place to protect the health of farm animals across our country.

At the same time, Bill C-275 strikes a balance between producers' safety and protection and the right to lawful and peaceful protest. Our members' operations often host visitors to demonstrate how the land is managed or their animals are cared for, but there is a key distinction between those who willingly follow prescribed, strict biosecurity and sanitation practices and those who willfully endanger animal health, welfare, and food safety.

The letter goes on to quote Megz Reynolds, an executive director of the Do More Agriculture Foundation, a group that is the national voice and champion for mental health in agriculture. She said:

Agriculture is an industry with a foundation in deep rural roots, hard work, resilience, strength, and community. On a daily [basis] farmers deal with numerous factors outside of their control, that directly influence their mental wellbeing. Farmers should not have to add living with the fear of protestors trespassing into enclosed areas and endangering their animals, livelihoods, and food security on top of everything else that weighs on them day in and day out. Farmers are among the most vulnerable when it comes to mental health challenges like stress, anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. In 2021 the University of Guelph found that 1 in 4 Canadian farmers felt like their life was not worth living, wished that they were dead, or had thought about taking their own life in the last 12 months.

The letter concludes by saying, “We urge you to support Bill C-275 and its proposed amendments, which will provide increased safety to producers, the animals they raise, and the food they produce.”

I, of course, echo these sentiments. I want to encourage my colleagues to support Bill C-275 and send a message to our farmers, our livestock producers and their families. The message from the House of Commons would be that their animals matter, Canadian agriculture matters, our food security matters and, most importantly for farm families across the country, their livelihoods matter. We care about their mental health. We recognize the unwavering dedication our farmers and farm families have for the well-being of the animals in their care.

I again thank all colleagues who spoke so well and shared many of their personal sentiments on farmers and operations in their ridings across Canada and who echoed the concerns and viewpoints of their constituents in the House today. For colleagues who do not necessarily come from an agricultural or rural riding, it is important that we share this message not only with our rural communities but certainly with urban Canadians, who may not have a wealth of knowledge or experience regarding what Canadian agriculture is, how we do it, why we do it and the very strict regulations and protocols in biosecurity we must follow to ensure the security of our food supply.

I thank my colleagues for their support and hope they will continue to support Bill C-275. I also thank farmers and farm families across Canada so much for their support.

• (1825)

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

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Madam Speaker, I would like to request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 29, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Routine Proceedings

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The House resumed from November 1 consideration of the motion.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

The report that came forward from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development was well done, and I congratulate the committee for that work. I particularly want to draw attention to recommendations 12 and 13. Recommendation 12 is that Canada not grant a sanctions waiver to Siemens Energy Canada, which was trying to send over the natural gas pipeline turbines to power Nord Stream 1, pump more Russian natural gas into Europe and fund Putin's war machine. Recommendation 13 was to make sure that there was a real policy goal enhancement of the energy security of Canada's democratic allies, while fully complying with Canada's domestic and international obligations related to climate change. This speaks to the issues around energy security in Europe and in Ukraine, and how Europe is reliant on Russian LNG and Russian oil.

I can say without any argument that I am proud of my Ukrainian heritage and that I have been a long-standing supporter of Ukraine. I have been banned from Russia since 2014 because of my ongoing advocacy for Ukraine, and that support is unwavering. The Conservative Party stands with Ukraine, and its support is unequivocal. However, there has been a lot of talk over the last couple of days about the Conservatives' concerns around the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement that has been negotiated by the Liberal government.

Let us put this in perspective. First and foremost, the current Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement was actually negotiated by the former Conservative government under Stephen Harper. Our trade minister at that time, the member for Abbotsford, negotiated a very good free trade agreement that has been in effect for only seven years. The Liberals signed that free trade agreement when they formed government in 2015, and it went into effect the next year, so we have free trade with Ukraine already in effect.

We are supportive of most of the free trade agreement that is at committee, but the Liberals have stuck in a very slim amendment to the free trade agreement, which is the first one in Canadian history. No other free trade agreement has it, and no free trade agreement that the government is currently negotiating with other countries includes carbon pricing, carbon taxes and carbon leakage. That has very little to do with trade, and it disadvantages the people of Ukraine, who are today fighting a hot war against Russia, Putin and his barbarians. To put our values onto the people of Ukraine is, I think, distasteful at a time when they are dealing with their own future.

Routine Proceedings

The international trade committee has been studying this issue, and one of the academics who showed up at the committee, Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, when asked about the free trade agreement, the carbon tax and other parts of it, said, “I would see it more as an imposition to be honest. On the one side, I would see there is a very western value being imposed on a country that has been devastated by war. Secondly, we also need to question the mechanism itself, the carbon tax. There is literature out there suggesting that sometimes the carbon tax may not actually achieve the goals that we are trying to reach from an environmental perspective, so we need to make really sure that whatever we're imposing on Ukraine actually works, and that it actually can make a difference. I'm not sure there's consensus there.”

He went on to say, “I've said it before and I'll say it again: I actually do think we need to be careful, extremely careful, with how we see our values and how we impose our values on a great partner like Ukraine. Ukraine will absolutely need more help from Canada than we need help from them, especially over the short term. Again, I see this as an imposition from Canada, in my perspective.”

Thus, he has said that this is an unfair section of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

• (1830)

As we know, it is fundamental to our Conservative Party to oppose the carbon tax in Canada. Why would we support any agreement that ratifies a carbon tax for both Canada and Ukraine? Again, it is something that is not welcome.

If we really wanted to help Ukraine, we would do it through the free trade agreement by ensuring that we have its need for energy security taken care of. There is nothing in the agreement that addresses the issues around helping it rebuild its nuclear energy plants, helping it adapt Canadian technology from our SMRs and helping it adapt technology in developing its LNG. It has natural gas fields. Yesterday, it found a new field in the Carpathians and needs Canadian technology to access it. It has also found the ability to claim more natural gas from fields in the Carpathians that it considered exhausted. Now, it knows there is more natural gas down there it can pump out, and it is asking Canada for more technology. The free trade agreement has nothing in it to help with that.

I was in Ukraine in August. I can say that its infrastructure has been devastated by the indiscriminate bombing done by Russia and by the war crimes and atrocities Russia has committed against the civilians of Ukraine. Ukraine needs help in rebuilding its ports and its grain-handling infrastructure in its railways, things that Canada is very good at but which are absent from the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

We have been arguing for years, as Conservatives, to send more weapons to Ukraine, and more munitions, especially as we listen to experts from Ukraine telling us it is using 3,000 to 5,000 artillery shells each and every day, 155-millimetre shells that go into the M777 Howitzers that we sent from Canada, and that other countries sent as well, and into the M109 self-propelled Howitzer and other artillery guns. We build the shells here in Canada, but the Liberal government has not been able to get an increase in production for the past 22 months. Ukraine has been at war now for 638 days, on the front line, pushing back against Russian barbarians who are in-

vading it in this illegal war. We need to continue to provide everything we can, and one thing we can do here is build more munitions. However, we still build only 3,000 rounds of shells per month. That does not even give Ukraine shells for half a day.

One of the things I have heard many times from Canadian companies that want to invest in Ukraine is that there is no war risk insurance. There are Canadian companies that would go over there and build things like sniper rifles, armoured vehicles and munition plants, and set up infrastructure companies to help build Ukraine so it can build back stronger, yet there is no war risk insurance offered in the free trade agreement. The agreement is mute.

I am proud of the Conservative history on what we have done in Ukraine. It was a Conservative government that first recognized Ukraine's independence in 1991. It was a Conservative government's prime minister, Stephen Harper, who was the first western leader to go to Ukraine after Russia illegally occupied and annexed Crimea and started the war in Donbass in 2014. It was a Conservative government that made sure that Putin got kicked out of the G8, turning it into the G7. It was a Conservative government that sent the first military equipment over there. I actually accompanied some of those shipments as the parliamentary secretary for national defence in 2014 and 2015. It was a Conservative government that started Operation Unifier, training tens of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers. I want to thank the Liberal government for always renewing that and for now starting it in England, where I had a chance to see it in operation.

Once again, Conservatives support Ukraine. I love Ukraine. I support it 110% and will until the day I die.

• (1835)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that the member supports Ukraine to the bitter end. I travelled with him, when I was on the defence committee just after becoming a parliamentarian, to Ukraine to study what was going on there, and I saw his passion and his dedication. I do not question that at all. I do not question Stephen Harper's commitment, Erin O'Toole's commitment or the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle's commitment when they were leaders.

What I question is the member for Carleton. He said the Conservative Party stands with Ukraine. Why did the Conservative Leader of the Opposition not have one tweet, one Facebook post or any mention when Zelenskyy came to the House just a couple of months ago? He never said a word about it. Then, we see what happens when talking about things as being woke. President Zelenskyy asked for the free trade agreement. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress asked us to vote in favour of it. Why can he not see that there are members in his party who are dictating MAGA Republican politics? He should stand up to that.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I forgive the member for always using bully-boy attacks and for his rhetoric. The idea of trying to tie us to something happening south of the border is ridiculous. Anyone who knows the current Conservative Party and knows the leader of the Conservative Party knows that the leader stands with Ukraine. I personally confess that I have seen him passionately defend Ukraine. He is opposed to Russia's aggression. He is opposed to Putin's dictatorship and the atrocities that Russia is committing in Ukraine. He is a leader who stands for freedom, for democracy and for human rights, and he stands with Ukraine. I have no doubt of that, and neither should any other member of the House. In spreading misinformation and disinformation, the member is only helping Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin.

● (1840)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his passion in standing with Ukraine in general.

I want to point out something, building on his comments about the importance of munitions. At the trade committee, Conservatives actually proposed a motion that would allow the committee to adopt amendments that would expand the scope of the bill and include specific measures that would increase the export of weapons from Canada to Ukraine and allow Canadian businesses to do more to support the development of weapons manufacturing in Ukraine. There are very important amendments that we are developing that would actually put into the deal the thing that should have been in it, which is more weapons.

It is shameful that Liberals at the trade committee voted against our proposed instruction motion that would have expanded the scope of the bill. We have Liberals saying, on the one hand, that we must be for the carbon tax or we are against Ukraine. On the other hand, they are voting against our motion that would actually put weapons exports into the trade agreement. The members opposite should know that the priority of the Ukrainian government is weapons. We fight a war with weapons, not with a carbon tax. That is why Conservatives are—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman the chance to answer.

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I do want to thank the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan for his passion and his advocacy, and for the leadership he has shown on this.

I was disappointed that the Liberals voted against the amendment to the act that would have provided more opportunity to produce weapons and ammunition to send to Ukraine. We started advocating the provision of weapons in 2018. We had sniper rifles and the Carl-Gustaf anti-tank weapons. We had rocket propeller grenades and side arms that we wanted to send to Ukraine that were sitting in storage, collecting dust and going nowhere. We asked the Liberals to send them, but they did not send them until after the war started in 2022, four and a half years after we started asking them to send them. The Liberal-NDP coalition called me a warmonger.

The truth is that we all knew Putin was going to try to fully invade Ukraine. We are coming up to the Holodomor commemoration on Saturday. We are having a commemoration here on the Hill

tomorrow. It was the genocide of several million Ukrainians by Stalin and his Communist thugs to wipe the Ukrainian nation off the earth. It is happening again. It is being done again by Moscow, by Vladimir Putin and his Kremlin kleptocrats. We have to stand with Ukraine. It needs weapons and not a carbon tax.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on the discussion about the report from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade entitled, “The Russian State's Illegal War of Aggression Against Ukraine”.

As Canadians know, Conservatives have always stood with Ukraine. Those who have had the pleasure of hearing at committee some stories from my personal history will have heard that, back in 1991, when the Soviet Union was collapsing, I was the senior adviser to Canada's foreign minister.

I can remember the weekend that I spent on the phone with the Prime Minister's Office, the Privy Council Office and former deputy prime minister Don Mazankowski, the first Ukrainian deputy prime minister of Canada, discussing what we should do. The Soviet Union had not quite collapsed, and Mikhail Gorbachev was trying to institute his glasnost reforms. It looked like, within a few weeks, there would be a collapse.

We had a long discussion about recognizing Ukraine first. We were the party that recognized Ukraine on that weekend, December 2, and we were the first country in the world to recognize Ukraine as an independent country, separate from the old Soviet Union. That was a momentous thing because, of course, we have a large diaspora of Ukrainians in Canada. I am proud to have played a very small and minor role as a senior adviser to the then minister of foreign affairs, Hon. Barbara McDougall, when we did that.

We do support all of the recommendations in this report, but I would like to draw attention to a couple of particular interest to us. The previous speaker spoke about recommendations 12 and 13, and I will come to that, but I would like to focus a little on recommendation 8, which says:

That the Government of Canada work with its international and domestic partners to improve the coordinated implementation and enforcement of sanctions against Russia, by working to identify all assets connected to designated persons and closing any loopholes that may exist.

There are a lot of loopholes that still exist today. Not to toot my own horn, but I worked on creating the legislation the Government of Canada still uses today back in 1991, when there was the coup in Haiti. We wanted to impose economic sanctions, globally through the OAS and then through the UN, on Haiti and the illegal coup of Haiti's first democratically elected president.

There was no power to quickly impose economic sanctions. We quickly created within about four days a piece of legislation that was introduced and passed unanimously through the House and Senate within about 48 hours to create a bill that gave the Governor in Council the power to quickly move and impose economic sanctions.

Routine Proceedings

We know these sanctions are leaking, and I have raised this before in committee. I said it as a member of the fisheries committee. While the government has targeted specific individuals, and all of those are justified, what it has not done is looked at the leakiness of the sanctions overall. I have an example that has had a very large impact on Atlantic Canada. The snow crab fishery is a very big fishery off Newfoundland, and 52% of the crab fishery caught in Newfoundland was, until this war happened last year, bought by Japan, through contracts.

When the war broke out and Russia was desperate for cash, it started to sell their snow crab at a much cheaper price on the global markets. Most countries respected the fact that that money would be used for fuelling Putin's illegal war and did not bite. Japan did bite, broke every contract in Newfoundland and stopped buying all their snow crab from Newfoundland. Now Japan buys most of their snow crab from Russia, helping to fund their war.

The minister and the Liberal government have never raised those kinds of issues with counterparts. We have raised them with the minister, and the minister was totally unaware that this had happened.

• (1845)

It is not unusual for a Liberal minister to be unaware, but one would think that, when we are dealing with sanctions in a war, it is not just about the individuals but is about the flow of cash that is going in by buying goods of our G7 allies.

I would also like to comment on recommendation 12, which reads, "That the Government of Canada not grant a sanctions waiver to Siemens Energy Canada Limited for Nord Stream 1 pipeline turbines...."

Remember, with the turbine, Russia did this fake thing about needing the turbine for the pipeline that brought natural gas and oil into Europe. It brought in a need for repair, and the government said it was no problem, to bring it in here and we would repair it. Then the war broke out and Russia said it wanted it back in order to facilitate the continued supply of that oil and natural gas, supposedly. The government acquiesced, granted a waiver, sent it back to Russia and allowed it to continue to ship oil and natural gas to fund its war.

In fact, if we look at some of the testimony in this report, it quite clearly shows that a number of witnesses were flabbergasted the Government of Canada would allow such fakery to happen.

In addition, in a rare moment of clarity on the liquefied natural gas issue, the Minister of Natural Resources said at the time, and this is from page 31 of the unanimous report, that he could not "overemphasize the depth of concern on the part of the Germans, but also on the part of the European Union, with respect to the potential implications associated with their effectively not being able to access natural gas."

The report goes on:

In addition to the concerns expressed by Germany and the EU, the Minister [of Natural Resources] noted that, in conversations had with the United States, "they reflected and shared the concerns about the divisions that could end up undermining support for Ukraine...."

That was the Liberal minister, but yet when the Chancellor of Germany came to Canada and Germany was begging for our natural gas to deal with the issue of the impact on energy supply in Europe because of this illegal war, the Prime Minister said that there was no business case to ship it oil.

Maybe there is a case to get it done because there is a war on, but of course we were not ready to do that. When the Prime Minister and these Liberals came to power in 2015, there were 15 LNG plants on the books. As they progressed with their agenda, their no-pipelines bill, Bill C-69, or the "no capital bill", as I call it, to drive capital out of Canada, we have how many? I am sure there are members here who could tell me how many have been built since those 15 were proposed and going through the environmental system.

I hear a colleague say zero. Maybe the true answer the Prime Minister should have given the Chancellor of Germany is that he messed up and that he was not ready to deal with the issue of making sure good, clean, ethical Canadian natural gas could be accessed by Europe, which has become totally dependent on Russia, in case of emergencies. Unfortunately, that was not his answer. He glibly said that there was no business case for it. I am not sure the Prime Minister has actually ever read a business plan, but he told the Chancellor that, and so Germany went and obtained the natural gas it needed from dirty dictatorships. That is the great foreign policy we have had.

My colleague mentioned the fact that if the Liberals were truly interested in supporting Ukraine, they would have put provisions in the free trade bill to enable and foster the ability of our country to supply more munitions to Ukraine and to manufacture them. In fact, if there is a gap in political risk insurance by the EDC, it is easy for the Government of Canada to show its commitment to Ukraine by using the Canada account to help Canadian munitions manufacturers located in Germany and deal with the risk insurance issue.

Have the Liberals used the Canada account to do that? No, so their commitment to Ukraine is, like all other things, fairly superficial and not done with the seriousness one would expect from an ally of an important democratic country in this world and of our diaspora of 1.5 million Ukrainians in Canada who expect more from the government.

• (1850)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member referred to foreign policy and he talked about being superficial. President Zelenskyy came to Canada last September and signed a trade agreement with Canada. Ukraine wants this trade agreement. If I had enough time, I would explain to the member why. The 1.3 million people of Ukrainian heritage in Canada support the Canada-Ukraine deal that the president signed off on. Amazingly, the Conservative Party of Canada is the only party in the chamber that said "no" to that Canada-Ukraine trade agreement for all sorts of red herring types of reasons.

Routine Proceedings

The bottom line is that the Conservative Party is abandoning sending a solid message to Russia, providing more hope for Ukraine. Why did the Conservative Party vote “no” on the Canada-Ukraine agreement?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I know the member for Winnipeg North has a selective memory, but I will remind him that we had a free trade agreement with Ukraine already. It was negotiated by the Harper government.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, yes, they signed it, but they did not negotiate a comma of it. It was all negotiated and put to bed and then the election happened in 2015, so they came in and signed it, just like Jean Chrétien in 1993 when he said that he would tear up NAFTA. Then it came in and became part of the “three amigos”. He talked like he invented free trade with NAFTA, even though he ran on an election campaign against it, as did another former Liberal leader, John Turner, who fought the 1988 election against free trade. Thankfully, we won that election 35 years ago yesterday or we would not have free trade with the United States.

The member should do a little bit of history about which party has truly been committed to free trade and which party has tried to impose woke conditions on a carbon tax on a country that is at war, taking advantage of that country to put forward its domestic political agenda and impose it on another country.

● (1855)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, just in response to that last intervention, I think it is fairly obvious that trade deals need to be evaluated based on the substance of what is in those deals. There is a long history of various parties in this House opposing certain trade deals, doing so because they had particular views on provisions in those deals. It was not because they did not care about the other countries with which the deals were negotiated. It is because they had issues with the content of the deals.

In particular, the Liberals have tried to sneak a carbon tax provision into this trade deal. Meanwhile, Conservatives have tried to amend the deal to support expanded weapons transfer. We can ask anyone connected with the Ukrainian government or the Ukrainian community; they may have a variety of opinions on the particulars of the deal in general but if someone were to ask them what their priority is, weapons or a carbon tax, I think they would all say the priority is weapons, not a carbon tax.

We need to keep the eye on the ball here, which is that Ukraine needs to win this war. That means having the weapons and munitions that will allow it to win this war. The Liberals voted against including weapons in this deal. They are the ones abandoning Ukraine. We are the ones standing with Ukraine.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I would agree with the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, who made an eloquent speech on this very issue previously. It is outstanding to me that the Liberal government would think that the priority of what to do with the Ukrainian government right now is to try and impose a Canadian carbon tax on Ukraine and then, at the same time, vote against providing the ability of Canadian companies to

establish free trade and manufacturing facilities back and forth in munitions, during an illegal war. There is a coalition between a former and still, really, KGB agent, Putin, who is in an unholy alliance with China and Iran, trying to attack these dictatorships and trying to attack democracy around the world.

The government has not banned and declared the Wagner Group, which is in this report, as a terrorist group. It has not abided by the resolution of this House for many years now, and still refuses to declare the IRGC as a terrorist group. I do not know why the government is so opposed to declaring these organizations as terrorist groups and letting them operate in Canada, while not providing our ally, Ukraine, what it needs.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to bring the voices of Chatham—Kent—Leamington to the chamber this evening and to rise to continue debating concurrence on the 10th report of the foreign affairs committee, “The Russian State’s Illegal War of Aggression Against Ukraine”.

Before I go on, I will tell members that I will be splitting my time with the member for Dufferin—Caledon.

As this report deals with our support for Ukraine, I would like to focus on three key recommendations related to energy and food security, not only for Ukraine but also for our European allies as well. The first recommendation I will touch upon is recommendation 12:

That the Government of Canada not grant a sanctions waiver to Siemens Energy Canada Limited for Nord Stream 1 pipeline turbines as long as sanctions remain in effect.

Last December, the natural resources minister said that Canada was revoking the exemptions to sanctions that allowed a Montreal company to repair turbines for the natural gas pipeline operated by the Russian state-owned energy giant Gazprom. The world was aghast. As background, in July, Siemens Energy was granted an exemption to Canada’s sanctions against Russia to repair up to six turbines for this pipeline, which carried natural gas from Russia to Germany. The federal government defended its decision by saying that it was “calling the bluff” of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who Canada had accused of withholding gas exports to Europe.

I question if this is the position of our ally Ukraine. Is that what it asked for when it came to the turbines?

Once again, the government miscalculated at a great cost to our allies. As the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan stated, “the government’s decision to suspend their own sanctions is a slap in the face to the Ukrainian people in their darkest hour.” He continued by stating how important it is that we hold firm in our resolve with Russia: “If we aren’t, then Russia will simply continue to escalate their pressure”.

That is exactly what it has done. It has weaponized energy against the Ukrainian people and, indeed, against our European allies.

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Instead of standing firmly with our allies, Canada has turned its back on them in their time of need. As usual, the government has not considered the long-term consequences of its decisions by allowing Russia to manipulate the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, and this may have far-reaching consequences for global energy security, not to mention our own international relations. With its ill-thought-out policy, the government has once again sent the message to our international partners that Canada is not reliable.

The world came calling for Canada's abundant supply of LNG but, in true form, the Prime Minister and his Liberal cronies shut the door on its allies. Why?

We learn that, for the first time in the history of free trade negotiations, Canada is again betraying Ukraine by adding a carbon tax to our free trade agreement with Ukraine. I will ask the question again: Is this what Ukraine came to Canada asking for?

The Prime Minister has the audacity to virtue signal and, in essence, double-cross Ukraine by making the carbon tax part of the agreement. Ukraine does not want our carbon tax any more than Canadians want it. That is why the Conservatives oppose the ineffective carbon tax here in Canada and in Ukraine.

Ukraine is looking for a reliable trade partner, not to be force fed a carbon tax. Ukraine has not requested it and has not requested that we export the Liberal government's empty ideology. Instead, Canada should focus our trade agreements on areas in which we excel, such as agriculture, technology, LNG expertise, grain storage and the so many other areas I could list.

Members remember that the Conservatives negotiated the first trade agreement with Ukraine back in 2017 and fully support free trade. The member for Dufferin—Caledon mentioned in his speech yesterday that the Liberals voted against an amendment that would allow Canadians to build munitions requirements that would allow Ukraine to win the war. The Liberals believe that by imposing their useless carbon tax, Mr. Putin will turn tail and run. It would be laughable if it were not so serious.

Conservatives also proposed that we would both provide civilian nuclear technology and sell our civilian-grade uranium from Saskatchewan to power nuclear plants that would give emissions-free electricity to Ukrainians to replace bombed-out electricity plants. I guess it made too much common sense because, in true Liberal custom, they did not include that in the agreement either. Again, I reiterate that Ukraine needs Canada to be a reliable trading partner and ally.

Putin has stated numerous times that Ukraine is not a nation but rather a state of Russia. Timothy David Snyder, a professor of history at Yale University, told the foreign affairs committee that the major issues in this conflict, territory, neutrality and security, have “never really been the problem.”

● (1900)

He explained, “Putin was never actually fighting a war about NATO”; Putin was “fighting a war to destroy the Ukrainian state.” Let us go back 100 years, to the death of my great-grandparents in the Holodomor.

It seems the Canadian government is hell-bent on fighting a war to destroy Canadian energy that would bring stability to Ukraine and our European allies. The current Liberal regime is determined to rob the world of reliable energy security that would, in turn, provide sustainable and clean energy sources, preventing our allies from being forced into vulnerable reliance on an authoritarian regime.

We can and should contribute with sustainable clean energy solutions, reducing our allies' dependence on single suppliers and creating a more geopolitically stable international environment. We can contribute clean energy solutions that align with climate change goals and demonstrate our leadership in both energy security and environmental responsibility. That is not to mention the economic benefits this would bring to Canada in a time of skyrocketing inflation brought on by eight years of the Liberal government.

The Prime Minister also stated that there was no business case for Canada to build LNG export facilities. However, in the last two years, the U.S. has built eight such facilities, partly using Canadian gas, adding value to it by liquefying it and then exporting it.

At the foreign affairs committee, we continue to look at the food and fuel effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Earlier this week, Trevor Kennedy from the Business Council of Canada testified that there was, and continues to be, a business case for infrastructure to export Canadian LNG. Canada should have played a role in Ukraine's and Europe's energy security, and it should still do so.

There are eight billion people in the world, and four billion of them owe their lives to the use of synthetic fertilizers, in particular, supplemental nitrogen. Nitrogen is produced from natural gas through the Haber-Bosch process. Canada should also be there for Europe and Ukraine as a fertilizer supplier, supplanting supplies from Belarus and Russia. I will come back to this point in a minute.

Another recommendation I want to touch upon is recommendation 6:

That the Government of Canada continue to strengthen global food security, and the role of Ukraine as one of its guarantors, and join the efforts with Ukraine on the Black Sea Grain Initiative in the Global South....

In July 2022, Ukraine's title of the breadbasket of the world was once more becoming a reality when Russia signed on to the Black Sea grain initiative. The first ships left Ukrainian ports on August 1, 2022, making over 1,000 voyages from Ukraine's Black Sea ports. Unfortunately, a year later, Russia pulled its support for the deal, and the world was once again thrust into further food insecurity. The international community watched in despair as Russia now used essential commodities to gain world domination and control, now using food as a weapon.

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If we were able to ship our fertilizer, our potash, to eastern Canada from Saskatchewan by rail, we would not have to rely upon Belarusian and Russian fertilizer. We would be able to step in and fill the gap to ensure food security for not only Canada but also other parts of the world.

I have shared this earlier in other speeches: On my own farm, we have used more Russian and Belarusian potash over time than we have our own from Saskatchewan. We have used more imported urea from Russian sources than our Canadian-made fertilizer from western Canadian gas, because we do not have a pipeline that brings natural gas to eastern Canada. It would be possible to bring Saskatchewan potash more affordably into eastern Canada by rail if our train cars were not hauling so much crude to eastern refineries.

There is much we could do. Canadians have paid the price for the Prime Minister's "all socks and no substance" policies. Now, unfortunately, the world has to pay a dear price for the same Liberal rhetoric in the form of energy and food insecurity.

The foreign affairs committee made several recommendations with respect to Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. The Conservatives are calling on the Liberals to stop supporting pro-Putin policies, as it did by signing off on the six turbines for Nord Stream. It is time for the Conservative common-sense plan that would turn dollars for dictators into paycheques for our own people in this country.

I look forward to questions from my colleagues.

• (1905)

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the hon. member could justify his comments around forcing an ideology on Ukraine, considering that it has its own homegrown carbon pricing system. It was a co-operative partner in the development of this agreement and urged us to pass it.

Could the member make this make sense?

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I can answer very simply. Is this what Ukraine needs? Is this what it came to Canada asking for? I have not heard any speech or anything from the Ambassador of Ukraine to Canada, any Ukrainian representative or any member of Parliament asking us to negotiate a carbon tax into our trade agreements. If there is evidence, I would be open to looking at it. That is not what it needs right now. It needs a reliable partner in all of the areas that Canada has expertise in and exporting a carbon tax is not one of our Canadian pieces of expertise.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I find it very disturbing that Conservatives are trying to rewrite history.

President Zelenskyy was in this very House calling for all parties to support the trade agreement with Ukraine. We had the Ambassador of Ukraine endorsing the trade agreement with Ukraine.

Ukraine is going through an incredibly difficult time. I know Conservatives try to minimize the horrific bombings and attacks that are taking place daily as Ukrainian citizens die, but what happened yesterday was a betrayal of every single Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadian by the entire Conservative caucus. Conserva-

tives rose as one not to vote about the details of the trade agreement, but to say they opposed in principle a trade agreement with Ukraine.

My simple question, through you to the hon. member, is this: How could Conservatives betray Ukraine and Ukrainian Canadians in such a nefarious fashion?

• (1910)

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, the member's party ran in every single election against free trade.

Our record is perfectly clear. We negotiated with my colleague, the hon. member for Abbotsford, and signed the agreement in 2017. As we have heard from other Conservative members in this House, we are solidly in favour of free trade. Where in this free trade agreement is energy security? Where is the partnership and research? Where is supply chain infrastructure and the establishment of a Canadian-Ukrainian agri-food business council?

Why would the member say we are minimizing the horrific attacks? I would like to know the basis of that. We stand with the Ukrainian people. We call out the violence there. I have no idea where that comes from.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it was a great pleasure working with my colleague on the foreign affairs committee in the course of the development of this report.

We are in a new global cold war. The member correctly describes the way in which access to commodities is a crucial part of that struggle. Canada developing its capacity in areas around food and fuel and supplying our democratic allies around the world in order to make them less dependent on Russia and other hostile powers is a very important part of this struggle for freedom and democracy. That is why Conservatives have championed the role Canada can play in supporting global energy security.

Sadly, the Liberals do not understand this. Their anti-energy ideology is getting in the way of Canada playing its global role in defending global security. It is very telling that in an agreement that should have been about supporting Ukraine in meeting its food and fuel needs, supporting Europe with its energy security and a deal that could have included provisions around energy security, the government instead wanted to impose a carbon tax on Canadians as well as Ukrainians, which underlines how wrong it is. This is the big question right now.

In their hearts everybody would say they want to help Ukraine, but the concrete way to help Ukraine, yes, crucially, is to supply it with weapons, but to also undermine European dependence on fuel exports as part of the Russian war machine. This is what has been missing. This is what needs to change.

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I would like my colleague's comments on how important it is to take into consideration the energy security dimension of this new cold war.

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I absolutely agree with the premise of the question put before me.

Canada has so much more it could give toward energy security for Ukraine and our European allies, not only energy security, but also food security. I have raised this several times, both at committee and in this House. Eight billion people are in this world and four billion of them owe their lives to the conversion of fossil fuel, natural gas, to synthetic fertilizers. This has neither been challenged by anyone, nor has it been acknowledged other than by my Conservative colleagues.

I would ask those who are opposing the conversion of natural gas to supply to our allies in the form of either energy or fertilizer for food this: Which 50% of the world's people do they not want to see live?

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, the member asked what proof he has. The reality is that he was here in this room when President Zelenskyy called for the adoption of the Canada-Ukraine trade deal. He witnessed that. He knows that the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the ambassador from Ukraine to Canada called for this. However, reprehensibly, given the new extremism of the member for Carleton, each Conservative rose in turn yesterday to repudiate all those commitments to Ukraine—

• (1915)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is some confusion here, but the member said that he was splitting his time. He recalls saying that, so I believe the question and comments period should be over and we should be on to the next speech. Many members heard that said.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Neither the table officers nor I heard it.

Mr. Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I said it in my second sentence. I said that I would be splitting my time with the member for Dufferin—Caledon.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to see if there is time for questions.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, if it was not stated, of course, the member could ask for unanimous consent to split his time afterwards, and that is up to the House to decide.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, we agree to unanimously hold that it had been said.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member did say it, and so we have finished with questions and comments.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon.

Mr. Kyle Seebach (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to speak on behalf of the great residents of Dufferin—Caledon.

I am going to focus my remarks today on two of the recommendations in this report. It is incredibly timely that we are having this

concurrency debate with respect to this report from the committee. I want to start with recommendation 12, which is, “That the Government of Canada not grant a sanctions waiver to Siemens Energy Canada Limited for Nord Stream 1 pipeline turbines as long as sanctions remain in effect.” I am going to go into why that is significant.

First of all, it granted that waiver in contravention of what the committee recommended, which included Liberal members of that committee. It is relevant because that went to a pipeline that aided Vladimir Putin. It aided his ability to export oil. He funds his illegal war in Ukraine with the energy exports and the money he gets from energy exports.

As we debated the free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine, Conservatives took a principled position to vote against that free trade agreement not only for what is in it, but because the Liberals are trying to export the misery of the carbon tax. I know trade agreements are about imports and exports, but what we should not export is the misery of a carbon tax on Ukrainians in the middle of a war. That is one export I bet Ukrainians do not want.

Why is that so relevant? It is relevant because Conservatives took a principled position to vote against it due to that and many other aspects of this trade deal. It is a bad deal. We voted against it. We are His Majesty's loyal opposition. Opposition is an act of loyalty. Therefore, when we vote against a piece of legislation in our capacity as the official opposition, we are doing it as an act of loyalty. To have Liberal members accuse us of aiding Vladimir Putin as a result of that is beneath contempt. It is despicable.

We should consider that the committee had six Liberal members who put a recommendation forward not to grant a waiver to give a turbine to a Russian pipeline that would pump Russian oil, and they went ahead and did it. Then they have the audacity to stand in this chamber and say Conservatives are aiding Vladimir Putin, the ones who invited a Nazi into the chamber when the President of Ukraine was here. The Liberals say we are aiding Vladimir Putin. It is unconscionable for them to go there.

They granted the waiver for that permit, which enables Vladimir Putin to pump more oil. That puts more money into the Russian war machine. They say our act of loyalty as the opposition is aiding Vladimir Putin. This is disgraceful, even by the standards of the disgraceful conduct of the Liberal Party routinely all across this country and, in particular, in this chamber.

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Now I will turn to recommendation 14, which is, “That the Government of Canada continue to provide significant military, financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine so long as Ukraine must defend itself from Russian aggression.” That is what the committee recommended, including six Liberal members, it should do. Yesterday, at the international trade committee, which is studying this free trade agreement, I put forward a motion to expand the scope of what could be included in the review of this legislation. I did that because Conservatives wanted to include increased munitions exports to Ukraine. This would be real help. We wanted to include Canadian industry helping Ukraine increase its domestic capacity for munitions manufacturing.

It is relevant because, right now, Canada only sends to Ukraine 3,000 rounds of munitions per month. Does that sound great? Maybe, but Ukraine goes through 3,000 rounds of munitions in one morning, every morning, and the ratio of soldiers being able to survive a war with the ratio of the number of munitions that can be used is directly correlated.

● (1920)

By not doing what they should do, which is increase munitions production and help Ukraine increase more munitions, it will cost the lives of Ukrainian soldiers and aid Vladimir Putin in his vicious, illegal war in Ukraine.

Now, let us go back. The Liberals are actually doing things that are harmful to Ukraine. They are exporting a turbine that is used to increase Russian revenue from oil and gas. I do not know what the definition of helping Vladimir Putin is, but if I wrote the dictionary, that would be in there.

On munitions, how did the Liberals vote on my motion at the committee to expand the scope of the review to include munitions? Let us guess. The Liberal member for Richmond Centre voted no. The Liberal member for Brampton East voted no. The Liberal member for Brampton South voted no. The Liberal member for Ottawa—Vanier voted no. The Liberal member for Nepean voted no. However, they have the audacity to say that Conservatives voting against them trying to export their most disastrous policy in Canada, the policy of deep misery, of two million Canadians going to a food bank, of seven million Canadians eating less healthy food—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): One moment please.

I would like to remind members that, if they want to have conversations, to please take them out of the chamber. There is a debate going on here and the hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon has the floor.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, I can take the heckling. They are heckling because they are losing and they do not like what I am saying.

They voted against expanding the scope of this trade agreement to include increasing munitions production, increasing Ukrainian capacity to build their own munitions. We can think about that for a second. All they had to do was expand the scope of what the committee could do. It was a simple vote, yet all those Liberals voted absolutely not. It is disgraceful. They then say that we are the ones

who are not supporting Ukraine, but that would be real support for Ukraine.

What is not real support would be a carbon tax or carbon pricing, which has never been in a Canadian free trade deal ever. This is the first time. If this is the first time we put this into a trade agreement, we could put in other new things, could we not? They put a carbon tax in for first time, so new things can go in. Where is the section on energy security? Where is the section on LNG exports? Where is the section on seed bank co-operation for farmers? Where is the section on grain storage? They are not there. Why? It is because the Prime Minister is ideologically obsessed with the carbon tax and he wants to spread the misery all around the world.

I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after “That” and substituting the following:

“The 10th report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, presented on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, be not now concurred in, but that it be recommitted to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development with instruction that it amend the same to recommend expanding the scope, either at committee or report stage, of Bill C-57, An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, in keeping with Recommendation 14 of the report, in order to support expanded munitions production in Canada and increasing munition exports to Ukraine and support the development of weapons and munitions manufacturing capabilities in Ukraine by Canadian Industry.”

It is time for them to put their money where their mouth is. The rubber has hit the road. Are they going to support this motion, yes or no?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (1925)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would like to remind members that the House is still in session and I have not recognized anybody.

As the hon. member mentioned heckling, I would like to clarify that I had said that there was a conversation going on. If he is saying that it was heckling, then it would have been from his side as well. I just wanted to clarify that it was from both the government side and the official opposition side.

The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, 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.): Madam Speaker, President Zelenskyy came to Canada back in September and signed the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. The extreme right element of the Conservative Party of Canada decided to vote against the trade agreement.

Now we have Conservative members scratching, looking and searching for whatever they can come up with to try to justify their behaviour in voting against an agreement that sends a very powerful message to Russia and supports the people of Ukraine and Canada. The member cannot get around the fact that the far right in the Conservative Party is now in control of what is taking place in the office of the leader of the Conservative Party.

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Does the member have any remorse for voting against the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement?

Mr. Kyle Seeback: I absolutely do not, Madam Speaker. I will not stand here and vote for something that would export the worst, most harmful policy that the current Liberal government has come up with in decades. It is creating the misery that is in Canada.

However, what this member and Liberals should all be ashamed of is that they granted the export waiver that is allowing Russia to pump more oil. The member has the audacity to say that we have given Vladimir Putin a win by exercising our right as the opposition to oppose a bad trade deal, when the Liberals granted the waiver that increases Russian blood money. They are disgraceful.

● (1930)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, this is another sad chapter of the Conservatives' betrayal of Ukraine. Yesterday was the Day of Dignity and Freedom, the 10-year anniversary of Ukrainian people uniting to defend their right to freedom and democracy. Conservatives chose that day to betray Ukrainian Canadians, to betray the consensus that we had in the House on Ukraine and to vote against the principle of even having a trade agreement with Ukraine.

Today, we have a report that talks about Canada's taking a strong stand on war crimes. This is important for Canadians across this country and the million and a half Canadians of Ukrainian origin to be aware of: The Conservatives have just moved an amendment that would kill the whole report. It would delete all the recommendations and what is fundamentally important. This is another betrayal of Ukraine.

How can the member live with this double betrayal in two consecutive days?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, there are some members thinking out loud, and it is not their turn to do that. I would ask them to hold off.

The hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, I fundamentally disagree with what the member says this motion would do. It would not do any of the things he suggests.

Voting against a bad trade deal is our right. Conservatives negotiated the original free trade agreement, which is currently in effect. It will remain in effect, regardless of how we voted on this particular trade agreement.

We know that the NDP and the Liberals are ideologically obsessed with the carbon tax. They want to export that misery all across the globe. It was not enough to make Canadians miserable; they want to export it all over the world. We will not stand for it. We voted against it on that basis.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent work. Could he remind the House of what happened at the international trade committee yesterday? It was not just Liberals; it was also the NDP. They voted together to oppose Conservative efforts to expand the bill and get more weapons to Ukraine. Ukraine needs

weapons and not a carbon tax. Liberals and New Democrats voted against expanding the trade deal to include weapons.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the hypocrisy is stunning. The Liberals granted a turbine to fund Putin's war machine and voted against munitions. The NDP is just merrily along for the ride.

The NDP members on the committee voted against expanding the trade agreement to include critical munitions exports. How dare he say that we betrayed Ukraine. They did it.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, given the hypocrisy of what we have heard from the Conservatives tonight, I am pleased to rise to defend the recommendations made by the foreign affairs committee, which the Conservatives are trying to gut. More importantly, I want to come back to the importance of adopting concurrence on the report rather than seeing it gutted, as we are seeing, by the Conservatives. In a procedural sleight of hand, they are trying to destroy all of the recommendations that form part of a consensus we have had since Putin invaded Ukraine.

We have seen the appalling civilian casualties. We have seen the evidence of war crimes and sexual abuse. We have seen the appalling bombings of hospitals, schools and apartment buildings. We have all seen that. It is fair to say there was initially a consensus, and it is reflected in the report the Conservatives are now trying to gut, trying to destroy. It was reflected as well in President Zelenskyy's comments to us parliamentarians. He asked, on behalf of the people of Ukraine, to adopt the Canada-Ukraine trade deal. This resonated across Canada and should have resonated with Conservative members given that a million and a half Canadians are of Ukrainian origin and they believe strongly in Canada supporting Ukraine.

Yesterday was no simple day. It was the 10th anniversary of the Day of Dignity and Freedom for Ukrainian people. It is important symbolism, a profound symbolic act of Canada standing in support of Ukraine. Ukrainians could not celebrate that day because they are trying to defend their villages, farms and homes. What we saw yesterday, on the Day of Dignity and Freedom, was the entire Conservative caucus, not just the leader, the member for Carleton, whose extremist views we know about, rising one after the other to betray Ukraine, to betray the commitment that all Canadians feel they have to Ukraine.

President Zelenskyy, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the Ukrainian ambassador to Canada asked us, as an act of solidarity and support for the Ukrainian people, to adopt the trade agreement, and every single member in this House except Conservatives rose as one to stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Every single member of the Conservative caucus betrayed the consensus we have had since the beginning of the horrific invasion and horrific violence that has been engendered toward the Ukrainian people. Conservatives decided to choose the Day of Dignity and Freedom to betray Ukrainian Canadians and betray Ukraine.

I continue to believe that this vote lives in infamy. The member for Carleton has an obsession with the federal price on carbon, which does not even apply in my province of British Columbia, in Quebec or in the Northwest Territories, and demands that the federal price on carbon be part of a carbon election. What does that mean for my province or our second-largest province, the Quebec nation? What does that mean for the Northwest Territories and other jurisdictions where the federal price on carbon does not even apply? He has never even asked that question, but his obsession with the price on carbon and his obsession with the denial of climate change I find to be profoundly disturbing.

This is a step further. This is taking the extremism of the Republican Party in the United States, which is rejecting supports for Ukraine and refusing to stand with the Ukrainian people as we speak, and manifesting it here in this chamber. Canadians were all witness to it yesterday, on a symbolic day of such importance.

• (1935)

The Day of Dignity and Freedom is the day the Conservative MPs chose to betray Ukraine. That was the day the entire Conservative caucus turned its back on Ukraine. The Day of Dignity and Freedom was hard fought by Ukrainians, to establish their democracy, to fight back against this totalitarian, authoritarian dictator Putin who has ravaged the country. That was the day Conservatives chose to side, not with the Ukrainian people but, with the extremists that we see in the Republican Party. I find that profoundly disturbing.

Not a single Conservative MP rose to stand with Ukraine. How could they go back to their constituents with this weird extremist obsession of their new leader, the member for Carleton, with the price on carbon and denying climate change? How could they go back and say that their obsession with the price on carbon was what led them to betray Ukraine?

Today, we have a report from the foreign affairs committee. This is part of the consensus that Canadians saw, in a very positive light, since the invasion of Ukraine, since the horrific violence brought against the people of Ukraine. There was an all-party consensus that lasted up until the Day of Dignity and Freedom, when Conservatives betrayed and turned their back on the people of Ukraine, breaking that consensus.

Then tonight, we have another example. We have a report that has come forward with the consensus of all parties, that speaks to Canada taking a leading role against the crimes against humanity, the war crimes, the violations of international human rights, the gender-based and sexual violence, with Canada play a leading role

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in that prosecution. Conservatives said no, that they were going to gut the report, and were—

• (1940)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member's time is up.

I do want to remind members who are having conversations in the House that they may want to take them outside. It is a little loud.

[*Translation*]

It being 7:41 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion are deemed put and recorded divisions deemed requested.

[*English*]

Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 66, the divisions stand deferred until Wednesday, November 29, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am here to speak on the arrive scam.

However, in a brief coda to the previous debate, the NDP House leader was talking about the importance of supporting Ukraine, trying to wrap himself in blue and yellow. It is important to tell the House that the NDP has consistently opposed giving Ukraine the weapons it needs. In fact, I will quote from the member for Edmonton Strathcona, the NDP foreign affairs critic, who said, last February at committee:

Some people in this committee and some members of our Parliament have been calling on the government to provide lethal weapons to Ukraine. I have some concerns about that, obviously.

Do you believe there are risks—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the hon. member speaking on ArriveCAN? It has to be on the ArriveCAN app. I want to remind the member that the subject before the House is on the late show question that he submitted.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I was simply reading a quote, which I think is on the record, that showed the NDP speaking out against giving lethal weapons to Ukraine. Ukraine needs weapons.

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I will speak now about the arrive scam app, which is a grotesque scandal that I think many Canadians are seized with. It is actually more like a family of scandals; it is a number of different scandals that are interrelated. The government spent \$54 million developing an app, which is far in excess of what it had spent on apps before. It spent \$54 million developing a glitchy app that did not work and that sent many Canadians into quarantine who should not have been in quarantine.

In the process, the government hired not a major company or a company with IT expertise. Rather, it hired GC Strategies, a company of two people working out of their basement and who did no IT work. They simply subcontracted all of the actual work. That would be like the Speaker's hiring me to paint her fence for \$100, my then hiring the member for Winnipeg North to paint the fence for \$20, and my pocketing \$80. He did all the work, and the Speaker was sort of fine with that arrangement. That is what happened consistently. I think Canadians have a grave problem with why the two-person company that did nothing got all the work. The RCMP is now investigating the contractors. Meanwhile, there is an admission that fraudulent resumes were submitted to the Government of Canada by GC Strategies, and there are senior public servants accusing each other of lying about who is responsible for the choice to hire GC Strategies.

We need an answer from the government on this, because we have tried to ask senior public servants, and they have accused each other. They have said, "It wasn't me; he chose GC" and "No, someone else chose GC Strategies." One can understand why nobody wants to take credit for the decision, given the fact that a company with no IT experience and that did no work was hired. The government needs to explain, because it was a decision made by the Government of Canada.

In the midst of these structural problems about contracting, fraudulent resumes and public servants accusing each other of lying, will the government finally tell us who is responsible for choosing GC Strategies for ArriveCAN?

• (1945)

Mr. Charles Sousa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as previously indicated in the House, we take these allegations seriously. As the member is aware, a matter is under investigation by the RCMP, and we have full confidence in our national law enforcement agency. Let us be clear that the RCMP commissioner stated on October 23 of this year that "contrary to public reporting, the RCMP is not investigating the ArriveCAN matter. The confusion may arise from the fact that we are investigating a file based on allegations brought by Botler AI". We trust that the RCMP will pursue the investigation with integrity, and that, should the RCMP find any wrongdoing in the matter, it will pursue any charges as appropriate.

Additionally, the CBSA has launched its own internal audit, even though GC Strategies and Botler AI did not have a contract with the government. Notwithstanding that, it is important for the CBSA to review its contracting and provide more rigour in the procurement process, in part by increasing oversight of the granting of contracts and of those who hold contracting authority. In the meantime, the CBSA has suspended some of its existing contracts until the agency

gets further clarity on the facts. Although the allegations and investigations are not specific to ArriveCAN, we recognize they may also yield findings relevant to that procurement.

Members may know that the CBSA and the Public Health Agency of Canada have also been engaged with the Office of the Auditor General on a performance audit of ArriveCAN. We await the Auditor General's findings and recommendations.

Once again, we will respond to all findings and ensure that any acts of wrongdoing have consequences.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, that great fog of a non-response obviously gets nowhere close to the question I asked. I will repeat it. We have the arrive scam scandal: \$54 million that was spent on an app that should have cost much, much less. Money was spent through a company that did no IT work and subcontracted all of the actual work.

We need to know who is responsible. Who made the choice to hire GC Strategies? There are senior public servants, Cameron MacDonald and Minh Doan, accusing each other of lying about who is responsible. Somebody has to be responsible. The government made the decision to give the money to GC Strategies for the arrive scam app. It is a simple question: Who was responsible for the decision to hire GC Strategies for the ArriveCAN app?

Finally, to the parliamentary secretary, who was the person responsible for hiring GC Strategies?

Mr. Charles Sousa: Madam Speaker, the government takes these allegations seriously. We will act on any investigation and audit findings to ensure that controls, oversight—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member had an opportunity to ask his question. I would ask him to please offer that respect back to the member. It was very quiet when he was making his statement. Please allow the parliamentary secretary to answer.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Charles Sousa: Madam Speaker, as I said, we will act on all the findings and ensure that controls, oversight and stewardship over contracting are strengthened. The CBSA and the RCMP are investigating certain allegations, and they will act appropriately on those findings. Ahead of that, the CBSA had already launched its own internal audit of contracting, and it has increased its oversight on the granting of contracts. The agency has also directed all employees with contracting authority to retake procurement training and certification.

Furthermore, the CBSA has suspended some contracts until the facts are clear. Once again, we take all allegations seriously, and we will act on the findings and on the facts to provide Canadians with proper services and value for money.

• (1950)

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity this evening to follow up on a question that I asked in question period on October 20 regarding the Liberal government's opposition to liquefied natural gas exports to Europe.

For context, shortly after Vladimir Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the leaders of western European countries started to take steps to end their dependence on oil and gas imports from Russia. This makes a great deal of sense, because buying oil and gas from Russia means funding Vladimir Putin's war machine against Ukraine.

What exactly did the leaders of Europe do? In August of last year, Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany visited Canada looking to buy more oil and gas from this country. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister told him that there has never been a strong business case for Canadian oil and gas exports to Europe.

What did the German chancellor do next? He flew to the Middle East to see if the dictators of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar felt that there was a strong business case for oil and gas exports to Europe. Those Middle Eastern dictators were happy to sign a multi-year memorandum of understanding that will guarantee steady oil and gas exports to Germany for years to come.

The story does not end there. Last month, France, the Netherlands and Italy all signed separate agreements to import LNG from Qatar for the next 27 years. This raises a question: Why is Canada not exporting LNG to Europe?

According to a report released by the Fraser Institute shortly after Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine last year, "Unfortunately, despite being the world's fifth-largest producer of natural gas, Canada has missed the opportunity to expand our supply of LNG to overseas markets due to a lack of export infrastructure, largely due to regulatory barriers and environmental activism."

In fact, Canada does not have a single operational LNG export facility, and only one is under construction. This is the Coastal GasLink project in British Columbia.

That brings us to my question in question period last month, when I asked if the Liberal government still believes that there is no business case for Canadian LNG exports. What was the government's response? It was, "Mr. Speaker, it is really shameful that the Conservative Party would use this humanitarian situation to peddle conspiracy theories."

There are some things I would really like to know. What conspiracy theories was the Liberal minister referring to? Were last year's German LNG deals with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates all conspiracy theories? When Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited Canada last year, was he part of the conspiracy? What about the three agreements that Qatar signed last month with France, the Nether-

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lands and Italy? Are they in on the conspiracy as well? What about the 6,000 people who worked on the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline? Does the Liberal minister think that they are part of the conspiracy too?

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Madam Speaker, companies and countries around the world are making decisions to ensure that they are able to access and deliver energy that is reliable, clean and affordable. That is true in Canada and around the world.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine included significant impacts on global energy markets and supply chains. That is why the European Union signalled that it is looking to secure sustainable sources of energy, stating that it is clean energy that will play the largest role in their long-term energy security. We must be skating where the puck is going.

[*Translation*]

The Conservatives may deny climate change, but they have to at least acknowledge that is not the case for our partners and allies in Europe.

We know that energy security and climate action go hand in hand. When it comes to supporting Canadian projects to provide energy to our allies, I can confirm to the member across the way that our government has a better record than the Conservatives do on every level.

• (1955)

[*English*]

To give members an example, we have approved, as the member mentioned, the Cedar LNG project in B.C., led by the Haisla Nation. It is a small-scale floating facility and marine export terminal. Beyond LNG, there are many increasingly important resources of low-carbon fuel that we are working actively on. One of the top 10 hydrogen-producing countries is Canada, which has emerged as a leader in developing new hydrogen and fuel cell technologies.

Allow me to add that Atlantic Canada will be a significant driver of that as well. The Canada-Germany hydrogen alliance will also export hydrogen to Germany as early as 2025. Just last week, we announced the financing of major hydrogen projects in Nova Scotia using wind power.

[*Translation*]

Once the Conservatives stop their shameful opposition to Bill C-49, we can begin to build offshore wind farms in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Nova Scotia. That means thousands of jobs, a lot of clean energy for the power grid and emissions-free hydrogen production for export. While the Conservatives denigrate our economic future, we are taking measures to build the future.

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On top of this, I will briefly mention our efforts to bring clean nuclear energy and biofuels to our allies. There are growing opportunities for Canada's CANDU technology. Earlier this year, the minister of energy joined the Romanian minister to announce a \$3-billion loan to Romania, which will be best spent on building two new CANDU reactors in Romania.

All of this money will be spent on Canadian companies and good jobs for the clean sector. We will be powering Romania at no cost to the taxpayer. This will help Romania phase out coal and provide clean power to countries that are looking to move away from Russia.

On biofuels, we continue to invest this year in Canadian innovation to support our allies' energy needs. In May, we announced \$86 million to save and retool the Come By Chance refinery in Newfoundland and Labrador, so that the former oil refinery can lead the region in sustainable biofuel production. Canada will continue to be a reliable and steady global supplier of clean energy.

Mr. Michael Kram: Madam Speaker, in the Liberal parliamentary secretary's original response from last month, he said, "It is really shameful that the Conservative Party would use this humanitarian situation to peddle conspiracy theories." I find the use of the word "shameful" to be very interesting. What exactly is it that the Liberals find to be shameful?

Do the Liberals think that it was shameful for German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to go to the Middle East to buy oil and gas after the Prime Minister gave him the cold shoulder? Is it shameful for other European countries to buy LNG from Qatar, given the Prime Minister's statements? Do the Liberals think that the 6,000 people who worked on the Coastal GasLink LNG project should be ashamed for providing clean, ethical Canadian energy to the world?

Mr. Marc Serré: Madam Speaker, it is ironic to hear the Conservatives pretend to care about Canada's economic future when their campaign on climate denialism has prevented them from supporting even the most popular economic opportunities. The Conservatives are currently using shameful tactics in the natural resources committee to hold back Bill C-49.

Bill C-49 would play a key role in allowing for the development of offshore wind power, a key component for hydrogen and clean electricity. This is critical for improving global energy security and growing the number of good-paying jobs available across all Atlantic provinces.

[Translation]

We have already reached an agreement with the Germans and the Europeans on hydrogen exports. Both premiers support this bill, and the industry has been calling for it to be implemented. The only obstacle is the Conservative Party of Canada and its shameful campaign against all forms of climate action. However—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired. The right of reply is limited to one minute.

[English]

The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

● (2000)

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, on the heels of yesterday's disappointing fall economic statement, I rise to continue pushing the government to end legislated poverty for people with disabilities. To this day, people with disabilities continue to disproportionately live in poverty across the country. Of those living in poverty, 41% have a disability. While a Canada disability benefit has been promised to Canadians with disabilities for years, it has now been six months since this Parliament unanimously supported the Canada Disability Benefit Act, with no funding committed since.

People with disabilities deserve better from the government. Therefore, I will reiterate what I have said in this House before. If the governing party were serious, it would have supported people with disabilities the way it approached child care, through funding first, then agreements with the provinces and territories and then legislation. However, for people with disabilities it was the other way around. It was legislation first and now we continue to see funding not get committed, and we hear only crickets when it comes to actually funding the benefit. This is all part of why the disability community has been calling for the disability emergency relief benefit, DERB, to recognize legislated poverty for people with disabilities as the urgent crisis it is.

When it came to CERB during the pandemic, the government acted with urgency. We know it is possible. We know it could do so here again. That is why I asked the Prime Minister in question period weeks ago if he would put in place this emergency benefit while the Canada disability benefit regulations drag on. I asked this, recognizing that neither he nor I have ever had to live under the crushing weight of legislated poverty, imploring him to act quickly.

Not only did he not answer my question and not only has the government not put in place DERB in the time since, but then we had the fall economic statement yesterday. For people with disabilities there was nothing. There was nothing for the Canada disability benefit. There was nothing for the disability emergency relief benefit. It was not surprising for some given the words of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance on this very question. When asked specifically by the media in the week leading up to the fall economic statement about funding the Canada disability benefit, her words were that they cannot fund everything. It is deeply disappointing to hear that from her after all the government has promised to people with disabilities.

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My overarching concern ultimately is that the governing party seems to be allowing the leader of the official opposition to almost govern from opposition. The government needs to wake up and realize that it needs to differentiate itself from the Conservatives, not become more like them. It needs to show that it remembers what it looks like to be progressive. It needs to make clear that the lives of people with disabilities are not there simply for a photo op, and that Canadians with disabilities expect it to follow through because once again, today, Canadians with disabilities continue to live in poverty. For all the fanfare with the Canada Disability Benefit Act passing, as I am sure we will hear from the parliamentary secretary, nothing has changed yet for Canadians with disabilities across the country.

My question for the parliamentary secretary is this: What is the point in passing the Canada disability benefit if the government does not seem to have any plan to actually fund the benefit?

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his advocacy.

Our government recognizes that many Canadians with disabilities need additional financial support. That is the reason for the Canada disability benefit. The benefit will provide this.

We are in no way dilly-dallying and wasting time. The passage of Bill C-22 is a major milestone. Our government has a strong and unwavering commitment to create a more inclusive and barrier-free Canada. This is the result of decades of relentless advocacy by the disability community. I want to thank all parliamentarians of this House who supported the passing of this critical piece of legislation.

[*Translation*]

This summer, we reviewed the engagement process for developing regulations. We are moving forward with our commitment to create and implement a new Canada disability benefit as soon as possible.

• (2005)

[*English*]

This is a big undertaking. We must make sure it is done properly and done well. We cannot cut corners. We must respect the regulatory process. We must provide opportunities to persons with lived experiences to contribute to the benefit regulations. The disability community must have its say in how this benefit will look. This is required by the Canada Disability Benefit Act.

We are now actively engaging with a variety of stakeholders. They include persons with disabilities from a range of backgrounds, provincial and territorial governments and Canadians at large. We are working together in developing the regulations.

[*Translation*]

The Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities and I held a number of round tables with the community, who generously shared their perspectives and experiences.

[*English*]

Last week, we launched an online engagement tool. This will allow all Canadians to have their voices heard. We are diligently analyzing this input. The input is valuable. It will help us develop meaningful and impactful regulations. When we get there, the draft regulations will of course be published in the Canada Gazette. This will give one last opportunity for Canadians to share their feedback.

Again, we are doing everything to make sure that the disability benefit will be fulsome and impactful, and will serve Canadians and lift up those experiencing economic challenges who are of working age and living with disabilities.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, I want to make it really clear to the parliamentary secretary that he is absolutely right that people with disabilities must, and I appreciate he used the word “must”, be involved meaningfully in the collaboration of the design of the regulations. That is the case because it was in an amendment I put forward that was supported at committee. It is now the law.

No one is debating the extent to which people with disabilities must be meaningfully engaged in the design of the regulations. The point I am making is that the government does not need to wait for regulations to be done to dedicate the funding. As I mentioned, when it came to child care, it was the exact opposite. Funding came first and other steps followed. The federal government could do the exact same thing here. It has chosen not to for six months, and time is running out for people with disabilities living in poverty.

Is the government going to provide a disability emergency response benefit, and is it going to step up and fund the Canada disability benefit?

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Madam Speaker, we are moving as swiftly as possible on ensuring that the disability benefit is fulsome, is done in full consultation with the disability community and factors in the comments, feedback, expertise and lived experiences of the disability community. We are doing the work to make sure this is done properly, in a fulsome way, and done right.

From the beginning, our government has been committed to supporting Canadians with disabilities. We are filling in the gaps. Yesterday, the Deputy Prime Minister tabled our government's next phase of a plan to help create good middle-class jobs and grow a strong, inclusive economy. The disability community is part of our society and economy.

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We are making sure to get this done properly and in full consultation with the community. This is in the spirit of “Nothing Without Us”. It helps us ensure that all voices are included, especially the voices of those who have disabilities.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Ac-

ordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:09 p.m.)

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