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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, September 26, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)
[*English*]

HEALTH

Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to subsection 3(1) of the Federal Framework on Autism Spectrum Disorder Act, I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, the framework for autism in Canada.

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CRIMINAL CODE

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-413, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (promotion of hatred against indigenous peoples).

She said: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to table an act to amend the Criminal Code regarding the promotion of hatred against indigenous peoples. If passed, this bill will add to the Criminal Code the offence of wilfully promoting hatred against indigenous peoples by condoning, denying, justifying or downplaying the harm caused by the residential school system in Canada, calling irrefutable historical facts into question, a genocidal project that was recognized as such unanimously in the House.

Survivors and their families deserve to heal from this intergenerational tragedy and be free from violent hate. We cannot allow their safety and well-being to be put further at risk.

All parliamentarians must stand firm against all forms of damaging hate speech, including the denial of the tragedy of residential schools in Canada. At a time of increasing residential school denialism, including from some parliamentarians, I note that survivors, their families and communities need protection and a platform to share our history.

In honour of Orange Shirt Day, I extend this gift to them on behalf of me and all of my colleagues. May they find justice and healing in the protection of their stories.

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

PETITIONS

HONG KONG

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition today on behalf of Canadian citizens regarding the Hong Kong pathways that have been established by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

There are two streams, stream A and stream B, and as of January 2024, there are over 15,000 permanent residency applications, leaving over 8,000 in a backlog. The processing time has exceeded the stipulated 6.5 months, creating all kinds of hassles and problems for the petitioners.

The petitioners ask that IRCC uphold the priority processing guidelines as outlined; create a mechanism to issue minor study permits to children, ensuring that their well-being is safeguarded; and allocate additional admission targets to the Hong Kong pathways to effectively address the backlog.

IRAN

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Madam Speaker, my second petition is on behalf of Canadians who believe the Islamic Republic of Iran is using extreme violence to terrorize political opponents, including the peaceful participants in the Women, Life, Freedom movement. The Islamic Republic of Iran has, alarmingly, increased executions.

The petitioners are calling for the Government of Canada to redouble its pressure on Iran to protect the universal right to life, call for an immediate moratorium on executions, call on the supreme leader to hold his officials fully accountable for their role in all human rights abuses, and publicly assure the people of Iran of Canada's support for their civil and political rights.

SUDAN

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I would like to table a petition on behalf of Canadians who are concerned about the situation in Sudan, where 25 million people, 14 million of whom are children, need immediate humanitarian assistance and support. Alarmingly, 17.7 million people, more than one-third of the country's population, are facing acute food insecurity issues under a warning of potential famine.

Business of Supply

More than 8.6 million people have fled their homes since the conflict started, including families of Canadian citizens and permanent residents. Nearly 230,000 severely malnourished children in refugee camps are facing death in the coming months if they do not get food and health care, with 13 children dying each day according to recent reports by Doctors Without Borders.

This petition has several calls to action, including implementing temporary processing measures for Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers recognized by the UNHCR to be offered resettlement to Canada; granting temporary visas for evacuees to travel; urgently pushing the two rival factions to impose a temporary ceasefire to ensure the safe and adequate delivery of humanitarian aid; and calling upon bordering countries to open secure corridors to facilitate humanitarian aid, in addition to several other requests.

• (1010)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to present a petition on behalf of my constituents. I rise for the 45th time on behalf of the people of Swan River, Manitoba, to present a petition on the rising rate of crime.

Community members of Swan River are struggling with the rising rates of crime in their area and feel the threat this crime poses on the community's safety and economic stability. In the last nine years, violent crime has risen by 32% and gang-related homicides by 92%. The people of Swan River demand to be heard, since in the last five years, the town's crime severity index has increased by over 50%.

The people of Swan River are calling for 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.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to table a petition today on international flights.

In the last decade, the growth in Canada's Indo-Canadian community has been fairly incredible to see and has had many different benefits. In good part as a result of that, but also because of the interests of non-Indo-Canadian community members, we have seen a much higher demand for international flights going to Europe and, in particular, directly to India from Winnipeg.

The petitioners have signed this petition in the hope that the federal government, the provinces, airport authorities and airlines will give extra consideration to that growth and look at having more direct flights.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canadians from across the country, along with a coalition of over 250 feminists and women's organizations, are urging the government to protect women, children and all survivors of intimate partner violence from accusations of parental alienation in family courts. The peti-

tioners outline that parental alienation is a discredited and unscientific theory used in family court to silence survivors of family violence and often goes against children's wishes. The petitioners would like the government to amend the Divorce Act to make accusations of parental alienation inadmissible in parenting time disputes.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT

Motion

moved:

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

He said: Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

There was a time when every young person in Canada could hope to one day own their own home, a place to call their own, where they could raise a family. There was a time when those young people could dream of a positive future for their children. They could think that one day their children would be able to fulfill the dream of buying a home, that they would live in a country where they could make their hopes and dreams come true and become what they wanted to be, whether here or elsewhere.

Business of Supply

Sadly, that is no longer the case. Unfortunately, too often, young families are turning to food banks because they can no longer afford groceries at the end of the month. Today's young families are worried about the safety of their children. That is the case in Montreal, where people are worried about sending their children to day care because supervised injection sites have set up shop next door to schools and day cares. Today, young families are even struggling to find a place to live because the cost of housing has doubled over the past nine years as a result of this Liberal government's policies, which were supported by the Bloc Québécois.

The Canada that most of us here aspired to no longer exists, all because of this Prime Minister's nine years of inflationary, centralizing and disastrous policies. Now he is being propped up by the Bloc Québécois and the NDP.

Like me, the majority of Quebeckers and Canadians are probably extremely disappointed today. They are extremely disappointed because this Prime Minister is not currently at Rideau Hall, in front of the Governor General, asking for the dissolution of his government. He would have to make that request in English, by the way, because the Governor General still does not speak French.

That is what should have happened. That is what Canadians wanted. That is what Quebeckers wanted. Unfortunately, the NDP and the Bloc Québécois would rather stay the course, to borrow one of the Prime Minister's favourite phrases. They would rather see Quebeckers and Canadians go further into debt. They would rather watch the cost of everything, from food to housing, keep going up. They would rather implement policies that allow criminals to stay home watching Netflix than put them behind bars. This is the sad reality today, and it is the result of the NDP and Bloc's shameful decision to vote against this motion of non-confidence in this bad government. It is a bad government for Quebeckers. It is a bad government for all Canadians.

It is surprising to see that the Bloc Québécois chose to support this government that is bad for Quebec, considering it was the Bloc leader himself who said on May 23: "The government has two choices then. It can hold off on its aggressive centralization agenda, its abuse of the fiscal imbalance and abuse of spending power until the end of its mandate, which would normally run until late 2025, or it can call an election now to try to obtain that type of mandate". On May 23, the leader of the Bloc Québécois wanted an election because this government was interfering in provincial responsibilities, because this government was bad for Quebec. Suddenly, yesterday, the Bloc Québécois chose to prop up the most centralist, controversial, spendthrift government ever, a government that is bad for Quebec.

• (1015)

I would like to quote again from the leader of the Bloc Québécois's May 23 speech. He said the Liberal Prime Minister "has no right to dupe Canadians or the parties in the House. As I said before, if the Prime Minister is so interested in the jurisdictions of Quebec and the provinces, he can go off and pursue a career in provincial politics, preferably in Ontario." We certainly do not want him in Quebec.

Yesterday, the Bloc members had the opportunity to send the Prime Minister off to make the leap to provincial politics. Yester-

day, they had the opportunity to stand up for Quebeckers and put their money where their mouths are. It is time to walk the talk, as the saying goes. Unfortunately, that is not what they did. The Bloc Québécois made its choice. It saved this bad Liberal government. It had an easy choice to make yesterday. It had a choice between putting Canadians ever deeper in debt, doubling the cost of housing and increasing the cost of food, and calling an election to bring in a common-sense government, a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Why do we need to axe the tax? Canadians are earning less and paying more for nearly everything because of this Prime Minister's deficits and inflationary taxes. The costly "Liberal Bloc" has added \$500 billion in inflationary spending. The Bloc voted to keep the Prime Minister in place 188 times, and it did it again yesterday. Because of these taxes, Canadians have less money in their pockets and their paycheques are getting weaker and weaker. Canada's per capita GDP has declined for the fifth quarter in a row. It has fallen 3.6% since 2022. By comparison with our neighbours to the south, their per capita GDP has risen 4.5% since 2022. Talk about a gap. To put it more simply, had Canada simply kept pace with the United States over the past two years, our economy would be 8.5% higher. This represents an extra \$6,200 per Canadian per year.

It is important to put more money in Quebeckers' pockets while rejecting policies that would cost them more. We know this government is obsessed with making Canadians and Quebeckers part with more and more of their money, including through gas taxes. The Bloc Québécois is fine with Quebeckers paying more in gas taxes. With carbon tax 2, the Bloc Québécois wants Quebeckers to pay an extra 17¢ a litre. There is just no denying that. Bloc members have been very clear. According to them, even that is not enough. They want to radically increase gas taxes for all Quebeckers and Canadians. The reality is that the Bloc Québécois shares the same views, goals and agenda as the Liberals.

The Journal de Montréal reports that food insecurity is no longer a problem that only affects the poor. La Presse reports that one in 10 Quebeckers uses food banks and that Quebec's food banks serve 872,000 people each month. Yesterday, the Bloc Québécois voted to continue down this path. As I said earlier, we need to build the homes. To me, it is mind-boggling that the Bloc Québécois wants to keep standing in the way of young people's dreams of home ownership. Canada's inflation in the house price-to-income ratio is higher than any other G7 country. We need an election so that Quebeckers can put a roof over their heads.

Business of Supply

We need to fix the budget and implement measures like finding a dollar of savings for every dollar we propose to spend on a new program. That is common sense. We cannot keep piling debt on our generation and on the next seven or eight generations as well. As for inflation, Quebec leads the pack. Finally, to stop the crime, I think the Bloc Québécois should quit going after law-abiding hunters and try to join the Conservative Party's efforts to target the real criminals and keep them behind bars. The time has come for a common-sense Conservative government.

• (1020)

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague. I consider him a very honourable member, and for that very reason, I cannot understand why he is telling only half the truth when he talks about the price on pollution. As a member from Quebec, he knows full well that this does not apply to Quebec.

Why will he not be honest with Quebeckers about the actual policy?

Why does he keep repeating the same comments as his leader, who is not being honest with Canadians?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

It is unparliamentary to tell the House that a member is not being honest. I would ask the House leader to withdraw that comment.

• (1025)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, on that point of order, it would be entirely appropriate to reference the fact that the Leader of the Opposition did not make a speech on this, which is what was said. That is part of this point of order, Madam Speaker, and I would suggest that you reflect on that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am very concerned, and my personal thing is that we have a Leader of the Opposition who wants to bring down the government, but he is missing. I am just worried something happened to him. Maybe he got stuck at Dairy Queen this morning. Should we send out a—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. There is another point of order.

The hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot has the floor.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, the member for Kingston and the Islands has not given a speech since he was forced to retract and apologize for a statement he made on Twitter. Therefore, it is quite ironic that he would be criticizing which member of the opposition is legitimately giving a speech—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is a point of debate.

In order for the House to function properly, we need members to be debating the legislation that is before the House. We need to make sure that they are careful with the wording that they use. I want to remind members they are not able to say indirectly what

they cannot say directly, so I would just ask the hon. government House leader to withdraw that comment.

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, I withdraw it with regard to the individual in question but not with regard to how they are speaking about the policy.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would just ask the hon. member to withdraw with no explanation. That is all I ask.

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, the comment is withdrawn.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, the fact is that, according to Statistics Canada, crime and homicide rates have risen 28% over the last nine years. Sexual assaults are up 75%. Gang murders have nearly doubled. Auto theft is up 34% after nine years under Justin Trudeau. I apologize. I meant to say under this Prime Minister. It is up more than 100% in Montreal, more than 100% in Ottawa-Gatineau and 59% in Quebec.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is rising on a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member stood up on a point of order because he is so sensitive. However, he just finished referring to the Prime Minister by name. The member is somewhat seasoned, so he should know that he cannot say the name of the Prime—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): He caught that, and he said he was sorry for using it. Again, I would ask members to pay attention to what is going on in the House—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, the truth hurts the Liberals. I understand that. That is why they should step aside and go see the Governor General.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, to me, there is nothing more harmful than an elected official trying to make the public lose confidence in institutions. For a while now, the opposition leader has been trying to stoke public discontent. When members say that the carbon tax is causing teachers to quit their jobs because there is no heat in the schools, that nurses are quitting their jobs because there is no heat in the hospitals or that people are requesting medical assistance in dying because they have nothing to eat, in my view, that is not serious. In my view, what they are trying to do is stoke public discontent.

That is why my Conservative colleagues are not being taken seriously. They will be taken seriously when they can introduce us to this famous electrician who captures lightning to power the lights in this room.

Business of Supply

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, once again, the first member to rise here to save the government's skin is a member of the Bloc Québécois. No surprise there.

The Bloc Québécois has propped up this government nearly 200 times during non-confidence votes in recent years. It voted for \$500 billion in inflationary spending. It is thanks to the Bloc Québécois and this government that Quebeckers are paying more for their homes, their rent, their food and everything else. The Bloc Québécois should be ashamed of itself.

• (1030)

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, we have tools in the House to bring forward serious issues, which is what opposition days are for. Yesterday, there was a vote of confidence in the Leader of the Opposition, and the House overwhelmingly voted that they did not have confidence in his strategy. Today, we are being told that the Leader of the Opposition is going to defend Quebec and that he demands an election, which is a serious issue to ask.

The Leader of the Opposition might be under his desk, but I believe he should be here. I would ask him this: Why has he abandoned Quebec today?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I allow the hon. member to finish his question, again, I will remind members that they cannot say indirectly what they cannot say directly in the House. In addition, if they heckle, I will not recognize them for questions and comments or for debate.

Again, I would ask the hon. member to be very careful on how he words things. I will allow him to finish his question so that we get to the answer.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, the question is simple. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that he wants to bring down the government. He wants to force an election. I would ask him this: Why has he abandoned Quebec today if it is so important to him?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I would ask the NDP why it sold its soul by signing a coalition agreement that allowed this government to enact policies that drove up the cost of food and doubled housing costs. That is the reality.

The NDP made a big show of saying the coalition was over, but when the first confidence vote took place in the House, the NDP rushed to save its partner. Yes, the NDP is still the Liberals' partner. It is still a partner in all the poor decisions and bad policies that have made everything in Canada cost more for everyone.

[English]

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this place and join in debate on behalf of the good people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola. I particularly appreciated the speech by the MP for Mégantic—L'Érable. He made many good points that I hope to follow up on.

Our motion today is a serious one:

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

I have to say that although I did not know about this particular opposition motion until recently, I came to the topic well prepared today. Back home in my riding, I write a weekly MP report to my constituents, as I am certain many others in this place do as well. For the past few weeks I wrote extensively about this particular topic, as I knew, we all knew, it would be coming up in this place.

On September 4, I of course wrote about the leader of the NDP's tearing up his agreement with the Liberal government. When it came to answering a question on what it would mean to have an election, here is what I wrote: "The NDP can, and I suspect likely will, continue to vote with the...Liberal government". Well, it is almost like I am psychic. Who could have possibly predicted that the NDP leader would continue to stand with the Liberal government after the great theatrical performance of tearing up the agreement?

When I was asked why I thought the NDP leader staged the theatrical performance, here is what I wrote in response: "In my view, the Leader of the NDP is responding to criticism for what has been his current NDP strategy of bitterly condemning and complaining about things...Liberals do outside the House of Commons that the NDP fully supports when inside the House of Commons." Once again it was an almost psychic reading of the NDP leader.

Often I like to ask my local citizens a question at the conclusion of my report. The following week I asked the question, "If given the chance to participate in a non-confidence vote on [this Liberal] government, would you opt for an election now or prefer to wait until October 2025?" I suspect it will not surprise any member of this place to learn that an overwhelming number of Canadians want a carbon tax election, and that they want it now. The fact that even the leader of the NDP says he no longer stands with a carbon tax speaks volumes. I mention these things because I now can say with complete and total certainty that the good people I represent want a carbon tax election.

Let me go back to the leader of the NDP. Imagine for a moment that he broadcasts his own radio talk show. If people ever wanted to know about the incompetent and bad performance of the Liberal government, they could tune in to the NDP leader's AM radio show, as it would be 24-7 talking about just how bad the Liberal government is. It is the same Liberal government about which the NDP leader said, "The fact is, the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people".

Business of Supply

The leader of the NDP is clear that the government is the enabler of corporate greed. Let us for a moment surmise that everything the NDP leader says is true. When it comes to the Liberal government's incompetence, he is not really that far off. However, here is the thing. Who is the greatest enabler of the Liberal government? It is, wait for it, the leader of the NDP. I know that is hard to believe. How can someone say that a Liberal government is so incompetent and yet still support the Liberal government every single day?

Once again, this week we learned that after all of the great theatrics, the leader of the NDP still stands with the Liberals. It is such a totally nonsensical situation to say, "Yes, I think it is the worst government ever and does not deserve to be re-elected whatsoever, but I will do everything in my power to keep its members of Parliament elected." It literally makes no sense to anyone, yet it is a "wash, rinse and repeat" tactic for the NDP.

Of course, joining in now is the Bloc Québécois. To some extent, I can sort of see the situation from the NDP's perspective after many years of blindly supporting the Liberal government no matter what. Many people now view the NDP and the Liberals as largely one and the same. When I knock on the doors of many seniors in my riding who were long-time NDP supporters, they tell me that voting NDP used to mean something and that the NDP has lost its way.

● (1035)

I will now go back to the Bloc. The Bloc's suddenly standing with the Prime Minister is something I did not fully expect. After all, the Liberal government has failed to deliver for the people of Quebec just as badly as it has for the citizens of every other province and territory. The Liberal government has literally turned failure into an art form on immigration, foreign interference in our democratic process, softwood lumber and the now \$60-million so-called gun buyback program that has not bought a single firearm.

Crime is up massively. There is corruption in the federal program for contracting, complete fiscal mismanagement, and failure with our military and in our foreign policy. Everywhere we look, there is so much failure. That is not good for our provinces and territories. It is not good for Canada.

Worse yet, the Bloc is now supporting a Liberal-NDP coalition that has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work and unleashed crime. We know that the House leader for the Bloc has said that there has been "excessive centralization" never before seen in history, and that a government that has difficulty managing it owns missions was starting to get its hands "into the jurisdictions of Quebec and the provinces."

There is one quick note I would like to share with the Bloc members in this place. There is a small value-added business in my riding whose owner sources his raw goods from two places. One of those places happens to be Quebec. Every time the carbon tax increases, the shipping bill from the trucking company he uses to get the raw supply from Quebec becomes more expensive. The trucking company literally sent out a note making it clear that it is increasing its shipping rates because of the carbon tax. After the next carbon tax increase, it will be more cost-effective to get those raw goods from outside of Canada. What a shame.

The jurisdictions that do not have carbon taxes and the trucking costs from the border of the B.C. interior are much cheaper than Quebec. The business owner says the carbon tax makes him feel punished for trying to use Quebec-sourced goods or, for that matter, goods from any other Canadian province.

Does the Bloc think that is good for Canada? Why does the Bloc want to become the new NDP and stand with the Liberal government? It is so bizarre. Every Bloc member of this place will have to answer to their own constituents as to why the Bloc is now working for the Prime Minister instead of working for them.

Before I close, I have to come back to something the leader of the NDP said recently: "it is the people's time." I could not agree with him more on this. Why not give the people an election so they can be heard, because we work for the people? I do not know about the Bloc, the NDP and the Liberals, but I work for the people who sent me here. I do not work for the Prime Minister.

Every time they vote against a confidence motion, they are voting against the people and against giving them a say on the Liberal government. It is well past time to give the people their say and have a carbon tax election. It is the people's time. I for one dare the NDP leader to stand for a change, using his own words, instead of standing for the Liberals.

Canadians want a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Canada's common-sense Conservatives are ready to do that for them. We believe government should serve the people, not the other way around. Therefore I ask my friends in this place to start putting the pressure on the government and to vote in support of the motion. I do hope that the voices of Canadians will be heard, not just through my words but also through our collective voice as a Parliament.

● (1040)

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, imagine a member of Parliament who has spent 20 years of his life in this place repeating slogans like "build the homes", but the only plan he can come up with is a Nimbyism line for people to call for "not in my backyard". I am wondering how many homes that is going to build. The point is that if Conservatives want to go into an election, they have to show Canadians a plan. Five lines is not a plan. How many homes is a phone line going to build for Canadians?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I will remind the member that in 2015, when the then third party leader presented his complete platform, it was during the election campaign, at a press conference where he could not debate with other parliamentarians. We have been putting out exactly the direction that we believe the government should be going in.

The member talks about building homes. In my own home province, Kelowna proper has signed an agreement for the so-called housing accelerator fund. I have looked through the plan that the Liberal government and the housing minister have championed, and there is not one reference to building a home. It says bike lanes can be built; it says sewage or sewer facilities can be built to plug into housing, or even a bridge can be built. They are essentially giving more money to the people who are not building the homes. Housing starts in B.C. are down 34%.

How can the member stand up and say that the Liberals have any moral authority on housing?

[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I do not know whether I want to congratulate my colleague on his speech. I often begin my remarks by congratulating a colleague on their speech, but instead I would like to address a few of the things my colleague said. Two things in particular stood out to me. He denounced the carbon tax and criticized the Bloc Québécois for supporting the government.

Allow me to set the record straight. The Bloc Québécois is not supporting the government. The Bloc Québécois is simply refraining from bringing down the government. There is a difference. In fact, we all know that the government is nearing the end of its life and that, inevitably, there will be elections sooner or later.

What we are doing is taking advantage of this to make gains that will benefit Quebeckers, such as increasing old age security benefits for seniors aged 65 to 74. We propose to fund that by paying less carbon tax and by sending the oil companies a bit less money.

What does my colleague think about helping seniors by spending less money on oil and gas?

[English]

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, this is the most centralizing government in Canadian history. Bill C-11 has given more power to the CRTC over what is considered to be Canadian. That also includes content from Quebeckers. The member has essentially voted to give more power to Ottawa, to the bureaucracy, over people's on-line expression.

The Prime Minister has doubled the Canadian debt. That means Quebeckers will have to put more money each and every year to service that debt, to Ottawa, instead of to their own interests.

The member talks about a bill that the Bloc Québécois has put forward in regard to seniors. The Prime Minister has changed the way the Senate works. The government can get a royal recommendation from the Minister of Finance, but can it get through the Senate? I do not think so. It is like the equivalent of *Jack and the Beanstalk*; Bloc members are asking for some magic beans, and that is what the Liberal government will offer them, but they will not grow anything except bigger Ottawa.

• (1045)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, one of the things the member said in his speech was that the Liberal government is the worst government we have seen. There are lots of challenges, and I am going to be speaking

Business of Supply

about my challenges with the Liberal government later on today. However, from my perspective, the worst government this country has ever had was in fact the Harper Conservative government, which cut supports for women and cut supports for health care. It cut supports Canadians need.

What the member is saying as well is that Canadians overwhelmingly want a carbon tax election. However, polling that came out on September 6 to September 8 shows that, in fact, the majority of Canadians do not want a carbon tax election. How does he square that circle?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, the member is making the point that her leader made: It is the people's time. Her leader rips up an agreement and says how terrible the Liberal government was, as she also does here, but when it comes time to put rubber to the road, they stand with the Liberal government and the Liberal Prime Minister.

My constituents have asked that we get them off the track the government has put them on, and the NDP is certainly part of the problem. It is definitely not the solution. A common-sense Conservative party's leading this country is.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a little awkward that we are here again today, just a few hours after the House voted non-confidence in the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, but here we are. It is a little awkward because there is only one party in the House that does not want to work for Canadians.

Yesterday, after that vote of non-confidence in the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, the Conservatives moved to obstruct debate so that we could not get to a second confidence motion on the ways and means motion. I guess they would be embarrassed to have lost two of those votes in one day. It is the only reason that I can surmise for moving to obstruct the business of the House. Then again, we know that those in the Conservative Party of Canada, its leader and its members, are only here for their own personal political gain. Its members are not here because they actually want to work on behalf of Canadians.

Yesterday, we saw that there are three parties in the House that want to work for Canadians. They are the Liberal members of Parliament, the Bloc members of Parliament and the New Democratic members of Parliament, and they are all here to get work done for Canadians. That is unsurprising to me as we have seen, particularly since this leader has become the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, that he treats our democratic institutions as a joke. He does not take them seriously.

Business of Supply

What I have found interesting is that today, even though they are moving again for non-confidence in the government, there is not the pomp and ceremony. In fact, it feels a little deflated in here. It feels like those Conservative members of Parliament do not have that same energy because they lost that motion yesterday and they are doing it again today. It feels kind of sad and desperate. That is what it feels like to me.

Let us look at the Conservatives' record. When we listened to the speech from the Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday, when he moved that first motion, he asked that we look at his record. He asked that we judge him on his record. There is really only one thing of note that he has ever done when he was in government, and it was not a positive thing. He, when he was minister of democratic institutions, brought forward what was considered to be one of the worst bills when it comes to electoral changes in Canadian history. It was widely panned by experts. It was widely panned by anybody who cares about rights and democracy. The only thing that he was able to accomplish was to make it harder for 500,000 Canadians to vote.

If we want to look at his record, we can see that the only thing he was able to achieve was to limit and decrease the rights of Canadians. He talks about making Canada the freest country in the world, but the only thing he has ever done is to take people's freedoms away. That is not something that Canadians want in a Prime Minister, and it is certainly not something that they want in the Leader of the Opposition. We think about his record as he talks about housing, and it is really cute to hear them talk about housing because of his record as the minister of housing. I can actually count on two hands how many houses he built: one, two, three, four, five, six. There are six in total. That is the record he is putting forward.

Let us take him at his word and look at what his record is for Canadians. The other thing that he did, and he did not do this as a private member, is that he was the architect behind the Conservative plan, when they were in government, to put anti-union, anti-worker, anti-women and anti-abortion private members' bills in place. This is a typical Conservative tactic.

Yesterday in the House, the Leader of the Opposition said that he would not reopen the abortion debate, but then he kind of did a wink, wink and nudge, nudge because that is exactly what Mr. Harper did when he was Prime Minister. He had his members bring those forward as private members' bills, through the back door, so he could pretend that it was not the government that was doing it.

We see that the Leader of the Opposition speaks on one side to say that, no, he is not going to do this, but then he looks at the members of his party who are social conservatives and tells them not to worry, that they can go, all-expenses-paid, down to Florida to anti-abortion conferences to talk about how they are going to bring those American-style politics up to Canada, to limit a woman's right to choose and to limit their ability to access reproductive health care in this country. He says that he will tell everybody that he is not going to do it, but to not worry because they can do it through the back door.

• (1050)

This is the issue that we have when it comes to the Leader of the Opposition: He refuses to tell Canadians the whole truth.

Let me get back to housing because the member who was just speaking talked about the Conservatives' great housing plan. They talk about their great housing plan, but they are not going to provide any funding to municipalities until they build the houses. For anyone who knows how municipalities work, or how development and planning work, are they just going to have a whole bunch of empty houses with no roads to get there, no sewers to use and no electricity? Those development charges, the funding that funds all of the stuff that builds healthy neighbourhoods, are required to get those houses built. The vision that the Conservative leader of Canada is putting forward is a whole bunch of empty homes with nobody able to get there or use them because there will not be any of the necessary services.

He talks about cutting taxes, but taxes pay for the services and programs that we care about as Canadians. They pay for the health care we receive, the education our children receive and the child care our children go to. They pay for the roads, the public infrastructure and everything that makes this country great and gives Canadians a fair shot at success.

Over the past nine years, our government has ensured that people have a fair shot at success and that the Canadian dream is an equal playing field, so that income, family background or where people come from do not matter. All people have an opportunity to succeed because Liberals believe that is the Canadian dream. When we have a Leader of the Opposition who only talks about tearing down the institutions that we have in Canada, the very institutions that have made this country great, that is not leadership. That is not someone who believes in this country or who wants to build a prosperous, successful and equitable Canada where everybody has a chance at success.

Our government is very proud of the record it has had over the last nine years. The Canada child benefit lifted 650,000 children out of poverty. Let us compare that to what the Conservatives did. They had the UCCB, which sent \$100 a month to all parents, but it was all taxable. The Canada child benefit is tax-free. That is money in people's pockets that helps with the high costs of groceries, rent and raising a family.

When it comes to senior citizens, what is the record of the Leader of the Opposition? He was in a Conservative government that raised the age of retirement from 65 to 67. He was in a government that cut seniors' pensions. What have the Liberals done? The first thing we did was increase the guaranteed income supplement by 10%. We increased old age security for those 75 and over by 10%. We also increased the Canada pension plan for future seniors to make sure that everybody would have a dignified retirement in Canada. Our record speaks for itself.

Let us talk about workers' rights. The Leader of the Opposition is going around talking to workers saying that he supports them. He has one of the most anti-worker, anti-union records in Canadian history. He has done everything possible to try to bust unions, limit workers' rights and make sure they do not have the strength they need to continue to support labour rights in this country.

One of the first things we did when we came into office was to reverse those anti-labour laws that Stephen Harper and the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, who was the minister of employment at the time, put forward. His record speaks for itself. He is anti-union and anti-labour. He simply does not care about workers' rights. What Canadians see, when they hear him speaking, is that he only tells half the truth. He neglects the part of the story that does not fit the narrative he wants to put forward, and he is hiding his true agenda. He can tell workers he supports them, but let us look at the facts. Let us look at what he has actually delivered for Canadians workers, and it is anything but pro-union and anything but pro-worker.

• (1055)

Let us talk about the future of the country. Let us talk about the fight against climate change. This is one of the most existential threats that our country, and indeed the world, is facing. If we want to have a country where our children can prosper and grow, and where our grandchildren can prosper, we have to fight climate change. That means we have to have a comprehensive plan when it comes to the price on pollution, the work to do with industry partners and investments in clean technology. We have to have that whole picture because this is a whole-of-society fight that we need to engage in.

The Leader of the Opposition says that he will do things for climate change, but right now, all he has is imaginary ideas that nobody has ever tested. The fact of the matter is that, when he was in government, when Stephen Harper was Prime Minister, we had the worst climate record in the world. Canadians were ashamed of our actions on climate change when the Leader of the Opposition was in government.

We just received news that our climate plan is working. The equivalent of 60 million cars has been taken off the road in climate-emission reductions because of the work we have put forward. Now, let us talk about our international record. Last fall, I thought the House was going to unanimously pass the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. I thought that would be something that would go smoothly. Instead, we saw obstruction at every single turn, which was led by the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada.

Canada has stood strong with Ukraine against Russia's illegal occupation and war. Again, we saw obstruction at every moment from the Conservatives. This was apparently because there was something about a price on pollution in the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, which was an absolute red herring since Ukraine already had a price on pollution. This was simply an update. It was a wink and a nod to the people online who are supporting the Russian occupation. The Leader of the Opposition did not want to necessarily rock that boat because he is one of those people who goes down those conspiracy theory rabbit holes.

Business of Supply

He was absolutely against moving forward in support for Ukraine. Finally, he was shamed into doing so, but it took a very long time. It is shameful that he was trying to obstruct and obscure our standing alongside our allies. If we think about it, the very fact that he cannot even get allies in the House to support his little political games makes me wonder how in the world he is going to get allies around the world to support Canada's objectives moving forward.

The Leader of the Opposition takes this place for a joke. He takes Canadians for a joke. Canadians deserve more than that. They deserve more from their political leaders than to be treated as props and to be treated as symbols for political advancement.

On this side of the House, and indeed among the other political parties, the NDP, the Bloc Québécois and the Liberals, we are here to work for Canadians. We will continue to do that. We will continue to advance the important work of the House. The only question we have today is whether the Conservatives will stop playing their silly partisan games, get over these ideas of grandeur and, instead, actually work for Canadians. All we see today is the fact that the Conservatives are only here to work for themselves.

• (1100)

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member stated numerous times that they are very proud of the government's record.

The motion for today reads, in part, "That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history".

In my riding of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, crime is out of control. The government's bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, are directly responsible for that. It is like a hockey stick. We can see the crime going up exponentially. We have made a common rural town into a crime scene. Is the member very proud of that?

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, what I am really proud of is the fact that we banned military assault-style weapons. The Conservatives want to bring that back. I am also very proud that bail reform passed unanimously through the House. We have done what we need to do at the federal level.

The issues that the member is raising are questions that he should be raising with provincial governments, because it is their court system and bail system that we need to be questioning. However, I am not surprised by the fact that he does not know which level of government is responsible for certain things.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like ask my colleague a question.

Business of Supply

She said her government had helped seniors by increasing old age security for seniors 75 and over. I just want to remind her that it was her government that caused this injustice in the first place, this unacceptable inequity, this hole in the pension program, by creating two classes of seniors.

The reason we are talking about this bill so much today is that the Liberals themselves caused widespread dissatisfaction among seniors aged 65 to 74, who still feel completely forgotten by this government to this day.

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned, we are very proud of what we have done for seniors in Canada.

As I mentioned, one of the first things we did for Canada's most vulnerable seniors was to boost pensions by 10%. We observed a change among seniors aged 75 and over. It is tougher to make ends meet, costs are up and their savings have dwindled. That is what led us to take action.

We acted for an important reason, which is to help the most vulnerable in our society.

• (1105)

[English]

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the hon. government House leader spoke at length about pro-worker policy, pro-union policy, yet the government does not exactly have a pro-worker track record. I reference its use of section 107 in the Labour Code against the Teamsters. What that does is essentially force binding arbitration in the middle of negotiations. The effect that has on negotiations is that it provides no incentive for corporations, bosses and management to come to the table and effectively bargain.

We have grain workers at the table right now, GWU Local 333. Therefore, will the government House leader now go on the record and commit today that the Minister of Labour will not intervene on fair bargaining and good-faith negotiations and will never use section 107 when it comes to negotiations for workers?

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague for Hamilton Centre and I are neighbours. We can see each other's ridings from the Burlington Bay.

I appreciate the member's question, but I also think it is a bit unfair, given the fact that one of the first things this government did was overturn the anti-union legislation from the Harper Conservatives nine years ago. We have also put forward pay equity legislation, which is extraordinarily important, and, most recently, the anti-scab legislation as well.

We very much support workers' rights. We very much support the labour movement in Canada. We know how important it is to building a prosperous and equitable future.

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was fortunate to be elected by the people of Kitchener—Conestoga in 2019 and 2021 with a clear mandate to work together across party lines. The pandemic was an example of all parties working together very well to get us through. However, something changed when the current Conservative leader happened, and now, all of a sudden, there is obstruction at every step of the way, includ-

ing obstructing dental care, the national child care program and school food program. Other parties are still working together well, and we are making progress.

Could my colleague highlight some other examples of where the Conservatives seem to be obstructing, and how we and the other parties can still work together to ensure Canadians get the support they deserve?

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, what we have seen since the House returned a week ago is that the Conservatives have tried to obstruct the business of the House at every single opportunity. They are trying to create a narrative that this place cannot work, but in fact it is only the Conservative Party of Canada members who are putting forward obstruction motions in the chamber and at committee.

Parliamentarians in three other parties are here to work on behalf of Canadians. We know that Canadians want to see their political leaders working together. Unfortunately, that is not something the Conservatives do. They would rather take their ball and go home.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, there have been 47,000 overdose deaths since 2016. Overdose is the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18 in my province of British Columbia. Thousands upon thousands of forestry workers right across our country are out of work. There are mill closures, job losses and scandal after scandal. We have the most corrupt Prime Minister in the history of our country. It is a government that has spent more money than all governments combined in the history of our country.

Is this the record of which the House leader is so proud? There have been 47,000 overdose deaths since 2016. The leading cause of death in my province for youth aged 10 to 18 is overdose. There is corruption and scandal. Is this the record on which the House leader wants to stand?

• (1110)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I do want to remind the member. He attributed an adjective toward the Prime Minister that was not acceptable. Again, we are going into personal attacks and I would ask members not to do that.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, every member in the House is seized with the opioid tragedy and crisis. Our government has been working with provinces, municipalities and providers on the ground to try to stem the flow and to ensure we are supporting people who have addictions, but also to ensure we are preventing deaths. Unlike on the other side, we are not allowing ideology to dictate how we are moving forward. We are doing this based on science.

However, one more thing that is really important, Madam Speaker, if you will allow me, is that when he talks about—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I do want to allow for one more brief question.

The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, as government leader, my colleague must be in the know. I would like her to apprise me of the status of Bill C-234, because our Conservative colleagues have been yelling non-stop against the carbon tax.

Quite reasonably, an exemption was created in Bill C-234. I would like my colleague to tell me whether what I heard is true. It seems to me that so many speakers are being added that we will never be able to pass this bill.

Is it true? Could the vote happen soon?

Hon. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, clearly there is a party that is directing its senators in the other chamber, and that is the Conservative Party. All the other senators are independent, but there is only one party where the senators are directed, and that is in the Conservative Party.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before listening to the next speech, I would just like to remind members to ensure that their remarks are free of personal attacks, and that they speak instead about the motion or legislation before the House. I believe that things will run more smoothly in the House if people follow this guideline.

The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I think I was a bit hasty in phrasing my question to the leader of the government. We misunderstood one another, but I will come back to this in my speech. I would like her to listen to what I am going to say, and I would like to receive information on Bill C-234.

I would just add that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Saint-Jean.

Getting back to the motion before the House, I would like to start by saying that our Conservative colleagues are not being serious. They are mocking us today. I say that because, two days ago, they moved a non-confidence motion that said the House does not have confidence in the Prime Minister. That is all it said. Our response was that we found it interesting that they thought that. Let me reassure them. We do not trust anyone. We do not have confidence in the current government and we do not have confidence in any Conservative government. My job is to protect the interests of Quebec until we are independent. That is our job. We are trying to make progress every day. We will continue to do so, despite the Leader of the Opposition's ambitions and his propensity for stamping his feet. He really wants to be emperor, replacing the current emperor. We told them that it was not enough. We will vote on motions with some substance. Two days later, with more theatrics, they come up with the idea of including their slogan in the motion, thinking that we would definitely vote with them. How can anyone take them seriously?

I find it quite sad. I am not making personal attacks, I am talking about the content. As members know, I focus on content, and I want things to move forward. We tell them that it is not good enough and that we are going to vote for things that are important to Quebec. They come back with a motion saying it is time to “axe

the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime”, which they repeat to us *ad nauseam*, approximately 72 times a day, without ever explaining it. That is what I find interesting. I want to hear them explain what they are going to do.

They tell us in the motion that food has been taxed. I just spoke on Bill C-234, which deals with the carbon tax we keep hearing about. As we in the Bloc Québécois are reasonable people, we agreed to create an exemption for grain drying. The bill already went to the Senate and has come back to the House. All that remains is to vote on it. The first speech I made in the House last January dealt with this, but since then, people claiming to want to make life easier for farmers have been blocking the legislation. They are adding speakers to fill the time and they are not allowing us to vote on the bill. Once we vote on it, it will be settled, provided we accept the Senate amendments, of course. That is the reasonable, intelligent and rational choice that the Bloc team has made, because that is how we operate.

The Conservatives keep yelling at me that the government is taxing food, but I would like them to show me that they do not plan to do the same. Results do not matter to them. What they want is an election. They are scheming for power. Nothing else matters. All they want is to score political points, spout slogans, generate sound bites and rake in money. They are not working for the people.

They talk to us about housing. Many times I have heard government representatives say that the Leader of the Opposition, while serving as housing minister, created something like six affordable housing units. I must confess, I did not check this figure. We hear it often. There must be some truth to it, although we should exercise caution. Everything said in the House is not necessarily true. We have to be careful. There is no proof. We will be careful.

People talk to us about interference and a centralist government, but the opposition leader is directly threatening cities with funding cuts if he does not like the look of the mayor. That is quite something. We are hearing that if a mayor is incompetent, their funding will be cut. First of all, he has no right to do that in Quebec. That has to go through Quebec. There is more to it than that.

They might be angry because they received only 12% of the vote in LaSalle—Émard—Verdun. They are hot and bothered about getting a more positive vote, maybe. Even yesterday, members began saying that the Bloc Québécois was no longer party of the regions because we captured a Montreal riding. That is interesting. We in the Bloc work for everyone.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, we are indeed a party of and for the regions, but if my colleague wants to ask questions, he can do so after my speech. I will be pleased to answer. I have been speaking for five minutes already. It is crazy how fast it goes.

Business of Supply

• (1115)

We are here to make gains for Quebec. We have two conditions. We want our seniors to have a decent standard of living. There has been enough dilly-dallying. Seniors aged 65 to 74 need money just as much as seniors aged 75 and up. Let us not create new discrimination. Let us let them make a little more money before taxing them on that income.

The other big thing is the protection of supply management in future trade negotiations. That one is the easiest condition to meet because our bill is already before the Senate, which started working on it yesterday evening. We are very pleased about that, even though we have learned some rather troubling things. I want to point out that the bill is getting a lot of support from senators, but there is also some opposition. I think that we need to go talk to those people. We really need to put a rush on this. We need to move forward faster. The House passed this bill in June 2023 and now it is September 2024. I would have expected the Senate to examine this bill in September or October of 2023, but it seems as though it was set aside. It is a private member's bill, which means that it is less of a priority than government bills.

It is no ordinary private member's bill, however. It obtained official approval from the executive branch of the government via the minister of agriculture and agri-food at the time. It is a serious bill, and the government supports it. If it really supports it, it should support it in the Senate as well, yet that is not what we have seen until very recently. It is good that the subject was raised in the Senate yesterday. The committee chair wanted to reassure us by saying that they had other fish to fry, but now that they had started working on it, it would not take long. We want to believe them, and we are watching. The senators are aware of our deadline here, that is, the end of October. The bill needs to be studied. I do not expect every senator to vote in favour of it, but I expect the bill to be studied on the Senate floor. We are certain we can win the vote, because we got an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons with 262 votes for and 51 votes against. Even a majority of Conservatives voted in favour of the bill, despite all the obstruction. I want to point out that the bill is getting similar support in the Senate. I have people on my side.

Things need to move forward. Why do we need to move forward? Because it is not certain whether we will get another chance to protect supply management in the near future, and because more international negotiations are coming. Yesterday we heard several times that there will be a review of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA. Before reviewing CUSMA, can we clarify our mandates? There is a way of clarifying mandates. In terms of supply management, they did their part. It is almost 10% in every sector. It is even worse for milk at 18%. As someone I know well would say, that is enough, anything more will be untenable. That is what is happening, because people need to understand that supply management is a balancing act. Prices are controlled, market supply is controlled. To be able to do that, we need to control what is coming in from outside. With milk at 18%, that means one quart of milk out of every five will be coming from outside. It has not happened yet, but we are getting there gradually. It will be difficult to maintain a balance. More than that and it collapses. It will not work any more.

If people have no intention of protecting supply management, then they should be honest with the farmers and say so. They should uphold the value of the incredible system they put in place, that preserves family businesses, that preserves the vitality in each of our regions, that allows businesses to run, from the Gaspé to Abitibi and to Montérégie with the same transportation costs. The supply management system is so good, so effective. It provides a very stable ecosystem for all other agricultural production.

I could go on all day, as I am sure you know. Unfortunately, I have only a few seconds left. I have 15 seconds left to tell you that this needs to get moving. My message to my Conservative friends today, whose questions I am looking forward to answering, is let us be serious. Let us be serious and work on the issues. There is going to be an election, do not worry. Our decision not to trigger an election today is not made out of fear.

• (1120)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the member that he is to address his comments and questions through the Chair and not directly to the government or opposition members.

The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to our Bloc Québécois colleague's speech. I have a very simple question for him. I will start by reminding him that Quebec's head of state, François Legault, and his government have made it clear that they no longer have confidence in this Liberal government.

Who does the member think better represents Quebec's interests? The Government of Quebec, which was democratically elected by a majority, or the Bloc Québécois?

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. It is a very interesting one, and I have a lot to say about it.

When the Bloc Québécois says that we speak on behalf of Quebec, that means we champion the National Assembly's unanimous motions here in the House. We are waiting. If a unanimous motion is adopted to that effect, we will evaluate it. There is no such motion now, however.

Since we are talking about the Government of Quebec and respect for the Government of Quebec, I hope my colleague will take the time to answer a question. I hope she will give a speech later on in response to my question. As a former member of the Quebec government that joined the carbon exchange with California, what are her thoughts on the fact that she is now a member of a political party that wants to abolish pollution pricing in the rest of Canada? That would have a hugely detrimental effect on Quebec and put us at a disadvantage in this system.

Perhaps, as she reflects on that tonight, she will understand why we are separatists. It is time to get out of here.

Business of Supply

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague. I also have the good fortune to work with him on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Of course, I supported Bill C-282, as did our government. I am well aware that the Leader of the Opposition and his local riding association have twice raised the idea of getting rid of supply management with his political party. The possibility exists that the House leader of the official opposition could become the minister of foreign affairs. He once described Brexit as a good thing.

I would like my colleague to help me understand the political game that the Conservatives are playing at the expense of farmers, specifically when it comes to Bill C-234.

• (1125)

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and for his usual collaboration.

Indeed, this is something I find deeply disturbing. We are asked to refrain from making personal attacks and stick to debating content, so I will address the grain farmers of Canada. They should call Conservative members and ask them to move forward with a vote on Bill C-234 before the government is defeated, possibly at the end of October.

That is a good idea. They should call Conservative members and ask them why the House is not voting on Bill C-234. The bill has passed in the Senate. If the amendments are accepted, the bill will come into force almost automatically. Farmers would get the exemption right away. I strongly advise farmers to call Conservative members.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, while the Conservatives prefer to engage in divisive politics, this morning, I prefer to celebrate Canadians' hard work. I would like to offer my congratulations to the community of Timmins. It is a proud and vibrant community that is an essential part of Franco-Ontarian culture. Congratulations Timmins on the opening of the new La Ronde cultural centre.

I hope my colleagues will also lend their support to this project, which is so important for the francophone community.

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, that question does not really have anything to do with the subject we are debating, but the Bloc Québécois will always defend the French language. Obviously, we defend Quebec's interests first and foremost, but if it helps the rest of Canada as well, all the better.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am glad my colleague mentioned the Bloc Québécois, noting that we want to be the voice of all Quebecers, of the National Assembly, of any consensus in the National Assembly. In that same vein, I would like to ask a collegial question. One of our colleagues from the official opposition, the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, said that it does not matter that the Conservatives did not win the by-election, since it was in Montreal.

I would like to know what my colleague the member for Berthier—Maskinongé thinks of that statement. He did not get a chance to ask him.

Mr. Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I think it is unfortunate when people say things like that. We are less popular in certain regions. That is normal. However, we work for everyone and we always aim to convince everyone.

We are very pleased with the progress we made in Montreal. Our member is already hard at work, and the people in his riding will see the difference between a Bloc Québécois member who is on the ground and a minister who is not. I think they will re-elect him. I am very hopeful.

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to follow my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé, whom I greatly appreciate.

I would like to begin with a bit of background about when Parliament resumed. I will outline what has happened since we returned to the House. Hearing our explanation may help people better understand our reasons for voting for or against the motions moved by the Conservatives. My basic premise is that some people need to have things explained to them for a long time before they understand. I will explain things for as long as it takes.

This fall, at our caucus meetings before Parliament resumed, this was the approach we were taking. We were thinking that, for the first time in about two and a half years, the Bloc Québécois had the opportunity to capitalize on what should have been the norm for the past two and a half years, namely a true minority government.

The people decided that this would be a minority government. However, what we have seen is that it has acted like a majority government with the NDP's help, which means that the government in power did not reflect the will of the people for two and a half years. Today, after the surprise termination of the agreement at the end of the summer, things are back to normal, that is, we have a minority government that is obliged to negotiate with the other parties. The Bloc Québécois now holds the balance of power that had slipped through its fingers in recent years. However, that did not prevent us from making headway. The opposition parties play an important role in both minority and majority governments. We proved that with the bills we pushed through despite everything and which I will address a bit later.

We saw that we had the balance of power and that we had an opportunity we have not had in a while. We were not going to discard it the first chance we got. We decided to take the opportunity to get more for Quebec. In some cases, these gains will also benefit all Canadians, and I say good for them. The Bloc Québécois is not that chauvinistic.

That is why, yesterday, we set out specific goals we wish to achieve, explicit gains we want to make before a set deadline. Unlike the NDP, who tied its own hands for two and a half years, we do not intend to blindly support the government until fall 2025. We do not intend to remain uselessly patient and allow the government to refuse to make a decision for absolutely nothing when it comes to our demands.

Business of Supply

Our two main demands concern seniors and supply management. Our deadline for achieving our demands is the end of October, which is reasonable in both cases. It is reasonable in terms of content. The two bills in question are Bill C-319, which was introduced by my colleague for Shefford, and Bill C-282, which was introduced by my colleague for Montcalm and other members, including the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot and the member for Berthier—Maskinongé, who preceded me. These two bills have already made their way through the House. At worst they are the subject of a relative consensus and, in some cases, they received a large majority of votes.

Bill C-282, progressed so well that it made it to the Senate. We are therefore asking the government to perhaps make it easier, to ensure that there are no useless obstructions so that this bill can get to an irreversible point, as our leader mentioned. We want it to reach the point of no return by obtaining royal assent.

The same is true of the bill for seniors. The bill passed second reading. It was sent back to committee. The committee produced a report that received the unanimous support of the parties. There should not be any problem. This is an absolutely essential matter we are working on. This unanimity did not come out of thin air. It represents more purchasing power for seniors, regardless of their age, starting at age 65. It is the opposite of what the government was trying to do when it created two classes of seniors, when it created a difference between seniors age 65 to 74 and seniors age 75 and over.

Yesterday on *Téléjournal* we saw some statistics concerning seniors' needs.

• (1130)

It was reported that 59% of seniors aged 75 and over earn less than \$30,000 a year, which is not much. In the case of seniors aged 65 to 74, that proportion is 54%. Despite all that, until recently, the government was telling us that seniors aged 65 to 74 do not need as much money as seniors who are 75 and over and that this older group really needs help. As if the cost of living were not the same for both groups. As if groceries cost less when you get to age 75. As if there were an additional discount. As if prescription drugs were less expensive.

The Bloc Québécois could not make any sense out of this and decided it was time to put an end to the discrimination. The argument that one age group has fewer needs than the other does not hold water. That is evident when we look at who is getting the GIS, and we should note that anyone receiving the GIS cannot be that well off: 39% of seniors aged 75 and over are entitled to the GIS, while 29% of seniors aged 65 to 74 qualify to receive it. Our motion will make it possible to enhance the old age pension, the OAS, which will benefit many seniors who need it, despite the arguments we have been hearing from the government that these people are not a priority.

Our measures are reasonable, and so is our deadline. We said October 29, which gives the government almost five weeks to get these bills, which are already at a late stage, passed. In the meantime, we do not intend to lose this opportunity to make gains. That means, and this is no surprise, that we will be voting against today's

motion. I hope that the Conservatives understand why, if they are listening at all to what we are saying.

That is how we work. We take a logical approach. We work to make gains for our constituents. That is exactly what we are doing. If, like some people, we were only interested in ourselves, we might be satisfied with our victory in the riding of LaSalle—Émard—Verdun. We might be satisfied with the polls, which show we are in a pretty good position, and decide that, if we call an election right away, it will be good for the Bloc Québécois.

No, we chose to do what is good for Quebec, as we have always done and as we will continue to do. If, for example, we make gains and obtain results with Bill C-319 and Bill C-282, we will not let the government walk all over us by bartering support for interference, for example. We will not vote in favour of something that is bad for Quebec because we managed to achieve something good for Quebec. We will not change who we are in future votes. I hope that both the government and the Conservatives understand that. We are telling them our strategy for the future, in case they missed that. If it is good for Quebec, the Bloc Québécois votes for it. If it is bad for Quebec, the Bloc Québécois votes against it. That will never change.

When we are asked whether we have confidence in the government, the answer is that we do not trust the Liberals any more than we trust a potential Conservative government to look after Quebec's interests. It is a good thing that the Bloc Québécois is here, because the Conservatives and the Liberals are both the same. They both want to attack Bill 21, and neither have any lessons to give in terms of oil subsidies. When it comes to immigration, the war Quebec is waging may have begun with the Liberals, but we have no guarantees about what the Conservatives plan to do about another one of Quebec's demands, namely, the distribution of asylum seekers, since this is at a standstill with Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. What do those provinces have in common? They all have Conservative premiers. These are the same people who are unable to respond to Quebec's needs and who are saying that Quebec needs to figure things out itself.

When we are asked whether we have confidence, the answer is no. The only confidence we have is in ourselves and our ability to make gains. That is how we are going to operate moving forward. We are also not worried about an election. We are ready. If we need to campaign in the snow, then we will bundle up and do that. There is not much that scares the Bloc Québécois.

Business of Supply

• (1135)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, a few days ago, the leader of the Bloc Québécois said with bravado, the same bravado we saw from the leader of the NDP, that if the government does not get the bills passed sooner, the deadline for passing them is October 29.

How is the Bloc Québécois going to force an election without the NDP to back it up? Bloc members say they have no confidence in the Liberal government, but how are they going to do that?

Ms. Christine Normandin: Madam Speaker, what we have promised to do on October 29 is not to bring down the government, but to negotiate with the other parties to do so and succeed. We have said that we are prepared to withdraw our support from the government and begin discussions with the other parties, as we have done in the past when the time came to bring down a minority government. The parties did not just work in isolation, each in their own corner. They talked together.

We do not rely on the decisions of the other parties. Our commitment is to negotiate with the other parties in order to bring down the government. That is what we will do when October 29 comes around, if not a little sooner, if it looks like things are going off the rails or our requests are not moving forward.

• (1140)

[English]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I understand what the member opposite is saying.

[Translation]

I understand the Bloc Québécois strategy. It makes sense, even though I do not fully agree with it.

What does my colleague think of the Conservatives' strategy? They have already moved a non-confidence motion to bring down the government. That is clearly not the plan of the opposition parties. Why are the Conservatives using government time and resources to repeat this strategy?

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that unless they have the floor, they should not be speaking. It is something that we have been trying to reinforce here in the House, and it seems to be very difficult. I just want to remind members that if they wish to have the floor, then they should try to be recognized.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Saint-Jean.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Madam Speaker, there is an expression that has been wrongly attributed to Albert Einstein and that says insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. I will leave it at that.

I can see that the only thing the Conservative Party wants to do is replace another government. To us, that is not a winning solution in Quebec. Ultimately, it is six of one and half a dozen of the other. When I hear that replacing the government with the Conservatives

is what Quebec wants, I would say that is what the Quebec premier wants and he has painted himself into a corner. This is what Premier Legault wants. When we see what is happening in Quebec, there is anything but a consensus.

That is why we are saying that in the meantime, the Bloc Québécois is here to make gains. Then we shall see. I look forward to hearing the Conservatives explain their election platform. If they actually have more than slogans—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is all the time we have.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her speech today in the House, because despite the ridiculous motions that the Conservatives keep bringing forward, she has taken this moment to speak about issues that are important to Canadians. The member spoke about seniors and the support that we want to be giving to seniors.

For a very long time, New Democrats, like the Bloc, have been calling for the Liberal government to fix the problems, where they were not providing the same support with OAS to seniors from 65 to 74. I listened to the Liberals talk about how they had made a promise to fix OAS, but then when it came down to it, they skipped the 65 to 74 age category, which is super unfair. It does not cost seniors in that age category less.

Could the member explain why the Liberal government has made this choice, or—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I did ask for a brief question, and that was not quite brief.

I will ask for a brief response.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin: I do not know why the Liberals decided to try and justify this inequity, but the numbers speak for themselves. Seniors are no better off in one broad category than in another. The cost of living is the same. I thank my colleague and her party for their support on Bill C-319. I hope this will be part of the discussions we will be having around October 29, if this injustice is not corrected.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to split my time today with the incredible member for Timmins—James Bay.

Here we are again in the House of Commons debating one of the Conservatives' ridiculous motions that they bring forward time and time again. There are Canadians who are struggling to put food on the table, who are struggling to pay their rent or buy their first home and who are struggling in our country. Imagine what it must feel like for them to see the gamesmanship, the ridiculousness and the baffling behaviour of the Conservatives.

Business of Supply

On Tuesday, we had a debate just like this, and every single member of this House, except the Conservative members, voted non-confidence in the leader of the official opposition. We are doing it again. We will just keep doing it because the Conservatives seem to have no ideas, no suggestions, and no policies to bring forward to help Canadians. They want to have bumper stickers and slogans, and they want to waste our time in the House, when we really should be debating important legislation that could help Canadians right now.

I also want to point out the Conservatives are deeply unserious and they are misleading Canadians. I do not say this lightly: They are a danger to our democracy. They will not speak with media. I do not know if everybody knows, but they will not speak to the CBC and now they will not speak to CTV. Clearly, they do not recognize that media plays an important role in any democracy. Media is allowed to ask questions of the opposition, questions that they clearly do not want to answer. They would rather have their YouTube videos and their 30-second slots where they do not actually have to answer any difficult questions.

What is the Conservatives' actual policy? Do they believe in climate change? Are they homophobic? Are they anti-women? Will they take away women's rights to reproductive health? They do not want to answer those questions.

The member for Peace River—Westlock has come to this House and talked about the fact that he would take away rights for gay marriage and he would take away rights for women. Yesterday, we saw a disgusting display of homophobia from the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. That it is horrendous and he should be ashamed—

• (1145)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind hon. members to please be careful on how they are referencing events that have happened in the House. There was no decision made on that. The point of order was raised, nobody was identified. The response is forthcoming. I just want to remind members to please be careful. Again, on the personal attacks, I would rather individuals focus on the legislation itself.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I have seen a lot of degrading elements in the history of my time here, but I have never seen anything as ugly as what happened yesterday. The Speaker heard the anti-gay slur from the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. It is on the tape. I have heard the tape.

Is the Speaker telling us—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Sorry, I will cut the hon. member off.

As I have said, the Speaker did indicate he did not hear exactly who said it. He did hear the comment. Again, this is now becoming a debate on that particular situation that occurred. I think the debate should be on the motion.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I mentioned a while ago that if members continue to heckle and they are not respecting the will of the Chair, I will not be recognizing them

for questions and debate. I would ask members to please hold off on their comments and questions until they are recognized.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I appreciate the effort that you are making today. We are seeing aspersions and, quite frankly, lies coming from the other side, or misleading—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Even “misleading” is becoming problematic. It is how we use the word. Therefore, I would ask the member to raise the point of order that he wants to raise and not make personal attacks.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, you are doing yeoman service in the chair today. You are doing your very best to try to quell some of the activity that is going on in the House, and I applaud you for that.

Time and again, what we are seeing, from both the leader from the Liberals and in this speech, is a threat to democracy. I do not believe those comments are parliamentary; they should not be entered into the record.

I ask that you ask the hon. colleague who is speaking right now and the member for Timmins—James Bay to retract their comments.

• (1150)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, before I go on, I want to say that what has been happening in the House has related to most of the parties. It is time for members to be judicious and think twice before they speak. Please be respectful to one another. All members in the House are honourable.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, and for the Chair's consideration, there is video evidence now of the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, and there could be—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This is becoming a different debate. If hon. members want to rise and add to the other point of order, then that is a separate issue. Again, we should stick to the motion. As I said, the Speaker will be coming forth with a response on that. Everybody heard what the Speaker said yesterday, so I do not want to go on to that.

I have one more point of order from the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, the member for Cariboo—Prince George said that I lied. Is that okay, or will you ask him to retract that? I actually did hear the tape, so I know it was said. He sat beside the person who said it. Are you going to ask him to retract the word “lie”?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will get back to that in a minute.

The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach.

Business of Supply

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, Conservative members in this chamber are saying that members of the New Democratic Party are lying, when it is clear that the member for Edmonton Strathcona simply stated a series of facts that took place yesterday. I know those are facts because we all heard what was said in this chamber. I appreciate that the Speaker's office is now considering this, and we expect a quick and judicious response to what is extreme cowardice from the members on that side of the House, who cannot admit—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This is starting to snowball. As I indicated to members, there is a decision forthcoming.

First, I am going to ask the member for Edmonton Strathcona to withdraw her comment about the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, can you repeat that? You want me to withdraw the comment that the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan said something—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask her to please withdraw her reference to the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, fine, I will withdraw that, and I will—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I do not need an explanation.

I would ask the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George to withdraw the mention of lying.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, I withdraw it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Now I want the hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach to withdraw the use of the word “cowardice”.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, at what point, the Leader of the Opposition gets to say—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I ask the hon. member to withdraw so we can go on with the debate. That is all I am asking for. The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona is waiting to go on. Can the hon. member please withdraw?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I need to understand what comment was offensive. Is it offensive to say that a statement is cowardice?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I would ask the hon. member to please withdraw the comment.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I need to understand why this comment about a statement—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will not be recognized again until he withdraws the comment.

The hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I am very happy you have put your foot down on this. It is clear that there is a vexatious use of the Standing Orders here to interrupt what should be a legitimate de-

bate on a non-confidence motion. I hope the Speaker will continue to punish those who are utilizing the opportunity to come to their feet and to use a standing order to cast an allegation against another member.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate that you have demanded for people to withdraw their comments or to sit down, and I would support you doing that in the future. It should not be vexatious use of—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I thank the member for the additional information. This applies to all members in the House of Commons. It is very difficult for the House to get its work done when these situations arise. I would hope that this is a lesson for members and that they will be respectful to one another in the House.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona has the floor.

• (1155)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I would just like to very briefly say that, if somebody had said something horrendous and homophobic in this chamber, one would expect that hon. member to have the dignity and bravery to admit what they had done. One would expect them not to have cowardliness. I am not necessarily attributing this to any one person, but I am certainly saying they would probably be able to be much braver and admit they had done that, particularly as it is on film and there are tape recordings of it.

I will now continue with my speech on why this motion and this day, frankly, are so embarrassing. We need to be working to make sure there are things happening for Canadians, that the things Canadians need to make their lives more affordable, easier and better are being done. That is our job in the House. It is what we do here.

Of course I am extraordinarily proud of the way New Democrats were able to push the Liberal government to bring things such as dental care forward. Hundreds of thousands of people across this country will benefit from dental care; I see this as one of the wonderful things that have happened in this Parliament. That the NDP was finally able to get the government to move on pharmacare is important. These are important pieces of legislation, things that will help Canadians across the country. They will help seniors and children, and I am very proud of that.

The reason I will not be supporting this ridiculous motion, or the next five ridiculous motions I assume Conservatives will bring forward, which will be exactly the same as this one, is that the Conservatives are so dangerous for Canadians. I was not in politics when Stephen Harper's government was in power. I was not a parliamentarian then, but I saw the way Stephen Harper cut supports for women and defunded women's organizations. We know the Conservatives will cut supports for women.

There are members on their bench who, time and time again, have been clear. It is not just the member for Peace River—Westlock but also the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands and the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. They do not believe in a woman's right to choose, and they will try to take away a woman's right to reproductive health care. We have seen it happen before, and they will do it internationally as well. We know they will cut health care.

Business of Supply

I live in Alberta, where Danielle Smith is dismantling our cherished health care system.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, it is shocking to me that there are members from Alberta heckling me right now. They do not understand that 58% of doctors in Alberta have said they are going to leave their practices because of the current provincial Conservative government. The cuts to health care are fundamental, and we cannot allow a Conservative government to take away those things that are vitally important for so many people.

Conservatives have made it very clear that they will cut dental care, pharmacare and health care. I want to talk a little about pensions. The CPP is rated the number one pension in the world. Currently, Danielle Smith is trying to take Alberta out of that pension, despite the fact that there is little support for that in Alberta. The overwhelming message that Albertans are giving their elected leaders is that they do not want Danielle Smith messing around with their pensions.

Right now, in this country, protecting our pension would require the government to implement a private member's bill. I have drafted such a bill, put it on the Order Paper and even sent it to the Deputy Prime Minister and said she could have it. The government could copy our homework again; they should just do it to protect pensions. We are seeing an attack on pensions. If the Conservative Party becomes government, we know it will cut the pensions our seniors depend on.

Members should not get me wrong. The Liberals have failed to live up to their obligations to seniors. We have talked about how terrible it is that they have a two-tiered system of OAS, where seniors between 65 and 74 are not given the same support as other seniors.

• (1200)

At a moment when the cost of living is going through the roof, seniors are struggling to pay for rent and for all of their needs, including food and health care. However, the Liberals somehow believe that, in some magical universe, seniors aged 65 to 74 pay less for that. They promised Canadians that they would fix that, and fixing it halfway is exactly why Canadians are tired of the Liberal government. It is one thing to say something; it is another thing to do it halfway. Frankly, these are some of my concerns.

I am also the foreign affairs critic. I want to say that, when I think of the Conservatives, I am deeply worried about their waning support for Ukraine. At this time, Ukrainians need all of us to be working together to support them. What we have seen from some members of the Conservative Party is that they are willing to turn their back on our ally. That could be because of the Russian misinformation that we know is happening; some Conservative social media people have been clearly identified as being in the pocket of Putin and the Russian Federation. Frankly, I know many of those things have been shared by some members of the Conservative Party.

I worry about some things that we have seen and heard from the member for St. Albert—Edmonton. He says that he accidentally

seems to end up in front of Nazi flags. He accidentally ends up at dinners with people who are assaulting the members of my party. He accidentally ends up having conversations with an awful lot of people. It seems strange that no one else accidentally has those things happen to them—

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, you clearly set out rules of the House and tried to enforce them earlier on. You had this member withdraw a previous comment. She has just put into the record that members of this caucus are in the pocket of Putin, the Russian president. That is completely false.

Madam Speaker, I ask for you to have the member of Parliament withdraw that comment.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I did not hear that comment directly as I was speaking to the Clerk on a previous matter. For the particular point of order that the hon. member just raised, I will have to go back and listen to Hansard and come back to the House if need be.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I want to add something for your reflection on that; I would like you to give it serious consideration before making a ruling.

Madam Speaker, please consider all sides of this and the fact that many members on the other side will use such words as “corrupt”. Although we are offended by the word “corrupt”, it has still been considered acceptable. I would encourage you to consider all of this when weighing that, Madam Speaker.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Whether it is the word “corrupt” or anything else, I ask members to be very careful and try not to use those words. Even if the word is used and acceptable in a certain way, sometimes it is the way that it is used in context.

No matter what, as soon as it brings out a reaction and causes disorder, it is really not acceptable. If members were to stop using those words, we would be in a better place today and our House here would be more functional.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I just want to clarify something. You said that the word can be used, but if it gets a reaction, then it is unacceptable. Does the Speaker say it is unacceptable every time the Conservatives shout us down? If that is the case, then we will have to use the same tactics for the language that they throw around against our leader and the Prime Minister.

Madam Speaker, you need to be very clear. If we have to withdraw because Conservatives get upset, then that needs to be clear; we will understand that this is the way the House operates, and we will operate accordingly.

Business of Supply

• (1205)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate these points of order. Everything is being taken into consideration. There is much discussion being had. I know that the Speaker's office is also working very closely with all the Speakers. I would just ask for your co-operation in following the rules of the House to ensure that we can continue our debates in a healthy fashion.

The hon member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I will finish today by saying that New Democrats come to Ottawa to get help for our constituents, to get help for Canadians. That is the job we do. I am proud of our team and what we have been able to get for workers, seniors, people living with disabilities and children in this country.

We will continue to come here every day to try to make the lives of our constituents and all Canadians better. We will continue in that fight. We will not take any lessons from a party that uses bumper stickers as policies, a party that has shown itself to be deeply unserious and misleading toward Canadians and, frankly, a party that is very dangerous for our democracy.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague talked about pensions. Recently, the Prime Minister announced that Mark Carney, who is the chair of the multinational, mega investment company Brookfield, would be acting as the government's chief economic adviser, and he has not registered as a lobbyist. Investors for Paris Compliance published a report on Brookfield, and it highlights that the company does not account for up to 92% of its greenhouse gas emissions. Also, The Logic recently reported that Brookfield has started talks with the federal government and Canadian pension funds about pooling resources.

My colleague expressed concerns about pensions. Does she feel that it is inappropriate for Mr. Carney to be acting in this way given the potential impact on Canadian pensions? Should Mr. Carney be registered as a lobbyist?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, my colleague and I share a love for Alberta and a desire to fight for Albertans.

What she brought up is an important issue, and we have seen time and time again that the Liberal government lacks clarity in how to act in a moral manner. However, from my perspective, why was she not interested in bringing that issue forward as a motion for us to debate in the House? The Conservative Party could have brought anything forward to talk about today. We could have had a debate on protecting Canadians' pensions and making sure that the Liberal government is not once again selecting its friends to give benefits. I could have gotten behind that and would have enjoyed debating it in the House today.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech today, particularly the beginning part of it where she spent a lot of time talking about the incredible programs that have been brought forward during this session of Parliament. However, I cannot help but reflect on the fact that the Liberals and the NDP had a really good working relationship and were able to bring stuff forward together.

Now that we are in the position of not knowing when an election will be, the Conservatives will keep bringing forward these motions because they understand that there is no supply and confidence agreement anymore. I am interested in hearing my colleague's perspective on why it was so incredibly important for the NDP to back away from an agreement that had been working so well up to that point.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I can imagine the Liberals are quite upset that we broke an agreement with them, but frankly, right now we are disappointed in so many of the things that the Liberal government has done.

Let me be clear. I am not interested in supporting the Conservatives in any possible way, but when I look at the Canada disability benefit, with the laughable small amount that the Liberals brought forward for it; when I look at OAS and their failure to meet the needs of seniors in this country; and when I look at the way they have failed time and time again to meet the truth and reconciliation that this country is required to do, those are huge issues. Then, to top it all off, when I look at their foreign affairs failures, with their lack of clarity and lack of courage in recognizing the state of Palestine, it has become incredibly difficult for us to continue to support them.

They can continue to earn our vote. That is fine. However, we are done working with them.

• (1210)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I know my colleague has a keen interest in women's issues. Since she also talked about pensions, I will try to combine the two issues.

How can restoring equity between seniors aged 65 to 74 and those aged 75 and over also benefit women, who are often senior women disproportionately affected by insecurity?

How would putting an end to this unacceptable inequity created by the government help senior women?

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for being a strong advocate for women in this Parliament.

It is true that the impact of not adequately providing the OAS disproportionately falls on women. Women typically live longer. Women typically do not have as strong a pension because maybe they stayed home to care for their families. That is the reality. We need to make sure we are doing everything we can to protect all seniors, particularly recognizing that senior women are more vulnerable.

Business of Supply

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, as always, it is a great honour to rise in this House, although I have found in my 20 years here that the House has sometimes not lived up to its standards of credibility. People expect us to come here to be their voice, a voice that brings some kind of hope and direction, and I do not see that here most days. Most days, it has become a very dumbed-down and vicious affair.

Today, the Leader of the Opposition is once again demanding an election. We have not really seen much from him, except that he wants the election right now. Yesterday, he wanted an election right then, and the House voted non-confidence in him because there is no trust in the Conservative leader. This is because we have such serious issues facing us as a nation and as a planet, and the Leader of the Opposition is not a serious leader for dealing with them.

We could be here talking this morning about the homeless crisis, which is a devastating crisis. We know that the Liberals have failed multiple times on their housing plans, but what is the plan of the Leader of the Opposition, who lives very well in a 19-room mansion at Stornoway with his own private chef? He attacks municipalities. He ridicules our mayors. When he comes to northern Ontario, he does not bother to meet with any of the frontline people who are trying to solve the housing crisis. He says he is going to go after them and calls them gatekeepers. That is not a plan; that is a slogan.

We talk about the rising use of food banks. The Conservatives wipe crocodile tears every time they talk about hungry children, yet they voted against a national nutrition plan for schools. The New Democrats pushed the government to address and fill the gaps, but the Leader of the Opposition, who has his own private chef, seems to be out of touch with that.

A huge opioid crisis is devastating our communities. What did the Conservative leader and his MPs do? They viciously attacked medical doctors and frontline nurses, to the point that doctors trying to keep people alive have faced death threats. That is not acceptable. It is not acceptable that MPs face death threats from the mob, whom I see Conservatives patting on the back every day. There are people threatening and attacking indigenous MPs, attacking women MPs and attacking racialized MPs, but to attack and threaten medical doctors is not what a leader does. Those are the tactics of the Leader of the Opposition, and he wonders why we do not have confidence in him running our country.

We have a number of huge international crises. With the situation in Lebanon and Gaza, a humanitarian disaster is unfolding, yet the member for Edmonton Manning had nothing to say about the threats facing Lebanese Canadians and the Lebanese people. He had nothing to say about it because if those in the Conservative caucus do not repeat talking points, they do not get a gold star and they sit on the backbench. That is not leadership. We are all brought here to represent our communities. In Edmonton Manning, the Lebanese community is living in terror from the Israeli air assaults, and the member says nothing because he wants to get the gold star from his leader, who lives in the big mansion in Stornoway, by repeating and repeating the same dumbed-down slogans. People's lives are at risk. We are watching—

• (1215)

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I think the hon. member should read the tweet from the member for Edmonton Manning, because he did do something about it yesterday. The member is spreading misinformation and disinformation in the House.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I invite the member for Edmonton Manning to come into the House and say it. I do not read his Twitter feed. Who does? Not many do, but I know they read mine.

This shows the lack of seriousness about a horrific humanitarian disaster, the genocide happening in Gaza, with people dying, the targeting of medical doctors, the targeting of civilians and the targeting of journalists. This is something we in the House would deal with, but what we have learned from the Leader of the Opposition is that he has no interest in standing on the international stage. He ridicules the Prime Minister for staying at an expensive hotel. Well, he is the leader of a G7 country. I guess the Super 8 was booked the weekend he went to London. The Leader of the Opposition has to show a vision, but he does not have a vision; he has division.

The opposition could have brought in a motion today on the crisis we are facing in our medical system, but the Leader of the Opposition has no vision on that; he has bumper sticker slogans. His great favourite words are “radical” and “extremist”, and he is now saying that providing diabetes medication to people who need it is a radical idea. No, that is just plain human decency. That is what we should doing in Canada, but decency is not part of this leader's mantra.

What we have is a Conservative leader who has taken the fears and uncertainties of Canadians and pushed them down into dumbed-down slogans, which he has insisted that every member on his team repeat. I have been 20 years in the House and have never seen so many members reduced to caricature rhyming schemes. It is like a toxic Dr. Seuss, and the Conservatives repeat them again and again: “I don't like green eggs and ham. I don't like them, Sam-I-am. I don't like the carbon tax.” That is not leadership.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I got a laugh out of them. They smiled and woke up because they are used to hearing these dumbed-down slogans. That is not leadership.

Why is the Leader of the Opposition, whom I have known for 20 years and I feel is fundamentally unfit for public leadership in any capacity, is so desperate to call an election now? There are a number of reasons, and I think he does not want to be questioned about them because he has incredibly thin skin.

Members will notice that to the Leader of the Opposition, it is carbon tax, carbon tax, carbon tax. Well, Ken Boessenkool, who is a long-time Conservative, said that he is not serious about the carbon tax: “I just don't see any government in any future getting rid of that”. He also said:

Business of Supply

Look, there's a huge gap between what Conservatives say and what Conservatives do. And I hate to admit this, but it's true. Jason Kenney ran on "Axe The Tax" and he beefed up the industrial carbon price in Alberta. Danielle Smith ran on "Axe to Tax" and she not only beefed up the industrial carbon price in Alberta, she said she was going to go to \$170 (a tonne).

When we asked the Conservative leader, who lives in the mansion at Stornoway, what his view of the industrial carbon tax was, he said that it did not exist. He does not like to be questioned. No wonder he is so mad at CTV. No wonder he is so mad at CBC. No wonder he attacks Global TV. He does not want the questions. He is trying to stay ahead, which is why he wants to force an election.

I think it is really important to point out that with the foreign interference inquiry, documents have been tabled that say Erin O'Toole believes he was taken down as leader of the Conservative Party by foreign interference. That was in the documents. We know that many in the cabal over there supported the takedown of Erin O'Toole, and the one who benefited is the man now living in Stornoway. Why is he is not willing to be in the House to answer questions about foreign interference in his caucus? Maybe that is why he is trying to force this election. These are really important questions.

Of course, I think the other reason the Leader of the Opposition is trying to force an election is to stay ahead of the extremists in his caucus. The member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands went down to Florida to vow that he would end the right of women to make choices for their bodies, while we see in the United States women dying in parking lots from bleeding to death internally because they are unable to get a proper abortion. This is what the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands would say. We know the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan brought, on the Canadian dime, a legislator from Uganda who called for the death penalty for gay people. Let us stop and think about that. The member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan had Canadians pay to bring someone here who wanted to bring the death penalty to gay people. That is his caucus.

• (1220)

Therefore, when we see degrading and debased behaviour in this House, and these really ugly slurs against the Prime Minister of the country, and not one Conservative will stand up and admit they were the one who said it, it is because they hide behind their hate machine. However, we see them. We have it on tape, we see the footage and we know those who are making the hate. We know that people like the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan can only get away with it as long as the light is not shone on them, and we will continue to shine that light.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind members that referencing something that has not been determined, that is still questionable, may not be the right avenue.

I do want to come back to the points of order that were raised earlier. Can I go to the point of order here and then go back to the hon. member?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I just raised an issue that happened. That is all. We know it happened because it is on the tape. If you, Madam Speaker, are saying I cannot

even mention that an event happened, that is taking it one step too far, I would humbly—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): What I indicated was that when the Speaker was here, he indicated that he was not sure who had said what and that they would be reviewing the tape and we would come back to the House. Therefore, I just want to ask members to please wait until that decision comes back. There were two other points raised that I want to address.

The first one was from the hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach, and I am glad that I am able to come back to that. Sometimes, I cannot hear everything perfectly at this end of the House, and I do not think that all Chairs can either, but what was said was, "We are expecting a quick and judicious response to what is extreme cowardice from...that side of the House." After reviewing this and after discussion, we recognize that this is not directed directly to any particular party. The member said "that side of the House". Therefore, I want to indicate that the hon. member will be able to speak. I am not going to ask him to withdraw the comment, but I do want to ask members to please be careful with respect to how they say things because it does create quite a difficult situation. Again, we are all hon. members and we should all be conducting ourselves according to what is expected of us.

There was another point of order, which was raised by the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George, about what the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona had indicated. After reviewing the footage on that, I do not see an issue with what was said. It was not directed at members here. The member for Edmonton Strathcona specifically said, "Conservative social media people...identified as being in the pocket of Putin", so it was not referencing individuals here in the House.

Again, I want to ask members to please be careful with respect to how things are said. Sometimes, they are misunderstood or misconstrued.

The hon. deputy government House leader has a point of order.

• (1225)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for so quickly coming back to the House to address these points. I appreciate the very quick response.

I would ask that similar consideration be given to the member for Etobicoke Centre, who has not been able to speak in this House for six or seven months as a result of a very similar statement to what you, Madam Speaker, just ruled on. That member was not even given the reconsideration that you have now come back and given so quickly to an event that happened moments ago. I would encourage the Speaker and the occupants of the chair to give that same consideration to the member for Etobicoke Centre because he deserves that as well.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate the hon. member's raising this point of order. We will come back to the House if need be.

Business of Supply

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, we see a government that is proud of its record.

Over two million Canadians are using a food bank each month. More and more homeless encampments are creeping up in communities all across our country, with over 1,800 homeless encampments in this province alone. Homeless encampments are cropping up on the sides of freeways and highways in my province of British Columbia. Over 47,000 Canadians have died since 2016 due to overdose. I will say it again: Overdose is the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18 in my province. Thousands upon thousands of forestry workers are out of work due to this government's inability to get a softwood lumber agreement. There are mill closures all across our country. There is scandal and corruption.

I ask our hon. colleague if this is really a government that is proud of that record. That is the record of the current government. That is the truth, and I ask my hon. colleague if it is a record to be proud of. I am just puzzled by it.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, certainly I am not here to defend the Liberal government. What I am asked today is to vote on whether or not the opposition is credible, and I would like to ask that hon. member why he and his colleagues targeted a medical doctor on the front lines of the opioid crisis who received death threats. If the member is concerned about the lack of food for children, why did he vote against funding for a national school food program? If he is worried about the mental health crisis, why did he come into the House and vote against the suicide hotline?

These are questions we need to ask, because it is about the confidence that we would have in him as a minister. He is not willing to stand up on these issues, yet he stands up and uses the homeless population and uses the opioid crisis as people are dying, and then he votes obediently to shut down all those programs and target the doctors and the nurses who are trying to keep people alive.

What person would ever have confidence if that person was a minister? My gut feeling is that he is not going to be, so we are not going to have to worry. It is all hypothetical.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, to my hon. friend from Timmins—James Bay, I am very grateful for his participation in this House, and I know I am not the only one who is going to miss him because he has chosen not to run for re-election.

His speech started to really try to drill down on why it is that the official opposition wants an election now. As a British Columbian, I sent out an email far and wide asking constituents how they thought I should vote on the non-confidence motion. Of course, all of my constituents are in a provincial election right now. I did not get a single person, which is unusual, saying to please vote with the Conservatives. I do not have a lot of constituents who want our current Prime Minister to stay on, but I do have a lot of constituents who think, "What? We are having an election right now."

One of the things that occurred to me, and I will ask the hon. member, because he has spoken of foreign interference, is that perhaps the leader of the official opposition wants to avoid any questions as to why he does not seek top secret security clearance. I

think we need to ask him to do so, so there is not a lingering question about whether he is worried he would not get it.

• (1230)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that that my hon. colleague the leader of the Green Party is going to miss me. I know the people who are going to miss me the most are the Conservatives, because they are not used to anyone telling the truth. In their caucus, they get fed slogans, so they appreciate someone who can actually talk about facts.

To speak facts, I would like to respond that we have, in the Conservative leader, the only leader in the history of this country who either cannot or will not get security clearance. What does it say about confidence in being a national or international leader, when he came in the middle of the night and voted against Ukraine, voted against support for the Canadian military mission to Ukraine, and stood up and voted against Ukrainian support?

We now know, according to documents that have been filed, that Erin O'Toole, whom I respected, believes he was taken down by foreign interference. Who did that benefit? It benefited the guy who is living in the 19-room mansion, Stornoway. He needs to answer that question. Why is he not here to explain his role in taking down Erin O'Toole? I ask him to stand up and stop hiding behind the desk.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the House. I am always conscious of the honour that people have bestowed upon us by choosing us to represent them. We must take the people's grievances and aspirations to heart and champion them by all the means available to us in the House.

I would like to note that I will be sharing my time with my wonderful colleague from Oxford. I will read the motion first, because it is very important:

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history [and that ought to get the Bloc Québécois's attention] the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

This is far from a frivolous, much less capricious, motion or claim by the Conservatives. We are all hands-on people who spend a lot of time in our ridings. We spent the summer criss-crossing our constituencies. Quite frankly, if members of the other parties contradict what I am going to say today, it just shows that they are not hands-on people, that they are out of touch. Almost everyone I met seemed to feel that this government's day is done. The Liberal government may not be happy to hear it, but even long-time Liberals are telling me that enough is enough and that we really need a change of government.

Business of Supply

Why do we need a change of government? It is because Canada is no longer the country we have known since its foundation. It is no longer the Canada where dreams are possible, where a couple or a small family can build a home, or where having children, feeding them well and ensuring their well-being and growth is easy, like it was for so many years until now.

Is it right that, today, two million Canadians are using food banks? Is it right that there is so much homelessness in a country as rich as Canada? How can people just pretend that these problems do not exist and say that the Conservatives are being ridiculous with their motion to bring down the government? Things need to change. They have been like this for nine years, and there is nothing that shows me that keeping the Liberals in office longer is going to fix things.

The Conservative leader has been hammering this home for months. He has been voicing the distress of Canadians and Quebecers. Unlike what various members of the House have suggested, we have outlined the broad strokes of what we want to do, particularly in terms of housing and of getting our fiscal house in order. To support my position and to make sure that everyone knows why we moved this motion, I want to remind the House of a few very important facts that will bring home the reality that we are facing.

Let us talk about the budget. The Liberals have increased the number of public servants by 40% since they took office. There are an extra 100,000 people on the government payroll. Do members recall what was happening last year at Service Canada offices? People who needed passports and other federal government services were lined up out the door and camping outside Service Canada offices. That is not even to mention immigration and the endless delays there.

• (1235)

The debt has increased so much that it has actually doubled since the Liberals took office. Debt charges are now at an all-time high. They cost more than health transfers. They are equal to the amount Canadians pay in GST.

Inflation has reached a level beyond anything we have seen in the past 40 years. Everyone knows it. Everyone is aware. Everyone is experiencing it every day. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or OECD, a serious institution, Canada's economic growth is projected to be the worst of all member countries over the next three decades—not the next three years, but the next three decades.

This Liberal Prime Minister has personally increased the debt more than all prime ministers on that side combined. Need I remind the House that, since 2015, nine years ago, the Liberal government has not balanced the budget even once? No father or mother, and certainly no single mother, would ever manage their household budget so irresponsibly. We are the trustees of the public purse. We are entrusted with public finances, taxpayers' money, to use it intelligently. Over the past few years, since 2015, the Liberal government has not balanced a single budget. It has run deficits every year.

No one here thinks that there was no need for any effort to be made during COVID-19. That is not what we are talking about. Before COVID-19, our economy was flourishing, things were going well. The government said it would run small deficits, but that it would not matter. The Liberals made a lot of promises that they never kept, especially when it came to housing. The Liberals promised us housing. Does anyone how many homes will have to be built between now and 2030 to meet all of Canada's housing needs? A whopping 8.5 million. The cost of housing has doubled, rents have doubled, mortgages have doubled. There is not one young person left who can afford to buy a house. Young people can barely afford a two-bedroom apartment.

I will remind members of what the leader of the Bloc Québécois said recently about the federal Liberal Party. He said, "The government has two choices then. It can hold off on its aggressive centralization agenda, its abuse of the fiscal imbalance and abuse of spending power until the end of its mandate, which would normally run until late 2025, or it can call an election now to try to obtain that type of mandate, which I strongly doubt that Quebec will consider."

That was on May 23, 2024. The leader of the Bloc Québécois rose in the House to speak on behalf of his party. Today, the Bloc leader is so filled with hubris he reminds us of Louis XIV, who used to say, "I am the state". He is telling us that things will no longer work like before and that the Bloc Québécois will not support the Conservatives.

I do not have enough time to thoroughly demonstrate this government's negligence, as I wanted to do. The Premier of Quebec, who is the head of the Quebec government and who represents all Quebecers, says that he no longer has confidence in the government. Everyone knows that this is the most centralizing government ever. The Bloc Québécois voted against our motion last Tuesday. Then they unabashedly say that they will not vote for our motion next week. What country are they living in? They are living in Canada, where children are hurting and where people cannot find housing. It is high time that we got a new government.

• (1240)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member criticized the Liberal government quite a bit for its deficit budgets and she implied that the Conservatives could fix that.

Could the member inform the House as to how many balanced budgets Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper brought in and tabled in the House. If she does not know, I can answer for her. It was a grand total, between both prime ministers in 16 years, was a total of three balanced budgets. Two were actually on the heels of Paul Martin's surplus, and the other one, the one they called balanced in 2015, was done on the backs of veterans and selling shares of GM at bargain prices.

I wonder if the member could inform the House as to how many other balanced budgets she remembers the Conservatives introducing here.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, as the saying goes, people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. If I were him, I would not be rising in the House to ask questions about their ability to manage Canada's budget. I would not do that if I were him.

They are incompetent. Quebeckers are asking us about it. In Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, people are telling me that this government has to be defeated, that they cannot take anymore. People are broke.

What we propose is to put money in their pockets and end the waste. People are fed up with seeing \$21 billion sent to outside firms or another 100,000 public servants hired to deliver the same level of service.

We will have a new government soon.

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis looks really mad right now. Based on what she is saying, one might think the Bloc Québécois is in power. Maybe she is mad because she can see that we have a bit of power and that we are trying to use that balance of power to do good things for Quebec.

In her speech, she talked about housing. She also said that they would be less centralizing than the Liberals. I have my doubts about that. Housing seemed so important to them, but the Conservatives do not invest in it. Historically, they have not invested in social housing. Still, my colleague says it is a priority. Their leader sure says it is a priority. He says that it is a priority and that he basically intends to take over from mayors and tell them how to do their job. I find it strange that the leader of a non-centralist government would go around insulting all these mayors and telling them that he is the one who will decide how cities do things.

At the very least, would my colleague be willing to give us a list of the incompetent mayors they want to replace?

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, there is another one who should not throw stones.

The Government of Quebec says it no longer has confidence in this government, but the member is pretending not to hear it because his leader suddenly realized that he may now hold the balance of power. That has him a bit excited. He says they are going to stay put and keep the government in place.

I remember the Harper government, when I was minister in Quebec. He respected Quebec. He had an asymmetrical agreement with Quebec on health. My colleague should go back to his history books because he does not know the history of Quebec.

• (1245)

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the question today is really a confidence vote on whether the Leader of the Opposition should be trusted. I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question about values, Quebec values and Canadian values. How does she feel about one of her colleagues using taxpayer money to bring a legislator to Canada to testify, a legislator who called for the death penalty for gay people in Uganda? The

member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan was supporting a legislator who believed in the death penalty for gay people. How does she feel about having those values in her caucus?

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to fall into that trap. There is one more person who should not throw stones.

Roughly four or five weeks ago, his party tore up the agreement with the Liberals. It was all for show. In the House, his colleague tells us that the Conservatives are ridiculous for wanting to trigger an election. They are the ones who tore up the agreement and put the Liberal government on shaky ground.

Who here is the most ridiculous?

[English]

Mr. Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a tough act to follow after a great intervention from my colleague from Quebec.

As a proud son of immigrants, I have seen that struggle at home personally. My parents chose Canada about 40 years ago. They came to this country a blue-collar, working-class family with not much in their pockets. My dad worked at the same factory for about 30 years. Growing up, I did not get a chance to see him at home. He would leave at two in the morning and he would come back at 8 p.m.

As a young father myself, I understand now how hard that sacrifice is. He made that sacrifice for me, for that next generation, because Canada had a promise that if people worked hard and played by the rules, they could achieve that Canadian dream, that dream of home ownership, of buying a decent home in a safe neighbourhood, of going on a vacation once in a while.

That sacrifice my dad made, Canadians are making that every day. They are working harder and harder in the hope that the next generation will do better than the previous. Sadly, after nine years of the Liberal-NDP government, we are starting to see that hope slip away. That Canadian dream, that Canadian promise that so many have fought hard for, is starting to leave our country.

We have the worst economic crisis in my lifetime, in the last 40 years. Two million Canadians are lining up at food banks and 1,400 tent cities are popping up across our province alone, 25 in Oxford county. That was never the case. That never happened before. Two million food bank visits in a single month is not the Canadian dream my parents came to. That is not the Canadian dream Canadians want to live today.

The Liberal policies are making it worse. The Liberals brought in the carbon tax, a carbon tax that punishes our farmers who are feeding our families. They are punishing our truckers who ship our food and product in our country. It is going to cost our farmers a billion dollars. It is going to cost our truckers \$4 billion. It is going to be a blow of over \$30 billion to our GDP and our economy. It is simple. When we tax the farmer who grows the food and we tax the trucker who ships the food, we punish all Canadians who buy the food.

Business of Supply

Now the Liberals have this new capital gains tax hike. They are taxing our farmers; we have a food crisis. They are taxing our doctors; we have a doctor shortage crisis. They are taxing our home builders; we have a national home building crisis. Just yesterday, Jack Mintz put an article out projecting that the Liberal capital gains tax hike would take away 414,000 jobs from our Canadian economy and blow \$90 billion from our GDP. That is devastating.

These tax policies are hurting our housing policies. Housing costs have doubled. Mortgage payments have doubled. Rent has doubled. The amount needed for a down payment has doubled. More and more young Canadians, that next generation I spoke about, are now being forced not to buy homes. They are staying with their parents in their basements. That dream of home ownership is starting to fade away.

In 2022, we built fewer homes than we did in 1972, and we had half the population. The Liberals' plan is not working. Even if we manage to buy a home or rent a home, look at the neighbourhoods and what is happening in our streets. There is crime, chaos, drugs and disorder right across our communities. After nine years of the Liberal-NDP government, we are seeing a 50% increase in violent crime. Extortions are up. Auto theft is up.

A few weeks ago in Woodstock, a safe family neighbourhood with a lot of parks and children, there was a drive-by shooting at a home. We have never seen that before. We have seen 47,000 Canadians die from opiate drug overdoses since the Liberals took power of our country.

• (1250)

The Liberals have unleashed a wave of crime, chaos and drugs in our streets. Instead of investing in treatment and bringing our loved ones home drug-free, they are supporting radical drug policies, like giving government-funded meth, crack and other drugs out in vending machines to the public. That is not the Canadian dream my parents came to this country for. The sad thing is we have been seeing this every single day now. The NDP partners—

The Deputy Speaker: We have a point of order from the hon. deputy House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I do not think we have quorum in the House right now.

The Deputy Speaker: Let us start the count.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: We are good.

The hon. member for Oxford.

Mr. Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' catch-and-release policies, like Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, have released criminals back on to the streets. It is a revolving door that they created. My constituents tell me every single day that because of the violent crime, they are not safe in their communities anymore. They are afraid to walk on their streets and go to the park with their families. That is not the Canadian dream that my parents came here for. The sad thing is that the NDP, and the Bloc now, continue to prop up the government.

In my riding, we have a great auto plant, GM's CAMI, and great union workers work there. I met one of the workers last week. He said he has voted for the NDP his whole life. He thought the NDP was the party for workers, but he said it is not anymore. He will be voting Conservative for the first time because he knows the NDP sold out Canadians when it voted 24 times for the carbon tax. The NDP is killing the jobs of our workers and has sold out our workers. Our common-sense Conservative team will always stand with workers and ensure that we put more food on the table for their families so they can live that Canadian dream.

Canadians are now losing hope. We hear it, we see it and we feel it. The stories we share today are stories of many Canadians. They are stories of our friends, our neighbours, seniors and single mothers. They are everyday Canadians trying to survive, to make the sacrifice, like my dad did, to get ahead in this country, to build a better life for the next generation.

The Liberals have tried extremely hard to divide Canadians. They are pitting one region against the other. They are trying to divide our communities by spreading misinformation and disinformation. I know that Canadians see through this. There is hope in our country. We know Canadians are resilient. Our country is strong. I believe in our country and the Conservatives believe in our country. We know that, with the right leadership, we can get our country back on track and restore that Canadian promise that my father came to this country for.

That is why the Conservatives are calling for a carbon tax election now. There is a very clear choice between the NDP-Liberal costly carbon tax coalition that will tax our food, punish our work and take our money, or a common-sense Conservative plan, led by our great leader, that will axe the tax so Canadians can heat, eat and house themselves. We would build homes so Canadians can have a roof over their head. We would fix the budget so we can drive down inflation. We would stop the crime so our families can live in safe neighbourhoods.

We would be a government that would stand with the farmers who feed our families. We would be a government that would stand with lawful gun owners and go after real criminals who destroy our communities. We would be a government that would put Canadians first. We would be a government that believes in the prosperity of Canada, that believes better is possible and believes in Canada. For nine years, we have not seen that.

However, Canadians will have a choice and I call on all parties to call an election. What are they afraid of? Let Canadians decide; that is democracy. Every single day, we will do our job and hold the government accountable, unlike the other parties that have sold out their constituents. We will fight for Canadians every single day.

Business of Supply

• (1255)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about his parents coming to Canada to look for better opportunities. I think that is the story of many people in Canada, myself included. My mother is from Italy and my father is from Holland. They immigrated here about 55 years ago. I am a little older than my colleague, I imagine.

Generations that come here and grow up here shape our country. My mother, a relatively new immigrant, became part of the feminist movement in the late seventies and eighties that fought for women's reproductive rights. My wife gets to benefit from that work that my mother and her generation did fighting for those rights. However, now we see members of the Conservative Party who are literally trying to roll back those rights. We see them going to pro-life rallies on Parliament Hill.

Does he not agree that moving backwards is not beneficial for our country or society, or the people who have helped shape it to this point?

Mr. Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have broken that Canadian dream for newcomers. They have created 99 problems, and they have not been able to fix a single one. They are pretending to be firefighters when they are the ones who are causing the fires. They have been in charge for the last nine years. That newcomer dream that the member spoke about is gone because of his party. When the Liberals are doing all sorts of photo ops and announcing big promises, while we are getting nothing in return, who does it hurt the most? Who does the carbon tax hurt the most? It hurts newcomers, new Canadians.

It is the government that is responsible for breaking that Canadian dream.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague spoke to some of the areas I agree with, having to do with the stories of many Canadians who have come to this indigenous land, who have benefited from what is the immaculate power and grace of this great country. However, so often the original stewards are misunderstood. Their priorities of trying to get clean water, good jobs and social safety nets to help every single person have been difficult for indigenous people.

Forgive me if I cannot vote in favour of a motion that is a grab-power motion for the Leader of the Opposition, just to recreate the pain that so many indigenous people have had to endure. The last time the Conservatives were in government, they were sued by indigenous leaders for failing to create a framework for clean water. How shameful is that?

What does the member have to say to indigenous people who cannot trust the Conservatives? Although they were given so many opportunities to make things right, they have continued to let us down.

• (1300)

Mr. Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we will work to be partners with indigenous peoples and make sure that they feel heard, loud and clear. I understand why they do not want to go to an election. Just like Canadians, the NDP is broke. The NDP has no money. Just a few months away from receiving his

pension, I can see the leader salivating. In six more months, he will get his pension, so the NDP members are going to hold on. They can create all the drama they want. They can talk all they want about ripping up the agreement and how they are going to fight for Canadians, but, yesterday, they propped the government up again. If they have these concerns, they should fight for Canadians.

Be the voice of opposition that you are here to be. The member said that his job is to fight for Canadians and be a voice. You are missing from action.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member knows full well we have to speak through the Chair. The use of “you” or speaking directly to members in the chamber is not allowed.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I just want to follow up because I felt a little intimidated when he pointed at me and said that I was missing in action when I am here. However, the Leader of the Opposition is nowhere to be seen. The member should be pointing at his leader, but I guess—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is always trying to be very helpful, but that was not very helpful.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Caribou.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. Before I begin, I just want to recognize a Paralympian in my riding, Greg Stewart, who won gold. I want to commend him on that, and I want to wish him all the best with his fiancée, Taylor, for their upcoming wedding this weekend. All the best to Greg and Taylor, and congratulations on both fronts.

I really appreciate what my colleague was saying. I know that the member for Kingston and the Islands also referenced coming from an immigrant family.

Could he elaborate on coming from an immigrant family, where he sees things going and what he would change if he had the chance?

Mr. Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all Paralympians who are competing today, representing our great country on that international stage.

I understand that we share a very similar story, with our parents making the sacrifice so that we have a better life. The policies of the government have hurt them the most. If we look at the food bank usage, if we look at the jobless numbers that we are seeing today, at what is happening to our country, our community and our economy, it is because of Liberals' failed policies. We are seeing that positive response back right across our country. If we go to the GTA, if we go to B.C., if we go to Surrey, Brampton, Mississauga, Scarborough, Vaughan, people are sick and tired of their failed government. They want a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Business of Supply

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to rise this afternoon in this most honourable House and see many of my colleagues here today fighting and debating for their constituents. Earlier this week, I had the chance to rise and speak about a similar type of motion presented by the official opposition party. Let me simply start by saying this. Canada is the best country in the world, in my humble opinion. I am so delighted to be raising three daughters in Vaughan and to be fighting for them day in and day out.

I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Kingston in the Islands, my dear colleague and friend. The hon. member mentioned earlier that his mother came from Italy some 50-odd years ago. My father here came via Australia first, and my mother directly through Pier 21. It was a fascinating story. She took the train from Halifax all the way to Prince Rupert, from one end of the country to another, and brought us to a promised land. Canada chose us. Canada chose my parents, and I am so happy that Canada did and gave us this opportunity.

Canada is the best country in the world, not by accident. Yes, it is a work in progress, but Canada is the best country in the world because we do what is right. We take care of the most vulnerable citizens. We allow those who wish to create wealth and generate jobs to do so. We are blessed with bountiful natural resources and human capital. Peace, order and good government is our mantra. We have delivered for Canadians. I think of the Canada child benefit, a monthly tax-free benefit that goes to 15,000 families in my riding. I think of the Canada dental care plan, and how 7,200 residents, the majority of whom are seniors, are now receiving affordable and accessible dental care thanks to the Canadian dental care plan in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge.

I think of the early learning and national day care plan, something that all economists, right, left, centre, say is a great thing for female participation in the labour force and for affordability. It is a win for the economy, for families and for affordability. It is reducing costs. An average family in Ontario right now is seeing almost a 53% reduction in their child care costs and is saving nearly \$10,000 in after-tax savings. That is real money in the pockets of my residents.

We put in place the Canada workers benefit that is helping lift literally hundreds of thousands of working Canadians out of poverty so that they can pay rent and afford groceries. We are helping Canadians. Canadians, including those in my riding, have gone through a lot. We went through COVID, a global pandemic. Our government was there with the CERB, the wage subsidy and rent subsidy. We helped businesses. We helped Canadians, because it is the Canadian thing to do.

I know my hon. colleague on the opposite side mentioned earlier that when we first came into power, we had to remove two of the most anti-union, anti-worker bills, Bill C-525 and Bill C-377. We removed those bills because we support Canadian workers. We have never been a chameleon when it comes to that. We have always stood beside Canadian workers of all stripes, in all industries and in all careers.

On seniors, we were the government that returned the age of retirement for eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed in-

come supplement to 65 from 67. If that had been fully implemented, that would have cost retirees, at about \$780 a month, times 12, by two years, over \$15,000. Someone went off to Davos, Switzerland, and announced that they were going to be changing the retirement system, arbitrarily, with no consultation and no studies, and said that this was going to be right for Canadians. They themselves benefit from a very generous pension system, much like the official opposition leader does, who, by age 31 or 32, from what I have read, receives a beautiful pension and benefits. It is incredible.

We think about our economy, the investments our government has made in partnering with electric vehicle manufacturers, including Honda, Stellantis and Volkswagen. Those are real investments creating real jobs in Ontario and across this country.

I think about the partnership with the steel industry, having the steel industry workers' backs, the aluminum workers in Quebec, in Kitimat, in Trail. We have their backs and we have always had their backs.

• (1305)

We are not johnny-come-latelies to a party, like some of my hon. colleagues. I think of the investments in artificial intelligence and the things that are happening. Our support for Ukraine is undeniable. One does not flinch and one does not stop when dealing with a dictator, and we are dealing with one. One does not say they do not like the price on carbon so they are not going to vote for a free trade agreement with Ukraine. It is shameful.

Let us talk some matters. We had to respond to the Inflation Reduction Act in the United States and also to the European green deal. We responded with a number of tax credits and investment tax credits that have been put in place to help grow our economy and keep us competitive. That is what real leadership is about.

We all know that Canadians love their homes. Homes are not just people's greatest investments but are also places where we create memories with our family. I have three daughters, aged 13, 11 and three; and a beautiful wife who supports me in this endeavour. A person's home is their home, and we know that Canadians love to purchase a home. It is maybe not for everyone, but most Canadians want to be homeowners.

Business of Supply

Changes have been taking place in the mortgage market. The mortgage industry has applauded the change by the OSFI, the removal of the stress test on non-insured mortgages. There was an announcement last week by the Deputy Prime Minister regarding a homebuyers' bill of rights and a renters' bill of rights. The mortgage cap is going from \$1 million to \$1.5 million. There is also 30-year amortization, which is in line with the OECD countries for first-time homebuyers. There are new builds: green builds and all other new builds. These are real changes.

I was happy to announce in the city of Vaughan \$59 million through the fund we established to accelerate building, and it has been put to use. I have already made an announcement with the mayor of Vaughan. It is happening; houses are being built.

An hon. member: It's another announcement.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, we made an \$8-million announcement for Jane Street, which is going to be a key regional corridor. Work is happening, including in the heart of my riding, at Rainbow Creek Park. I was canvassing on Woodbridge Avenue, where there is a big sign about another investment by the federal government in partnership with federal investors.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1310)

The Deputy Speaker: I appreciate that there has been a lot of support for the hon. member's speech, but I want to make sure members know the hon. for Vaughan—Woodbridge has the floor.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I always have time for the hon. member for Abbotsford. I am always happy to chat with him.

On the trade front, there is the renegotiation of CUSMA, getting CETA over the finish line and reinforcing our trade relations with Europe and with other parts of the country.

I do wish to talk about small businesses as well, because small businesses are the backbone of our communities and the backbone of our economy. The city of Vaughan has 350,000 residents, and 20,000 SMEs operate in our city. We are blessed with an entrepreneurial and generous spirit second to none in any of the ridings. We did lower the tax rate from 11% to 9%. We also increased the investable capital, where one qualifies for the small business tax rate. This is generating hundreds of millions of dollars of tax savings. It was in budget 2022 if I remember correctly.

On October 19, we will celebrate and mark again the lowering of credit card fees for small businesses. The first time we did, it meant a billion dollars in savings for small businesses. We are helping small businesses grow. We had the backs of small businesses during the pandemic. We were there for them. They went through a tough time. I know that the restaurants in my riding went through a tough time, as well as the small businesses, when they were shut down by the provincial government and with the imposition of measures, but we were there for them.

In my concluding remarks, I go back to my comments at the beginning of my speech. We live in a blessed country. We are all of different faiths in this place, and we all attend church. I have my favourite psalms, psalms 91, 35 and 36, which I say to myself on a daily basis. We live in a beautiful country and a blessed country.

My kids are growing up and I see their interactions with their friends, and there is an optimism, I think. We have gone through a lot with COVID, a global pandemic, the war in Ukraine, supply shocks and global inflation we had not seen in decades. However, our future is bright, and no one can take that away.

I look forward to questions from my hon. colleagues.

Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the words we have heard over the last 10 minutes. The member's riding is not all that far south of where I live in beautiful Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte. I am hearing a much different message in my community, which it is that people are struggling a lot.

There is a big issue in my area these days with homeless encampments. The member opposite mentioned a bright Canada. It was brighter in Canada last night because there was a fire in another homeless encampment in Barrie. There have been so many that it is getting tough to report on them. That is what I am hearing back home in my community, which is only about 40 minutes north of you. Are you not hearing the same issues in your community about homeless encampments, people struggling and people wanting change?

The Deputy Speaker: I am hearing all kinds of things, but let us hear what the hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge says.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I have much respect for the hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

The first thing I would say is that I hope no individuals were injured in that event in the member's riding. My prayers go out to anyone who was injured. Obviously that should never happen in any riding, city or town in Canada.

Canadians, yes, are asking us to do more to assist them. We always need to listen to our constituents. I am not an MP who tells Canadians what they are thinking. When I knock on a constituent's door, I always wonder what the family is going through. Do they have a loved one in a hospital? Are they going through a transition? How are they feeling? I never tell a constituent that everything is rosy and merry. What I say is that we do live in the best country in the world but it is a work in progress, and I am there to listen to them and their concerns and to be empathetic and humble.

We put in a lot of measures to assist Canadians. We went through a tough time with global inflation. Absolutely, things are and will be getting better, but Canada fundamentally is the best country in the world.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on my Liberal colleague's speech on today's motion. We could draw a similar parallel with the other Conservative motion that was moved earlier this week.

I would like to know what my colleague opposite thinks about the Bloc's demands. The reason we have decided not to vote with the Conservatives is essentially because we think we can make gains, gains that we consider reasonable, gains that we thought the Liberals would support. Examples include increasing the OAS for people aged 65 to 74 and protecting supply management in trade agreements.

Does my colleague agree with the Bloc's demands? If so, will he tell his government to vote with the Bloc Québécois to save its own skin?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Like the Bloc Québécois, I think it is important that all members be able to fight climate change and help seniors.

[*English*]

We need to look at issues like climate change; making sure seniors have a secure and dignified retirement; and protecting our supply management system, which we know all Canadians depend on for food security, affordability and quality. Those are all measures that we need to always engage in with our colleagues and various stakeholders.

Canada is a beautiful and blessed country, and one of the reasons is that we have a great fiscal framework, a AAA credit rating and the lowest deficit and net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7 and virtually in the G20. Our fiscal framework is strong. We will continue to help Canadians and ensure that we can afford to pay for the social programs that we know strengthen our social fabric.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was surprised my hon. colleague mentioned the investment tax credits. We know that Biden used them in his first year and they created hundreds of thousands of jobs. There were billions of dollars of investment. There is a complete clean-energy revolution taking place in California, Texas and across the United States, yet the investment tax credits that were promised two years ago by the Liberal government are nowhere to be seen.

Europe is taking off, and others in the G7 are taking off, yet the government is still talking about investment tax credits when they are nowhere to be seen. The government literally moved mountains to get \$34 billion into the hands of Suncor and Imperial for the TMX pipeline, yet clean-energy tax credits are still nowhere to be seen. Why have the Liberals failed on this simple task?

Business of Supply

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, first, I continue to support and will always support energy workers in Canada while we continue to grow non-renewable energy supply. We need to move energy to markets, and that is what we should and will do in Canada.

Second, the ITCs are in place in legislation. There was a \$10-billion investment by Dow and a \$2-billion investment by Linde in Alberta, in hydrogen. I visited the first hydrogen facility in Ontario, and it was remarkable to see the technological transformation that is and will be taking place within our transportation system across this country.

Canada is uniquely positioned for the green economy of today and the future. I am excited. We are the best country in the world.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak to the motion. I did not have the opportunity to speak on Tuesday to a very similar motion, and I am really glad to be able to do it today because I think that a lot of my comments will be the same.

My speech today will definitely focus on the issue through which the Conservatives are requesting no confidence in the government. Then I would also like to talk a little bit about the NDP and where I see some hypocrisy, unfortunately, that has been coming out of our former colleagues in a supply and confidence agreement.

Conservatives have set up a narrative, and we have heard it many times today already, based on the price on pollution and trying to blame everything on that. I know why they did it. It is easy to do it, and, quite honestly, they have been effective at doing it. They are trying to sell Canadians on the idea that the reason we have higher inflation and have cost of living issues is that they are a direct result of the carbon tax. That has been their objective.

However, I will just point out very quickly that inflation is back where it should be, at 2%, yet we still have the price on pollution, the carbon tax. Therefore the whole narrative has lost a lot of steam, particularly in the last few weeks and months since inflation numbers have been coming down. That does not stop the continual narrative. We heard it again this morning from Conservative members.

The reality is that more people get back more than they pay. This is the way the system is set up. For people in a backstop province, all the money is collected and then equally distributed back to households based on household size. Eight out of 10 households in backstop jurisdictions get back more than they pay. That is a given fact.

Business of Supply

What is even more important is that 94% of households that have an income of less than \$50,000 a year, which for a whole household is not a lot, get back more than they pay. Again, this is just a fact. When Conservatives try to argue to axe the tax because then suddenly people are going to be instantly better off, it is just not true. A majority of people are better off with the Canada carbon rebate.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I know I am touching on the truth and hitting a nerve when Conservatives heckle me on this point, because they always do that. However, it is a fact.

I have said to the House before, and I will say it again to those who might be listening at home and to those who are in the House, that I did the math myself for my own family. I looked at our Enbridge gas bill, which is the only thing we pay a carbon tax on. I added up all the carbon taxes for 2023. My wife and I drive electric hybrid vehicles, but I asked what the average Canadian uses in gas per year. I assumed we were using gas, as I did not want to throw off the equation by not having to pay the carbon tax on electricity that we are powering our cars with.

When I did that, I came to the conclusion that in 2023, I paid about \$805 or \$810, if I remember my calculations correctly, on the carbon tax. My rebate, not what the government told me I was going to get but what I saw when I actually looked at my bank statement, the four deposits in 2023, added up to about \$865. Right off the bat I knew that my household was better off. We got back more than we paid.

A lot of people will ask how that is possible. How can the majority get back more than they pay? It is because the two out of 10 households, which might have many more vehicles, boats or other luxury items, are definitely going to be paying more than they get back. That is who the Conservatives are protecting. That is who they are really looking out for. They are looking out for the two out of 10 Canadians who are getting back more. The Conservatives will sell it as though who they are really looking out for are the lowest-income Canadians, but that is simply not the truth.

• (1320)

I really started to feel a sense of disbelief, but not when the leader of the NDP decided that he wanted to get out of the supply and confidence agreement, because I think that we all knew that would happen at one time or another, although I thought it was premature. I thought we still had a good year left to solidify a lot of these social programs that we had to make sure that they were there for a long time. What really bothered me was when, a few days later, he started to backtrack on the price on pollution, the carbon tax, basically saying that it was hurting Canadians.

What it showed me in that moment, and what I think it showed a lot of Canadians, is that the leader of the NDP does not have the ability to stand up to the Leader of the Opposition. He did a great job standing up to a protester outside of these doors just last week. I just wish he could stand up to the Leader of the Opposition like that. I know that the leader of the NDP believes in a price on pollution. I will prove in a moment that he and his colleagues definitely do not believe that the price on pollution has contributed to inflation and the hardships of Canadians, even though the leader of the

NDP said that. Why can he not stand up to the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Carleton, the same way that he was able to stand up to a protester outside, to stand up for what is right?

I will tell members what I recall. I went around and did some digging as soon as I saw the NDP start to flip-flop on the price on pollution. On June 13 of this year, just before the House left for the summer break, the member for Edmonton Strathcona said, “the carbon tax does not impact the price of food to nearly the extent the member is saying. It is minuscule.” She goes on to say, “economists, journalists and members of Parliament have made it very clear that the carbon tax is not what is responsible for the cost of food increasing so much.” My question to the member from Edmonton Strathcona, and I hope she asks me a question after I am finished, is this: How did she respond when the NDP leader suddenly said the price on pollution is negatively impacting Canadians?

I have pages and pages of examples, but since I am talking about the member for Edmonton Strathcona, I will tell the members something else that she said. On May 30, she quoted an economics professor who said, “A clear majority of households do receive rebates that are larger than the carbon taxes they pay for.... If we got rid of the carbon tax and the rebate, then this would harm a much larger fraction of lower- and middle-income households than it would higher-income households.” That is right. She basically said, on May 30, what I just said the Conservatives are doing.

They are trying to appease the two out of 10. They are selling it as though they are appeasing the eight out of 10, but they are really trying to put more money back in the pockets of the two out of 10. The member for Edmonton Strathcona knows that. She agreed with it and spoke to it. Then she had to watch her party's leader go out and say that he came to the conclusion that the carbon tax and the rebates are not actually helping Canadians more than they are hurting them. This is position that we find ourselves in. I am very glad to see that the NDP and the Bloc are continuing to be the adults in the room, recognizing the stunt that the Leader of the Opposition did.

Did members notice the fanfare that existed on Tuesday when the Conservatives had their opposition motion? It is so dead now. It is totally deflated because of what happened yesterday with the vote. They do not have nearly the energy as they did then. We have not heard from the Leader of the Opposition on this motion yet. I do not even know if he will speak to it at some point today. The point is, it is all a game for them. I know the NDP knows it was a game for them, yet somehow they caved to the pressure. I want to understand how the NDP got to that point.

Business of Supply

• (1325)

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the way commented on how much carbon tax an individual is getting back, and some are getting more back than they are actually paying. However, what about the hospitals? What about the municipalities? What about the schools? The government has charged all of those publicly funded entities a carbon tax.

The government started this all through COVID, and then had a program that was supposed to retrofit, but it cancelled that program at the end of COVID. Could the member please explain that?

• (1330)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I can explain that.

Obviously, the member does not know how it works because individuals do not get money back. Households get money back, so the money back is for a household. However, the member asked a good question, and I think his question deserves an answer.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, the member should stop talking to listen to me because I will directly answer his question.

The answer to his question is that, when we put a price on something, it incentivizes people to make different choices in the marketplace. The member talked about institutions, schools, etc. As an example, CHEO ended up getting a million-dollar grant, which it used to install heat pumps. Does the member understand what is going on here? This is how we shape and change market behaviour.

I always find it remarkable that I have to explain to Conservatives how market mechanisms work and how we have to put a price on something to change behaviour, as though it is the first time they have ever heard of it in their entire lives. We have countless examples. CHEO is just one. People and organizations are going to use these opportunities to find other ways. CHEO did it by installing heat pumps, and now its carbon footprint is much less than it was before.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member was quoting me quite a bit in his speech, and I am flattered that he pays so much attention to what I think are very smart interventions in the House. I am pleased to have him acknowledge that to some degree.

I think everyone here understands what has happened with the carbon tax, which is that it has not only been weaponized with huge amounts of misinformation being spread by the Conservative Party, but also that it has been ultimately broken by the government, the Liberal Party, because it chose who were winners and who were losers. It chose to pick people and decide on who got it waived and who did not. That is a terrible thing for a government of a country to do for political reasons.

More importantly, New Democrats are coming forward with a meaningful environmental plan that would address the climate crisis, and which would not miss every single target, like the Liberal government has. We have a climate plan that would not subsidize the oil and gas industry and that would not continue to put climate change on the back burner.

I wanted to respond to the member because he did bring forward some of my quotes. However, I think that all of us should be having a very rigorous debate in this place on how we deal with the fundamental crisis facing every single Canadian, every single human being, which is the climate crisis.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I respect the member. I know that she cares a lot about the environment. It must be a very difficult position for the member to be in given what her leader has done, and I empathize with her.

However, when she suggests that this is because there was an exemption on everybody throughout the country who uses oil, well, my response to the member would be this: Where was her voice when it happened? That was in the middle of the winter, and I did not hear any member from any NDP say, "Hold on, don't give them that exemption." They waited until September, after their leader had made a position on the supply and confidence agreement and, honestly, caved to the pressure of the Conservatives.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

Today, we are debating the following motion:

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Here is a motion that is asking the House to say it does not have confidence in the government. On behalf of my constituents, I do not have confidence in the government. The easiest way to describe why I do not have confidence in the government is that it is very clear that the government has broken the promise that it has provided to people from around the world to our citizens of Canada. There is a promise of Canada that the government is honour-bound and duty-bound to uphold, and the government has broken it. More importantly, the Liberals have no plan to unbreak that promise. They really do not. I have been listening to the debate, and as the member for Edmonton Strathcona said today, the government also lacks moral clarity on many issues. Therefore, at this point, it is case closed. The House should not have confidence in the government, and here is why. I want to go back to the broken promise of Canada.

Business of Supply

One of the things that has really impacted me and how I look at things in this place is that, in my time here, I became a mom. I am a stepmom to three kids, and I am a grandmother as well, which ages me a little bit. I am now Meemaw. Here is the thing: Much like many other people across Canada, I married somebody from a different country, from the U.S. I love my kids so much. I have watched them grow up. I have watched them go through college and trade school. I am so proud of my oldest stepdaughter. She just graduated and is an emergency room nurse now. My middle stepdaughter graduated from the University of Oklahoma. She is part of the reserve corps in the army, and she is brilliant. My youngest stepson pursued a trade and is essentially running the shop floor of a big manufacturing company in the city where he lives, and he is young.

Because my kids have been able to watch me stand up for my constituents in this place and be part of my work, the one thing that we always talk about as a family is that they have seen first-hand the promise that Canada offers. I can say to them as Americans, and this might get a little testy at Christmas dinner sometimes, that I do believe Canada is the best country in the world. When I look through my community, I see the diversity and our pluralism. What I have always seen is the promise that, if people come to Canada or are in Canada, they can do anything.

Frankly, for me right now, one of the most heartbreaking realizations I have had to come to understand is that my children cannot afford to come to this country, and I am in a position of privilege. That is just the reality. I do not say that to be partisan. I say that with absolute reality. My kids cannot afford to buy a house or rent in Canada. They just cannot. We have always talked about it. I have wanted to lure them, especially one of them who is thinking about grad school, to come here to live with us. The reality is that they just cannot afford it. For me, I am living that broken promise in a very deep way.

It is not just my family. It is so many other people in my community who have moved into Calgary Nose Hill from around the world. I had a heartbreaking conversation. I will not say exactly where, just so as not to blow her cover, but an employee from Air Canada came to me in tears, and this conversation absolutely broke my heart.

• (1335)

Her husband had recently passed away, and she has two children and cannot afford her rent. She is in a good job, and she said she does not know what to do. She asked me, "Where do I go?" I do not have an easy answer for that. The reality is that government members do not have an easy answer for that, in spite of doubling the national debt and increasing taxes. They do not have a plan going forward.

We all know that the government does not have a plan. We all know that the Prime Minister's head is not in the game of trying to fix the promise of Canada that he broke. He is trying to figure out what his next gig is. Is he going to lead his party through defeat or is he going to have some sort of other job? It is not me saying that. It is virtually every columnist across the country. I am just putting on the record here what the reality is in every newspaper.

The House cannot have confidence in somebody who cannot even be bothered to think about how he is going to fix the promise that he broke. It is the reason that my children do not have a clear line of sight on how they can live here, and why millions of other Canadians who are already here cannot afford to live. Is that not enough to say it is over for the government and we should not have confidence in it?

As the member for Edmonton Strathcona said, the government does not have moral clarity. I do not have a lot of time in my speech, but let us just go through some of the top scandals.

For the billionaire trip to the Aga Khan's island, the Prime Minister was found in breach of the rules by the Ethics Commissioner, found guilty, in 2017. Former finance minister Bill Morneau did not disclose his French villa. Would it not be nice to have a French villa? He also did not declare a conflict with Morneau Shepell. The former defence minister apologized for exaggerating his military record. The Prime Minister, as we all remember, had a disastrous trip to India in 2018, where he invited a convicted attempted murderer to a reception. The former fisheries minister broke the conflict of interest rules with the clam scam issue.

Then we can fast-forward to 2019, when we had the preposterous SNC-Lavalin and Jody Wilson-Raybould issue. The former environment minister gave \$12 million to Loblaw's for fridges in direct cash subsidies. The Prime Minister in 2019 made a sarcastic comment to a first nations woman at a fundraiser. In 2019, in the middle of the campaign, he could not tell reporters how many times he had worn blackface. He appointed a governor general who eventually resigned because of such poor vetting.

Then we had the WE Charity scandal of a billion dollars, a massive scandal and massive waste. There was a man implicated in a multi-million dollar illegal casino bust in Markham, Ontario, who had rubbed shoulders with the Prime Minister on two occasions before being arrested by police. The former defence minister was censured by MPs over a sexual harassment case in the military. The former public safety minister was unaware of the transfer of notorious murderer Paul Bernardo. The former public safety minister spent \$62 million on a firearms buyback program that bought back exactly zero firearms.

I have pages more, but I only have a minute left. I will just say this. The government has lost its "why". It has lost its ability to communicate why it is functioning outside of holding onto power, and it does not have the "how" of how it is going to fix the broken promise that was made to Canadians.

I implore colleagues to see that it is time. The House environment is deteriorating rapidly. We need an election. We need an election now.

• (1340)

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a mom too; I have two children. I came to this place to fight for a clean environment for them and for generations to come. Because of the work of our government, we have lowered emissions to the lowest they have been in 25 years, getting the equivalent of 62 million cars off the road. We prevented an increase of 41%, which we would have had if we had done nothing.

When will there be a plan from the member's side of the House that can address the same concerns that we have for our children, a plan for the climate crisis that impacts all of us? By the way, it is the biggest factor in the price of food right now.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, first, let me correct the record. According to Environment Canada reports, the lowest emissions in recent Canadian history occurred under the Harper government.

Second, the Liberal government's dogmatic adherence to the carbon tax does not function in Canada because of the lack of substitute goods. Carbon is price-inelastic in Canada. Because the government has been so focused on increasing the price of everything for everybody, it has stopped innovation in technologies and other types of programs that could reduce emissions, like, for example, having more public transit, as in the Green Line debacle in my riding, which the federal government has absolutely failed on as well. Because it has been so dogmatically attached to the carbon tax, it has made the climate crisis worse in Canada.

• (1345)

[Translation]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to my colleague talk about people who need help. She said that we need to help the most vulnerable. Does she include oil companies among the people or companies that really need help? Money from the Liberal government or previous Conservative governments—

The Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. I am going to speak. The member may continue her intervention during questions and comments.

* * *

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now ready to rule on the points of order raised on September 18 by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and September 19 by the member for New Westminster—Burnaby concerning disrespectful or offensive remarks. At the same time, the Chair will offer some comments on certain actions taken during the second of these sittings, as promised on Monday.

Referring to statements made during question period on September 18, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands asked the Chair to review the use of what she termed offensive nicknames for Canadians who are not members of the House. She suggested that this name-calling may have breached Standing Order 11(2). The mem-

Speaker's Ruling

ber for New Westminster—Burnaby called the Chair's attention to the enforcement of Standing Order 18, arguing that the leader of the official opposition had broken the rules by making disrespectful and offensive remarks about the members for Beloeil—Chambly and Burnaby South, as well as other members.

[Translation]

I will begin with the point of order raised by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. In this case, I must point out that Standing Orders 11 and 18 do not apply to comments directed at members of the public, but this fact should not be taken as permission to say whatever one wants about Canadians who are not elected officials—quite the contrary. In exercising their freedom of speech, members must show restraint in order to maintain a degree of civility in our debates.

As stated in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 622, and I quote:

Members are discouraged from referring by name to persons who are not Members of Parliament and who do not enjoy parliamentary immunity, except in extraordinary circumstances when the national interest calls for this. The Speaker has ruled that Members have a responsibility to protect the innocent not only from outright slander, but from any slur directly or indirectly implied, and has suggested that Members avoid as much as possible mentioning by name people from outside the House who are unable to reply in their own defence.

[English]

However, in practice, members quite often refer to ordinary individuals in their statements, not always to praise them. For example, the names of provincial politicians, prominent persons and other public figures are regularly mentioned without causing controversy. Furthermore, members are always required to choose their words carefully when they are discussing matters pertaining to individuals who do not have an opportunity to respond to their criticisms.

As for the individual the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands referenced in her point of order, he is quite plainly a public figure engaged in political and partisan debates. We should not be surprised that he is the subject of comment or criticism regarding past decisions or positions. So long as the tone and wording of members' comments remain sufficiently respectful, the Chair will refrain from intervening.

[Translation]

While Standing Order 18 does not apply to ordinary individuals, it is quite relevant when members comment on their colleagues. Standing Order 18 states, and I quote: "No member shall...use offensive words against either House, or against any member thereof".

Business of Supply

● (1350)

[English]

The Chair rose on September 19 to remind members of the purpose of question period. The Chair remains very concerned about the sequence of events that took place at that time, as well as the tendency in recent days to use overly personal criticism and insults. This tendency has been seen on both sides of the House.

As indicated on page 624 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition:

In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the Member speaking, the person to whom the words at issue were directed, the degree of provocation, and most important, whether or not the remarks created disorder in the Chamber. Thus, language deemed unparliamentary one day may not necessarily be deemed unparliamentary on another day.... Expressions which are considered unparliamentary when applied to an individual Member have not always been considered so when applied "in a generic sense" or to a party.

[Translation]

The remarks made that day by the Leader of the Opposition spawned disorder. They targeted one individual in particular, and they were excessively scornful and personal. It seems to me equally clear that, in response to such criticisms, it is unacceptable for a member to leave their seat and move toward another member. In the House, we resolve our disagreements with words, not with physical acts of this nature.

[English]

On Monday, the House unanimously took the same stance by urging "all its members to behave with civic-mindedness and respect towards their colleagues, in order to allow a truly constructive debate, in the interests of democracy and the common good."

After last Thursday's sitting, the Chair reached out to the leader of the official opposition and the member for Burnaby South. The Chair offered them the opportunity to make amends. The member for Burnaby South did so, and he informed the Chair that he will act differently in the future. I am grateful for his commitment.

The Chair has yet to receive such an indication from the leader of the official opposition. I indicated that, failing to hear from him, I would request a formal withdrawal of his comments; otherwise the Chair would remove some questions during question period today. Party leaders have a heightened responsibility to be role models. Vigorous debate and even profound disagreement are possible without resorting to such comments or actions.

The Chair therefore invites members to be more judicious in their choice of words and behaviour. If they are not, the Chair will have no choice but to discipline those members who persist in their unparliamentary behaviour.

I thank all members for their attention.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to briefly say that I deeply appreciate the thoughtful response to my last point of order. However, when referring to Standing Order 11(2), I was cut off by heckling and not able to direct the Speaker to the section that I thought might be relevant in the future, which is on avoiding irrelevant and repetitious speech. That seemed to be the case in the attacks on the individual we referenced.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member. I still believe the Chair's response stands.

The member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, before you rose to speak to the chamber, my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill still had about three minutes left of questions. We just want to know what is happening with that time.

● (1355)

The Speaker: I am going to the hon. member for Shefford to finish her question, and then we will go to the member for Calgary Nose Hill for a response.

* * *

*[Translation]***BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

OPPOSITION MOTION—CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will try to make my question shorter.

My colleague from Calgary Nose Hill talked a lot about the help that needs to be given to people who are finding the current climate a bit tough.

Does she think that the oil companies need as many credits and as much financial support as they are currently getting from this government and got from the previous government?

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, Canada needs a bright and vibrant economy in every sector, including the natural resource sector. I do not agree with the assertion of the Liberal government. The way the Liberals have addressed this issue, but completely failed, is by giving countless untold billions of dollars in waste to their corporate friends. This is, I think, what they are doing now with Mark Carney as well.

Today, in the industry committee, we tried to pass a motion to just look at the government's EV strategy, given that it has committed billions of dollars to that industry. We are seeing these companies essentially say they not going to set up shop here. So many jobs are lost, and that is such a big issue in terms of meeting Canada's climate objectives and there is no scrutiny of that.

Overall, this is why I think my colleagues should support this motion. We need to have an election so every political party can set out its vision for the country and so we can move away from the reckless Liberal government's waste.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable to me that my hon. colleague is a grandmother. I am not accepting that this is a possibility.

She listed a number of ways we can identify that the Liberal government has lost its moral authority. However, I have to say that most Canadians must be listening to this and thinking, “Liberal, Tory, same old story”.

I can also go through an incredible list of scandals that we saw under the government she was part of, the Harper government. I think of the Senate scandals with Mike Duffy. I think of election activities where they had to plead guilty to overspending. I think of Maxime Bernier, who is a scandal all in his own right. I think of the Afghan detainees, proroguing Parliament, the contempt rulings we saw with that government and the G8 funding in Huntsville. I could go on.

How does the member expect Canadians to believe the Conservatives would be any less corrupt than the Liberals have been?

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I guess I am having a hard time understanding the moral equivocation. I do not think anybody in this place can argue that the current government is a paragon of ethical standards. The key difference is that the member has voted time and time again, knowing these ethical standards have been brought up, and she has propped it up. That is the problem here.

It is time for an election. Canadians need to have a choice. The government's time is up. We need a reset.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ALLEGED VIOLATION OF STANDING ORDER 116 AT STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on the same point of order that I raised a couple of days ago. The standing order specifically is Standing Order 116. That standing order was put in place with the express purpose of protecting the rights of committee members to participate in debate on motions before those motions are put to a vote. It does not matter if the chair claims he did not see my hand. The point of the matter is that my hand was raised and the onus was on the chair to canvass the room and make sure he was fulfilling his obligation as chair to ensure that debate had actually come to a complete conclusion.

The standing order in question is in place to protect the rights of members to speak to a motion before it is voted on, regardless of whether the chair accidentally or on purpose does not acknowledge the request of the member to speak. It is designed as a fail-safe to protect members. The onus is on the chair of committees to confirm there are no members wanting to participate in the debate before the question is called.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add that to my original point of order.

● (1400)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I was in that committee meeting. The chair did indeed pause after the final person had spoken, and he looked around the room. He then called the question, as was his right, because no other member had raised their hand.

Statements by Members

After that, it was challenged by the member, but all opposition members, including from the Bloc and the NDP, confirmed the chair's ruling. Therefore, since committees are responsible for their own affairs, the committee itself, a majority from all parties, confirmed the chair did act appropriately. I will claim that I did not see the member raise her hand, nor did anyone else around that table.

The Deputy Speaker: I know the Table is looking at this specifically. Normally, the House does not involve itself in the actions of committees, but I know we are looking at this one closely.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

AIR INDIA FLIGHT 182

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 39 years back, Air India Flight 182 was blown up mid-air by a bomb planted by Canadian Khalistan extremists. It killed 329 people, and this is the largest mass killing in Canadian history.

Even today, the ideology responsible for this terrorist attack is still alive among a few people in Canada. Two Canadian public inquiries have found Khalistan extremists responsible for the bombing of the Air India flight. Now, there is a petition on the Parliament portal asking for a new inquiry and promoting conspiracy theories promoted by Khalistan extremists.

Mr. Bal Gupta, whose wife Rama was killed in this attack, told *The Globe and Mail*, “It's deeply frustrating. It opens up old wounds all over again. It's all garbage. It's an attempt to gain publicity and support for terrorist activities.”

* * *

MEMBER FOR TOBIQUE—MACTAQUAC

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently, my sister and her boyfriend were in a serious motorcycle accident. Both sustained substantial injuries. Our family is so grateful that this did not end in total tragedy.

We are so thankful to those who walk with others through the shadows of adversity: the concerned citizens, like Mark, Nancy, Steve and Wanda, who stayed and comforted them while help was on the way; the paramedics and first responders who treated them at the scene; the doctors and nurses who provided exceptional care during their recovery; the pastors, family and friends who were there with us with words of encouragement, prayers and sometimes much-needed coffee. I say a special thanks to my other sister, Amy, who has been by Julie's side through it all.

Statements by Members

There is an ancient writing that perhaps sums it up best when it says, “though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me”. I thank all those who walk through the shadows of adversity, pain and despair with all of us. It means so much more than words can ever express. I especially thank the one who promised to be with us through it all and to never leave us or forsake us.

The Speaker: I am certain all members extend their prayers and thoughts to the member's family, especially to his sister.

The hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over 600 civilians have been killed by Israeli air strikes in Lebanon in recent days. Among them are two Canadians. I send my condolences to the loved ones of all those lost. I represent a large Lebanese Canadian community, and its members are deeply worried for their families and loved ones.

Israeli officials say they are ready for a ground invasion that will kill even more innocent civilians. Civilians are dying in Gaza, in the West Bank and in Lebanon. The violence must end. The Netanyahu government must stop its escalations. Canada's words are not enough. There must be a ceasefire and consequences for Israeli government officials who have expressed support for genocide and violence.

We need a clear and unequivocal two-way arms embargo with no loopholes. As part of a two-state solution, Canada must recognize the Palestinian state now. We must stand for peace.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF DAY

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today marks the 25th national school support staff day. Every day, school support staff contribute to students' success, ensure a safe and healthy environment, support teachers, help with administration and maintain infrastructure.

There are over 80 different jobs, divided into four categories. First, there is administrative support, including administrative officers, school organization technicians, administration technicians and computer technicians. This includes everyone who takes care of logistics in our schools. Then there is building support, such as janitors, certified maintenance workers, pipefitters and electricians, everyone who makes sure schools are safe for our kids. There is also special education, which includes all the technicians who look after students with special needs. Finally, there are also child care services, their educators and their technicians.

Thank you to all these people, who show so much compassion every day and work to give all our kids a better future.

• (1405)

FRANCO-ONTARIAN FLAG

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September 25 marks the anniversary of the first raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag. It was hoisted for the first time at the University of Sudbury in 1975. This flag is a symbol of our history, our culture and our pride.

As parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Official Languages, I would like to thank the many organizations that work to keep the francophone community thriving, including ACFO du grand Sudbury, the health centre, the Richelieu clubs, the Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne, the friendship clubs and the Carrefour francophone de Sudbury.

Yesterday in Nickel Belt, we celebrated the construction of a new Catholic school in Val Thérèse, which will open in 2025. It will house students from École Ste-Thérèse, École Notre-Dame and École St-Joseph Hanmer. What a success story.

I invite all francophones and francophiles to celebrate our language and continue to proudly work on strengthening our legacy.

I also want to thank our anglophone and multilingual allies for their invaluable support.

I hope everyone has fun celebrating.

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[*English*]

LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up. Yesterday, Canadians witnessed the hypocrisy of the Bloc and the NDP as they voted to continue propping up the Prime Minister and his devastating policies. They are content to sit on their hands, allowing the Liberal government to unleash more chaos and suffering on Canadians while they wait to get their pensions.

The NDP-Liberal coalition has doubled the cost of housing, made it easier for criminals to get back on the street and allowed the cost of living to skyrocket. No matter how bad it gets for Canadians, the NDP-Liberal coalition does not care. They know Canadians are fed up, but they are refusing to listen.

Conservatives will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. We should let Canadians have their say and call a carbon tax election now.

PARTICIPACTION

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is “sneak it in” day, so Participaction is here in Ottawa to remind us all to make room in our busy schedules to sneak in some movement. Movement is medicine. It is preventative medicine for our minds, our bodies and our communities, keeping us all happy, healthy, connected and strong. A little exercise every day is also great for our mood, productivity and focus. I am proud that our government has made physical activity a national priority, reducing health care costs and making Canada a healthier place to live, work, learn and play.

Sportsmanship in politics was one of the pillars of my campaign, and it is important to me to ensure that we can all work together in the House of Commons to make progress on common ambitions. I have organized cross-party runs and soccer games. Yesterday, all political parties came together to play cricket. When we play and do healthy activities together, it reminds us that what we have in common is bigger and more important than what we might disagree on.

I thank Participaction for reminding us all that moving Canadians forward will lead to better health and prosperity for all Canadians.

* * *

TONY MOORE

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I stand here today to share the loss of Tony Moore, veteran and president of Whalley Legion, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 229. Tony was a dedicated advocate for veterans and served as president for as long as I can remember. He was also instrumental in the building of Canada's most modern full-service veterans facility, the Whalley veterans village. Opened in 2023, this groundbreaking initiative was launched thanks to Tony's deep understanding of the support veterans truly needed. He advocated tirelessly for the community, ensuring they received the resources and care they deserved.

Above all, Tony was a great friend to me, someone who was always frank and forthright. I want to extend my deepest condolences to Tony's family and friends, as well as all members at the Whalley Legion. Tony will be greatly missed, but his legacy of service, compassion and advocacy will not be forgotten.

May he rest in peace.

* * *

● (1410)

ETHICS

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, taxes are up, corruption is up, crime is up and time is up. Canadians want an election to decide the country's direction and how their money is used. While Canadians line up at the food banks and deal with a worsening housing crisis, the Prime Minister decided to use their money to purchase a \$9-million luxury condo for his personal friend. That came at a time when young Canadians are worried that they may never realize the dream of home ownership.

Statements by Members

However, Canadians are not without hope. An election is coming soon. Canadians can then hold the government accountable for driving up costs while Liberal insiders benefit. Only a Conservative government will cut the carbon tax and end the abuse of tax dollars.

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LEBANON

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Lebanon is bleeding. The entire country is currently in an intensive care unit. The population of the country appeals to the international community to intervene, put an immediate end to the hostilities and save civilian and innocent lives. Every human being has the right to live in dignity, irrespective of their corner of the globe. Killing innocent civilians is unacceptable on both sides of the border. The hospitals in Lebanon are overstretched and lack the capacity to treat such a massive number of patients. As such, the Lebanese request that our government contribute to demanding an immediate cessation of hostilities and emphasize the need to keep the airport operational.

The Lebanese community is hoping that Canada will stand up and champion Canadian values on the global stage. Lebanese people do not want war. The government of Lebanon does not want war. We want to live in peace and security and to see peace spread and prevail in all the world.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this soft-on-crime coalition, costs are up, taxes are up, crime is up, extortion is up and time is up.

Extortion has skyrocketed by 357% across Canada. It is easy for criminals to commit crimes, get bail and go out and reoffend again because of the Liberal-NDP government's soft-on-crime policies. In Alberta, extortion is up by 409%. Recently, in Calgary, disturbing stories have emerged of armed criminals committing extortions and kidnappings against newcomers, children, families and businesses.

The leader of the NDP, the Prime Minister and both Liberal MPs from Alberta voted against a common-sense Conservative bill on extortion, Bill C-381, so they could keep the Liberal-NDP Prime Minister in power and protect the NDP leader's \$2.2-million pension.

Statements by Members

Common-sense Conservatives are the only party standing up and protecting victims; the Liberal-NDP government has become the party of protecting criminals.

* * *

CARBON TAX

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years under the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up.

Taxes are up for everyone, and in Saskatchewan, our hospitals and schools will pay \$380 million in carbon taxes alone. This is money that should be used to hire doctors, nurses, technicians, teachers and educational assistants. Instead it is being used to line the pockets of the Prime Minister's elitist friends, such as Mark Carney. In Saskatchewan, we have seen this act before. The last time there was a radical tax-and-spend Trudeau as prime minister, health care took a major hit in my province, with hospitals and clinics being forced to close or reduce services. Yes, time is up.

The NDP leader has once again sold out his support to the Prime Minister, just as he did the other 24 times that we voted to axe the tax. If NDP members truly supported health care and education, they would end their costly coalition and vote with us to call a carbon tax election, just as Canadians want. It is clear that only Conservatives are on Saskatchewan's side, and we will axe the tax for good.

* * *

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this summer, I visited dozens of organizations that received Canada summer jobs funding. There were 223 youth in our community who gained meaningful jobs through this federal program. There were 64 organizations that received over \$1 million in investments in our beautiful riding of Pierrefonds—Dollard. Young Canadians have gained valuable experience and skills through these jobs with the Canada summer jobs program, which are experiences they will utilize in their careers.

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

I had the pleasure of visiting some key organizations.

[*English*]

I visited day camps, such as Youth Stars and Camp Chaos.

[*Translation*]

I visited community pools like Briarwood, Fairview and Elm Park.

[*English*]

I visited the West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped, which supports adults with disabilities.

[*Translation*]

I visited food banks like On Rock and the West Island Assistance Fund, which help families in need.

[*English*]

I also visited places of worship and cultural centres, such as the Hindu Mandir.

These groups are dedicated to supporting youth and developing our community. I thank them so much for all that they do.

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NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on September 30, we mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Together, we honour the survivors of residential schools and mourn the thousands of children who never returned home.

We have a legal and moral obligation to address the ongoing harms to first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples; to acknowledge what happened in residential schools as genocide; and to facilitate a path for healing. The government must do more. One important step would be to pass the bill from the member for Winnipeg Centre, which would combat residential school denialism.

This year, in my riding, constituents will be participating in the annual Reconciliation Day Ride, hosted by Victoria Orange Shirt Day and Capital Bike. We will hear from incredible leaders in our community, such as Diane Sam from the Songhees Nation, as well as Eddy Charlie, a residential school survivor from Cowichan Tribes. We will then ride as a group to the South Island Powwow.

This year's grand entry will take place at noon and at 6 p.m. Everyone is invited to come celebrate indigenous cultures and resiliency. *Hay'sxw'qa si'em.*

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[*Translation*]

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF AQDR GRANBY

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 2024, the Granby branch of the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées, or AQDR, is celebrating 40 years of fighting for the rights and dignity of seniors.

The theme of the anniversary celebration was “40 years of struggle and commitment: working together for the rights and dignity of seniors”. It was an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made while looking to the future with determination.

Since its inception, AQDR Granby has been defending and protecting the rights of seniors by fighting injustice and inequality with vigour and conviction. Let us celebrate the commitment and solidarity of its members and partners.

I want to point out that the AQDR has been a valuable ally when it comes to Bill C-319, which the Bloc Québécois introduced to put an end to the unacceptable inequity created by the government when it failed to provide seniors aged 75 and up and seniors aged 65 to 74 with equal OAS payments.

Together, let us put an end to this age discrimination. I wish AQDR Granby a happy 40th anniversary.

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[English]

CARBON TAX

Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the costly NDP-Liberal coalition, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up. Through the coalition, the NDP leader has sold out workers and residents in my community, which has resulted in taxes being higher, food costs ballooning, housing costs doubling and crime and chaos being unleashed in our once-safe streets.

Their joint plan to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre would literally drive Canadians to food banks. However, sadly, the NDP leader has voted 24 times in support of this tax. What are the results? Just over one million people visited a food bank in Ontario in the past year, which is an increase of 25%. In my community, Project Share reports that one in eight residents has had to visit a food bank.

Canadians need a carbon tax election now to decide between the costly coalition of NDP-Liberals and common-sense Conservatives, who would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, I rise on behalf of Vancouver Quadra constituents to defend carbon pricing. Canadians understand the urgency of reducing carbon emissions to limit their costly, or even lethal, impacts, such as wildfires and floods, on lands, people and property.

Twenty years ago, as B.C.'s environment minister, I laid the groundwork for B.C.'s comprehensive climate action plan, which fosters innovation, economic development and emission reductions through carbon pricing. Equally, Canada's national carbon pricing is a fair, efficient way to reduce emissions, and it works, just as British Columbia's does. What is more, under our pricing system, eight out of every 10 Canadians get more money back than they pay out.

Sadly, Conservative and now NDP leaders reject carbon pricing. I say shame on them for working to make carbon pollution free again. We must price it to reduce it.

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● (1420)

REMOVAL OF QUESTIONS DURING ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: Colleagues, I indicated in my ruling earlier today that I would offer the leader of the official opposition the opportu-

Oral Questions

nity to make amends regarding the words he used last week. Unless he did so, I would remove questions from him during question period today. Having not received such a commitment on his part, and the member having not withdrawn his comments, the Chair will remove three questions from the leader of the official opposition in the opening round today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, who could be against the following motion?

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader has a big problem. He claims to be among the world's leading economists on monetary policy, when he has not even read the beginning of the first chapter of an Economics 101 textbook on monetary policy. If he had, he would know that, when it comes to preventing inflation and helping the central bank reduce interest rates, one of the fundamental rules of monetary economics is to avoid attacking the independence and competence of the Bank of Canada.

When will he apologize for being the most incompetent expert and politician we know when it comes to monetary economics?

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at least someone over there thinks about monetary policy.

Who could be against the following motion?

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a very simple answer to his question as to who is opposed to that motion, Canadians.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have until October 29 to increase OAS benefits for seniors aged 74 and under and to protect supply management. They must pass Bill C-319 and Bill C-282. Why do we want the government to pass these two bills? Mostly, because they are good for Quebeckers, but also because there is a consensus in the House. The Liberals, the Conservatives and the NDP agree on this.

Why is the government keeping us in suspense for no reason when it could be making gains for Quebec? Will the government respond to our demands to help seniors and farmers, yes or no?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for La Prairie is very late when it comes to helping seniors. He voted against every measure proposed in the House that was solemnly adopted by members to help seniors, often the less fortunate seniors in Canada.

I would like to know what the member for La Prairie has to say to the 6,300 constituents in his own riding who are enrolled in the federal dental care program. What does he say to them when they ask him why he voted against that measure?

• (1425)

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if he keeps that up, he will be asking a lot of questions next year.

Those who live by partisanship, die by partisanship. October 29 is fast approaching. Instead of playing partisan games, maybe this government should get to work. The Bloc Québécois's demands are clear, positive and have a consensus. The Liberals have a very simple choice. They can choose to permanently help seniors and farmers or to give answers like that and scuttle their own government.

Will they survive by helping Quebeckers or perish from their partisanship?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bloc MPs and other members in the House can choose to sabotage the Canadian government's efforts to help seniors in their own ridings. There are 7,400 seniors enrolled in the Canadian dental care plan in my colleague's riding. In many cases, this is the first time in many years that these seniors are receiving accessible and affordable dental care.

When it comes to investments in housing, does my colleague really want to partner with the Conservative leader, who says Quebec municipalities are incompetent and who wants to tear up the agreement with the Quebec government to build 8,000 affordable housing units?

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Pascale is a single mom from Hull who wrote in an open letter, "I'm afraid I will never be able to buy a home. I'm afraid my eldest child will never know the joy of a space that she can truly call her own. I can't get a different apartment because rents have skyrocketed since I moved in...real estate prices in my neighbourhood are up over 150%".

The Liberals and the Conservatives are the ones who caused this housing crisis. Why do they want people like Pascale to pay the price now?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, who is a true champion of affordable and social housing in Quebec. He knows as well as I do that, although the Conservative leader is very, very good at hurling insults, his Conservative policy would be very, very bad for Quebeckers.

He keeps attacking Quebec municipalities and calling them incompetent, when they are in the process of building 8,000 affordable housing units. One, two, three, four, five, six: that is the number of affordable housing units the Conservative leader built in his entire term as minister responsible for housing.

[English]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, another summer has passed and not one single home for indigenous people has been built. The Liberals promised to deliver an urban, rural and northern housing strategy. Two years later, there is still no funding and still no shovels in the ground. Delay, delay, broken promise after broken promise, that is the Liberal way. Meanwhile, first nations, Inuit and Métis people continue to live in mouldy and overcrowded conditions or on the street.

Why do the Liberals keep indigenous people waiting for the homes they need now?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to be part of a government that understands by indigenous, for indigenous housing, and that is exactly what we are doing by launching the \$4 billion urban, rural and northern housing strategy. Already \$300 million have been dispensed through an organization led by indigenous leaders determining how best to use those funds so that first nations, Inuit and Métis people have the kinds of housing and support they need in every city in the country.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, moments ago I asked the government who could be against a motion, pointing out that the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work and unleashed crime, to give Canadians the chance to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. She said that Canadians were against all those things.

If that is the case, why will she not let them decide in a carbon tax election, now?

Oral Questions

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a little sad that the Leader of the Opposition, having just lost a vote of non-confidence in the government yesterday, is putting forward the exact same motion today. I think it shows his desperation.

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HOUSING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no, in fact, the motion specifically demonstrates that the NDP-Liberal government has doubled housing costs. I find it interesting that the NDP has now discovered that they have doubled housing costs. A second ago, a Montreal MP stood up to point to a young woman, Pascale, who can no longer afford to rent, much less to own, after housing costs have tripled in that city. When I was housing minister, rent was \$700 in Montreal, and we built almost 200,000 units.

Why can the members of NDP not put their actions where their words are and vote for a carbon tax election?

• (1430)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these slogans are clever but they are empty. It is empty rhetoric on the other side, as always.

In fact, we should take a look at the CMHC's report from today that puts a spotlight on Montreal: a 106% increase in rental construction. Why? Because GST has been waived by this government to ensure greater supply and to incent builders during a difficult time. He has no idea how to incent that sector. He is good at running around the country insulting mayors and putting a spotlight on the homeless, but coming up with no ideas on that. It is more right-wing populism. Those members have nothing to say.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let Canadians decide in a carbon tax election if that is true.

[Translation]

Unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois is telling Quebeckers to wait. Those who cannot pay their bills will have to wait. Those who cannot buy a house after nine years of this Prime Minister will have to wait. Those who are afraid to go out on the streets because of the crime wave the "Liberal Bloc" has unleashed on our streets will have to wait. Quebec is at the breaking point because of immigration policies, but members of its government will have to wait.

Quebeckers do not need to wait. They need to choose a new common-sense government.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government's priority is to deliver results for all Quebeckers and all Canadians. That includes child care spaces, a dental care program and historic investments in housing.

What are the Conservatives focusing on in the meantime? Well, as reported in the Journal de Montréal this week, Conservative MPs are taking trips to Florida to preach about the importance of banning abortion and teaching creationism. We cannot make this stuff up. Shame on them.

[English]

The Speaker: Even when members are not recognized on the floor and should not be speaking, I always invite them to be very mindful of the accusations they make of other members.

The hon. member for Kenora.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government.

People across northern Ontario are struggling to fill their gas tanks, young professionals cannot find an affordable place to live and our communities are less safe. These are all reasons why Canadians deserve a carbon tax election so they can vote for our common-sense plan, but the NDP continues to support the government, denying Canadians that opportunity.

Why is the Prime Minister so afraid of facing a carbon tax election?

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives want to take away the rebate to Canadians, they will have to explain that to Canadians. What they will also have to explain at some point is that they lost 800,000 affordable homes when they were in office. The former minister of housing, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, had no plan on housing and never mentioned homelessness once, and when it came time to vote in favour of ensuring zoning changes at the local level through federal dollars that would incent that change, he voted against it. They all did.

They do not care about the young people the member just mentioned. They never cared. It is more right-wing populism.

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*[Translation]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois showed its true colours yesterday by keeping the Liberal Prime Minister on life support.

Oral Questions

The Bloc voted to keep a centralizing government with a disastrous record on public safety. Since 2015, the number of auto thefts in Quebec has increased by 87%. Violent firearms offences are up 146%.

Does the Bloc Québécois-backed government recognize that its policies have created public safety problems across the country, and particularly in Quebec?

[English]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the investments we are making to make our communities safe.

We are moving forward on banning some of the most dangerous weapons, over 1,500 assault-style weapons, which are designed to kill. The Conservatives get upset because they are sent here to do the work of the gun lobby instead of keeping Canadians safe, in particular women, who are disproportionately affected by gun violence. It is a shame for the Conservatives to stand up and vote against these measures.

• (1435)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, gun violence is up 121%. However, these are not sport shooters or hunters. These are street gangs with guns that have crossed the border. The government needs to put more money, investments and effort into the border. That is what a Conservative government will do.

How can the government explain its weakness? Why does it always go after hunters and sport shooters?

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would invite my colleague to be honest with Quebecers because he knows very well that we are not banning the firearms used by hunters and sport shooters. We are banning firearms meant for warfare that are being used by gangs to commit murder on an ongoing basis.

My colleague should know that the primary victims of firearms in Quebec and Canada are women, so it is really shameful that he is opposing our measures to ban assault weapons, particularly in Quebec, after the Polytechnique massacre.

SENIORS

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have told us again and again that they are concerned about the cost of living and seniors' living conditions. That is why we issued our October 29 ultimatum.

The Liberals have no right to abandon seniors aged 65 to 74 considering the rising cost of living. They must put an end to the two classes of seniors they have created. They must stop discriminating against retirees based on age. They have until October 29.

Will they comply with our request or will they try to explain their intransigence to voters?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 14,600 seniors in my Bloc Qu b cois colleague's riding, Shefford, now benefit from the Canadian dental care plan.

Nevertheless, she has stood up in this House time and time again and voted against vulnerable seniors in her riding who are currently benefiting from this program and saving hundreds of dollars.

Why?

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that was not the question. The Liberals may not realize it, but October 29 is just around the corner.

In the meantime, they can start today by showing seniors and the community organizations that assist them a sign of good faith. The Liberals can promise to reach an agreement with the Government of Quebec and stop withholding funds from the age well at home program. It is unacceptable that the federal government should start a dispute so that it could interfere in Quebec's jurisdictions, only to end up depriving our organizations of money that rightfully belongs to Quebec's seniors.

Will they reach an agreement with Quebec and stop holding seniors hostage?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is not all. When we moved the age of retirement back down from 67 to 65, what did the member and her colleagues do? They voted against it. When we increased the GIS, a federal program helping hundreds of thousands of vulnerable seniors, the Bloc Qu b cois and my colleague voted against it.

Yes, we proudly increased OAS for vulnerable seniors. She and her colleagues voted against it.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinong , BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is an ultimatum. Bill C-282 on supply management has to pass before October 29.

That should be simple. The House voted in favour of the bill, but it has been stuck in the Senate for more than a year. Yesterday, in committee, a senator asked an excellent question. He said, and I quote, "Can you explain why this bill is being held up in the Senate? It is a bill that was supported by the vast majority of members in the democratically elected House."

The Prime Minister appointed 80% of the senators. Will he tell them that it is time to release the bill?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government supports supply management, and my hon. colleague is well aware of that. We supported Bill C-282 because, of course, we have supported and always will support supply management, unlike the Conservatives, who fell shamefully behind when important funding for supply management came to the House and voted against it.

My hon. colleague is fully aware that we have supported and will continue to support supply management.

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● (1440)

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberals, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up.

The NDP leader made a big deal about tearing up the supply and confidence agreement with the Liberals and then flip-flopped by voting to keep the Prime Minister in power. The NDP leader needs to end the costly coalition with the Liberals. People cannot afford to eat. Ontario food bank usage just posted an eight-year high.

Canadians need a carbon tax election. Why is the Prime Minister so afraid to have one?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all suffer when we know that fellow Canadians are struggling.

We have made historic investments as a government to ensure that our social security net is strong for Canadians, whether that is with \$10-a-day child care or restoring the retirement age to 65. However, let us not pretend that the Conservatives really care about helping Canadians. If they did, they would be supporting these important measures, which are helping.

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CARBON PRICING

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is what they have really done. The NDP-Liberal coalition has doubled the debt, doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work and unleashed crime in our streets.

Instead of selling out Canadians by keeping the Prime Minister in power, the NDP leader needs to vote with common-sense Conservatives for a carbon tax election. Why not let Canadians decide whether they want the carbon tax hiked by 61¢ a litre by the Liberals or want a government that is going to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the question is why the Conservatives are so desperate for an election right now. It is because they want to get in before Canadians understand that they have a hidden agenda. However, Canadians are much smarter than that. When the Conservatives say one thing and do another, Canadians know.

We trust Canadians. When will the Conservatives start trusting them?

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up.

The Saskatchewan premier said the carbon tax is costing Saskatchewan's health and education systems nearly \$380 million. He notes, "That's money that could be used for more teachers, more doctors, and more nurses." The NDP-Liberal carbon tax is literally taking away teachers and nurses from Saskatchewan. Shame on the NDP for supporting this tired Liberal government.

If the Prime Minister wants to cut teachers and nurses in Saskatchewan, why will he not call a carbon tax election and let Canadians decide?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I would encourage my Conservative colleagues to use facts. Eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back. It is an affordability measure. People who live on modest incomes benefit significantly. It is also an important way of fighting climate change.

If the member wants to quote Scott Moe, I would say that when he appeared here in Ottawa and talked about the price on pollution, he said that he looked at doing something else and everything else was too expensive, so he was not going to do anything to fight climate change. I guess that is the answer of the Conservative Party of Canada.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, veterans taking part in the Invictus Games have found themselves on the hook for medical insurance. This has come as a shock since all serving military members have theirs covered under the Canadian Armed Forces. The Liberals created this mess. Now one veteran has had their life changed after a serious injury during the previous games.

Will the minister admit to this mistake and extend medical coverage to all Canadian Invictus athletes for the upcoming Whistler games, or will she continue to ignore the needs of veterans?

Oral Questions

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Invictus Games offers a very unique rehabilitation opportunity to ill and injured veterans and to members of the Canadian Armed Forces. It is important to make sure that the well-being of veterans is taken care of during the games and after the games. That is why we will continue to work with the Canadian Armed Forces, Soldier On, the Invictus Games and other stakeholders to ensure that the well-being of our veterans is always taken care of.

I want to assure members that this situation will be rectified before Invictus Games 2025.

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● (1445)

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, young Canadians are in survival mode and rates of anxiety and depression have gone through the roof with the high cost of living and youth unemployment. Many are struggling just to meet their basic needs, like food and shelter, making paying for therapy out of pocket seem like a luxury.

The Liberals promised to ensure that mental health is treated as a full and equal part of Canada's universal public health care system, but they have failed to deliver. When will the government finally get serious about the mental health crisis and ensure that all Canadians can access the mental health care they need when they need it?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can say as the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, but also as a mother to two teenage daughters, that this is exactly why in 2024, in this year's budget, we pledged \$500 million toward the youth mental health fund.

We are working with community service organizations that are youth-led and for youth in every community across this country. We want to meet young people where they are to get them the supports and services they need and deserve. They are the future of our country, and we are going to take care of them so that we build a stronger Canada together.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud that around the world, Canada has a reputation for helping its friends and being there for its allies.

The world was rightly shocked when the Conservative Party repeatedly voted against Ukraine, and Canadians were shocked once again this week when the deputy Conservative leader disparaged and personally attacked the German state secretary for saying that climate change is real and Europe wants to buy clean Canadian energy.

Can the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources share with this House how Canada is supporting our European allies like Germany?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Ukrainians were invaded by Russia, we worked actively with them to support them, including providing necessary equipment to support their electricity grids, while the Conservatives chose to abandon Ukraine. When Germany said it needed help from Canada with energy security and providing clean hydrogen and critical minerals, we said yes and worked with it. The Conservatives simply bullied German officials publicly.

Providing clean energy to the world is something that will not only benefit Canada from a prosperity and jobs perspective, but will also enable us to help our allies around the world. The Conservative rhetoric is going to cost Canada its friends. It is going to cost Canada jobs—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I know that all members get passionate when it comes to questions and answers, but we must make sure that we show a fundamental respect for all members.

I know that the hon. member for Calgary Signal Hill is a veteran of this place and other places. I am certain he knows how to make sure his language is appropriate.

The hon. member for Bay of Quinte.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Liberal government, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up, time is up and now tariffs are up, with softwood lumber tariffs doubling to 14.5%. What has happened?

Today, Resolute Forest Products announced the closure of the sawmills in Mauricie and in Maniwaki, Quebec, costing 280 jobs, because of the tariffs. The Prime Minister said that this was a small issue.

Can the Prime Minister explain why the loss of 280 jobs is a small issue, or is he just a soft Prime Minister?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member that the forestry sector and the workers, particularly, in this sector are tremendously important to our communities across the country. They are dedicated workers who give their all. As we have said, the punishing tariffs are unjustified. We have said this to the United States. In fact, I know that the United States cares about building affordable homes just as we do. If the United States were to get rid of the tariffs, it would actually help us build affordable homes in this country and in the United States.

• (1450)

Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian softwood lumber producers have already paid \$9 billion more because of the excess tariffs since 2017. Do we know what else they pay? They pay the carbon tax. The carbon tax costs hundreds of millions of dollars more, which makes it uncompetitive to the U.S. industry.

Do we know what the irony is? The industry plants trees. Last year alone, it planted 440 million trees, while the government's two-billion tree program barely got off the ground.

Is it not time for a new, competent minister who is going to axe the tax, stand up for Canadians and fight for the 400,000 jobs in the forestry sector?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question is yet another example of the Conservative Party's not doing its homework and not learning the facts. As I say, on a residential basis, eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back. It is an affordability measure and an effective way to fight climate change.

In terms of the plants he is talking about, they are based in Quebec, which has its own cap-and-trade system. It does not pay the price on pollution.

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[Translation]

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning, we found out that the sawmill in Maurice and the one in Maniwaki are closing.

Some 280 workers are out of work once again because of the failure by an incompetent government on the softwood lumber agreement. It is not over. More sawmills will close their doors after the Minister of Environment and Climate Change imposes his order that will kill at least 1,400 jobs. Entire communities are in jeopardy. Why do the Liberals always fail to help forestry workers?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Conservatives are not huge fans of science, researchers or knowledge, but I would still like to quote Martin-Hugues St-Laurent, a professor at the Université du Québec à Rimouski, who recently said, "The emergency order is amply justified. The federal government is simply implementing the legislation given the absence of a provincial strategy deemed effective enough to contribute to the species' recovery."

I could also quote Alain Branchaud of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, who said, and I quote, "The emergency order proposed by the Canadian government is justified and measured. First and foremost, it's scientifically justified." On this side of the House, we listen to science.

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Quebec forestry workers work hard, but they always get the short end of the stick from this Liberal government, which is backed by the Bloc Québécois. The threat of an order that will kill at least 1,400 jobs is still looms large, since the Bloc Québécois voted yet again to keep this government in power.

Oral Questions

The forestry sector is vital to our regions, and the Bloc Québécois is no longer a party of the regions. This was evident during the Montreal by-election. How many jobs is the minister willing to sacrifice before the government falls?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as an MP for the amazing Montreal area, I am proud of the people I represent. Perhaps the member opposite does not feel the same way.

I would like to suggest that he talk to forestry workers in Quebec. As they told me and several public commissions, the future of the forest and the future of their jobs depends on the health of the forest. The Conservative Party of Canada does not seem to understand that.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec City is the cradle of the French language in America. However, the Governor General cancelled her visit to an organization called Pignon Bleu because she still does not understand French even though she promised to learn it three years ago. Pignon Bleu's preparations for Ms. Simon's visit were all for naught. Pignon Bleu thought it could express itself in its language, French. Ms. Simon is still unable to treat the organization with a modicum of respect.

How can the Liberals consider this acceptable and justifiable?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government remains firmly committed to protecting the French language here in Canada.

It is important to note that Her Excellency the Governor General did not have the opportunity to learn French when she was young because of discrimination. She is the first indigenous woman to hold the position. She speaks one of our indigenous languages, which we are very proud of.

We expect the Governor General to continue her studies in French. Linguistic duality is at the heart of our identity as Canadians.

• (1455)

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Governor General has had three years to learn French. Taxpayers even paid \$28,000 for her to take lessons. Clearly, she has not been trying.

Why should she bother? She already landed the job. This is another example of history repeating itself for francophones. Today, we are talking about Mary Simon, but it was the same thing when Air Canada appointed Michael Rousseau.

When will the Liberals finally understand that appointing English-speaking people on the promise that they will learn French is nothing more than taking francophones for a ride?

Oral Questions

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a bilingual country and Canadians expect their leaders to be able to express themselves in both official languages.

It is worth highlighting that the Governor General was unable to learn French when she was young because of the discriminatory policies that existed in Canada at the time. We expect her to continue learning French, as linguistic duality is at the heart of our identity as Canadians.

We are proud of our bilingualism here in Canada.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberals, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up, time is up, and now visits to Cambridge food banks are also up nearly 20%. The Liberals' carbon tax scam has forced our seniors and our families to rely on food banks for their survival. The NDP continue to prop up its political masters and deny Canadians the carbon tax election they so desperately want.

Why is the Prime Minister so afraid of a carbon tax election, and why will he not call one now?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to talk about the child care numbers that are up. Just last week, Co-mox Valley Schools announced a new child care facility with 108 new spots for children. In Winnipeg, the Splash child care centre has announced an additional 40 new spots for children. That is 148 new spots for kids here in our country. High-quality, affordable care is what is up.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberals, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up, and now time is up. However, the NDP leader and his colleagues voted yesterday to keep the Prime Minister in power so he can quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre, the carbon tax that drives up the cost of everything and is driving a record number of British Columbians to food banks.

Why is the Prime Minister so afraid of a carbon tax election? Why will he not let Canadians decide?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday what we saw was that the House voted non-confidence in the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, young Quebeckers cannot afford to wait any longer.

After nine years of this Prime Minister, they have been betrayed by the “Liberal Bloc”, which wants to continue with the Liberal government. A total of 72% of young people between the ages of

18 and 40 think that they have a lower standard of living than the previous generation. Half of them are living paycheque to paycheque. The “Liberal Bloc” is supporting a bad government for young Quebeckers.

When will young people be able to vote for a government that will build houses and fix the budget?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is bad for Quebeckers, including young Quebeckers, are the insults, lies and austerity that the Conservative leader keeps promoting. That is what he does every day. He wants to make cuts, including cuts to housing investments that young Quebeckers need.

Not only is the Conservative leader calling everyone, including Quebec's municipalities, incompetent, but he also wants to rip up the agreement that we signed with the Government of Quebec. We are talking about a \$1.8-billion agreement to create tens of thousands of housing units and several thousand affordable housing units.

* * *

● (1500)

HOUSING

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government presented a plan to build 250,000 new housing units on federal public land by 2031. The Conservative leader's housing plan will allow him to sell federal buildings to the highest bidder with no guarantee of affordable housing in return.

Can the Minister of Public Services explain to the people of Alfred-Pellan how our federal lands are going to be used to create affordable housing across the country?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one, two, three, four, five, six affordable housing units is what the Conservative leader built during his entire tenure as the minister responsible for housing. Even so, he calls Quebec's municipalities incompetent despite the fact that they are currently building 8,000 affordable housing units across Quebec under the historic agreement we signed.

Quebec municipalities do not need lectures or insults from the Conservative leader.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Liberal-NDP soft-on-crime coalition, tax is up, cost is up, crime is up, extortion is up and time is up.

In Calgary, disturbing stories emerged of armed criminals committing extortion and kidnappings against families and businesses. The Liberal-NDP coalition voted against the Conservative deputy leader's bill, Bill C-381, to crack down on extortion. Instead, the coalition made it easier for criminals to get bail and to re-offend.

Why is the freedom of criminals more important to the government than protecting extortion victims?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, on every single measure that we have made, including investing in police to combat guns and gang units, Conservatives voted against, and they are against them. In addition to that, when they were in power, they actually cut the CBSA and the RCMP, which did this very work and which worked with our provincial and municipal counterparts in policing.

When it comes to addressing crime, Conservatives are all about cuts and slogans, and we are about action.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nine years ago, we warned the government about joining the Beijing-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and so did the Obama-Biden administration. Last year, news about the Chinese Communist Party's infiltration of the bank forced the government to initiate a boycott and to begin a review. The boycott has now been 15 months. Canada still has its shares and Beijing still has the nearly quarter-billion dollars that the government gave the bank.

When will the government release the review, dump the shares and get the money back?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as soon as the minister heard about the very serious allegations, she took action. The minister announced an immediate halt to all Canadian government-led activity at the bank while we conducted a review of the allegations. In December, we announced an expansion of that review in partnership with some of our closest international partners.

The Department of Finance continues to review the matter, as well as Canadians' participation in the organization.

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DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up. The Minister of Environment says he is proud of his preparations for the catastrophic Jasper wildfire, but one-third of Jasper was destroyed, there are \$1 billion in damages and 2,000 people are homeless. This is not something to be proud of, yet this is the record of failure that the NDP supports. Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper are still in danger.

It is time for the minister to take responsibility for his failure so we can prepare for the next fire. Will he do that?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member should be ashamed of himself. Conservatives have deliberately taken out of context emails between Parks Canada officials who were debating which measures to use to fight fires, as opposed to not fighting fires at all. One of those Parks Canada employees has received death threats since the Conservatives put this online. They should be ashamed of themselves.

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● (1505)

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is World Contraception Day, an important day on which to remember that, too often, contraception is not accessible due to political ideology. On this side of the House, we proudly supported pharmaceutical, which would provide free contraception to Canadians.

Could the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions please tell the House what else the government is doing to expand access to universal contraceptives and support the right of women across Canada to choose?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always defend the freedom of a woman's right to choose. Conservatives time and again have shown that they will claw back women's rights, from presenting backdoor legislation to prevent access to abortion services to voting against a woman's freedom of access to contraceptives. We will never let politicians dictate what a woman can and cannot do with her body, and we will certainly not fly to Florida on all-expenses-paid trips to meet with anti-choice politicians. They need to be honest with Canadians about their hidden agenda because, on this side, we stand for women's rights.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are appalled by the Liberals' failure to help family members in Gaza get to safety and reunite with their loved ones here in Canada. From the beginning, the government's initiative was marred in red tape and roadblocks. Precious time was wasted and loved ones continue to be killed. Israel's brutal siege and bombardment continue and there is further escalation in the region.

Oral Questions

What concrete action has the government taken to ramp up diplomatic efforts and collaborate with NGOs on the ground to help bring loved ones to safety?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree as a House that the best way to make sure that Gazans are safe is to make sure there is a ceasefire, so we can continue to work with people to get people here who have connections to family members and who are looking to be reunited with them. We will continue, as a government, to work with the authorities on the ground, whether we agree with their positions or not, to make sure those people are kept safe, and we will continue to work to make sure those people get to Canada in an expeditious fashion.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, education is a provincial domain. Still, MPs would agree the safety of children is a concern for all Canadians. Does the government support Ontario's criticism of the abhorrent action of the Toronto District School Board using students as pawns at a foreign protest that hijacked learning about indigenous peoples and their efforts to get clean water?

Activist teachers on a TDSB-sanctioned field trip compromised the safety of children and violated the trust of parents. Will the government stand up to deceit and hatred?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is a question for the Ontario government.

On this side of the House, what we have been focused on is ensuring that every indigenous child in this country has a fair chance to succeed in their educational journey. In fact, when we took office 10 years ago, we saw a chronic underfunding of first nations education systems so that education rates were appalling across the country, leading to first nations students not being able to reach their full potential. We have changed that, and we are proud of that.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, while we appreciate that you have acknowledged and ruled that the Leader of the Opposition was out of order last Thursday, we are confused by the mixed messaging you have provided to the House. The member was out of order, yet he has still been allowed to participate in debate, and today he had five questions in question period. The regular practice is that a member is not recognized to speak until they have withdrawn. That is not being applied, and we have some concerns about the mixed messages.

I would also like to remind the Speaker of the very serious matter that was raised yesterday regarding the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. We are still waiting for him to withdraw and apologize for his homophobic and disgusting comment.

• (1510)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is rising on his feet, and I will recognize him in due time. However, so that the member does not have to get up twice, I

recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the government House leader is rising on the same point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I want to add a couple of thoughts to the point of order.

We have to put it into the proper perspective that, when a member is requested by the Speaker's chair to withdraw remarks, as has been pointed out, they are required to do so. If they do not, Speakers have not identified them until they make the apology. We can give ample examples of that.

We cannot allow a member of Parliament to violate the rules and then have it be that the political party pays the consequence. That is what we saw here. It was the Conservative Party that lost the three questions. There was no penalty for the leader of the Conservative Party. That causes a great deal of concern for all parliamentarians.

The Speaker: Before I move to the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, I will speak to the points raised by the hon. parliamentary secretary, as well as those raised by the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

The Speaker has made a ruling on this decision. I would encourage all members to read it very carefully. As we know, when there is something that contributes to Standing Order 18, the Speaker has some discretion as to what to do. The Speaker has certainly considered this question, has been in contact with others and has had many discussions. I would encourage the hon. members to read the ruling. If they wish to challenge the ruling of the Chair, they know the procedure to do so.

Mr. Ben Carr: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order.

I would like to draw your attention, for the benefit of the House, to some language I have heard used that is unbecoming of the House and of members in the House. I have no interest in ascribing blame or pointing fingers, so I am not going to name names. However, there has been reference over the course of debate in the House, in the past few days in particular, to pagers and walkie-talkies exploding and reference to members in the House themselves perhaps having that type of technology, which is an obvious reference to the conflict that is happening in the Middle East right now.

I heard another comment from a member today that asked, "Did you get a thank-you letter from Hezbollah?" This was to an Israeli member of the House who has lost innocent loved ones in the conflict. We have other members of this chamber, from all sides, who have lost innocent people by virtue of the conflict that is taking place.

I again am not interested in being partisan. I simply want to draw your attention to this, Mr. Speaker, and call upon the better angels in the House to conduct themselves, on behalf of Canadians and one another, with compassion and dignity.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre for a thoughtful intervention, and I will take this opportunity to remind all members of the House that the most important thing that we can do, despite pursuing the interests of our constituents passionately and pointedly, is to make sure that there is a fundamental respect between all members. This is a point that the Chair has made and that chair occupants have made on several occasions.

* * *

● (1515)

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say briefly that the NDP whip, in particular, has a history of making false and defamatory comments about me, and this is no exception. Members know this. It is very clear—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, please keep your comments to yourselves so the Chair can listen to the point of order being raised by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, who was referenced in some other points of order. I think it is fair to allow him to raise his point of order, uninterrupted, to the Chair.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, there was an exchange yesterday in question period about extravagant spending by the government, with \$9 million spent on a luxury condo on Billionaires' Row. Now, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, false or defamatory comments have been made about me. If members want to hear a response, I will provide one.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that \$9 million was spent on this extravagant condo and identified a number of luxury features associated with that condo, including an extremely luxurious bathtub. Following that, the Prime Minister made no comment whatsoever about those features. Instead, he spoke about the kinds of international engagement that the government does. As Hansard clearly—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am going to ask the hon. member to please get to his point. It is very important that we do, or this may be perceived as engaging in debate.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, false and defamatory comments have been made about me. I am providing a response, and I hope members will benefit from reviewing the context of what happened.

There was \$9 million spent on a luxury condo on Billionaires' Row in New York. In a question from the Leader of the Opposition, various luxury—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am going to invite the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to get to the point immedi-

Points of Order

ately so that we can address the allegations that were made. He is almost there. We can then move on in the House.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, we have heard a few words said in the House about bullying. I am trying to provide an explanation with context and to answer false allegations that have been made against me. I will persist in doing that.

The Leader of the Opposition asked questions about a \$9-million luxury condo purchased by the government, identifying a luxury bathtub as one of its particular features. In what followed, the Prime Minister ignored reference to those features and instead spoke about the engagement done by the government internationally. Hansard shows the exchange.

Many of the comments made on Twitter about what was allegedly said do not reflect what is in Hansard, which is this: "Does he engage with them in the bathtub?" The point of that comment is to illustrate that, of course, meetings do not take place in a bathtub. A luxurious bathtub has nothing to do with meetings; the Prime Minister's answer had nothing to do with the questions. However, the comment was not about sex. I was not thinking about sex at all.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (1520)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will keep my remarks to a minute, and I hope you let me finish.

We heard the tape. I have listened to the tape. What we did not hear was an apology. I just want to understand whether the Speaker is saying that a Conservative member can make a homosexual slur against the Prime Minister of the country, and it is okay; the Conservative member can defend himself by speaking for a good ten minutes. Is that the standard we have in the House? We would like to know if it is the standard the Speaker is bringing because it would very much clarify where we go from here.

The Speaker: I see the hon. member for Don Valley West rising on a point of order. I hope it will be germane to the issue at hand.

The Chair will consider this and come back to the House, if necessary.

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday a point of order was raised, and I am a little confused about whether it is a true point of order. The member for Edmonton Strathcona has essentially raised a new point of order but referred to yesterday's point of order.

However, to be victimized once in the House is sufficient without being revictimized by someone's pretense. We all heard what was said, and it is in Hansard. It is a homophobic slur. Indeed, there were two of them. They were both absolutely personal.

If the consul general in New York were a woman, the House would be outraged if she were treated this way. Every member should be outraged because there was a homophobic slur. I want you, Mr. Speaker, to take it under consideration.

Business of Supply

The Speaker: Colleagues, I appreciate the points of view raised by the members. I appreciate the hon. member for getting up and offering his perspective.

The Chair is obviously going to take this matter under advisement. I will just say this, which I think is really important. One of the best ways to avoid these kinds of situations is to make sure that members do not speak out of turn. In that way, we do not have a situation where there are different interpretations of what was said.

I thank all hon. members for rising on this issue. The Chair will consider this and come back to the House, if necessary.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, with all due respect, I have real issues with this.

On two occasions, once before the House rose, you let a Conservative member liken somebody's racial background for criminality—

The Speaker: The hon. member is raising an issue that was brought up and decided by the Chair in a decision made by last week.

I will invite the hon. member to sit down and take a look at the ruling that is here.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1525)

The Speaker: I am moving on.

Is the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona rising on the same point of order?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I am.

The Speaker: The Chair has already given his opinion. The hon. member is an experienced member, and she understands the process available to her.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order on how the House is being run, if I may.

The Speaker: I am afraid not.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I was hoping that the government House leader could update the House as to the business for the rest of this week and into the following week. Perhaps she and her cabinet colleagues have finally seen the light and decided not to sit next week. Instead, they could give Canadians the carbon tax election they so desperately want. Canadians could then vote in a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only people who are desperate for an election are the Conservative members of Parliament. Everybody else in the House wants to get to work. We look forward to doing that next week.

An hon. member: Are you afraid of the people?

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, the only people who are afraid are the Conservative MPs. They know that the longer the House sits, the more their hidden agenda is exposed and the more Canadians do not want to vote for them.

This afternoon, we will be dedicated to the Conservative opposition day motion.

Tomorrow, we will consider Bill C-76, an act to amend the Canada National Parks Act, which supports the people of Jasper following the devastating wildfires this summer. As per the special order adopted last week, following one round of debate, this important bill will be deemed adopted at all remaining stages and sent to the Senate.

Next Tuesday shall be an allotted day.

On Wednesday, we will call the vote on Ways and Means Motion No. 26 concerning capital gains. This confidence vote was scheduled to take place yesterday, but, unfortunately, the Conservative members of Parliament blocked it. I think it is because they did not want to lose two confidence motions in a row. I can understand it is embarrassing for them. It seems like they did not want to have that happen.

The Conservatives have also blocked debate on substantive legislation with concurrence debates on five out of nine days since the House returned. The government has a responsibility to ensure the orderly continuance of the work of the House, notwithstanding the efforts of the Conservatives to disrupt this important work at every opportunity.

I will reiterate the fact that there are three parties, not the Conservatives, that are here to work for Canadians, and we look forward to continuing that important work next week.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am the one with the daunting task of calming things down here in the House.

As members know, I have been an MP since 2006. Over the years, I have seen Canada evolve and prosper only to slip backwards and lose the essence of the values it holds dear. That fills me with great sadness as a legislator, but also as a father of five children and a grandfather of seven wonderful grandchildren, whose future has been compromised by the bad decisions made by this Prime Minister and this government.

Business of Supply

People are constantly worrying every day because they no longer believe that our country's legislators are dealing with the real issues and working to address their concerns. This summer, I met Ms. Francine, who shared her concerns with me about the direction that Canada is taking. She said, "I can't take any more of the Prime Minister. When will there be an election?" Her words express the wishes of millions of Canadians who want a new government in our country. These are legitimate concerns, especially when it comes to the national debt, which is over \$1.2 trillion, and the interest costs for the public purse.

Ms. Francine understands that more interest charges means fewer services and less money in Canadians' pockets for the welfare of the vulnerable. She is also concerned about the price of homes and housing, which puts home ownership out of reach for her beloved grandchildren. She is concerned about everything costing more, with inflation affecting the cost of living, food, housing and energy. I wish I could have reassured her, or at least confirmed an election date, but the Bloc Québécois and the NDP seem to enjoy watching the Liberal government slowly but surely waste away.

A minority government has a life expectancy of 20 months, not 48 months. It is in the Bloc Québécois and NDP's hands to allow Canadians to choose who will govern Canada for the next years. With its strong, renewed leadership, the Conservative Party is offering Canadians a credible and exciting opportunity for the future of our country.

We can offer security and reassurance for the future, because we have a proven track record. The current Conservative government balanced the budget. It worked to create and keep jobs here, cracked down on crime, did not encourage the use of harmful drugs, engaged in missions to restore peace, and ensured that all citizens had the chance to make the most of their opportunities by having a good paycheque and leaving more money in their pockets. The previous Conservative government was consistent and did whatever it took to meet the needs expressed by Canadians.

Today, Canadians are living with the consequences of the bad choices made by a reckless Liberal minority government that has been kept in power since 2019 by two opportunistic parties that take turns blackmailing it for their own benefit, to the detriment of the Canadian population. This illegitimate Liberal government, which the NDP and Bloc Québécois are keeping on life support, has dragged us into serious challenges and crises that we may not be able to overcome now or in the years to come unless something changes soon.

I do not know if the Liberal government can hear me, but I can certainly hear them here in the House talking on the other side—

• (1530)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis on a point of order.

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Madam Speaker, we are listening to a very serious and emotional speech by our colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière. Our friends opposite are being very loud and we can hear them all the way over here. It is distracting both for us and for our colleague.

I would appreciate it if you would call the House to order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I agree. Members need to respect those who are speaking and should not be having conversations while a colleague is giving a speech.

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, I was proud to be elected as part of a Conservative government that expanded the promise of a better Canada, lowered inflation, cut the GST and taxes for small business, and balanced the budget, all while increasing health transfers faster than any other government in history. Personal incomes rose by 10% after inflation and taxes. In fact, we did more than we promised.

Now, after nine years under this disastrous Prime Minister, the Canadian promise is broken. This Prime Minister has broken numerous promises and dashed many of our hopes. He has not balanced the budget. He has not cut taxes for the middle class. There still is not enough affordable housing. In addition to going back on his word, the Prime Minister refuses to face up to the fact that he is not good for our country.

Being born in or living in Canada no longer comes with the assurance of a minimum threshold for living in dignity and decency. This was a promise that everyone in Canada once received as a native-born Canadian or as an immigrant to this country. It is so sad to see young people working hard but staying longer, even too long, in their parents' homes. It is appalling.

The Bloc Québécois has voted more than 189 times to keep this Prime Minister in power. It has voted for \$500 billion in inflationary, bureaucratic and centralizing spending. I would add that this \$500 billion does not include health care funding or money for seniors. Those funds are external and are already set out in law.

It is truly scandalous to see all the money that is going to consultants, bureaucrats, interest groups and big business, all subsidized by the state. It is even more shocking to see the Bloc Québécois laughing at us at the same time, voting to increase gas taxes, including in Quebec, with the second carbon tax that does apply in Quebec.

I am also thinking of the Bloc Québécois's support for capital gains taxes, which will force Quebec farmers, entrepreneurs, doctors and home builders to pay more money to Ottawa, only for those funds to be controlled here by the state.

I was part of a Conservative government that increased health transfers. Now the Bloc Québécois wants to keep the most centralizing and costly prime minister in our history in power.

Business of Supply

The Prime Minister, with his immigration policy that even his own minister admits is out of control, has pushed Quebec to the breaking point. The Bloc Québécois does not even think that immigration is an important issue. In other words, Quebecers are far down on the list of the Bloc Québécois's interests and priorities.

It is also important to remember that during the past nine years under this colossal and ineffective government, the Prime Minister doubled the national debt. That means he alone spent more than all the prime ministers before him. He spent more in nine years than all the others did in 148 years.

That debt has a material impact on ordinary people. It means that currently, under this Liberal government, all the money taxpayers spend on GST is being used just to cover the interest on the debt. Unless something is done, these payments will continue to increase, further mortgaging the future of the next generations and their right to a government that has its books in order.

Is that what democracy is about? Is it about keeping the government in a position of weakness indefinitely?

While the Bloc Québécois and the NDP circle around the Liberals like vultures, hoping for some gains that they are very unlikely to get, voters are clear about wanting a carbon tax election. The current situation is not normal. Nothing about it is normal.

Voters did not vote for that in 2021. First of all, if they had known that the NDP was going to form a dishonourable coalition with the Liberals, the outcome of the election probably would have been very different. The same is currently true of the Bloc Québécois. Voters did not vote for that party, which has voted 189 times to keep the Prime Minister in power. Time is up. Why is the Bloc Québécois too afraid to give voters the choice right now? The "Liberal Bloc" is a very appropriate name. What image are we portraying to the international community? Do other countries see a strong, proud Canada that is secure in itself and its destiny, or a Canada where the government is unstable and voters are urgently calling for an election?

Let us talk about the infamous carbon tax. It is the most unproductive government tax ever created in Canadian history, because, like all other taxes, it not only takes money out of taxpayers' pockets, but it also puts Canadian businesses at a competitive disadvantage compared to those of other countries. When it costs more to manufacture in Canada than elsewhere, it forces our businesses to move away and discourages foreign investment in Canada.

• (1535)

Our productivity now falls far short of that of our neighbours to the south. Canada ranks second-last in the G7 in terms of productivity per hour worked. For all these reasons, we are going to vote to bring down this government in order to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member gets a gold star, just as every Conservative member who stands and repeats the slogans and bumper stickers

gets a little credit in the back room. It is mandated by the leader of the Conservative Party that they have to say that slogan.

Does the member not give Canadians credit for being able to understand that an election is more than just slogans and bumper stickers and at some point in time we have to share ideas? I know there are a lot of ridiculous ideas out there from the Conservative Party, but is there no sense of obligation to be a little more honest, particularly in social media posts from the Conservative Party today, which are there to mislead Canadians? That is what we see day after day from the Conservative Party.

Does the member have any remorse for that?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, let us talk about honesty. During the last election in 2021, the Liberal Party platform never mentioned the possibility of a coalition with the NDP if a Liberal minority government were elected. That was never mentioned by the person running to be Prime Minister.

Was it honest to conceal this possibility from Canadians? If Canadians had known that these two parties would form a coalition, I am not sure whether the outcome would have been the same.

• (1540)

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague is blaming the Bloc Québécois and talking about Quebec. However, when it comes to immigration, we have no idea where the Conservatives stand. Do they agree on the need for a more equal distribution? What are their concrete commitments?

In terms of official languages, for example, we know that almost all official language funding is spent on English in Quebec. Have the Conservatives made any commitments in this regard? I would like to know.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, we would be delighted to unveil our immigration platform in two days if the Bloc Québécois agrees to vote with us to bring down this government.

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech. The member for Lévis—Lotbinière has been here for almost 18 years, if not more. He has seen a lot, I am sure.

He mentioned the Harper government, which, at the time, brought back a balanced budget after a very dark period in history. Both 2008 and 2009 were very difficult years. In spite of everything and after making considerable efforts, we managed to balance the budget. In the end, that is what has allowed the current government to spend as much as it wanted.

I would like to ask my colleague about the policies put in place by the Conservative government at the time. Similar policies will be part of our next election platform. I am certain Canadians will be pleased with them and, most importantly, they will make it possible to axe the carbon tax.

Business of Supply

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that good question, and I congratulate him on all the good work he is doing in his riding. He has become a legend. I have seen my share of snow, but it never snows as much as it does on the shores of the river where he lives, which is truly exceptional.

I had the good fortune to be part of a Conservative government under Mr. Harper. Our finances were sound. Our leader was a man of clear vision who worked hard and did great things for Canada. I am very proud of that. That is exactly what we are going to do when we are back on that side. We are going to restore our country to its former glory. We will build a strong, proud country for future generations.

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to hear what my colleague thinks. The Bloc Québécois enjoys boasting that it listens to Quebec's needs and is in lockstep with whatever the Government of Quebec wants. Now, the Government of Quebec wants this government to be replaced. Moreover, the Parti Québécois leader, Paul St-Pierre Plamondon, has condemned this government's inflationary spending.

What does my colleague think of what the Government of Quebec wants and the Bloc Québécois's position?

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, I love working with my colleague in Lévis. We are really an outstanding pair. Unfortunately, at present, the Bloc Québécois's offices are satellite offices for the Parti Québécois in Quebec. They are in the process of mounting a major national strategy to hold a referendum in the coming years.

[*English*]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise to speak to this motion. What I see from this motion is the kind of attention-seeking hyperbole that is becoming the trademark of politics south of the border and the trademark of a certain presidential candidate south of the border. It is the kind of discourse that inserts phrases like, “best ever”, “worst economy”, “best market performance”, “nuclear winter”, “mass hunger”, “people never being able to leave their homes and having to turn their temperature down to 13°C” and that kind of hyperbole.

I could say that the phrase from the motion, “the most centralizing government in Canadian history”, forgot to add the superlatives “ever” and “entire”, to read, for example, “the most centralizing government ever in the entire Canadian history” or maybe “human history”. Why not? It is the language of the sloganeer.

What are the yardsticks for making such sweeping statements? Let us look at our Canadian history. Let us look at Conservative governments, policies and actions that could be seen as centralizing, even if we consider those past initiatives to be good nation-building initiatives of another, more constructive, brand of Canadian conservatism.

Let us go back in history. CN has been in the news quite a bit. Who created CN, a Crown corporation and national railway company that extended from sea to sea and could be seen as too centralizing by some today? It was Prime Minister Robert Borden.

Let us talk about the CBC, the Conservatives' bugbear. How did the CBC get started? It was started in some way with CN, because

in the early days CN was looking for ways to keep its passengers entertained, so they created a kind of radio network, an entertainment system of the day, for their trains, and then that kind of morphed into an organization called CNR Radio. In 1932, on the heels of that, R.B. Bennett established CBC's predecessor, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission.

I have just been reminded that I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North, and I apologize for forgetting to say that at the beginning.

On the environment, which is a weak point for the Conservative opposition, it was the Conservatives under Brian Mulroney who created national, or so-called “centralizing”, environmental legislation. CEPA, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, was enacted in 1988 by Mr. Mulroney. It was designed to provide a systematic national approach to assessing and managing chemical substances in the environment, as well as to create criminal law offences for polluters.

Quebec probably saw that centralization as an unwelcome intrusion into provincial jurisdiction at the time. I would think that would be the case, because Hydro-Québec, a provincial Crown corporation, went up against the federal government in court to argue that the federal government had no jurisdiction and that it was essentially invading provincial jurisdiction, but the Supreme Court of Canada found that the federal government did have jurisdiction and that this was a matter of national interest, and therefore criminal law power was justified.

Let us look at national parks. The Canadian national park system began in November 1885, when the federal government of Sir John A. Macdonald set aside an area of approximately 26 square kilometres on the northern slopes of Alberta's Sulphur Mountain for public use. I suppose in today's terms it would be seen as an intrusion by the federal government into provincial jurisdiction.

● (1545)

Conservatives used to say that they liked to stand up for conserving our heritage, natural and otherwise, but today's Conservatives, to me here on this side of the House, seem to be more interested in upending the system by leveraging populist sentiment and by farming anger.

Let us look at, more recently, the unfair elections act, which is a perfect example of a heavy-handed approach by a federal government with a majority. As a matter of fact, the sponsor of the legislation was the current Leader of the Opposition. Of course, the government was using its majority's power to attempt to suppress votes in what was, as they say, a heavy-handed and top-down approach.

Business of Supply

There has been some Liberal centralization too, for example with national medicare and the Canada pension plan. If I may say, partly in jest, because this is a good-natured debate, I think the Conservatives are envious that these were not their ideas, so envious that they are trying to dismantle them.

What is the most decentralizing form of human organization known to man, a mechanism so decentralized and so out of the government's reach, a vehicle of citizen agency synonymous with the words "freedom" and "democracy", the very antidote to centralization? The answer is the market and its price mechanism, what we call the invisible hand that allows society to grow and prosper anonymously through trillions of individual relationships outside the purview and control of the state.

Since the motion mentions the price on carbon, let us be clear that there is no carbon tax; the Supreme Court has said so. We know that Conservatives do not respect the court much, but the Supreme Court has said the price on carbon is not a carbon tax because the money is returned. It is not a tax. That is not my opinion; that is the opinion of the justices of the Supreme Court.

Let me read a quote from a recent analysis by Andrew Coyne in *The Globe and Mail*, on the Conservative approach to environmental policy. We all know that Andrew Coyne is a clear-eyed, incisive journalist and certainly not a Liberal Party cheerleader. I think Andrew Coyne's is an extremely objective voice. This is what he says about Conservative environmental policy:

The Conservative position [is], as near anyone can make it out...that climate change should be fought, if at all, not by harnessing the power of the free market, but by central planning, a mix of command and control regulation and government subsidy...

How much more efficient is pricing carbon to the alternatives? Some years ago the Ecofiscal Commission, a group of environmental economists, estimated the economic costs of a carbon tax, sufficient to meet Canada's internationally agreed emissions-reduction targets, at 0.05% of GDP annually.

The cost of the regulation-first approach, by contrast, it put up to 0.8% of GDP: 16 times as much. At a time when growth is expected to average just 1.6%, it's huge.

What we see in the rejection of the price on carbon, a mechanism that Milton Friedman, the Leader of the Opposition's economic hero, his favourite economist, agreed with as the best way to fight pollution, is a rejection of the market approach. We see a government that is favouring instead, as Andrew Coyne said, a "command and control" system. That is about as centralizing and as top-down an approach as one can get. I think the party opposite should maybe look at itself in the mirror in that regard.

The Conservative Party claims it believes in provincial autonomy and staying out of provincial jurisdiction, yet the Leader of the Opposition tells cities that if they do not do what he says to solve the housing crisis, he will punish them. I think that Conservative policies and actions do not match the rhetoric of the motion.

• (1550)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives are so bad at this confidence stuff that they do not even have quorum in the House. Perhaps we could have a quorum call.

And the count having been taken:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have quorum now.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, perhaps the member opposite is unaware of what is happening in the country, where 70% of Canadians want to get rid of the carbon tax and 70% of Canadians are very unhappy with the performance of the Liberal government.

If he thinks the Liberals' plans are so fantastic, why does he not give Canadians what they want and call a carbon tax election?

• (1555)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, there is a lot of work left to do in the best interests of Canadians. We know that dental care is in the process of being rolled out. We know that the opposition does not believe dental care exists, even though people are signing up and even though dentists are signing up. The third phase of the program needs to be rolled out, and an election now would interrupt that. We cannot take that risk.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, now I understand why we get so few answers during question period. It is because we call it "question period" and not "question and answer period".

This afternoon, perhaps we can dare to hope that the government will give us an answer. My question is very simple. I want to know if the government is going to proceed with the irreversible implementation of two bills that the Bloc Québécois has been championing for months, namely, Bill C-319 to increase old age security for people aged 65 to 74, and the famous Bill C-282 on supply management.

Could I have an answer?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I am not part of the government. I am a duly elected member of Parliament, but I do not hold a cabinet position.

As far as old age security is concerned, obviously there is a financial framework. There are many programs that could be improved. There is the Canada child benefit, the Canada disability benefit. We could improve the child care system. Choices have to be made. I am not the Minister of Finance. I might have an opinion, but it is not up to me to decide.

Business of Supply

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I quite enjoyed the hon. member's interesting speech. I know that a couple of other members really could not control their laughter at some points, and I appreciate some entertainment in the House.

In my riding of North Island—Powell River, there are a lot of health issues, especially around the health care system. There are a lot of emergency rooms in smaller communities that are having to be shut because there are not enough people to staff them. It is an ongoing issue.

I am just wondering whether the member shares the concern that I have, although I do not think the Liberals are giving as much money as they should. The Conservatives seem very interested in privatizing, which of course will mean that rural and remote communities will have many fewer services and that there is going to be an even worse epidemic where people, if they cannot pay, will not be able to access health care.

Could the member speak to that?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I am extremely concerned about the health care system. Many of my constituents are afraid to get sick. They would not know where to turn. They do not want to go to the emergency department. They might have to wait 48 hours and get sick while they are at emergency.

The federal government is a funder of health care, and a recent study showed that we have increased our transfers to the provinces for health care faster and more greatly than the provinces have spent on health care. I think that perhaps provincial governments need to make the reforms, because it is a provincial jurisdiction even though it is partly federally funded. They need to spend the money required to ensure that people can have a family doctor and that, if they are sick, they can get care in a reasonably quick manner.

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a quick question for my colleague. I know he talked about dental care and how important that is. In my riding, Louis-Hébert, 88% of eligible seniors, or 9,200 seniors, have signed up for the program. For the rest of the population, those aged 18 to 64, they will be eligible somewhere around June 2025. What impact will this have on the lives of these citizens, on Canadians across the country?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, it will have a tremendous impact. I think it was the Minister of Health who mentioned it the other day during question period. Thanks to the program, people can now get a dental checkup. Some dentists have already found cancers. We can expect many lives to be saved under this program.

• (1600)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak today, even though it is the second day we are having a confidence vote. We cannot help

but notice a definite lack of enthusiasm from across the way if we contrast today to last Tuesday. I suspect there was a bit of an accountability check on Wednesday when the Conservative Party did not get what it wanted.

What the Conservatives want is not what is in the best interest of Canadians. They want what is in the best interest of the Conservative Party and its leader. That is why I often talk about their thirst and quest for power. They let nothing get in their way, according to the Conservatives. They strive for power for the sake of having power, and power alone. We have seen that virtually from day one with the Conservatives being the official opposition.

I want to approach it in a different way, because I only have 10 minutes this time around, and talk about some of the things we know about the Conservative Party, or what I like to refer to as the Conservative-Reform party. When I say Conservative-Reform party, I do not say it lightly. At the end of the day, we see a party that has taken a very hard right turn.

Many, including myself, would suggest the Conservative Party has adopted many of the thoughts and ideas that flow from our neighbours to the south, the far right or the MAGA right. We should all be concerned about that because there is a very strong negative side to it. We see it through things like character assassination, the spreading of misinformation and the discrediting of our traditional media. These are things we should all be aware of.

I want to highlight some things I think most Canadians would be very surprised and disappointed by. One of them is in regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank. We hear Conservative members say they are going to get rid of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Many of them will say the Canada Infrastructure Bank has not done anything, and therefore, they are going to get rid of it and save money for Canadians. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

I can give the facts right now. We have \$10 billion of investment coming through the public, matched by virtually \$20 billion of outside investment. We have \$30 billion being spent throughout different regions. Every region is receiving money and support in building Canada's infrastructure. We know that. Anyone can look it up and they can see it first-hand. However, the leader of the Conservative Party, who will likely be addressing the House soon, does not have a problem giving misinformation and saying the Canada Infrastructure Bank has not done anything and the Conservatives are going to get rid of it.

The biggest myth out there is this whole idea that the people of Canada will benefit from getting rid of the carbon rebate. Conservatives go out and tell Canadians they are going to "axe the tax", or get rid of the carbon tax, but they say nothing about the rebate. They say nothing about the 80% of Canadians who receive more money as a direct result of this particular policy. That is a fact. It is not something that is coming just from members of the Liberal Party.

Business of Supply

• (1605)

It was not that long ago that all parties in the House agreed that a price on pollution is an effective tool. The government has developed a tool to ensure that the vast majority of Canadians, 80% or more, are receiving more back. That does not match up with the Conservatives' bumper sticker or slogans.

It is just like the housing issue. When the Conservatives talk about it, they say they are going to get out there and build more homes. History will show that one of the worst individuals we could ever turn to to deal with the housing issue is in fact the leader of the Conservative Party, because he was the minister of housing. As has been pointed out by numerous members, when he was the minister he was an absolute disaster. One reason we have the problem to the extent we have today is his lack of action when he was the minister of housing. By the way, for the record, he built six houses.

Some of the greatest accomplishments of the government, I believe, outside of things like the \$198 billion toward health care and the many progressive measures the Liberals have taken, are some of the economic measures. No government in the history of Canada has signed off on more trade agreements than this Prime Minister and this government. That is a fact. Liberals recognize the value in supporting Canada's middle class, and those aspiring to be part of it, by freeing up and opening those trade lines that are critical to Canada's future. We have been very successful at that.

For the first time ever, the Conservative Party actually voted against one of our trade agreements. Amazingly, it was the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement. It was because of an issue that the Conservative leader, in principle, did not like, even though Ukraine has a price on pollution. The things we hear that come from the Conservative Party are borderline at best. I would suggest that most often they are of a very ridiculous nature. Trying to flush out the Conservatives' issues is a challenge. What do they have to say about dental care? They vote against it. What do they have to say about child care? Do members remember that in the last election they said they were going to tear it up?

These are the types of programs that are helping Canadians in every region. Therefore, when we get members talking about the Conservative hidden agenda, people should be concerned. When Conservatives talk about things like fixing the budget, that is code for Conservative cuts. They are not going to provide the types of programs we have been able to put together over the last number of years that benefit literally millions of Canadians. These things are at risk, because the Conservatives are more focused on trying to fool Canadians. That is what they are banking on. They want the election as soon as possible because they believe that the longer the House sits, it is slipping away from them.

Canadians will become more aware of the leader of the Conservative Party and what he actually stands for. As we see the contrast between the government of the day and what Conservatives have to offer, as we continue to work for Canadians while the Conservatives play games, prevent things from ultimately passing and play an obstructive role here in the chamber, Canadians will see through that. Ultimately, we will continue to serve Canadians in a very productive way from now until the—

• (1610)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):
The hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, crime is rampant in rural Canada. Last night at a town hall in Stoneville, in Notre Dame Bay, a part of my riding, with RCMP present, terrified seniors told of having been threatened that they would be burned out of their homes or burned in their beds. Seventy-five-year-old retirees who worked hard all their lives for a safe Canada are sleeping with baseball bats next to their beds in Gander. A few weeks ago in Lewisporte, an RCMP squad car was vandalized. It was spray-painted with the words “back off” by criminals in rural Canada. There are towns of fewer than 1,000 people in my riding with five crack houses operating, where teenage girls are being sold into prostitution. These are children of the people we represent.

It is time to stop the crime. How can this member support the NDP-Liberal coalition that has let this rot and this crime creep into rural Canada, in places like Notre Dame Bay in my riding?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the leader of the Conservative Party addressed his national caucus just before coming in. This is part of what he said: “There would be mass hunger and malnutrition with a tax this high...our seniors would have to turn the heat down to 14 or 13 C just to make it through the winter.... Inflation would run rampant and people would not be able to leave their homes or drive anywhere.” This is the type of extreme, MAGA, right attitude and propaganda the Conservatives spill every day, just like what we heard opposite.

There was the bail reform bill that was supported—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):
The hon. member for Louis-Hébert.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to get a bit of mileage out of the question my Conservative colleague just asked. I do not think that there is a single member in the House who does not want to reduce crime in Canada and ensure that our communities are safe. Sometimes there are different approaches to this.

If this is so important to the Conservatives, can my colleague explain why, under their reign, we observed a series of cuts to our intelligence agencies, the border services, and the police forces that fall under the federal government's responsibility?

Business of Supply

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize that Ottawa worked with all the different provinces and we brought in bail reform, which we were ultimately able to pass even with the Conservative Party dragging and kicking, because they did obstruct it. That was something we worked on with the provinces, and the provinces are the administrator. In regard to how important it is to deal with crime, we do not take anything for granted. That is one of the reasons we conducted the automobile theft inquiry. Prior to that, the leader of the Conservative Party was nowhere; he did not even raise the issue until we raised the issue. These are the types of responsible things Liberals are doing as government, working with Canadians to make them feel safe in their communities.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, one thing I am not hearing the Conservatives speak about, which I am hoping the member can share his thoughts on, is the horrific attacks on the right of Canadians to access comprehensive, safe reproductive health care, including abortions. It is very problematic and concerning to see the Conservative Party putting forth petitions and legislation attacking these rights.

I am wondering if the member can speak to this and share his thoughts, but I also wonder why we have not seen the Liberals taking the action required to ensure these rights are accessible for all Canadians. We have seen a decrease in access to this vital care in rural communities, for example.

• (1615)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, as a government, Liberals have brought forward pharmacare. Free contraception is one of our first initiatives on the pharmacare file, and I am hoping we will be able to expand. I have talked about shingles in the past. There are so many Canadians who would benefit. A national pharmacare program is something Canadians would value. Unfortunately, the Conservative Party has made it very clear it does not support a national pharmacare plan. I find that unfortunate because it is something Canadians want.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will simply read the motion and then go over each item to prove that no one can vote against it.

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Let us start with the first point: that “the government has doubled housing costs”. There is no debating that. It is basic math. Unfortunately, we have a Prime Minister who says that the economy is not numbers or figures, it is people. Rent is a number. The cost of a mortgage is a number. When someone buys a house, the price is measured in numbers. Numbers control the universe.

Here are the facts. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in 2015 was \$973. Now it is \$1,877. It has doubled. For a two-bedroom apartment, again, rent has doubled from \$1,172 to \$2,337. That is twice as much. The amount needed for a down payment on an average home has doubled from \$22,000 to \$47,000. That is twice as much. The mortgage payment for an average new home

was \$1,400 in 2015. Now it is \$3,000. It has doubled. There is no debating that.

Let us move on to the next point, which is that the government “taxed food”. People may agree with the Prime Minister and the leader of the Bloc Québécois that a carbon tax is good. People may think that a 61¢-a-litre tax is the best idea in the history of the world, but they cannot deny that it increases the cost of food because farmers use fossil fuels to power their machinery. Truckers have to use diesel. This is the first carbon tax, and it applies across Canada. It applies to Quebec indirectly because all the food produced in and transported from the rest of Canada costs more. The second carbon tax, which the federal government is imposing with the support of the Bloc Québécois, will increase the cost of gas by 17¢ a litre. That will directly increase farmers' costs, and therefore consumers' costs as well. There is no debating the fact that the government is taxing food.

The third point says that the government has “punished work”. According to the Fraser Institute, recognized as the most prestigious academic institute in the country, 80% of middle-class Canadians are paying more taxes than they used to. Taxes penalize work. People who work harder pay more. That is penalizing work. On top of that, the government has blocked a number of natural resource development projects. It is allowing the Americans to kill forestry jobs. It is considering issuing a radical Liberal order on caribou that will kill jobs and punish work at the same time. There is no debate on that either. The government is punishing work.

• (1620)

It is also allowing crime to spiral out of control. The Liberals passed three main bills. The legislation arising from Bill C-75 provides for the automatic release of criminals, and crime in Canada has increased by 50%. Gun crime has increased by 121%. Despite spending \$69 million, the Liberals have failed to remove a single rifle banned in Canada since their big election announcements on this issue. Today, gun crime is up, as is crime in general. In addition, 47,000 people have lost their lives to drug overdoses since the government liberalized drugs. There is no debating that. Since this government came to power, there has been more crime.

Lastly, this is a centralizing government. We have seen excessive centralization. There is no need for me to argue this point, since the House leader of the Bloc Québécois has done it for me. He said, and I quote, “For the first time in history, excessive centralization became a fact of life. Despite its difficulty in managing its own responsibilities, this government started poking its nose into the jurisdictions of Quebec and the provinces.”

Business of Supply

This is the biggest, most centralizing and most costly government. It added 100,000 public servants, who meddle in Quebec's business. It doubled spending on consultants. It doubled the debt. This centralizing and costly government punishes work, taxes food and doubled the cost of housing. The evidence is clear. That is why Quebeckers deserve to choose a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. That is exactly what we are proposing.

We are calling on all the opposition parties to show their independence from this centralizing government and vote to allow their constituents to choose a new government that would allow Canadians to bring home a bigger paycheque to buy food and gas in a safe community. That is common sense.

[English]

I am going to be very clinical here and simply read the motion and prove it is true. It states:

That, given that, after nine years, the government has doubled housing costs, taxed food, punished work, unleashed crime, and is the most centralizing government in Canadian history, the House has lost confidence in the government and offers Canadians the option to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Let us go through the items one by one.

Did the Liberals double housing costs? Let us look at prices. In 2015, the average rent for a one-bedroom was \$973 and today it is \$1,877. In 2015, the average cost of monthly rent for a two-bedroom was \$1,072 and today it is \$2,337. In 2015, the average down payment needed for a new home was \$22,000 and today it is \$47,000. In 2015, the average mortgage payment on an average new home was \$1,400 and today it is \$3,020. There is no debate; it is double trouble when it comes to housing.

Are the Liberals taxing food? Well, they admit they are taxing diesel, which is what powers combines, tractors and other equipment. They admit they are taxing the natural gas that dries the grains in the silos. They admit they are taxing the truckers who bring us our food. There is no debate there. They want to quadruple that tax to 61¢ a litre. There is no debate on that either.

Are the Liberals punishing work? They have increased income taxes on 80% of middle-class people.

Are the Liberals unleashing crime? Violent crime is up 50% and gun crime is up 120%.

Are the Liberals a centralist government? They doubled their debt. They have doubled the amount of money for consultants.

All of these points are proven. That is why Canadians deserve the chance to elect a common-sense Conservative government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime so that hard work earns a powerful paycheque that buys affordable food and homes in safe neighbourhoods where the promise of Canada is restored in the freest country on earth, Canada. Let us bring it home.

I am splitting my time with the member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

• (1625)

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his interesting speech. I would like to ask him two questions that directly affect people in the Quebec City area.

The first question has to do with the tramway. Quebec City is the only city of its size in North America that does not have an integral public transit system. This summer there was some confusion. The Quebec lieutenant for the Conservative Party, who is sitting right next to him, said that, even if the Conservatives came to power, there would still be funding for the tramway. He then quickly changed his mind and said that, no matter how far along the project was, a Conservative federal government would not be providing funding. This directly affects residents of Quebec City. The Conservatives can confer on the benches and respond directly. Where do they stand on the tramway? Are they going to provide funding for it?

My second question for the Leader of the Opposition is this. There are 8,200 seniors in Sainte-Foy, Sillery and Cap-Rouge in my riding who have enrolled in the dental plan that we introduced and who have benefited from it over the past year. There will be a lot more people who will benefit next year when the program is opened to people between the ages of 18 and 64. What does he have to say to them? This is very real care that seniors in my riding received thanks to this program. I would like to hear his thoughts on that.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, we will not interfere in Quebec's business by forcing people to have a tramway. I know that the "Liberal Bloc" wants to force people to have a tramway that would cost at least \$15,000 per family, even though the people do not want it. I respect the will of Quebeckers, who want a third link. I know that the Liberals are against the third link. The Bloc Québécois wants to interfere in Quebec's jurisdiction to stop Quebec from building a third link.

What would I say to seniors in the member's riding? I am aware of the fact that they cannot pay for groceries because this government's inflation is stopping them from eating. Often, they are forced to use food banks. It is unfortunate—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give another person the opportunity to ask a question.

The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, my question is very simple.

The opposition leader, who badly wants to trigger an election, has had several opportunities to present his plan. I am not talking about the four items he mentions, we know that song by heart. He declines invitations to participate in a debate with the leader of the Bloc Québécois in front of the national media. Why?

Business of Supply

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, that is not true. I invite him to participate in a debate. He is not here now. He could have asked me questions, but he is not here—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that we do not mention whether members are present or absent in the House.

Is that agreed?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I apologize.

I would have liked to debate the leader of the Bloc Québécois, but he does not speak in the House when I am here. However, he may have other opportunities to debate me during an election.

[*English*]

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the member's record is clear. When he was in government, the Conservatives hid the abuses at residential schools, refused to have a national inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women and girls and voted against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Why? It was because they did not support free, prior and informed consent.

Why should indigenous communities trust the Leader of the Opposition now when he continues to fundraise with organizations that are on record denying residential schools?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: First of all, Madam Speaker, that is false; that is not true.

Second of all, the member and her party have continually acted against first nations people. They have attacked first nations people's rights to have resource projects that they support. When 20 out of 20 first nations communities supported the Teck Frontier mine in Alberta, she and her party took the paternalistic "government knows best" approach and said they could live in poverty. When they supported the Coastal GasLink pipeline, she said they could not have a pipeline and could not have any paycheques. Then she supported banning hunting rifles to take away the constitutional right of first nations people to hunt and harvest the wilderness for a living.

We on this side support first nations people and all indigenous people. We will, in fact, expand their rights and freedoms to harvest a beautiful living for themselves and their families and will put an end to the colonialistic, top-down, paternalistic mentality of the NDP, which wants to keep the government on top forever.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): 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 Saanich—Gulf Islands, The Environment; the hon. member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, Carbon Pricing; the hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country, Mental Health and Addictions.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to rise in this place to address

members and the people of Canada, but first I have to say that I am disappointed that the hon. Minister of Finance is not here to listen to my maiden speech. If she had been here—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that we do not mention presences or absences in the House.

I would like the hon. member to withdraw that and not mention it again.

Mr. Don Stewart: Madam Speaker, I would like to let the hon. Minister of Finance be aware that during my election campaign, when she characterized me in front of a national audience as "cold, cruel and small", she had it wrong. Throughout this speech, I think she will perhaps learn that I am a warm, generous and kind human being, but mis-characterization is the MO of the Liberal Party. I have only been here two weeks, and I have already seen it.

The day I was sworn in, I walked through the halls of West Block and something colourful caught my eye. It was the red head of a small five- or six-year-old boy who was getting a tour or walking around with his mom or his dad. The young boy was gazing around at these tall columns and the thick walls that hold up this endlessly high ceiling. I too feel not unlike that small red-headed boy when I take my place here in the Parliament of Canada.

Those thick walls represent to me the strong foundation upon which Canada has been built over many years, a foundation that was laid over those years, including before Canada the country came into being. For a nation like this one, we continue to build upon the foundation.

The great Sir Wilfrid Laurier put it well: "I want the marble to remain marble; the granite to remain granite; the oak to remain oak; and out of these elements, I would build a nation great among the nations of the world."

I want to touch briefly upon those builders, whom we have come to identify as Canadians. The indigenous peoples were the original inhabitants of this land. We must continue our efforts toward reconciliation. First nations, Métis and Inuit, along with the people who came later, principally the French and English in the early days, laid the groundwork for what would become the Dominion of Canada. Given the lamentable state of Canadian history education in our country, I hesitate to call attention to some of the greatest citizens for fear of losing my audience at home, but for posterity's sake, and in recognition of what they did to help build this country, I will take that risk.

Some of the greats, while strictly speaking may not have been Canadians, were builders of this great land of what would become known as Canada: the great generals, Montcalm and Wolfe; Sir Isaac Brock and Sir Arthur Currie; scientists, like Banting and Best; and our early foundational prime ministers, MacDonald and Laurier. Let us not forget Colonel R.S. McLaughlin from Oshawa, my hometown.

Business of Supply

Canadian heroes come from many walks of life. I am thinking of examples like Terry Fox; sports heroes like Wayne Gretzky or Tom Longboat; artists like Gord Downie and Ottawa's own, and a personal favourite, Paul Anka.

Of course, we have to make room for the more recent greats. Summer McIntosh impressed us all this summer at the Paris Olympics, not only with her phenomenal athleticism, but also with her grace and poise on the podium and elsewhere. I hear last month she was even old enough to vote.

All Canadians will have their own list of favourite great Canadians. The list to choose from is nearly endless. I encourage all of us to celebrate them in our own ways and not just in this place. We need more celebration of Canadian history. As the great historian Jack Granatstein wrote in his famous 1998 book, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, "History is memory, inspiration, and commonality—and a nation without memory is every bit adrift as an amnesiac wandering the streets. History matters, and we forget this truth at our peril."

There is one more group of people I will also include in the list of great Canadians: the members, the veterans and the families of our Canadian Armed Forces: the army, the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal Canadian Navy and Special Operations Forces. We salute both the regular and reservists, who, in the words of Winston Churchill, are "twice the citizen".

● (1635)

Our national foundation supports our aspirations for greatness and that is what we are in this place to do. That is what the people of Toronto—St. Paul's have asked me to do: preserve what we have and build something better.

We must focus on what unites us as Canadians and not on what divides us. We must not pick winners, but create an environment where anyone from anywhere can do anything. That is the Canadian promise. We also strive for peace, order and good government. This is the Canadian way. There are foundational Canadian values that we hold dear and must protect. These are the foundational Canadian values that appeared to be at risk in recent months.

I have witnessed, in our Canadian streets and on our Canadian campuses, so-called protests calling for the death of those in our Jewish community. They are sponsored by known terrorist-linked entities. This is not the Canadian way. When foundational Canadian values are under attack, we are all under attack.

However, this government supports the funding of those who would take on this anti-Canadian charge. Employees of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, in part funded by the Canadian government, are known to have held hostages on October 7. Canada is, in part, paying the salaries of combatants who work for the Hamas terrorist regime. It was these same Hamas terrorists who murdered eight of our fellow citizens: good people from Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and elsewhere. Their names were Alexandre Look, Ben Mizrachi, Adi Vital-Kaploun, Shir Georgy, Vivian Silver, Netta Epstein, Tiferet Lapidot and Judih Weinstein Haggai. May their memories be a blessing.

There are still 101 hostages being held in Gaza and not all amongst the living. People held against their will, held in the darkness and dampness of a subterranean warren of war, a tunnel system created for the sole purpose of waging war. Every day, I think about those people held in captivity in those deplorable conditions, and I think, too, of the innocents of Gaza, used as human shields by an uncivilized terrorist organization. I encourage all in this place to do the same and give thought to these victims.

I made my remarks earlier about Canadian history and Canadian heroes because I care deeply about this country and its past, but I care equally about the future of this great nation. I got into political life not because I am crazy, but because I thought about my two daughters, Leah and Charlotte, both in their 20s. I thought about the kids I see in the park and the ones I see clinging to their mothers' legs when I knock on doors. I thought about the fact that they do not appear to have the same opportunities for success as young people did a generation ago. They do not have the same Canada. This is not the same Canada.

We must leave a country in better shape than we found it. Can we say that is true for the NDP-Liberal government members and the Liberal Prime Minister who took over nine years ago? Does anyone even believe they have what it takes? The economics of this country have become stagnant. The feeling of optimism has evaporated. The sense that Canada has a great destiny thrust into the intention of the future, as the philosopher George Grant put it, is absent.

I am here, thanks to the good people of Toronto—St. Paul's, to be a part of something bigger than any single one of us. I am here to help build a better country, one day at a time. I am here to work my hardest for the people of my riding, yes, but also for every last person in this country. Let us remember that as we engage in the great debates of our country. I am new and that is, perhaps, why I am filled with so much optimism. Optimism can take us a long way, and I am delighted to be here.

● (1640)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, one of the greatest Canadian debates is on something we all identify with, and that is our Canadian health care system. This is a government that has invested historic amounts of money into health care for future generations. A part of that debate also says that we need to look at issues like pharmacare, something that I and many of my colleagues are very passionate about.

Many Canadians, including Canadians the member opposite represents, will benefit from it. We have the dental program. Again, thousands of Canadians that the member represents will benefit from it. Those two aspects alone make a difference, and they are part of the Canadian debate.

When we talk about issues that can unite us, does the member agree that these are the types of policies that will enhance Canada's health care system, and that is something that his constituents and my constituents want to see?

Business of Supply

Mr. Don Stewart: Madam Speaker, I recently came off a by-election campaign and had the opportunity to knock on about 13,000 doors, which I am told is an extraordinarily high number for a candidate. The people at those doors were telling me that they are not happy with the direction the government is taking. They would like to see a change, and that is what Conservatives are going to offer the people of Canada when we have that carbon tax election.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, it is my first opportunity to address the new member of this place, the member for Toronto—St. Paul's, so congratulations and welcome.

I can see we have a new orator in this place who loves history, as do I. I am particularly pleased that he identified Arthur Currie as one of our great Canadians. The town where I live, Sidney, British Columbia, is where Arthur Currie used to teach school. His ability to go from being a civilian low-ranking, not high-military, officer as he went into the war and to use basic, common-sense skills of building community together to prepare for and to lead the Canadian Armed Forces in some of the key conflicts of World War I goes down in history forever. We do not forget those people who have served this country, and I appreciate the member's drawing our attention to it.

Given we have seen so many recent events in the area he represents of flash flooding and extreme weather events that have cost millions of dollars to Toronto businesses and people, what does he think will have to be done to try to address the climate crisis while we still have time to do so?

Mr. Don Stewart: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her kind comments.

With the environmental concerns we do have, I would say that we are not living in a bubble inside Canada. We live in a competitive environment. We are starting to impose carbon taxes, for example, on Canadians alone to reduce carbon in the atmosphere. That puts us at a big disadvantage in our economy. The more our economy suffers, the more we are going to put at risk the rest of the social programs we hold dear. That is something we want to avoid.

• (1645)

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to acknowledge that we have another settler MP in the House.

What I have heard so far is not a lot of willingness from the Conservatives to talk about experiences of indigenous peoples, including the lack of reference in his intervention regarding indigenous people, indigenous people's rights and the lack of investments that we continue to suffer.

We have great indigenous leaders such as the late Elijah Harper, Meeka Kilabuk and Tagak Curley, who is a great part of Canadian history and who helped make sure that Canada's map was changed forever so that we could have the great territory of Nunavut, which I am so proud to represent in the House.

I wonder if the member can share with us what his party will do to persuade indigenous peoples, because I do not see it yet, that MPs are doing enough to ensure that we are doing better for indigenous peoples in Canada.

Mr. Don Stewart: Madam Speaker, last Sunday, I was able to spend the day with some indigenous people in my community to welcome the equinox, and it was quite a moving experience and I was glad to be able to do that. As far as what the Conservative Party will carry on, to help the indigenous people of the country, I think our leader said it earlier that it is about giving more autonomy to the indigenous people of Canada and less centralization and motherhood and fatherhood statements from the government.

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

Let me start by giving two data points. Recently, Bloomberg commissioned a study conducted by Nanos Research. It was a four-week tracking poll ending September 20, and it was on the Canadian consumer confidence index. Canadian consumer confidence has reached a 29-month high. The last time we had this much Canadian consumer confidence was way back in April 2022. The second data point I would like to bring to our notice is the inflation rate. It has now come down to 2%. It is the eighth straight month that inflation is within the target set by the Bank of Canada.

Inflation hit a high way back in June 2022. Obviously, we all felt the pain of that inflation and the resulting interest rates. The inflation basically started during the pandemic and, postpandemic, due to supply chain disruptions, the inflation hit very high. The Bank of Canada had to do its duty to control inflation. It started dramatically raising interest rates. For the first time in the history of Canada, we saw a dramatic, huge rise in interest rates in a very short period of time. It affected all. It affected inflation, interest rates and mortgage payments. It affected all.

We felt the pain. The grocery costs and the grocery bills were high. The fuel costs got high. This created genuine frustration and anger among all Canadians.

It is not surprising that Canadians, now, are maybe opening up and ready to listen to the economic story. The politicians made use of this anger and frustration and amplified it. Not only did politicians amplify it, but also social media and the algorithms amplified it. They amplified this and allowed politicians to seize on the discontent to fuel the anger more. I think some of these people banked their political success on the failure of a Canadian economy. That is not going to be the case. The economy has done well compared to any other G7 country. The economic good news is bad news for a few politicians in Canada.

Business of Supply

They advised us. They said that all the spending or the support programs we had launched to help needy Canadians was fuelling inflation further. They advised us to have austerity measures, but we continued to support Canadians in need. We stood firm. We now see inflation back to 2%.

Canada is the best performing economy in the entirety of the G7 countries. IMF recently made a report that said it forecasted that Canada's performance will be the best not only in 2024 but also in 2025, leading among all G7 countries. The world is being reshaped by four major shifts: green transition, artificial intelligence, geopolitics and friendshoring, and changing demographics. We have carefully looked at these four major changes that are reshaping the world, taken measures and made investments that will benefit Canadians today and tomorrow. We are already beginning to see the results.

• (1650)

In the forthcoming months and years, we will see the much more visible positive effects of what we have done so far. Through the mines to mobility strategy, we have seized on the changing transition to the clean economy. We have been investing in everything from the mining of critical minerals to the setting up of mineral processing companies, from battery plants to electrical vehicles manufacturing. We have been doing that. We are already seeing the good effects of that, but they will be much more visible in the coming months and years.

There are certain myths that have been propagated for a long time in Canada. Let me touch upon them.

One myth is that the Canadian federal government is spending high and that the debt is very high. However, we have the smallest deficit-to-GDP ratio amongst all G7 countries. I repeat, it is smallest deficit-to-GDP ratio among all of the G7 countries. Our net debt to GDP is also the lowest among all of the G7 countries. Colleagues need not take our word, or even the IMF's word, but they can take that of the rating companies, which are the final arbitrators in this. Let me quote the statement of Fitch Ratings from just two months back. On July 24, Fitch Ratings said, "Canada's ratings reflect strong governance, high per-capita income and a macroeconomic policy framework that has delivered steady growth and generally low inflation". Taking a look at every G7 country, at their deficit to GDP, the net debt to GDP, or the ratings, we see that we are the best. That is a fact.

The second myth is that taxes are making Canada uncompetitive. That is very far from the truth. In fact, we have the lowest effective tax rates on new business in, again, all of the G7 countries. If someone goes back and checks the IMF reports or the OECD reports, they will find that the effective tax rate for new business is the lowest in Canada.

The third myth is that the government is driving investments away. Again, this is a myth that has been propagated by politicians. Usually these days, I do not invest in the stock market, but a couple of days back, I just happened to look to see where the stock market is at. Canadian TSX year-to-date gain has reached 14%. In the first nine months, there are 14% returns from the Canadian TSX. I think the budget was on April 16. Since the budget, the stock exchange index has returned more than 10%. I am not saying that that should

be the only criteria to measure what Canada is doing for investments.

The second, again, hard cash measurement data I have has to do with foreign direct investment. There is no charity in business. Multinational companies do not invest just for the sake of investing or just to make the Canadian federal government look good. They invest because they see opportunity. Canada has a high rate of foreign direct investment. I think Canada is second or third among all OECD countries. Per capita, the federal direct investment is the best among all G7 countries.

In closing, I quickly want to say that we are not perfect. Are there any economic indicators that we are still lagging behind? Yes, such as productivity, for example. However, the best part of Canada is that we know we have to improve and we are working hard to improve. That is what makes Canada great. I am so proud to be a part of this moment when we are transitioning into a clean economy in a much greater way.

• (1655)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to the member's speech intently, but I noticed that he did not mention some of the things that we need to work on in Canada, such as the two million people who are using food banks, which is the highest number ever. That would be one indication that things are not going as well in this country as they should be. Another would be how high food inflation is in this country, where families are choosing between putting gas in their tank or food in their fridge. The price of gas has gone up. Taxes have gone up. People are taking home less than they have ever made before.

My question to the member is, if things are so good in Canada, why do so many Canadians have it so bad? If his government is doing so well, why are Canadian people not doing so well?

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, things were really tough, and I am the first person to agree. More people are going to a food bank, which is also a fact. As I said, after the pandemic, inflation shot up, interest rates shot up and mortgage payments shot up. Even working families found it hard. However, we did provide support to all those in need, and we continue to do so.

Things are changing. The fact is that inflation has come down to 2%, and the interest rates have fallen to 4.25%. The Bank of Canada is meeting next on October 23. It is not a question of whether the interest rate will reduce further, but a question of whether the Bank of Canada is going to reduce it by 0.25% or 0.5%. The market economists are forecasting that the interest rate will come down to 3% by July 2025.

Yes, we have had this pain. Canadians felt the pain. We all felt the pain, but now things are changing, and they are changing for the good.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is important to talk about the good that we have done. Canada is not all misery, devastation and destruction. Some things are going well.

That being said, there are other things that are not going so well. It is important to talk about those things too. That is one of the opposition's main jobs, but the government also has to acknowledge problem areas. If we ignore what is not going well, then we are ignoring what needs to be improved. There are a lot of things that need to be improved, including border management, whether in terms of immigration or the management of goods crossing the border. I am talking in particular about illegal weapons.

I would like to know what the government actually intends to do on the ground to ensure that illegal weapons can no longer cross the border and so that Canada can restore its good reputation in this regard.

• (1700)

[English]

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, I agree with the hon. member that the government, the ruling party, has to also work with the opposition parties to see Canada become strong again economically.

The member touched on immigration. I agree that there were some issues with immigration. The numbers went up too dramatically in too short a period of time. We have taken action to make sure to rationalize it and bring it down to a manageable level so that the pressure that was created on our system, on our society, is addressed.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, when the Liberals inherited the government from the Conservatives some years ago, the conditions that indigenous peoples were in were quite deplorable, and they have not improved that much since the Liberal government was elected.

I will give a basic example of how corporate greed is being supported by this Liberal government. The Liberals keep the nutrition north program going, which is a program that supports corporate greed by allowing the CEO of the North West Company to earn \$3.91 million in salary and benefits in one year while Nunavummiut are suffering in poverty.

I wonder if the member can share with us how the Liberal government will do better for indigenous peoples and how the Liberal government will do better for Nunavummiut so that corporate greed ends with this government.

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, for the indigenous people in Canada, I am so proud of the things that our government has done since we came to power in 2015. In the history of Canada, no government has taken the kind of actions that we have taken, the kind of programs that we have launched, to support indigenous people.

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House this evening to speak to the motion before the House to-

day. It is a pleasure and a privilege every day to represent the people of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country. I am grateful to be in the House, to work on matters and to do the business of the nation. This is why it is a little unfortunate that, for the second time this week, we are basically debating the same motion. There are many issues we could be discussing today and parts of the business of government that we could be looking into. I think it is unfortunate that we are again debating a motion from the Conservative Party to stop our work as parliamentarians.

Today, I want to comment on the motion before us and the common slogans we hear from the Conservatives. I want to set the record straight about what their slogans really mean. I am going to go through them one by one.

When Conservatives say that we should axe the tax, they are really talking about axing the facts. I want to get into this because we have seen a disproportionate amount of time of the House spent talking about the carbon tax, and the Conservatives consistently misrepresent what this is. It is a measure that is going to contribute 40% of Canada's emissions reductions. It is also an affordability measure because 80% of Canadians get more money back with the rebate than they end up paying into it. This is particularly so for low-to-modest income Canadians, who get a disproportionate amount when we consider the costs and benefits. However, the Conservatives do not like these facts or the fact that 300 economists have confirmed this, because they like to use alternative facts.

What is worse is that Conservatives also plan on proposing to get rid of the industrial carbon pricing system, which would let the biggest polluters off for free. There are, of course, other ways to reduce emissions, which cost more and take many more years to roll out. However, that is actually what they want. What do they say will happen in place? They say that we will have technology, not taxes. However, the only technology they talk about has not been proven to work right now or is not going to be available for many years. We can think of such things as wide-scale applications of carbon capture and small modular reactors for nuclear. We do not hear them talk about renewable energy or anything that is able to reduce emissions in the short term. We can look at what their cousins in Alberta have done, when they did everything they could to cancel a renewable energy industry that was the envy of the country. In the process, they chased away billions of dollars of investment. Their real plan is to distract by talking about the carbon tax, to delay more action and to dismiss the idea that we need to take real action to safeguard our climate and our future.

Business of Supply

This should not be surprising; it is the modus operandi of Conservatives. When they were last in power, they did quite a bit of work to axe the facts by doing such things as ending the long-form census and reducing funding for Stats Canada. Without any notice, through an omnibus legislation, they gutted the Fisheries Act and the Environmental Assessment Act. They also muzzled scientists so that they could not speak to the public about any of the science that they were doing, especially on climate change. We also know that they did their best to declare that environmental NGOs were violent criminal groups so that they could use the RCMP to monitor them and weaponize the CRA to go after their charitable status. This was done because they want to be able to base government decisions on slogans and ideology rather than on science and evidence. We know this is real because Conservatives do not believe that climate change is real or that immediate action is required to address it.

They also say that they plan to build homes, but what they are actually proposing is to block homes. When the Conservatives were last in power, housing construction was as low as 150,000 units in a year, a number that we nearly doubled in 2022. When the Leader of the Opposition was in charge of the housing file, a measly six affordable units were built across the country. Throughout this time, 800,000 affordable units were lost because he does not believe in things like cooperative housing, which he refers to as Soviet-style housing. At this time, they completely abdicated all responsibility for getting housing built and downloaded it to the provinces and municipalities. We are still paying the price for that today.

• (1705)

To give some perspective, in my riding alone in the last five years, during which I have had the pleasure of serving as representative, the government has supported over 1,000 below-market units that have been constructed. We have been steadily working with municipalities to support them to speed up the permitting process, and we see provinces like British Columbia that are doing that work as well.

What is the leader of the official opposition's strategy to build the homes? He wants to raise taxes on apartments and cut funding for programs that are getting housing built. Rather than work with municipalities, he and his B.C. Conservative brethren plan to scrap policies that are getting gentle density going in cities and restrict infrastructure funding. I do not understand the magical thinking that if we get rid of gentle density, we will get more housing, but maybe the Conservatives' plan is to do more things like paving over the greenbelt.

Trying to bully municipalities into getting housing built under these restrictions, by saying they would restrict infrastructure funding, does not actually mean that much, considering the amount of funding the Conservatives provided for infrastructure, which, among other things, was 13 times less than the amount of funding for transit we have provided.

The other thing the Conservatives like to talk about is fixing the budget, but their history has really been about gutting the budget. The Conservatives like to think of themselves as good stewards of the public finances, but the reality is that their last two administrations in office completely exploded the budget. The Conservatives racked up more debt than all previous prime ministers combined.

The only balanced budget that the Harper government ran was a few months after it won office in 2006, when it inherited surpluses. It desperately and unsuccessfully tried to balance the budget in 2015 by selling off GM stock for a song.

Let us talk about what the Conservatives plan to do with the budget. They cut services before. They cut military spending to a record low, and they provided huge giveaways to some of the most wealthy people in the country. The hope of the Conservative ideology of trickle-down economics, or trumped-up economics, is that by cutting services and cutting taxes, they would massively grow the economy. However, again the facts just do not bear that out. That is probably why they want some alternative facts to the reality that in the last year of when the Conservatives were in office, GDP dropped almost 14%.

What are the Conservatives planning to do now? They are planning to cut child care programs, end the dental care program that is already providing dental insurance for 750,000 Canadians, end programs that are getting housing built right across the country and end programs that are positioning Canada's economy to thrive in a low-carbon future.

The last part of the Conservatives' plan is that they say they are going to stop the crime. However, I would more appropriately refer to the plan as ditching the charter. They want to make us think that we are experiencing some massive crime wave, that crime is at an all-time high, but in fact when we look at the data, we see that the crime rate is actually lower than it was in many years when the Conservatives were in office.

The Conservatives believe that if they fearmonger, people will not pay attention to the facts. What did the Conservatives do in the past? They said that by taking tough-on-crime measures, by passing legislation that involved very long mandatory minimum sentences, they were able to keep people safe. In practice, there was just an overincarceration of people in many minority groups in Canada, and the courts threw the legislation out for being incompatible with the charter.

On top of that, the Conservatives gutted funding for the RCMP, the CBSA and crime prevention programs, and they disbanded the Integrated Proceeds of Crime Section, which was tackling money laundering. These things, all together, put us in a very difficult position, and crimes like money laundering have flourished since then. One thing that all Canadians should be very concerned about is that the leader of the official opposition is openly saying that he plans to sidestep the charter and invoke the notwithstanding clause.

When we look at what the Conservatives actually intend to do compared to what they are saying, we see what their hidden agenda is. Their plan for project 2025 is not one that Canadians want. Canadians want an economy that works for everyone, where the least fortunate people are supported, and that we can build for a prosperous future and tackle the challenges we have today. That is why I will be voting against the motion.

• (1710)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate that my fellow British Columbian came to this place to debate a very serious issue. However, I have to say that, hearing the cartoon talking points coming out of the Liberal Party, it has totally lost all reality.

I am just going to address one small sliver here. The Leader of the Canada's Conservative Party has publicly responded to the Supreme Court's decision that someone who walked into a Quebec mosque and shot innocent men, women and children, who were just there praising their God in their way, is allowed to serve their punishment concurrently instead of consecutively. Conservatives believe that is the wrong message to be sharing, that the lives of those individuals are somehow less. We stand for proper justice in this country and to have consecutive sentences for such barbaric acts as shooting people in a mosque.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The individual my hon. colleague referred to is in prison for life. He is not walking around on our streets.

[English]

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the intervention from my colleague, the member for Beauport—Limouilou, and the question from my colleague, the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

I will just say that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not some buffet where people can pick and choose what to use and what to cast aside. However, that does not mean that we should not do everything we can to hold criminals responsible and keep our communities safe.

Those are exactly the types of things that we are doing through our programs. For instance, we are increasing funding for law enforcement and passing legislation that is actually going to keep our communities safe. We also have crime prevention and hate prevention programs. These are programs that—

• (1715)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[Translation]

The question is on the motion.

[English]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party

Speaker's Ruling

participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division, please.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, October 1, at the expiry of time provided for Oral Questions.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS— SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am now ready to rule on the question of privilege raised on September 16 by the House leader of the official opposition, concerning the alleged failure to produce documents pertaining to Sustainable Development Technology Canada.

In his intervention, the opposition House leader argued that several government departments and agencies failed to adhere to a House order for the production of documents related to Sustainable Development Technology Canada, which was adopted on June 10. His assertions were based on a series of letters provided to the Speaker by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel and tabled in the House pursuant to that order.

The law clerk had been directed to report to the Speaker on whether the respondents had, in fact, fully complied with the House order, by the stipulated deadline of 30 days following the adoption of the order. The letters were tabled on July 17, August 21 and September 16. In some instances, only partial disclosures were made, owing either to redactions or the withholding of documents. In other instances, the House order was met with a complete refusal.

[Translation]

The opposition House leader argued that the House's powers to order the production of documents are absolute and, as a result, the government was in contempt of the House for its disregard of a binding House order. He therefore asked the Chair to find a prima facie question of privilege, enabling the House to consider a motion to reiterate the order with a new deadline and urging the Prime Minister to make it clear to departments that the House order ought to be complied with.

[English]

In response, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons expressed concerns that the House order may trespass on certain charter rights, in particular relating to police investigations and privacy. She also argued that it was procedurally inadmissible on the grounds that the order exceeded the authority of the House by attempting to secure documents for the exclusive use of a third party, namely the RCMP, rather than for its own use.

Speaker's Ruling

[Translation]

She further suggested that the order constituted an attempt by the House to appropriate the role of another branch of Canada's system of government, namely, the judiciary, by authorizing the RCMP to obtain information outside the established and judicially based law enforcement processes. Indeed, she noted that the RCMP itself had raised concerns about accepting the documents, as it feared doing so may circumvent normal investigative processes and Charter protections.

The government House leader also indicated that the order was silent on whether the documents requested should be redacted. She suggested that, absent any other indication from the House, the government should follow its statutory responsibilities by redacting documents to protect sensitive information.

● (1720)

[English]

While the government House leader argued that the House may have exceeded its authority in adopting the order, if the Chair determines that the matter is a prima facie question of privilege, she contended that the appropriate course of action would be for the House to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to shed light on the contentious points.

The House leader of the official opposition returned a second time to rebut arguments advanced by the government House leader, namely those on the admissibility of the motion, the nature of the motion and the scope of the House's power to order the production of documents.

[Translation]

The member for Windsor West intervened to argue that the order for the production of documents should be respected. He added that it is up to the House to decide whether it is satisfied by the nature of the response. The member for La Prairie contended that the government may well have had reasons to not meet its obligations, but that the privileges of the House are well established and the order was clear. He endorsed a prima facie finding. While both members noted the order was unusual, both maintained this fact does not excuse non-compliance.

[English]

The House has been seized before with questions of privilege regarding orders for the production of documents. Neither the Standing Orders nor any statute delimits Parliament's authority to order the production of papers and records that it may need to carry out its duties. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, confirms this procedural and constitutional understanding, stating at page 985:

No statute or practice diminishes the fullness of that power rooted in House privileges unless there is an explicit legal provision to that effect, or unless the House adopts a specific resolution limiting the power. The House has never set a limit on its power to order the production of papers....

The House leader of the official opposition pointed to the partial production of documents provided to the law clerk. As we have been informed, there were many redactions and omissions, which were made by the various departments and agencies that produced the documents. The House order, indeed, did not explicitly require

that the documents be provided in unredacted form, nor did it make provision for departments and agencies to pre-emptively omit or redact portions of documents or documents in their entirety. On this matter, only the House can judge if it is satisfied with the production of documents that it has received.

[Translation]

More generally, the understanding that it is for the House to determine how to exercise its power to order the production of documents is also set out in Joseph Maingot's *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, second edition, at page 190, where he states: "The only limitations, which could only be self-imposed, would be that any inquiry should relate to a subject within the legislative competence of Parliament, particularly where witnesses and documents are required and the penal jurisdiction of Parliament is contemplated."

[English]

The procedural precedents and authorities are abundantly clear. The House has the undoubted right to order the production of any and all documents from any entity or individual it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Moreover, these powers are a settled matter, at least as far as the House is concerned. They have been confirmed and reconfirmed by my immediate predecessors, as well as those more distantly removed.

To lend support to the absolute nature of the power to order the production of documents, the House leader of the official opposition relied on the ruling on a question of privilege of April 27, 2010, from Speaker Milliken, centring on the House's right to order documents. He stated in the Debates, at page 2043, the following: "procedural authorities are categorical in repeatedly asserting the powers of the House in ordering the production of documents. No exceptions are made for any category of government documents".

● (1725)

[Translation]

The government House leader attempted to argue that this particular order for documents was different, insofar as the documents were not to assist members in carrying out their duties but instead to be transmitted to a third party. For this reason, she claimed that the order was beyond the authority of the House. The Chair would suggest, respectfully, that these concerns ought to have been raised prior to the motion's adoption.

I would remind members that, if there are concerns about the procedural admissibility of any motion, they should be raised with the Chair before the motion is debated or, at the latest, before the House is called upon to vote on the matter. It would be difficult, perhaps even inappropriate, now for the Chair to retroactively comment on its admissibility.

[English]

As it stands, the motion was adopted. The House has clearly ordered the production of certain documents, and that order has clearly not been fully complied with. The Chair cannot come to any other conclusion but to find that a prima facie question of privilege has been established. However, before inviting the House leader of the official opposition to proceed with the moving of a motion, I would like to make a few comments on the type of motion the Chair would consider to be appropriate in the circumstances.

The members who intervened on this question used words such as “unusual”, “novel” and “unprecedented” to describe this particular production order. The Chair agrees with those characterizations. It is indeed unusual, novel and unprecedented for the House to order documents not for its own purposes but for a third party. The Chair also notes that the intended recipient of the information, the RCMP, has expressed to our law clerk its serious reservations about receiving these documents, at least in their current form. Both the opposition House leader and the member for La Prairie argued that this is not the House’s concern and that the RCMP can simply refuse the information if it wishes. Before insisting on the production of documents, as the opposition House leader proposes to do, the Chair believes the House would benefit from having this matter studied further.

[Translation]

In his landmark ruling on documents relating to Afghan detainees on April 27, 2010, Speaker Milliken spoke eloquently of the need for reflection, collaboration and even accommodation in such matters. While asserting unequivocally that the House had the right to order the production of papers, he also recognized that the House generally understands that the government has responsibilities to protect certain information.

[English]

In that case, it was a matter of balancing national security concerns with the duty of elected representatives to hold the government accountable for its decisions. In the case before us, the government, the RCMP and even the Auditor General, an officer of Parliament, have expressed concerns about providing the documents in question to the RCMP. While it is ultimately for the House to decide how it wishes to proceed in the face of such objections, the Chair is of the view that it would be valuable to afford an opportunity for the concerns expressed by the RCMP, as well as by the Auditor General, to be addressed fully and, I would hope, for a mutually satisfactory solution to be arrived at.

I believe the best way for this to be achieved would be to follow the usual course for a prima facie question of privilege, that is, a referral to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Such a referral would allow for a more detailed consideration of what documents remain to be submitted, what has been withheld and why, and, most importantly, how the House can ensure the intended recipient, the RCMP, is in a position to act as the House would wish it to act.

[Translation]

The Chair acknowledges that, in recent years, other privilege motions have been brought forward, rather than the usual referral to

Privilege

a committee, although previous Speakers have on occasion insisted on a particular course of action.

My predecessor’s ruling of June 26, 2021, found at page 8550 of the Debates, stated that:

A review of the rare exceptions shows that there was a certain consensus on the procedure to follow and, thus, on the wording of the motion. As Speaker Milliken confirmed in a ruling on March 9, 2011, at page 8842, ‘The Chair is of course aware of exceptions to this practice, but in most if not all of these cases, circumstances were such that a deviation from the normal practice was deemed acceptable, or there was a unanimous desire on the part of the House to proceed in that fashion.’ There are also precedents that support censure. In short, given that the parameters for such motions are clear and that the practice is well established, the proposed motion should be a motion of censure or to refer the matter to the appropriate committee for study.

• (1730)

[English]

I would also refer the House to the same ruling made by Speaker Milliken on March 9, 2011, in which he found that the proper course of action in those circumstances was to refer the matter to committee. At page 8842 of the Debates, he stated:

I hasten to add that the powers of the Speaker in these matters are robust and well known. In 1966, Mr. Speaker Lamoureux, having come to a finding of prima facie privilege on a matter ruled a number of motions out of order. As *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, tells us at page 147, footnote 371, in doing so, Mr. Speaker Lamoureux “more than once pointed out that it was Canadian practice to refer such matters to committee for study and suggested that this should be the avenue pursued”.

The table officers and I are available to help the House leader of the official opposition craft an acceptable motion. The House will consider the matter as soon as the member is ready to move his motion in the appropriate form.

I thank all members for their attention.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Speaker: We will suspend the House for a couple of minutes to allow the House leader of the official opposition to approach the table to discuss putting this matter in the proper form.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 5:32 p.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 5:37 p.m.)

• (1735)

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu’Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I did rather like my original motion, but out of respect for the Chair, I move:

That the government’s failure of fully providing documents, as ordered by the House on June 10, 2024, be hereby referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Privilege

I would like to thank the Speaker for upholding one of the most important principles of parliamentary democracy, which is that those who are tasked with the awesome responsibility of making laws, passing taxation measures and spending money have all the information that they could possibly need to properly do their jobs. Here in the House, we vote on all different kinds of legislation. We vote on laws that touch on broadcasting, on agriculture and on food-labelling laws, and to do that, we need to make sure that we fully understand all the issues and all the possible ramifications of our decisions. To do that, at various stages along the legislative process, we rely on information, usually in the form of either testimony from witnesses or of documents and papers.

The same is true when we talk about taxation. Those who remember our political science lessons, either in high school or in university, know that there is one characteristic that separates government from every other institution and every other entity in our society. The one thing that truly makes government different from any other organization is its monopoly on the use of force. I can ignore what my local community association might want me to do. I might be involved in a volunteer group, and it might want members to conform to one thing or another. I have the choice as to whether I want to continue to be a part of that organization. However, none of us have the choice when it comes to government because, at the end of the day, government backs up all its decisions with that monopoly on the use of force. Citizens must comply. They must follow the law, or they will forcibly be punished for that refusal.

The same is true when it comes to taxation. At the end of the day, all the taxation measures that are passed here are built upon the bedrock that the government will send someone to arrest us if we do not pay our fair share of taxes. Therefore, when the government collects those tax dollars out of the pockets of the hard-working Canadians who earned it, the people who get up before the sun rises and come home after it has set, when the government reaches into their pockets after they have earned their pay through the toil, sweat and often blood that they expend to do their jobs, it had better have a darn good reason to take that money out of people's pockets. When the government takes all that money and collects it here in Ottawa and decides whom to give it to, it better darn well be for the reasons that were explained for taking the money in the first place.

What we uncovered with the SDTC green slush fund scandal was abhorrent. It violated the fundamental basic premise of responsible government, which is the idea that the dollar that is taxed should go to the program that it was allocated for, and for the reasons that were explained.

What we found out is that the government set up the fund and appointed the board of directors basically out of the ranks of Liberal supporters. The Liberal-friendly board of directors started to make decisions as to the allocation of that money to fund its own companies, to fund projects that the Auditor General found did not even have a single environmental benefit. The government went out and collected money from the hard-earned dollars of workers across the country. The officials said that they were going to take this money forcibly from us, but not to worry as they were going to spend it on all kinds of good things that would benefit the environment. However, instead, the officials were funnelling that cash to their friends, supporters and cronies. That is shameful.

It took a great deal of work. I want to take this opportunity to thank the hard-working members of the committee, who are my colleagues sitting right here, who came in after hours for meetings on break weeks and during recesses to pore through those accounts, to force testimony from those officials who made those decisions and some of the beneficiaries of that graft. We exposed this slush fund for what it was, which was a way for the government to funnel tax dollars into the pockets of its partisan supporters.

Do members remember when a certain someone said that sunlight was the best disinfectant? I am old enough to remember that. I remember that it was the mantra that the Prime Minister got elected on. However, like so many things about the Prime Minister, it was not quite as advertised, was it? It has taken the tremendous effort of a parliamentary committee, and now a production order from the House itself, for the government to hand over the simple documentation as to who got paid. That should be the simplest thing.

• (1740)

That should not even require a motion at committee; it should just be a normal matter that departments should follow of their own accord. They should proactively be disclosing this type of thing, or when a committee member asks for it, it should be provided, no questions asked. Only a government that had something to hide would go to such great lengths to keep it hidden.

Think about this: The government has forced the House to use precious time out of our legislative calendar to force the information from them. It could have resolved this right from day one. With the first hints that something was wrong, it could have immediately said that it was going to come clean, if it has nothing to hide, with all the documents, and save a bunch of committee time and House time. We could have gotten the documents, and we and all Canadians could have learned exactly what happened.

The very fact that to this day the government is still redacting pieces of paper and still refusing to hand over documents is so telling, and it is certainly not the action of someone who has nothing to hide.

I would like to quote for the House some interesting statements on the principle of disclosure, from a gentleman whose name is Paul MacKinnon and who I believe is related to the current Minister of Labour. He sent an advisement up the chain of command. On September 15, 2021, in preparation for the current Parliament, he said, "in the event that parliamentarians press for the release of confidential information, the appropriate minister or ministers should take responsibility for the decision to provide or withhold the information." That has not happened.

He went on to say at a later date, "Consistent with the principles of responsible government, the ultimate accountability for deciding what information to withhold from or release to parliamentarians resides with the responsible minister. Public servants do not share in ministers' constitutional accountability to the Houses of Parliament".

It is the ministers themselves who have the requirement, so the ministers responsible for the departments that refuse to hand over the documents are, in effect, in contempt of Parliament. That is why our original motion called for that fact to be recognized and gave the government a very reasonable one-week deadline to provide the documents they already have in their possession. It is not the case that they have to go scouring through emails.

I should mention at this point that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

I just want to reinforce the point that the documents exist. We know they exist, because they were the subject of the Auditor General's audit. All we are asking for is that the government simply take the documents and provide them to the law clerk. The law clerk can then provide them to the RCMP. If, as we suspect, crimes were committed, we owe that to the Canadian taxpayers who were robbed of their hard-earned money, because the money did not go to what the government said it was going to go to; it went to Liberal-friendly firms.

I think about a board of directors' making a decision to allocate money to a company that they had a financial interest in, that they themselves owned. They were using taxpayers' money and funnelled it right into the companies that they owned and profited from. That is an egregious abuse of taxpayers' money. That is why the production order was so important. That is why it is such a contempt of the House that the government ignored it, and that is why all members of Parliament, if they pretend to believe in any sense of parliamentary accountability, should support the motion.

• (1745)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, those were interesting comments, to say the very least, and nothing that really surprises me, but the question I have for the member is this: He made reference to the consumption of the House's time. I would like to take him up on that thought, because if he is really concerned about the time inside the House, would he not agree that it might be best then to deal with this issue in the next 30 minutes? There is a motion before us. Would he provide assurance that he would be comfortable in allowing it to ultimately go to committee, shortly before 6:30?

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, I have an even better idea that would save even more time: Produce the documents.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our House leader for outlining exactly the incident, but there is a pattern of behaviour. The Winnipeg documents were not produced, and there were extremes gone to in order to suppress those. The WE Charity scandal documents were the same. Time and again, the Liberal government obstructs transparency. If it had nothing to hide, as the member well pointed out, that would be fine. However, clearly it does have something to hide, and the more we find out, the more criminal it sounds.

Could the member comment on that pattern of behaviour?

• (1750)

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, that is a great point. It is almost like some of us have seen this movie before. This is not the

Privilege

first production order that the House has had to adopt in order to get information. The Winnipeg lab's document is an excellent example where all kinds of concerns were raised about national security and what information the Government of Canada was allowing to be passed to the Communist regime in Beijing about a pandemic and lockdowns that had such a devastating effect on the Canadian people and on the economy. The government not only refused to release the documents, but actually took the Speaker's predecessor to court and sued the Speaker of the House of Commons to try to prevent those documents and that information from coming to light.

Again, the government is now a serial abuser of parliamentary privilege and a serial committer of the crime of suppressing important information that Canadians have a right to know.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have just seen the tip of the iceberg of who has money and which Liberal insiders are getting rich. The foreign affairs minister's husband got some contracts in other areas.

How deep does my colleague think this rot is and how long will it take to have this go through committee and actually find out how many taxpayer dollars have gone to Liberal insiders, friends and family?

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I think the hon. member knows that at the end of the day, Liberals get a Liberal. This is a part of their DNA. Looking back at every Liberal administration, there are examples where they used the power of their positions to reward and enrich their friends.

I believe many Canadians were fooled by the Prime Minister back in 2015, when he tried to cast himself as something different, but it did not take long for people to see that he was the same old kind of Liberal. They seek power, not to do what is best for Canadians, but to implement their own wacko, extreme ideological agenda and, most importantly, to enrich their friends who helped them get there in the first place.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a vitally important issue which I have had the unfortunate pleasure of working on for now more than a year and a half.

The Privy Council Office, which ordered the government departments to redact the documents being sought by the House of Commons about the green slush fund, is the personal department of the Prime Minister. I would like the official opposition House leader to comment on why he thinks the Privy Council Office would make that order, and would they have been directed by someone else?

Privilege

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is very familiar with the inner workings of government, having had a long and celebrated career in public service in previous administrations, so he knows exactly how this works. There is no way that a production order that touched on all of those departments would not rise to the level of being on the Prime Minister's desk. There is only one person responsible for refusing this production order from the House, and that is the Prime Minister himself.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are here this evening because the Liberal government has once again refused, through its many tentacles, to comply with a direct order of this Parliament to obtain very important information.

Let us talk about the Liberal green fund, the Liberal government's slush fund. A lot of public money, Canadians' money, went into this \$1-billion green fund. Remember the sponsorship scandal? Next to this Liberal green fund, that other Liberal scandal from a few years back looks like small potatoes. We are dealing with a situation where people deliberately ignored ethics rules. They deliberately ignored regulations in order to benefit themselves and their own companies. The people I am referring to are the directors of this green fund, which we call the green slush fund.

I want to commend the exceptional work of my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets, who never gave up, who uncovered the scandal and who pushed past the initial refusals that we got in the beginning. First there were full-blown denials that there were any problems, and then the minister said that they had cleaned house and that everything was resolved. The matter might have ended there. Nothing would have been discovered. Case closed. If my colleague had not investigated further, we would not have had the devastating reports from the Auditor General and the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, who lifted the veil and brought this Liberal green fund scandal into the light of day. The Liberal government and this Prime Minister tried to hide the extent of the corruption from Canadians.

I want to present a few facts. By the way, the directors of the green fund were obviously appointed by this Liberal government, probably to benefit the friends of the Liberal Party. That is our biggest concern. How much did people profit from this appointment to get rich to the detriment of Canadians and at the expense of Canadians?

The Auditor General found that these Liberal-appointed officials were sending taxpayers' money to their own companies. The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner found that the Prime Minister's hand-picked green slush fund chair had also broken the law. We thought she had broken it once or twice. The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner recently appeared at a committee meeting that my colleague attended, where we learned that the former chair of the Liberal green fund had breached the ethics rules 24 times.

The Auditor General found that directors had awarded funding to projects that were not eligible. Proponents applied for funding for projects to improve our environment, but it turns out that these projects had absolutely nothing to do with the green fund's objec-

tives. That did not stop the board of directors from voting to grant the money anyway.

According to the Auditor General, \$123 million was awarded appropriately and \$59 million was awarded to projects that should never have received money. That is not peanuts; that is hundreds of millions of dollars. The Auditor General found that over \$330 million of taxpayers' money was paid out in more than 180 instances where there was a real or potential conflict of interest. Directors appointed by the Prime Minister paid money to companies that belonged to them.

• (1755)

These directors decided to give funding and subsidies to businesses that they themselves owned. Is it not the most basic rule of ethics for a board member to recuse themselves from a decision from which they stand to benefit? They did not feel it was necessary to recuse themselves. When someone like that stays at the table, the main problem is that they can make sure that funding goes to their own business. When a board member in that position does not recuse themselves, then no one can raise a conflict of interest like they could if that board member were absent. Those board members stayed at the table and happily gave themselves millions of dollars. I am not the one saying it. This comes from the Auditor General of Canada and the Ethics Commissioner.

How can we expect these directors to follow the rules? There is a simple, basic principle that everyone has to follow the rules. Unfortunately, the example set at the top emboldens people to stop worrying about the consequences of breaking the rules. This example comes from the Prime Minister himself, who was found guilty of violating ethics laws not once, but twice. Both times, he stood up in front of all the members of the House and said that he accepted responsibility for his actions and would suffer the consequences.

Can anyone tell me what consequences the Prime Minister suffered for breaking the ethics rules twice? There were no consequences. The Prime Minister said he accepted responsibility and the matter ended there. Thank goodness for Conservative members like my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets who are staying vigilant and making sure that no ethics violation or case of corruption goes ignored or unpunished.

Still, they pushed back hard. They refused to comply with the House's order to produce the documents that would enable us and the RCMP to determine whether, in addition to the ethical violations and conflicts of interest, any crimes had been committed. We would like all departments to hand over documents to the law clerk of the House so that we can determine whether crimes were committed in addition to all the other violations.

These documents have been provided only in part or not at all, or they have been redacted. Parliament has the right to receive these documents. Parliament has that authority. With the power to tax people comes the responsibility to ensure that the money is being well spent. That is why Parliament has the power to ask anyone it wants for documents and to get all the information. That way, Canadians can be sure that there is accountability for the money they agree to pay to their government.

This is not the first time this government has balked at submitting to an order from Parliament. It has happened several times in the past. The most blatant case was that of the Winnipeg laboratory, when the government went so far as to call an election in the middle of a pandemic to avoid submitting to an order from Parliament. In the interest of settling the matter quickly, I am asking the government to hand over all the documents immediately; otherwise, we will go to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

I would like to move an amendment to the motion moved by my colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle.

• (1800)

[English]

I move:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

“provided that it be an instruction to the committee:

(a) that the following witnesses be ordered to appear before the committee separately for two hours each:

- (i) the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry,
- (ii) the Clerk of the Privy Council,
- (iii) the Auditor General of Canada,
- (iv) the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police,
- (v) the Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science and Development,
- (vi) the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel of the House of Commons,
- (vii) the Acting President of Sustainable Development Technology Canada, and
- (viii) a panel consisting of the board of Sustainable Development Technology Canada; and

(b) that it report back to the House no later than Friday, November 22, 2024.”

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

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest you take the time in receiving the amendment because we believe it is not in order, given the comments the Speaker has put on the record, in terms of the framing of the actual motion. I would suggest taking the time to make that determination.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Laurentides—Labbelle on a point of order.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, we not only need to read it, but we also want to have it in both official languages.

• (1805)

The Deputy Speaker: We will try to have it translated quickly. We hope that everyone has access to interpretation to understand the gist in French.

Privilege

[English]

I will consult with the Table.

The amendment is in order.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague how he squares the circle that both the RCMP and the Auditor General feel incredibly uncomfortable with what the Conservatives have put forward and what the chamber has put forward, and how he squares the circle of trampling the rights of Canadians through the motion that he and the Conservatives have put forward.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know how the government House leader can square the circle of the countless scandals that have been uncovered involving the Liberal green fund. I would like to know how the government House leader can square the circle of the chair of the Green Climate Fund being cited in 24 cases of conflict of interest. I would like to know how the government House leader can accept such carelessness with the money that Canadian taxpayers entrust to the government. These are questions she should answer.

If crimes were committed, I think that she, the RCMP, the people who worked on this file and especially Canadians deserve to see measures being taken and consequences being meted out.

This Liberal government does not seem to know the meaning of the word “consequence”.

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a reason we are here, besides the fact that the Privy Council Office defied an order of the House and decided to edit documents, or tell departments to edit documents, which is not what the House had asked for. I would ask the member a question about the SDTC act and the Conflict of Interest Act.

Both say government office holders and their family members cannot personally benefit from serving in that office. The Auditor General found that 82% of the transactions she audited were conflicted, totalling \$390 million that went to Liberal appointees' own companies in a conflict and was spent outside of the contribution agreement.

Can the member comment about the criminality aspect of the breach of the Conflict of Interest Act and the SDTC act?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I was just saying how knowledgeable my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets was on this issue and how ably he pointed out something that we should all know. He put his finger on a major problem. The sponsorship scandal is small potatoes by comparison.

Privilege

Today, the House has rightly requested access to documents so that we can unravel this entire matter, not just a small part of it. The Auditor General was unable to look at everything. The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner deliberately turned a blind eye to certain other conflicts of interest because the people involved had stepped down. Members of the House and Canadians have a right to know the truth, the whole truth, and not simply the truth that the Liberals are willing to show us.

• (1810)

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, members of this House who are familiar with the file are well aware of the purpose of the amendment my colleague just brought forward. We know why this amendment is important.

I would like my colleague to take a moment to explain this to those who may be watching us, because they may have lost track of the discussion since June, but they have every interest in knowing why this amendment is important to our discussions.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, it is important because if we want to get to the bottom of things, we need to hear from people. We have to agree on the people we want to appear before us. As a long-time member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I know that people can argue at length about a list of witnesses and how long each witness will be required to appear. What we want is to get to the bottom of this as quickly as possible.

Not only did we prepare a list of witnesses, but we also set a deadline for producing a report so that the House could learn the truth before Christmas, and I mean the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, not just the Liberal truth.

[English]

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a terrible precedent is being set by the chamber today. I have made my points clear in my original statement, but I would like to reiterate a number of them.

The RCMP and the Auditor General have both expressed their extreme discomfort with the blurring of the line of the separation of power between the legislative and judicial branches of government. Quite frankly, there is an abuse of the power of this place that is trampling on the charter-protected rights of Canadians. I would have liked to have thought that all members of the chamber, our hon. members, would like to live in a country where politicians do not use their extraordinary powers to bypass the judicial oversight that law enforcement requires to include on the charter rights of Canadians.

I do not know of any democracy in which politicians decide who or what is to be investigated by law enforcement. The only countries that I know of that do this are dictatorships. I, for one, believe that every member of the chamber should be as alarmed as the RCMP was when it expressed its view that it should not receive the documents without the required charter protections.

This is an extremely dark day for the House and a very troubling day for democracy in this country. I would submit that the actions we are—

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The government House leader is now questioning the ruling of the Speaker by what she is saying.

The Deputy Speaker: I will allow a little bit of breadth on what the hon. member will be saying.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, that is not true. I am not questioning the order; I am expressing my dismay with it. I would submit that the actions we are seeing from the Conservatives to trample the charter-protected rights of Canadians are just a glimpse of how they will act if they ever form government.

The Conservatives talk a lot about freedoms, but today they are starting to demonstrate the freedoms that they will take away from Canadians. If they are willing to take away the right to privacy, what is next, freedom of association, security of person, freedom of movement or freedom of expression? If this is where the Conservatives begin, Canadians should pay very close attention to where they will end when it comes to overriding the charter-protected rights of Canadians.

In conclusion, I call on the members of this chamber to do the right thing. Parliamentary powers reign supreme, but just because someone has the power to do something does not mean they should.

• (1815)

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the most incredible thing I have ever heard. In the incredible defence of \$390 million of taxpayer money by Liberal appointees, the government House leader decides to do a smoke-screen.

What level of theft of taxpayer money is a breach?

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the member opposite is not focused on what the motion is asking for and on my argument about the charter-protected rights of Canadians. Nothing says that parliamentary committees cannot use this information for themselves. It is that they are requesting this information and sending it to the police, bypassing judicial oversight and bypassing the very important separation of the legislative branch, the judicial branch and the government.

The RCMP, in its response to the committee, stated that police independence is important in Canada. It is a part of our democracy that is paramount. This motion is attempting to override that. That is what Canadians should be concerned about, and the fact that the member opposite does not understand that this is what the motion is about is of grave concern to me. It should be of grave concern to all Canadians.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I feel like I am at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, so I will do what I usually do.

An amendment has been moved, but let us get back to where this started. There was an order of the House that was not complied with. Once again, the government is trying to find a way to hide or be unable to provide the information we need.

Privilege

The goal is to ensure that we have the information we need. The RCMP will decide what it wants to do with the information. There was an order of the House. It must be respected.

If I may, what I would say about the amendment is that we have been through this before. I have been a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for two years. I see that we are once again going to have to shed some light on this.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, what is concerning about this order is that the documents were not requested for the use of the House. They were requested for another reason. The House requested those documents to give them to a third party, in this case the RCMP. That does not follow important procedures for protecting the rights of Canadians under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We need to ensure that the RCMP is careful about the way it uses those documents. That is the fundamental issue. I know that my Bloc Québécois colleague respects the rights of Canadians.

The motion that we are debating is concerning for me and, I believe, for all Canadians. Just because the House has the power to do something does not mean that it is necessarily the right thing to do. We should not necessarily do it.

[*English*]

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with every single word the government House leader has said. Parliament is supreme. Parliament has extraordinary powers. These extraordinary powers, in my view, should be used only in the case of a real emergency, like when there is a security threat to Canada or in the case of war, but not here.

The Canadian system has been working so well for over 150 years because it respects the division of responsibilities. The parliamentary officers are independent. The institutions, such as the RCMP, are independent. The government of the day, or even Parliament of the day, should not dictate what needs to be done or how it needs to be done. This is very disruptive.

I would like to ask my colleague to explain the importance of the government or Parliament not interfering in the workings of an institution, such as the RCMP.

• (1820)

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, while colleagues on the opposite side laugh about interfering with police work, I will say that it is actually a very serious matter. There is a very good reason why there is a separation between the legislative branch of government and the judicial branch of government. What the Conservatives are putting forward is absolutely trying to interfere with that separation and that independence. That is extremely concerning to me, and I think all members should be concerned.

I would ask my hon. colleagues, when they go home tonight, to look themselves in the mirror to ask whether they are comfortable with the fact that they are setting a new precedent in which this chamber has decided that it should override the rights of Canadians.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable to me that the government House leader is worried about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms when the government has violated every single Charter right there is. It has violated the

freedom of expression with Bill C-11 and Bill C-63. It has violated the mobility rights of millions of Canadians, as well as life and security of the person. I could go on and on.

Then the member says she is concerned with making sure there is separation from the RCMP. When has the RCMP been separated from the government? In the WE Charity scandal, the Prime Minister took an action that benefited him, his wife, his brother and his mother, which is against subsection 119(1) of the Criminal Code. What about SNC-Lavalin? When did the government start taking action? It was four years after the event.

How can the member look herself in the mirror and not see the problem on that side?

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about some of the allegations the member opposite made, and I am worried that she is spending a lot of time in Internet conspiracy theories as opposed to in reality. What the House is doing—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

With all the seriousness of this debate, I would ask hon. members to keep their comments to themselves and participate in the questions and comments portion of our debate. That is why it is there. Members can stand and ask questions. I appreciate the question that was just asked, and I will allow the same latitude to the hon. government House leader to answer that question.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, I can only surmise by the reaction of my colleagues opposite that it is making them a bit uncomfortable knowing that what they are doing is trampling the charter rights of Canadians. They are taking the extraordinary powers of this place for political gain to override the rights of Canadians. This is where it begins.

I hope that my hon. colleagues reflect seriously upon this and decide that this is also where it should end because that is not what Parliament should be doing. It should not be overriding the rights of Canadians. We have extraordinary powers in this place for a very good reason, but it is not so that legislators can direct the police. That should not happen in a democracy, and that is a very slippery slope. I hope all members of this place take that seriously, reflect upon it, and think about what their duties are as they sit in these seats and are here to supposedly stand up for the rights and freedoms of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing about the importance of the separation of the three powers. I completely agree with that. That is the foundation of democracy.

However, the request being made does not infringe on this separation of powers. We are not giving an order to the RCMP. We are asking for the production of documents that are potentially evidence and the RCMP can take it from there. It is not an order to conduct an investigation. If it were, that would overstep our duty to respect the separation of powers. We are simply providing potential evidence, however.

Adjournment Proceedings

Does the member make the distinction between providing potential evidence and wrongly assuming a power? If not, there is a problem.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague can read the letter sent by the RCMP commissioner to the House of Commons. He said that it will likely be impossible for the RCMP to use them because it is in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

As the Speaker mentioned in his response to this question of privilege, this is something that is very rare and unusual in the House of Commons. It is unprecedented for the House of Commons to request documents and give them to a third party, without even using them itself.

Conservative members have said they think there is something criminal going on. The RCMP told the House of Commons that they had concluded their investigation and found nothing criminal. It is up to the RCMP, an independent police force, to decide whether it is going to investigate something or not. It is not up to the House.

• (1825)

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my esteemed and very competent colleague from Laurentides—Labelle.

Let me say right away that we agree. Parliament has the power to demand documents. Its only limitation is the good judgment of the House. Whether or not the RCMP decides to use the documents is up to the RCMP. As far as we are concerned, demanding documents and providing them is not interference in the judicial branch; it is providing the tools that the judicial branch may or may not need.

This is clearly not interference. If this counts as interference in the judicial branch, then anyone who happens to find a gun and turns it over to the RCMP would be interfering in the judicial branch. If, tomorrow morning, I found a bloody weapon and turned it over to the RCMP, since I am a legislator, I would be interfering in the judicial branch. It is a fine line, but we are nowhere near that line.

The government is mixing things up. More importantly, it wants to limit the powers of the members of this House, the elected officials who represent the entire population.

We are not directing the police, and we are not a people's court, either. I would also remind all members of the House that we are not judges, a jury, witnesses or a tribunal. It is imperative that we maintain that separation.

I am confident that the motion as amended respects judicial, legislative and executive powers.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that one needs to understand the fact that what we are talking about is blurring judicial independence versus the extreme powers Parliament has. If, as a Parliament, we say we want this information for the purpose of giving it to the RCMP,

there is a process that would normally go through the independent judiciary. This would deny the opportunity for those who might have that information.

I am concerned about the blurring of judicial independence. Are the Bloc members at all concerned that this might be an overreach of the privilege we have as a Parliament, which is ultimately supreme? Is the member not concerned about that?

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola: Mr. Speaker, I am always concerned about the powers of the House of Commons. I constantly ask myself whether I might be overreaching the usual powers. I do my utmost to ensure that I respect the three orders of government that constitute the best approach to establishing a democracy, according to the Enlightenment.

In this case, producing documents that may or may not constitute evidence, and letting the RCMP decide whether or not to use those documents makes all the difference with respect to the division of powers in a situation such as this one.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1830)

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today at the hour of adjournment to pursue a question I asked May 2, the day the Minister of Finance tabled Bill C-69. This is what is called, in the vernacular, an omnibus budget bill. Liberals will remember those words because it was in the platform of the Liberals that they would not introduce such things as omnibus budget bills.

Liberals also promised that they would make sure that the legislation brought forward would have full consultation with indigenous peoples as required under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; that did not happen either. We also had a promise to improve environmental assessment. What I did on May 2 was refer to this as something of a hat trick. There were three different platform promises broken in one omnibus budget bill.

The part that concerns me the most, although it is hard to say which is worse, is I think what we have had happen here is a gross violation of our responsibility as parliamentarians to respond to the challenges and the need to have environmental assessment legislation that works, to ensure that it is constitutionally valid and to ensure that it is studied in the appropriate committee.

Let me try to point out one of the major reasons it is so deeply offensive that the Minister of Finance brought forward the changes being made to the environmental impact bill. This is a huge omnibus bill. There are over 40 different divisions, not to mention there are over 300 sections to the bill. We get to the environmental assessment bits by the time we get to division 28, part 6 and then we start realizing something.

This is what I think as an environmental lawyer and I have consulted some friends who do constitutional law. The Liberals may not have fixed the problem that the Supreme Court had because the way they have defined when something is in federal jurisdiction is to get rid of language they think the court did not like, which was language around things like “adverse effect”. They said an adverse effect, and throughout the bill it is the same every time, within federal jurisdiction is a “non-negligible” adverse change. That is repeated multiple times.

My point is we cannot come up with a conclusion that an effect is non-negligible before studying the project and having some idea what the impact is going to be. We cannot decide, ahead of time, that it is non-negligible. It is a tautology. It is hastily drafted. The court ruled that the last version violated the Constitution by having federal intrusions into provincial jurisdiction.

Here is the problem: The bill continues with what Stephen Harper did in wrecking environmental assessment in, yes again, omnibus budget Bill C-38 in spring 2012. This was a chance to fix it. The Liberals blew it.

• (1835)

Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her ongoing advocacy for environmental causes in Canada.

Countries around the world are taking decisive action toward combatting climate change and protecting the environment, and Canada is no different. Tackling the climate crisis requires many innovative solutions, and one of the tools in the tool box is achieving a healthy environment, including a strong and effective Impact Assessment Act.

Last October, the Supreme Court of Canada issued an opinion regarding the—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the hon. member to make sure the phone is not near the microphone there. Something was vibrating.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Speaker, last October, the Supreme Court of Canada issued an opinion regarding the constitutionality of the Impact Assessment Act, stating that we needed to clearly focus on the areas of federal jurisdiction and underscoring that we work with provinces “in the spirit of cooperative federalism.” More specifically, the Supreme Court of Canada stated that decisions under the act must be tied exclusively to “adverse effects within federal jurisdiction” and that the definition of “effects within federal jurisdiction” must be clearly defined.

Adjournment Proceedings

I am happy to say that last June, the Government of Canada delivered on its promise to quickly and meaningfully amend the Impact Assessment Act to respond to the Supreme Court of Canada and provide regulatory certainty for major project proponents, indigenous partners and Canada's investment climate.

The amended act clearly focuses on preventing or mitigating effects in areas of federal responsibility. It also provides increased flexibility and new tools to harmonize the federal process with those of other jurisdictions and facilitate greater co-operation. As a result, it reduces duplication and increases efficiency and certainty with the goal of achieving “one project, one assessment”.

The government is committed to ensuring that indigenous consultation is included in the work it does. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples remains integral to the Impact Assessment Act. As such, the act will continue to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement and the participation of indigenous peoples in the assessment process with the aim of securing their free, prior and informed consent, and ensuring their rights and interests are respected throughout the process.

The government is committed to ensuring that future generations are able to live in a healthy environment, and that is exactly what it will continue to do.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, if only there was a way I could tell the parliamentary secretary, in one minute, of the 40 years of work I have put into environmental assessment; how casually it was trashed when Stephen Harper came in; how clearly the mandate letter to former environment minister Catherine McKenna said, “Fix this”; how she did not fix it but instead kept the Harper model; and how, because of that, the court found it unconstitutional.

We had a system that worked. The expert panel on environmental assessment gave the government clear information on what to do. It chose not to do it. What that means is that right now a project clearly in federal jurisdiction could wipe out an endangered species. It would never hit a red flag. It would never hit a trigger. It would never get assessed, because we have abandoned the core principles we had for EA since 1993.

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Speaker, I admire this member, and I admire her passion. She is baiting me to defend the Harper government, and there is no chance I am going to do that, of course. I will defend the Liberal government's record on the environment. I will defend the former environment minister Catherine McKenna.

We have taken every step along the way to make sure that the assessment process works, that it satisfies constitutional requirements and the federal-provincial boundaries, and that there is no obstruction in getting projects approved. “One project, one process” is important to us. That is our goal, and that is what we are going to do.

Adjournment Proceedings

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question to the government during question period was about the cost of the carbon tax, what it was costing families, so I am going to read out a letter I got from James from Shoal Lake, Manitoba. He sent me a letter, and he wrote, “The carbon tax is making it harder to survive. It's getting to a point where I will have to sell my house and move in with family.”

What does this government have to say to James?

• (1840)

Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my immediate reaction is that James should check his mail and look at the carbon rebate, but the Conservative Party seems to be obsessed with the idea of attacking the carbon pricing mechanism. Carbon pricing is a proven, effective method of reducing emissions in Canada. Whether someone lives in Toronto, in Manitoba, in Saskatchewan or in Nova Scotia, the fact remains that carbon pricing has been proven time and time again to be effective.

Eight out of 10 Canadians receive more money back than they pay out. That is undisputed fact, and the Conservatives can continue to spout this rhetoric about how carbon pricing is making life more difficult for Canadians, when in fact the opposite is true. What carbon pricing is doing is protecting our environment, helping us reduce emissions and making life more affordable through the rebate, which is something they continually, over and over again, fail to talk about whenever they talk about carbon pricing.

The rhetoric has to stop. I am prepared to have a reasonable debate with this member or any member opposite about reducing emissions through carbon pricing and other processes we can introduce to make the system more fair and effective to help Canadians create an environment where we are living in a cleaner Canada.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that the actual response at first was “check his mail”.

I have another letter, from Jack and Donna from Forrest, Manitoba. They wrote that for them as retired members of the area, the carbon tax is making it harder to enjoy travelling and seeing family. What does the government have to say to Jack and Donna?

Mr. James Maloney: Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to be cute. This is a very serious issue. I live in Toronto. The price of gas at the pumps in Toronto is lower now than it was a year ago. It is about the same price as it was when carbon pricing was introduced a number of years ago.

The notion that it costs more to get in the car and travel is pure fallacy. It is political rhetoric to score some political points to help the Conservatives win an election. If they want to have a debate about efficient, effective mechanisms to reduce carbon in our environment, I am here. I will talk to them in the House, I will talk to them out in the corridor and I will talk to them in my office.

However, until the Conservatives cut back on the rhetoric, I am not sure the conversation is going to be productive.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise on behalf of the residents of Kelowna—Lake Country.

I rise today to speak about the ongoing drug addiction crisis and its terrible impacts on residents in my community of Kelowna—Lake Country and across Canada. Overdoses are up; overdose deaths are up and addictions are up. Since 2015, overdoses have increased 184%, and that is nearly 45,000 Canadians who have, sadly, lost their lives.

The radical NDP-Liberal so-called safe supply drug experiment has done nothing to stem the tide of overdose deaths. It has instead flooded our streets, playgrounds, public spaces and even hospitals with dangerous illicit drugs. We have heard from expert witnesses that diverted so-called safe supply drugs such as hydromorphone are being resold and trafficked into our communities and used as currency in exchange for fentanyl. This fuels the drug trade even further.

A report commissioned by B.C.'s top doctor actually said that the program was “almost as good as giving [drug users] cash.” I have talked to first responders in my community who are, frustratingly, seeing the effects of these policies on our streets. The Vancouver Police Department noted that around 50% of all hydromorphone seizures were diverted from government, taxpayer-funded, drugs. Over 30 criminal charges were just made following a raid at a so-called safe consumption site in Nanaimo. We have heard that drug diversion is specifically targeting children.

We have already seen what happened when the federal addictions minister approved an open drug use policy. The federal government has also approved an open drug use policy in public spaces, including parks and playgrounds. Open drug use in playgrounds normalizes exposure to deadly drugs to children and was a contributing factor for the reckless policy to be backtracked when it was repeatedly called out.

There was a drug paraphernalia vending machine in British Columbia, distributing crack pipes and syringes. Only after much massive public pressure during a provincial election did the NDP provincial government stop it.

Unfortunately, the ideology-driven minister appears to show no signs of slowing down from implementing radical policies. In July, a memo to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions was obtained through an access to information request. The memo advised the government to “use all tools” at its disposal to address the crisis, including using national drug decriminalization. This means that the Liberal government is considering the legalization of hard drugs, like crack, meth and fentanyl, across the whole country. This reckless expansion cannot happen.

Adjournment Proceedings

We continue to see the disastrous results of the NDP-Liberal drug policies in British Columbia. Recently on Vancouver Island, a tribal council representing 14 first nations declared a state of emergency over the ongoing opioid crisis. In British Columbia, drug overdoses have become the leading cause of death for children between the ages of 10 and 18. This is absolutely heartbreaking. We cannot afford to continue with these Liberal policies, nor can we afford to entertain the expansion of deadly programs that are flooding our neighbourhoods with drugs.

The taxpayer funding of dangerous drugs must end now. Therefore, common-sense Conservatives will end the failed NDP-Liberal drug experiment for good. We will instead bring hope and healing through addiction treatment and recovery to bring our loved ones home.

● (1845)

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the toxic drug and overdose crisis continues to have an impact on Canadians from coast to coast. People are losing their lives to the ever-changing illegal toxic drug supply. Many are dying because of it, but these are preventable deaths. We need to use everything at our disposal to save lives.

This crisis is complex, and we need to work with all orders of government, partners and stakeholders. We need to listen to our partners and do everything we can to save lives, improve access to health care services and maintain safe communities.

A strict law enforcement-only approach, with no acknowledgement that this is a public health crisis, drove Canada's response to substance use for over a century. Time and again, this has been proven to be ineffective. We hold it to Canadians to work towards solutions. Canadians suffering from addictions need health care, not jail.

This government's commitment to working with all orders of government to find local solutions is unwavering. Working in partnership is what responsible governments do. However, screaming slogans into the void is the only solution Conservatives offer. They like to talk about crimes and disorder, but the actual experts in law enforcement do not agree with them. They have been clear in their support of a comprehensive public health approach to addressing substance use harms. Police are looking for better ways to address community concerns around safety in public spaces, rather than arresting someone for a health care issue.

Cities across Canada are witnessing the compounding effects of the ongoing overdose crisis, with people managing mental health issues, the impacts of the housing shortage and the need for more affordable housing. If the Conservatives cared that much about public drug use, they would not oppose safe consumption sites. When these sites do not exist, the streets and our public spaces become consumption spaces.

[*Translation*]

There is no single solution to this crisis. It requires a comprehensive response with innovative actions to save more lives, and we are closely monitoring those actions so we can make adjustments

along the way. We are working to ensure that Canadians have access to a full range of prevention, risk reduction, treatment and recovery services, as well as the support they need, when and where they need it, while also keeping communities safe. For example, budget 2024 announced a new commitment of \$150 million for a fund to support municipalities and indigenous communities. This funding will help provide rapid responses to more heavily affected communities with urgent and critical needs related to the overdose crisis. This is in addition to the billions of dollars we have already committed to combat this crisis.

● (1850)

[*English*]

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves. After nine years of radical, reckless Liberal policies, the drug crisis has gotten worse, not better.

Even the B.C. NDP requested that the federal Liberal government recriminalize illicit drugs after the massive failure of their joint drug experiment. This is no wonder, given that B.C., sadly, saw a 400% increase in drug overdose deaths in the first year of the decriminalization experiment. Many of our residential neighbourhoods, where children used to be able to play and seniors used to be able to walk safely, as well as business areas with small businesses, have been taken over by crime and people openly suffering from addiction.

The Liberals' drug policies are not working. We need to give people hope by focusing on addiction treatment and recovery so that we can bring our loved ones home.

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière: Mr. Speaker, Canada's approach to addressing the toxic drug and overdose crisis and substance use-related harms is comprehensive, equitable, collaborative and compassionate. It is guided by the Canadian drugs and substances strategy. This federal strategy outlines a continuum of care, including prevention and education, harm reduction, treatment and recovery.

Adjournment Proceedings

[*Translation*]

Our government supports an evidence-based, person-centred, trauma-informed public health approach that also offers culturally safe treatment options. That said, our government also wants to protect public health. We have invested over \$1 billion since 2017 to address the overdose crisis head-on by investing in public health and public safety. This includes funding the RCMP to target organized drug crime and prevent the cross-border movement of illegal drugs and precursor chemicals.

We will continue to do everything in our power to stop the needless harms and deaths of Canadians due to this crisis, while also maintaining safe communities.

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

(The House adjourned at 6:52 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Thursday, September 26, 2024

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Health

Mr. Holland 25893

Criminal Code

Ms. Gazan 25893

Bill C-413. Introduction and first reading 25893

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) 25893

Petitions

Hong Kong

Mr. Redekopp 25893

Iran

Mr. Redekopp 25893

Sudan

Mr. Desjarlais 25893

Public Safety

Mr. Mazier 25894

Air Transportation

Mr. Lamoureux 25894

Children and Families

Ms. Collins (Victoria) 25894

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux 25894

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Confidence in the Government

Mr. Berthold 0

Ms. Gould 25896

Mr. Simard 25896

Mr. Angus 25897

Mr. Albas 25897

Mr. Drouin 25898

Mr. Barsalou-Duval 25899

Ms. McPherson 25899

Ms. Gould 25899

Mr. Mazier 25901

Ms. Larouche 25901

Mr. Green 25902

Mr. Louis 25902

Mr. Doherty 25902

Mr. Perron 25903

Mr. Perron 25903

Mrs. Vien 25904

Mr. Drouin 25905

Mr. Angus 25905

Mrs. Gill 25905

Ms. Normandin 25905

Mr. Brassard 25907

Ms. Taylor Roy 25907

Ms. McPherson 25907

Ms. McPherson 25907

Ms. Rempel Garner 25911

Mr. Gerretsen 25911

Ms. Larouche 25911

Mr. Angus 25912

Mr. Doherty 25914

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 25914

Mrs. Vien 25914

Mr. Gerretsen 25915

Mr. Barsalou-Duval 25916

Mr. Angus 25916

Mr. Khanna 25916

Mr. Gerretsen 25918

Mr. Desjarlais 25918

Mr. Caputo 25918

Mr. Sorbara 25919

Mr. Shipley 25920

Mr. Barsalou-Duval 25921

Mr. Angus 25921

Mr. Gerretsen 25921

Mr. Mazier 25923

Ms. McPherson 25923

Ms. Rempel Garner 25923

Mrs. Atwin 25925

Ms. Larouche 25925

Points of Order

Oral Questions—Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker 25925

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Confidence in the government

Motion 25926

Ms. Larouche 25926

Ms. McPherson 25926

Points of Order

Alleged Violation of Standing Order 116 at Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Ms. Khalid 25927

Mr. Nater 25927

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Air India Flight 182

Mr. Arya 25927

Member for Tobique—Mactaquac

Mr. Bragdon 25927

Foreign Affairs	
Mrs. Zahid	25928
National School Support Staff Day	
Ms. Bérubé	25928
Franco-Ontarian Flag	
Mr. Serré	25928
Liberal Party of Canada	
Mrs. Block	25928
Participation	
Mr. van Koeverden	25929
Tony Moore	
Mr. Sarai	25929
Ethics	
Mr. Caputo	25929
Lebanon	
Mr. El-Khoury	25929
Public Safety	
Mr. Hallan	25929
Carbon Tax	
Mr. Patzer	25930
Canada Summer Jobs Program	
Mr. Zuberi	25930
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	
Ms. Collins (Victoria)	25930
40th Anniversary of AQDR Granby	
Ms. Larouche	25930
Carbon Tax	
Mr. Baldinelli	25931
Carbon Pricing	
Ms. Murray	25931
Removal of Questions During Oral Questions	
The Speaker	25931

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government Priorities	
Mr. Poilievre	25931
Mr. Duclos	25931
Mr. Poilievre	25931
Ms. Gould	25931
Mr. Therrien	25932
Mr. MacKinnon	25932
Mr. Therrien	25932
Mr. Duclos	25932
Housing	
Mr. Boulerice	25932
Mr. Duclos	25932
Mr. Desjarlais	25932
Ms. Hajdu	25932

Government Priorities	
Mr. Poilievre	25932
Ms. Gould	25933
Housing	
Mr. Poilievre	25933
Mr. Fragiskatos	25933
Government Priorities	
Mr. Poilievre	25933
Ms. Bendayan	25933
The Economy	
Mr. Melillo	25933
Mr. Fragiskatos	25933
Public Safety	
Mr. Paul-Hus	25933
Ms. O'Connell	25934
Mr. Paul-Hus	25934
Mrs. St-Onge	25934
Seniors	
Ms. Larouche	25934
Mr. MacKinnon	25934
Ms. Larouche	25934
Mr. MacKinnon	25934
Agriculture and Agri-Food	
Mr. Perron	25934
Mr. MacAulay	25935
The Economy	
Ms. Gladu	25935
Ms. Sudds	25935
Carbon Pricing	
Ms. Gladu	25935
Ms. Gould	25935
Mr. Redekopp	25935
Mr. Wilkinson	25935
Veterans Affairs	
Ms. Blaney	25935
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	25936
Mental Health and Addictions	
Mr. Johns	25936
Ms. Saks	25936
Natural Resources	
Mr. Jowhari	25936
Mr. Wilkinson	25936
International Trade	
Mr. Williams	25936
Ms. Ng	25936
Mr. Williams	25937
Mr. Wilkinson	25937
Forestry Industry	
Mr. Martel	25937
Mr. Guilbeault	25937
Mr. Martel	25937

Mr. Guilbeault	25937	Mr. Lamoureux	25944
Official Languages		Mr. Beaulieu	25944
Mrs. Vignola	25937	Mr. G�n�reux	25944
Mr. Boissonnault	25937	Mrs. Vien	25945
Mr. Beaulieu	25937	Mr. Scarpaleggia	25945
Mr. Boissonnault	25938	Ms. Gladu	25946
Carbon Pricing		Ms. Gaudreau	25946
Mr. Khanna	25938	Ms. Blaney	25947
Ms. Suds	25938	Mr. Lightbound	25947
Mr. Van Popta	25938	Mr. Lamoureux	25947
Ms. Gould	25938	Mr. Small	25948
The Economy		Mr. Lightbound	25948
Mr. Berthold	25938	Ms. Barron	25949
Mr. Duclos	25938	Mr. Poilievre	25949
Housing		Mr. Lightbound	25950
Mr. Iacono	25938	Ms. Gaudreau	25950
Mr. Duclos	25938	Ms. Gazan	25951
Public Safety		Mr. Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)	25951
Mr. Hallan	25938	Mr. Lamoureux	25952
Ms. O'Connell	25939	Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	25953
Financial Institutions		Ms. Idlout	25953
Mr. Chong	25939	Mr. Arya	25953
Ms. Bendayan	25939	Mr. Steinley	25954
Disaster Assistance		Mrs. Vignola	25955
Mr. Lloyd	25939	Ms. Idlout	25955
Mr. Guilbeault	25939	Mr. Weiler	25955
Women and Gender Equality		Mr. Albas	25957
Ms. Sidhu (Brampton South)	25939	Division on motion deferred	25957
Ms. Saks	25939	Privilege	
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship		Alleged Failure of Government to Produce Documents—Speaker's Ruling	
Ms. Kwan	25939	The Speaker	25957
Mr. Miller	25940	Sitting Suspended	
Public Safety		(The sitting of the House was suspended at 5:32 p.m.)	25959
Mr. Vuong	25940	Sitting Resumed	
Ms. Hajdu	25940	(The House resumed at 5:37 p.m.)	25959
Points of Order		Reference to Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs	
Oral Questions		Mr. Scheer	25959
Mr. Genuis	25941	Motion	25959
Mr. Angus	25941	Mr. Lamoureux	25961
Mr. Oliphant	25941	Ms. Gladu	25961
Business of the House		Mr. Steinley	25961
Mr. Scheer	25942	Mr. Perkins	25961
Ms. Gould	25942	Mr. Berthold	25962
GOVERNMENT ORDERS		Amendment	25963
Business of Supply		Ms. Gould	25963
Opposition Motion—Confidence in the government		Mr. Perkins	25963
Motion	25942	Mrs. Vignola	25964
Mr. Gourde	25942	Ms. Gould	25964
		Mr. Perkins	25964
		Ms. Gaudreau	25964
		Mr. Arya	25965
		Ms. Gladu	25965
		Mrs. Vignola	25965
		Mrs. Vignola	25966

Mr. Lamoureux 25966

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

The Environment

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 25966

Mr. Maloney 25967

Carbon Pricing

Mr. Mazier 25968

Mr. Maloney 25968

Mental Health and Addictions

Mrs. Gray 25968

Mrs. Brière 25969

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