



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

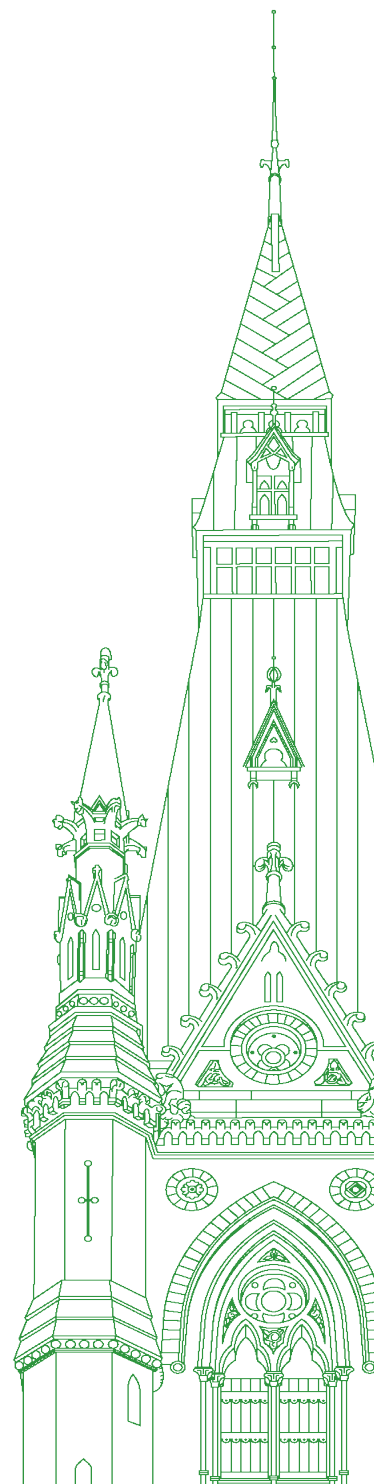
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

**Volume 151 No. 222**  
Thursday, September 21, 2023

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, September 21, 2023

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1000)

[English]

### AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 94(2) of the Access to Information Act and subsection 72(2) of the Privacy Act, the reports of the Auditor General of Canada on the administration of these acts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2023.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), these reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

\* \* \*

[English]

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND GROCERIES ACT

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-56, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Competition Act.

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

\* \* \*

### ADDRESS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order, or usual practice of the House:

(a) on Thursday, September 21, 2023, when the House adjourns, it shall stand adjourned until Monday, September 25, 2023, at 11:00 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1), provided that, for the purposes of Standing Order 28, it shall be deemed to have sat on Friday, September 22, 2023; and

(b) on Friday, September 22, 2023,

(i) an address, to be delivered in the chamber of the House of Commons before members of the Senate and the House of Commons, together with all introductory and related remarks, be printed as an appendix to the House of Commons Debates of Thursday, September 21, 2023, and form part of the records of this House, provided that the media recording and transmission of such address, introductory and related remarks be authorized pursuant to established guidelines for such occasions;

(ii) any standing, standing joint, special, and special joint committees, as well as their subcommittees, shall not be empowered to sit on that day.

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

It is agreed.

[Translation]

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

● (1005)

[English]

## PETITIONS

### FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from numerous Canadians concerned about the work conditions faced by Canada's flight attendants.

Flight attendants perform duties that are essential to the safety and comfort of air passengers, but they are not paid for many of the hours they are on the job. I think many Canadians would be surprised to learn that flight attendants are only paid when the airplane is in the air.

The petitioners note that, according to a survey of over 9,000 flight attendants by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, flight attendants in Canada are currently working unpaid for an average of 35 hours per month.

Petitioners call on the government to fix the relevant legislation so flight attendants who are on the job and at their employer's disposal are properly compensated at their contractual rate of pay. This includes training required by Transport Canada.

*Routine Proceedings*

## EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL OPINION

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief this morning. I have only three petitions to share with the House today. I would say to my colleagues that I will do better in the future.

The first petition is from petitioners who are very fond of a particular private member's bill, which happens to be one that I have put forward in this House. Bill C-257 is aimed at combatting the growing problem of political discrimination, that is, people facing discrimination on the basis of their political views or activity. They note that it is a fundamental Canadian right to be politically active and vocal, and it is in the best interest of Canadian democracy to protect public debate and the exchange of different ideas. Bill C-257 would add protections against political discrimination to the Canadian Human Rights Act by making discrimination on the basis of political views or activity prohibited grounds, alongside various other grounds.

The petitioners call on the House to support Bill C-257 and to defend the rights of all Canadians to peacefully express their political opinions without discrimination.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition is from those who are concerned about proposals to legalize euthanasia, or MAID, for children. The petitioners are asking the House to oppose any attempts to legalize the killing of children in Canada.

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition highlights the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. It lays out the history of that persecution; the nature of the Falun Gong movement as a traditional Chinese spiritual discipline that consists of meditation, exercise and moral teachings based on the principles of truthfulness, compassion and tolerance; and the ongoing issue of forced organ harvesting and trafficking.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to, among other things, strengthen its public calls for ending the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

I commend all these petitions to the thoughtful consideration of my colleagues.

## UKRAINE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure today that I table a petition dealing with the special relationship between Canada and Ukraine, which is somewhat dated but still very important. It is calling for the House of Commons, the Prime Minister and all members to do what they can in order to support Ukraine. I will leave it at that.

## FALUN GONG

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

The first petition comes from members of my community with respect to the Falun Gong community. The petitioners are bringing

to the attention of the House the persecution that members of their community are facing in China. They specifically call on the government to pass a resolution to establish measures to stop the Chinese Communist regime's crime of systematically murdering Falun Gong practitioners for their organs, to amend Canadian legislation to combat forced organ harvesting and to publicly call for an end to the persecution of the Falun Gong in China.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I have today comes from constituents throughout Canada who are calling to the attention of the House the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, which repeats a warning about rising temperatures over the next two decades. The petitioners are specifically calling on the Government of Canada to move forward immediately with bold emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that are comprehensive in scope and realistic in terms of achieving the necessary targets that Canada has set to reduce emissions by 2030.

● (1010)

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present this petition on behalf of the Canadians across the country who have signed it; they draw attention to the forced organ harvesting being conducted against Falun Gong practitioners by the Communist Party in China. These signatories are asking the Canadian government to pass a resolution to establish measures to stop the Communist Party regime's crime of murdering Falun Gong practitioners for their organs, amend the Canadian legislation to combat forced organ harvesting and publicly call for an end to the persecution of the Falun Gong in China.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the revised response to Question No. 1594, originally tabled on September 18, could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately in an electronic format.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1594—**Mr. Luc Berthold:**

With regard to Global Affairs Canada and the Global Heads of Mission meeting in Ottawa in June 2023: (a) which heads of mission attended the meeting (i) in person, (ii) virtually from the country in which they are stationed, (iii) virtually from a country other than in which they are stationed; (b) which heads of mission did not attend the meeting; and (c) when planning the event, what was the government's estimate of the costs associated with the event, including travel expenses?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### STRENGTHENING THE PORT SYSTEM AND RAILWAY SAFETY IN CANADA ACT

The House resumed from June 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Bonaville—Burin—Trinity.

I am proud to rise today to speak to a subject that is important and vital to the safety and security of Canadians, as well as our economy. The bill, as presented today, seeks to achieve multiple goals. It would modernize our ports to ensure a resilient supply chain at home, and it would secure our marine ports to keep Canadians safer. These changes would support Canada's economic recovery while taking an environmentally sustainable approach.

As we have heard from other members, the bill is very ambitious, but let me assure the House that all the goals are feasible and realistic. They come as a result of the ports modernization review that was launched in March 2018 by the then minister of transport. During the course of the review, many stakeholders were consulted, through various venues, such as ministerial round tables. The review focused on how ports could make progress on five key goals.

However, I want to focus on how this bill would enhance safety and security and help prevent contraband from being smuggled through Canadian ports, as well as facilitating the movement of legitimate commercial goods.

Over the course of consultations, we discussed potential safety and security issues at all our ports. As is the case elsewhere, the marine sector is not immune to organized crime activities, and that is why the Government of Canada is heeding this feedback and taking action. We have heard from stakeholders that the government needed to improve customs examination processes and reduce delays in getting Border Services officers to inspect cargo. That is precisely what we are proposing to do.

Stakeholders also highlighted a need for consistent standards for employee security screening at ports. This is precisely why our government is putting forward measures to increase efficiency in

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the presentation of containers for examination at marine ports to combat criminal smuggling efforts; reduce costs and delay for importers; increase the number of containers that would be secured from tampering on marine terminal property, through improved security measures; and increase the rate of compliance among trade chain partners by implementing additional measures to address non-compliance through penalties.

The changes I have listed would work in concert with the other measures included in this bill. They would allow our border services officers to accomplish their security mandate in a more efficient and effective way. This work would undoubtedly improve supply chain security and the flow of goods in and out of Canada's marine ports.

I know some members are asking themselves this: How would these measures impact the industry financially? These proposed measures are aimed at reducing delays and enhancing security, and they are expected to result in a long-term cost-saving opportunity for the entire trade community. This includes our importers, consumers and, ultimately, the Canadian economy.

I say this because the costs associated with the delays of examining containers and shipments subject to tampering are often passed on to the final consumer. Colleagues, this is a step in the right direction to ensure that all trade chain partners focus on improving security and efficiencies.

These changes may also improve the reputation and economic competitiveness of Canada's ports, because shipping delays and security vulnerabilities continue to have a negative impact. This is why the government expects strong support from the trade community, as the measures are aimed at addressing shipment delays and the associated costs, as well as improving supply chain efficiency. Allowing for more security at our ports and protection for Canadians and the economy should be reasons enough to support the measures.

Let me tell the House what would happen if we did not take these actions. As it stands today, the current legislative and regulatory framework does not provide the CBSA with authority to ensure containers are made available for examination in a timely manner or that adequate security measures are in place to prevent tampering prior to examination. A failure to examine incoming goods in a timely manner leaves commercial goods open to criminal exploitation. This places Canadians at risk, and it causes economic impacts to the trade community and to the wider Canadian economy.

*Government Orders*

• (1015)

Let me continue by saying these impacts are felt not only at home but also abroad by our international partners. Our issues can become their issues. They can translate into a lack of confidence in Canada's ability to secure its marine ports. That is why the changes proposed in this bill are integral to all parties at our marine ports, including the CBSA in carrying out its mandate for safety and security.

I want to reassure the House, the trade community and all Canadians that the CBSA continues to experience significant success from its ongoing interdiction efforts at our marine ports, despite the need for improvements. Our border officers are highly trained in examination techniques to intercept prohibited goods and illicit drugs being smuggled into Canada. Our officers look for any indication of deception and use intelligence, as well as a risk-management approach, to determine which goods may warrant a closer look. The seizures that are routinely reported by the agency demonstrate the crucial role that CBSA plays in ensuring public safety, but more can be done. That is why the government has put forward this bill to give our officers the tools they need to better complete their mandate.

With more measures in place and a requirement that high-risk containers selected for examination are kept in a dedicated secure area, our officers at the border would be better able to interdict contraband and prevent organized crime from tampering with containers before they have been inspected. The additional penalties and time limits would ensure goods are examined in the right place, which would lead to safer Canadian ports. I believe that anyone can get behind these measures to further secure goods and protect Canadians.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am from the Lower Mainland of Vancouver, and in 2016 the port authority stopped funding its enforcement team. Four hundred thousand dollars was pulled out of enforcement at the port. It is a gap that still remains today.

Could the member please let us know why the federal government is not funding additional enforcement when it knows there has not been enforcement in place for seven years?

• (1020)

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Madam Speaker, we know that ensuring good public services is integral to everything that our government does. We need to make sure that those public services are properly supported financially. We have thorough budgetary process reviews.

I know the minister of this file and his parliamentary secretary always provide good strategic overview for the issues brought up by the member, and I have full confidence that we will make sure these services are properly funded.

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this bill is a typical Liberal bill, which is a lot of fluff and a lot of bureaucracy in the name of safety, but it would bring a lot more costs, bureaucracy and inefficiency to Canadians and the ports. The members of the Association of Canadian Port Authorities say that more government is not the answer, and that is what this bill is. I wonder if the minister would respond to that.

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Madam Speaker, nothing can be further from the truth. We know that we have gone through a very difficult time over the last three or four years with the supply chains and the pandemic. Our ports have suffered because of that.

Bill C-33 would modernize the way Canada's marine and railway transportation systems operate. We would remove systemic barriers to create a more fluid, more secure and resilient supply. The bill would expand port authorities' mandate over traffic management. All of those are very positive efforts. This bill will go to committee and be looked at in greater detail, and I look forward to seeing this through.

[Translation]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. What I think is important about Bill C-33 is that it seeks to improve rail safety in Canada.

I would like to talk about a rail disaster. On July 6, 2013, 47 people were the victims of a rail disaster in Lac-Mégantic. Everyone remembers that.

In 2018, the Prime Minister went to Lac-Mégantic to announce the construction of a rail bypass, which was supposed to have been completed by the end of 2022. Today, nearly 10 years later, we have not even seen a shovel in the ground.

How can this government take the position today that it wants to improve rail safety when it has not even been able to keep its promise to build a rail bypass for the people of Lac-Mégantic? One can only imagine the negative impact that will have on the social environment.

My question for my colleague is simple. When will the shovels finally go in the ground to build the rail bypass for the people of Lac-Mégantic?

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his extremely important question.

What happened in Lac Mégantic a decade ago is a tragedy for Canada. Our government is committed to doing what it takes to make the rail system safer. We are working on this file and I know that the minister is working with the community and the industry to make the necessary improvements to prevent such a tragedy from happening again. We are committed to this issue.

[English]

**Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonaville—Burin—Trinity, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Canada's ports are indispensable links in our country's supply chains. In co-operation with other modes in the transportation network, they help grow our economy, create middle-class jobs for Canadians, deliver affordable goods and support Canada's growing export industry.

Canada's long-term prosperity is dependant on the competitiveness of this transportation network. This is, in part, determined by the reliability of each mode to move goods swiftly and cost efficiently. The ability to make data-driven decisions and the capability to plan for and make timely investments are critical. To ensure Canada's competitiveness now and into the future, ports require modernized tools and approaches to thrive in an increasingly global environment.

Other countries are pulling ahead of Canada. In the race to establish a fluid and agile transportation network, they have already established end-to-end systems, level approaches that consider each mode and link in the supply chain. All of this is informed by data and information sharing. To remain competitive, our government needs to adopt a comprehensive approach to supply chain planning.

Bill C-33 considers ports as central nodes in a complex, interdependent system and enables them to capitalize on their important position in Canada's intricate supply chain. The tools proposed in this bill would be informed by a cohesive data strategy that would enable prioritization of fluidity, responsiveness and agility.

A well-functioning transportation system requires and relies on the availability of vast amounts of data. Ports are nexuses where transportation modes converge. They present a unique opportunity to leverage untapped data to unlock and build an adaptable, responsive and resilient trade network. Furthermore, a resilient trade network requires continued development and growth to be provided through investment. To ensure that investments continue to serve the public as intended, they must be assessed against clear objectives.

The need to deliver a modern transportation network has never been clearer. Canadians are facing the rising cost of goods and services and product shortages. Inflation continues, and Canadians are struggling to keep up. Taking action to improve the competitiveness of the transportation network is key to making life more affordable for Canadians.

Bill C-33 seeks to enhance efficiency, facilitate data and information sharing, and maintain sustainable investment. These are the keys to ensuring that our transportation network continues to support Canada's economy and improve the life of every Canadian.

To that end, Bill C-33 would enable three competitiveness reforms that would provide ports with the tools and mandate to better manage traffic and ease congestion with the goal of enhancing gateway fluidity; empower port authorities, through the collection of data and information, to support efficient and informed planning to support resilient operations; ensure port investments align with public interests and that investments continue to be managed sustainably.

I will first speak to the need to provide ports with the tools and mandate to better manage traffic.

From end to end, ports and exports touch multiple transportation modes: marine, rail and road. These interdependencies make up Canada's transportation network, which requires a systematic approach to planning, development and traffic management. Bill C-33 would broaden the scope of the Canada Marine Act to mandate port authorities to work with the supply chain stakeholders to actively

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manage commercial traffic, including vessels anchoring while waiting for cargo, and allow for sequencing of rail services.

• (1025)

Ensuring that ports take a more direct role in traffic management would mean faster handling of ships, improvements to the fluidity of traffic flows at ports and maximizing the efficiency of supply chain operations. Additionally, the bill would enable Canada port authorities to create inland ports. Importantly, this would allow new ways of doing business that optimize terminal throughput, alleviate congestion in our urban centres and position our supply chains on a more resilient footing.

These tools would reframe the basis for collaboration between supply chain actors and Canadian port authorities. Port authorities would be empowered to take a more active role in managing the supply chain, including taking concrete actions to address congestion. However, unlocking the ability of ports to better manage traffic and ease congestion requires enhanced data and information sharing among partners.

The second main reform proposed is in support of greater competitiveness in data collection and information sharing among partners. Bill C-33 would allow ports to leverage data to better orchestrate traffic and inform port planning and smarter decision-making. As we look to best practices, governments and industry partners around the world have already improved efficiency, safety and productivity across entire supply chains by transforming their ports into data hubs. Canada needs to keep pace if we are going to remain a competitive trading nation.

As members of the House know, private investment has been a key to our competitiveness. This is also true for our ports. Private investment in our ports has been essential to the development of the port services we have today, and this will continue to be the case in the future. It is therefore critical that we continue to foster a clear and predictable investment climate while ensuring such activities support port sustainability and the public interest.

Bill C-33 would provide the government with more insight into strategic port investments by broadening the scope of reviewable transactions. Over the past number of years, Canada port authorities have called for greater financial flexibility to enhance their ability to harness investment and respond to development opportunities. Bill C-33 seeks to provide port authorities with increased borrowing and financial flexibility, balanced against the financial risks to the Crown and to Canadians. To that end, Bill C-33 would establish a triennial review of Canada port authorities' borrowing capacity.

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In summary, the suite of measures found in Bill C-33 would provide the tools needed to optimize port operations, enabled by modern digital solutions, and maximize investment and capacity development grounded in clear rules that maintain ports as attractive and sustainable assets. Taken together, these measures would ensure that our ports remain resilient, efficient and competitive.

Canadians have witnessed first-hand the need for such reforms. I hope I can count on my fellow members of Parliament to support this bill.

• (1030)

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the Liberals are waxing eloquent with this bill, but this would just make things worse. CP Rail says that, after four years, this is a whole bunch of nothing.

I recently toured both the Port of Nanaimo and the Port Alberni port. What they need is not more bureaucracy, more things to stifle movement. They need help with the Canada Border Services Agency, to get some representation there so we can reduce the clog in traffic and the bulk of the ships within the Gulf Islands and the area around Vancouver.

Will the Liberal member not recognize that this is not what industry is asking for and is not leading to efficiencies?

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** Madam Speaker, I too have visited these ports, many of them, in western Canada and eastern Canada. During a recent study tour, our transportation committee visited major ports in Montreal, Halifax and others on the east coast, while some of our members went to the west coast. We have seen first-hand the congestion that has materialized in some of the ports. What we are saying is that these are recommendations in this bill from so-called experts in the industry about how we can approach or improve congestion and port efficiency, and improve our supply chain.

• (1035)

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am trying to understand what we are doing here this morning. I am sincerely interested in having the government's agenda explained to me because I am having a hard time following.

There is currently a global climate crisis and this summer there were forest fires everywhere. There is a housing crisis and 3.5 million housing units need to be built. There are homeless seniors in Quebec. There is also an acute inflation crisis. I was just talking about the climate crisis. Canada had its knuckles rapped at the UN just last evening.

This morning, they show up with a sort of omnibus bill with safety measures for the railway system and half measures for the ports. I am trying to understand where the government is going with this. I would like my colleague to give me an indication.

[English]

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** Madam Speaker, the issues I raised in my speech about Bill C-33 are all related to supply chain needs. They are related to the connection with rail, marine and air services, which all interconnect to help improve our supply chain. As we know, for the past three or four years, we have had major chal-

lenges, particularly during the pandemic, when Canadians could never get services on time or get products they needed. This is all about improving efficiency over the entire transportation network.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have enjoyed my time on the transport committee with the member for Bonaville—Burin—Trinity, and my question has to do with that committee's work.

This bill is not only about ports but also about rail safety, with amendments to the Railway Safety Act. The member will be well aware of our work at committee on the topic of rail safety. Last May, the committee released a report with 33 recommendations to protect workers and communities from rail disasters. The bill in front of us, which claims to be partly about railway safety, has ignored all 33 of those recommendations.

As he is a member of that committee and someone who contributed to that work, how did it feel for the member's own minister to ignore the committee's recommendations so thoroughly?

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** Madam Speaker, I too enjoyed my time on the transport committee with my colleague, and the rail safety issue certainly has been an important part of our discussions, as has much discussion around the entire supply chain. This bill is attempting to cover all of these concerns and make sure we have a safe, affordable and competitive supply chain.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I continue to hear the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge refer to this as a fluff bill, and I take offence to that, although I am very glad to see that Conservatives are up and speaking today. We know they have been silenced by their leader twice this week already.

I am wondering whether my colleague can comment on why this bill is so important now and why putting it on the table and seeing the legislation pass is critical for the industry.

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** Madam Speaker, it is important because, in my half a dozen years on the transport committee with members of the government and the opposition, we have heard from many of the people who work in the industry on a daily basis. People do not understand the challenges some of our ports are facing and what needs to be done to create a comprehensive plan that delivers products and goods to Canadians on time, efficiently and affordably.



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**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the people of Skeena—Bulkley Valley in beautiful northwest B.C. and speak to the bill before us, Bill C-33, an act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act.

This is a fairly complex and technical bill, but really it focuses on Canada's supply chain. Canada is a trading nation, and the performance, resilience, efficiency and sustainability of our supply chain obviously have far-reaching impacts. This is something that was driven home just this past year with the atmospheric river events in British Columbia, the extreme climate occurrence that took out a good portion of the supply chain infrastructure in my province and caused some real concern and disturbance for the supplies that companies and citizens across our country require. There is also of course the impact of the pandemic on the supply chain. We saw during the pandemic a whole host of concerns, unfortunately very few of which are addressed in this bill. However, I do note there are some incremental improvements we can get behind.

I hope to focus my comments on the concerns I have heard from communities, from people in British Columbia and other parts of Canada who are impacted by the operation of the supply chain. The supply chain does not exist in a vacuum. It runs through places where people live. For years and years, people have been expressing concerns about the impact of the transportation of goods on their lives. I was somewhat dismayed to see that those concerns from citizens and the concerns from workers in the supply chain are not reflected in a more substantive way in the legislation before us.

The response to this bill has been rather tepid. As much as anything, the response has been that it is a missed opportunity to do something much more far-reaching and ambitious. However, as I mentioned, there are items in this bill that are supportable, so we look forward to seeing it get to committee where we can work with all parties to make amendments that strengthen its provisions.

I am going to focus my remarks on the portion of the bill that relates to changes to the Marine Act, that is, the operation of our ports, and changes to the Railway Safety Act, which is something very pertinent to the region I represent.

I will start with the topic of rail safety. I want to note at the outset that this year marks the 10-year anniversary of the Lac-Mégantic tragedy that took 47 lives and destroyed the downtown of a beautiful community. I came across comments from a fellow named Ian Naish, the former director of rail accident investigations with the Transportation Safety Board. He said in February that safety measures introduced since the Lac-Mégantic disaster have been “marginal”.

We also saw in East Palestine, Ohio, a major rail disaster that impacted thousands of people. In the wake of that disaster, Kathy Fox, the chair of Canada's Transportation Safety Board said, in referring to rail safety in Canada, “Progress is being made, but it's very, very slow. I can't say [Ohio] couldn't happen here.” These remarks should be of great concern to Canadians, because we see the volume of dangerous goods shipped by rail increasing every year.

I mentioned in my question to my colleague across the way a moment ago the work of the transport committee, on which both he and I sit. That committee, in May, released a report with 33 recommendations, and I am somewhat disappointed to see that this bill does not address any of them. One of our big concerns when it comes to rail safety is the use of something called safety management systems. This was brought in, I believe in the 1990s, under a Liberal government. Prior to that, there was a much more conventional approach to the regulation of the rail sector and the use of enforcement to do so. Safety management systems are really a form of self-regulation by the companies themselves.

● (1040)

This has been a concern for a number of watchdogs that keep track of changes in the rail sector. Since the Transportation Safety Board has kept a watch-list, this is a set of issues that are of concern and that Canadians should be watching when it comes to safety.

The Transportation Safety Board states, “operators that have implemented a formal safety management system (SMS) are not always able to demonstrate that it is working and producing the expected safety improvements.” I will also note some words from the Auditor General of Canada:

...Transport Canada was unable to show whether departmental oversight activities have contributed to improved rail safety. In addition, the department did not assess the effectiveness of the railways' safety management systems—despite the many reports over the last 14 years recommending that Transport Canada audit and assess these systems.

The picture I am trying to paint is one in which the government has largely allowed these multi-billion dollar rail companies to look after their own safety, and the oversight of them has been sorely lacking. Particularly on the anniversary of the worst rail disaster in 150 years, Canadians should be concerned about that.

Bill C-33 does contain one small change giving the minister the ability to require companies to address deficiencies in their safety management systems. However, this is a discretionary power given to the minister and really relies on his or her willingness to use that power. At the very least, safety management systems should be made public. Currently, they are proprietary systems owned by companies and not open to public scrutiny.

### *Government Orders*

Bruce Campbell, a rail safety expert who wrote a book on Lac-Mégantic and who has been looking into these issues for years, says, “Transport Canada must ensure that [safety management systems] are part and parcel of an effective, adequately financed, comprehensive system of regulatory oversight: [one-site] inspection, surveillance and enforcement supported by sufficient, appropriately trained staff.” He goes on to say that SMS, currently protected under commercial confidentiality, should be accessible to outside scrutiny. We would very much like to see the government make safety management systems public so that the public can see what railway companies are doing to ensure the safety of their communities.

It is incredible that small rural communities, like many in the riding I represent, are responsible for protecting their residents from potential disasters involving these multi-billion dollar rail companies that are shipping dangerous goods within metres of residents' houses. Many of these communities rely on small volunteer fire departments. They have limited equipment and capacity, yet we see hundreds of railcars with extremely volatile compounds being shipped right through communities every single day. It boggles the mind that the responsibility for responding to emergencies rests—

• (1045)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Could the hon. member for Saskatoon—University take the call outside the chamber, please?

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, we need companies to be responsible for protecting communities from their commercial activities. I think that is very reasonable.

Moving on to the portion of the bill that deals with ports, these are some of the more substantive changes being proposed by the government. I will start by noting the importance of the Marine Act and ports to northwest British Columbia.

Of course, the riding I represent is home to the port of Prince Rupert. It is one of North America's fastest-growing ports. It is currently the third-largest port in Canada, and it is a port that has really transformed the face of that community over more than a decade. With incredible growth and expansion, it is now by far the largest employer in the community and has been bringing a lot of benefits to that place, and some concerns as well.

In 2022, the port of Prince Rupert moved 24.6 million tonnes of cargo through its facility, which is a pretty astonishing volume of goods. Of course, this has benefits and impacts up and down the supply chain. The community I live in, Smithers, which has long been a railway town, has hundreds of railroad workers who work for CN and are involved in the transportation of goods from the port.

Last year the port of Prince Rupert completed some exciting projects. There is the Fairview-Ridley connector road shore power project, which I will talk about in a moment, and work is under way on the South Kaien import logistics park. They are assessing the feasibility of a second container terminal, which reflects their really ambitious plans for growth.

The changes to the Marine Act we are looking at in the bill before us really reflect an attempt by the government to solidify the role of port authorities as public institutions and as publicly accountable entities. I think that is a worthwhile project, but we need to ensure that it is done effectively so that the changes actually result in more accountability, transparency and value to the Canadian public.

The changes to the Marine Act would include enabling port authorities to act as intermodal hubs and establish inland ports, and would establish a regulatory authority for traffic management and a streamlined review of port authorities' borrowing, although I would note the bill stops far short of doing what the port authorities are asking when it comes to their borrowing authority. The bill would require ports to provide more information on their activities and their decision-making to government; expand the eligibility of port authority boards and amend their membership; require them to submit publicly available strategic plans; require periodic reviews of port governance; and require them to establish advisory bodies for indigenous communities, local stakeholders and local governments. Finally, the changes to the Marine Act would establish a regulatory authority to require port authorities to set five-year climate plans and targets. I think that is important, and I will speak to it.

There is a difference between real accountability and window dressing, and I think the port association, which has expressed concerns about the added burden of these regulations, is right to be concerned if they do not effectively increase accountability and transparency. When we look at the advisory committees, for instance, I think there are many examples throughout our country of advisory committees that do not actually perform a substantive role, that are there as a sort of PR project and do not improve governance or adequately reflect the concerns of the community or the stakeholders who are being consulted. As such, for these changes to really have the effect the government is hoping they will, we believe there needs to be some degree of independence and there should be clear linkages to port authority decision-making.

• (1050)

A number of advisory committees are being called for in the legislation. The government is talking about requiring port authorities to set up three advisory committees. I was remiss in not mentioning the port of Stewart, a much smaller port in northwest B.C. but an important one nonetheless. For port authorities in smaller communities, the requirement to establish three different advisory committees might be more than is required. We need to look at how we can amend that to ensure that we are properly reflecting the need for additional consultation and the capacity of the community to provide that consultation.

Let us move on to the requirement for port authorities to set climate plans. I believe this is important. The activities of ports make a small but real contribution to Canada's overall emissions. There are great opportunities at ports to reduce emissions and drive down climate pollution. This requires the establishment of five-year climate plans. There is very little detail in the legislation as to what those plans would include. Our view is that, at the very least, five-year climate plans should align with the other climate accountability legislation the government has passed, legislation that we have worked hard to strengthen. It should also be consistent with Canada's national ambitions around reducing greenhouse gases and our international commitments.

As I mentioned, there are huge opportunities at ports to reduce the climate's impact and drive down emissions, and we are seeing some of those opportunities already realized in British Columbia. Shore power, in particular, is a mature, commercially viable technology that is used extensively throughout the world. Last year in Prince Rupert, the port authority embarked on a shore power project. Shore power essentially allows vessels to plug into electricity and not rely on their diesel auxiliary engines when they are tied up in the port being loaded or unloaded. This not only reduces particulate matter in the local community and improves air quality, but it reduces greenhouse gas emissions significantly.

That project is going to make a huge difference. I believe the shore power project in Prince Rupert will reduce emissions by over 30,000 tonnes per year, which is incredibly significant. There is also a shore power project in Victoria at the cruise ship terminal there, which will see very similar benefits.

There is a need to decarbonize shoreside operations as well, including the container handling equipment. This is the equipment at the container terminal, which currently relies on diesel. That is a huge opportunity, not only to make the port's operation more efficient, but to drive down climate emissions. We also need to make parameters around climate planning more robust if this legislation is truly going to drive change. As I said, we need to align it with national ambitions and international obligations.

I will turn back to some of the pieces around accountability and representation when it comes to port governance. One thing we need to recognize, and I am not sure if it is adequately recognized in this legislation, is the central role workers play in the operation of the supply chain, both rail workers and port workers. One of the things I have heard loud and clear from port workers, particularly in British Columbia, is that there is a need for their perspectives to be incorporated into port decision-making.

Currently, on boards of directors of port authorities, there is space dedicated for local governments and for representatives from the prairie provinces. However, there is no seat on port boards of directors for the workers who allow our ports to function. These workers have specific knowledge, expertise and experience that would be of great benefit to the port authorities.

We have submitted that there should be a seat at the table for working people, for the employees of those port facilities. We believe that by working at committee, we can amend this legislation to ensure that workers have a voice in the conversation and a place in the governance of our port authorities.

### *Government Orders*

A final area of concern for residents is marine traffic and anchorages. It has been raised specifically by residents of the south coast of British Columbia in the vicinity of the southern Gulf Islands.

● (1055)

During the pandemic, we saw incredible congestion at the Port of Vancouver. We saw many cargo and container ships backed up and anchored in various locations throughout the Salish Sea and the surrounding waters, which caused real impacts on residents who live in these small communities.

The residents are very concerned about the use of ecologically sensitive coastal areas as essentially parking lots for these large ships. They are worried about the impact on marine mammals, particularly whales, like the endangered southern resident killer whales. They are worried about the impact of anchor dragging, the risk of collisions with whales, noise pollution, air pollution and light pollution. All these things affect people's lives in a very real way.

It is disappointing to see that, despite the media coverage of their concerns, despite writing the minister repeatedly and making the minister aware of these concerns and impacts, the bill before us would do very little, if anything, to address those concerns.

We will be working very hard to ensure that the concerns of those residents are reflected in meaningful amendments. We are talking about areas that Parks Canada has proposed as national park reserves. These are very special, nationally significant marine areas. We are going to ensure those are protected from the impact of shipping traffic, and I look forward to that.

Bill C-33, as others have said, is not as ambitious as it could be, but we look forward to working, through the committee process, with all parties to strengthen it and see if we can get it to the point where it is supportable.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, one issue I want to pick up on is that there are some environmental concerns, there is no doubt about that, but there is also the economics of ensuring that our ports are efficient and effective. The legislation does some modernization of sorts, which will help facilitate a better system.

Canada is very much dependent on our ports. Could the member comment on the economics of this and why it is so important that we deal with this legislation?

*Government Orders*

● (1100)

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, I see the legislation as representing two opportunities. One is an opportunity to make the supply chain more resilient, more efficient and more competitive. The other opportunity is to ensure that the impacts of the supply chain on people in communities are managed properly and mitigated wherever possible.

On the former point, the bill would move things ahead through things like data sharing, changes to port security and the scrutiny of cargo coming in, trying to reduce bottlenecks, giving the minister more discretionary powers to unstick things when there is congestion in the supply chain and giving port authorities more tools to realize opportunities. All that is relatively positive, and we can get behind them.

However, the real missed opportunity is on the latter point, which is dealing with the long-known impacts of rail traffic and shipping traffic on communities. This is where I believe the member's government has not gone far enough, and we hope that future legislation and amendments will take care of that.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Madam Speaker, there was a lot of anticipation with the bill from a many stakeholders in the community. I agree with my colleague from the New Democratic Party that there was a missed opportunity on many fronts.

The Chamber of Shipping said that this legislation missed out on addressing the root causes of supply chain congestion and that the additional powers only addressed symptoms of congestion and could aggravate managing cargo efficiently. Could he comment on that?

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, the central tension here is between a supply chain that is largely dominated by private players, by companies that move goods through our country, and the fact that ports, and many other aspects of the supply chain, fall under federal jurisdiction and are the responsibility of the federal government accountable to the people. Where is that balance between ensuring the public interests and allowing the private interests the flexibility to compete in a global market. In many ways, the bill would require increased accountability from companies in the supply chain and from port authorities.

What we saw during the pandemic was some very serious disturbances, and a lot of the accountability for that falls to the government. Allowing more public tools to address challenges in the supply is warranted to some degree as long as it is done in a way that is responsible.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my NDP colleague on his speech, which was nicely balanced.

I have to say that we have had plenty of opportunities to discuss the benefits and shortcomings of Bill C-33. We also had the opportunity to visit various ports in Canada last spring, if I am not mistaken, and my colleague took part in that visit.

He clearly laid out what he would have liked to see in the bill. I agree with most of the points he raised. However, I would like to add a few more.

I wonder if my colleague thinks that Bill C-33 is actually going to change the rules of the game and make a big difference. Is this really what the port representatives were asking for during our tour last year? Is this really what will help solve the problems facing our communities, towns and villages?

Personally, I am not convinced, but perhaps he could talk more about that. Does he think this bill is the gold standard, the greatest bill we have ever seen?

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

● (1105)

[English]

The member's question is whether the bill would be a game-changer, and it is very clear from the debate so far that it would not. It is clear from the feedback from stakeholders that it is not, whether the stakeholders be port authorities, shipping companies or residents of communities impacted by the supply chain. I have not heard anyone express excitement about the potential that the bill holds.

There are some incremental improvements in the bill around data sharing, efficiencies and providing flexibility in some cases. There are a few areas in which there is improved accountability.

Largely, and reflecting on the tour that he and I were on, listening to the needs of Canada's supply chain, this is a missed opportunity to do something truly bold and ambitious, and that delivers for Canadians.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the speech of my colleague, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, was terrific, profound and deep. He is an extremely effective advocate for the people of northwest British Columbia. He has been an outspoken advocate for transportation safety and affordability, and also ensuring that jobs in ports, for example Prince Rupert Port Authority, go to local communities. He has been extraordinarily good at all those things.

The member mentioned the issue of safety management systems, which we termed, when the NDP fought against this initiative, as “self-serve safety”. This was an initiative of the Harper regime and one of the many examples of that regime ripping apart the protective net for Canadians, eliminating inspections that should be the responsibility of the federal government and handing them over to corporate CEOs.

We have seen the tragic results, the dozens of deaths. Some of the worst rail accidents in Canadian history have happened since the Harper regime ripped apart that protection of regular inspections from federal authorities. Tragically, the Liberal government has done nothing to put those safety systems and inspections, which are so important for public safety, back into place.

What do we need to do to restore that confidence in rail safety and ensure that the federal government provides the effective oversight so our rail systems are safe?

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby is right. The actions of the Harper government to essentially move to this form of self-regulation caused some real challenges. It probably has contributed in a big way to many of the railway accidents and disasters that we have seen across the country.

We need to ensure that the federal regulator has the tools required to provide oversight for these multi-billion dollar corporations that are operating our railways. There is a heap of evidence that they do not currently. They are relying on a form of self-regulation, and they do not have the capacity, the boots on the ground. They do not have the regulatory framework to properly enforce safety rules and protect communities and workers. We need to do that.

Safety management systems are fine as a complementary measure, but right now they are doing the entire job and they are not doing it well. We need tough rules, with proper enforcement and proper inspections. In many ways, we need to get back to basics where the federal government actually provides oversight and works on behalf of citizens instead of corporations.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I have heard both the Minister of Northern Affairs and other Liberal members of Parliament speak to this bill. Unfortunately, what I have not heard from them is the impacts of climate change on the opening of the Northwest Passage and how that could deeply impact the opening of communities in my region in the Arctic.

I am saddened to see that the bill does not have more about ensuring that the Arctic would also be covered in the efforts toward the supply chain for efficiency, resilience, security and safety. I wonder if the member agrees that we need to ensure that there is better investment so that the Arctic could be covered in this aspect as well.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, absolutely, and the impact of climate change on the north and on the Arctic presents some real concerns, particularly for communities in that region. If the supply chain and shipping is going to increase its activity in that area, we need to ensure that there are very strong regulations that protect the people of that place in a meaningful way.

• (1110)

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, today we are debating Bill C-33. If the people listening do not know what it is and have not heard of it, that is not unusual.

### *Government Orders*

It is not a very exciting bill. Let us just say that it is far, very far, from revolutionary. To pique interest in the bill, a very original title was found: an act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act. Understandably, it is a large bill.

When I read it, I feel like every law in the country will be amended. When we look more closely at the bill, we soon realize that is not the case. All that to say, above all, we have no idea what this bill does. When we read its title, we have no idea what it is for. As I said, a lot of creative effort was put into a title that would say what the bill does and its purpose.

One might wonder why the Customs Act included in the bill. Will it affect the issues surrounding Roxham Road, illegal border crossings, illegal weapons crossing at the border? As we know, Roxham Road is now closed. It may no longer be a problem. However, it still was when the bill was introduced.

With respect to the Railway Safety Act, will the self-regulation of railway companies finally be ended, a kind of situation where they do pretty much whatever they want, greatly weakening industry oversight? Will this part of the bill really bring railway companies into line? No, they will not be brought into line. There is absolutely nothing to prevent CN or CP from sleeping at night, I guarantee. I do not think it will change much in their lives.

Regarding the Canada Marine Act, there are a few changes. We can start to see some substance. I say some, but not too much.

The fact that nobody is talking about it just goes to show that the bill will not change much in the lives of ordinary Canadians. Usually, when the government tables a bill, it is a big deal. Everyone is waiting for it. People are on the edge of their seats. We wonder what provisions it will include. Sometimes, the government leaks little bits to journalists to stir up interest in the bill. Then there are articles that come out. When the bill is tabled, there is a big press conference. There are media tours. Sometimes, there are regional tours in cities affected by the bill. There is a lot of noise around a bill. Normally, a bill is something important. After all, we are changing the laws of a country.

However, for Bill C-33, there has been nothing. No one has talked about it. We hardly knew it even existed until we debated it today in the House.

### *Government Orders*

I did a lot of research and I ended up finding something on the web that talks about the bill. It went almost unnoticed. The article is entitled, “a bill to strengthen collaboration between Quebec ports”. With such a title, I thought there might be something to enable Quebec ports to work better together. Moreover, this is one of the requests of Quebec ports, to be able, for example, to issue joint calls for tenders. I read the bill and saw that there is absolutely nothing in this document that will allow Quebec ports to work together more.

It seems that the former minister told the journalist some tall tales. The article states that close collaboration will lead to strategic investments that will improve facility services and performance while also strengthening the supply chain.

That reads like gibberish. Essentially, this is not about collaboration between ports but collaboration between the ports and the Department of Transport. In the end, that is the reality. Perhaps the journalist would have liked the bill to address the topic because the ports asked for it, but the minister was not clear in his response and that led to this article.

The article also talks about the supply chain. What would be interesting to know is what in Bill C-33 will truly help the supply chain. However, if we read the bill carefully, we can see that there is not much there that affects the supply chain. There is virtually nothing, unless the minister wants to personally start managing—or micromanaging—the ports one by one.

• (1115)

The fact is that, when Bill C-33 was introduced, there was a supply crisis virtually everywhere. There were problems with the supply chain, so Bill C-33 was announced. They said that the bill would improve the supply chain, but there is nothing in it for the supply chain. It is simply a way of spinning things to make people believe the bill is actually useful.

They wanted to make the bill ultramodern and topical, but that did not happen. To prove my point, I searched the text of the bill to see if it contained the words “collaboration” and “Quebec”, since there was talk of better collaboration between ports in Quebec. I will be honest, the word “collaboration” appears twice in the bill. However, those instances are in provisions that refer to railway safety. In fact, “collaboration” and “Quebec” appear nowhere together.

I also searched for the word “Quebec”. That word also appears twice in the bill, but, in both cases, it is to address minor matters concerning the management of leases by port authorities. This has nothing to do with collaboration between ports. To get back to the article, we will need to talk to the journalists. Indeed, the minister will need to explain how he came to tell us that. However, the minister will not be able to explain it because he is no longer there. There was a change of ministers.

Clearly the minister wanted to lead us down the garden path, because there is absolutely nothing in the bill to allow for collaboration between Quebec ports. It would have been a good opportunity to do that. Unfortunately, it is a missed opportunity.

The ports also asked to be allowed to issue joint calls for tenders and have more flexibility in raising funds. These are great ideas, but disappointingly, they are not in the bill. Ministers do not typically table bills every day. When a minister does get to table a bill, it is a unique opportunity for them to make their mark on history, usher in change and be remembered as someone who accomplished important things on behalf of a great country, Canada. I wish I could say on behalf of Quebec, but we are in the Parliament of Canada, after all.

Unfortunately, this is a missed opportunity because no one will remember Bill C-33. The minister will not go down in history; he is no longer in office. There is now a new minister who has to champion this bill, but I have not heard him say much about it publicly.

This bill lacks vision. It looks like the government is asleep at the wheel. The bill appears to have been drafted by a bunch of bureaucrats in the minister's office who brainstormed ways to better manage Canada's transportation system. They put it all in there—bits about ports, bits about customs and bits about rail transportation—but the end result lacks cohesiveness, vision and ambition. All it is is a bunch of little measures they threw together and called a bill, and then the minister introduced it in the House. It is utterly lacking in policy direction or vision.

We just started a new parliamentary session, and this is the bill that the government has decided to prioritize. We are in the midst of a housing crisis, a climate crisis, an inflation crisis, but they decide to take a bunch of random little measures and put them before Parliament, saying that this is the priority for the fall. There is something here I do not understand. Perhaps the government will have a chance to explain later, but I, for one, do not really see where it is going with this.

It is quite apparent that the government is lacking ambition and ideas, both in its legislative agenda and in this infamous bill, which really does not contain much of anything.

There are a few things in there, to be fair. For example, there is a provision that prohibits “interference with railway work...in a manner that threatens the safety of railway operations”.

We asked what “threatens the safety” means in concrete terms. Does it mean that people can no longer demonstrate on the tracks? Can workers no longer go on strike? We do not know. We need clarification on what “threatens the safety” means. How is that put into practice? We are looking forward to finding out.

The bill also provides that the minister can order a rail company to take corrective measures in relation to a safety management system. That is not a bad thing. If a problem is not resolved after many warnings, it will allow the minister to order that the problem be resolved. The minister could now have that power.

● (1120)

The minister can issue or cancel security certificates, for example. Anyone transporting dangerous goods will be required to register. That is not a bad thing. Previously, anyone could transport goods without being registered. It is about time that became mandatory.

In an emergency, the minister may direct a person to cease an activity or conduct other activities relating to public safety. That is not a bad thing.

The minister will be authorized to make interim orders and give emergency directions. This could apply to boats, for example, and could be used to prevent a ship from entering a port and keep it at sea. That is another power being given to the minister, but it does not mean the minister is allowed to manage the supply chain. The minister will certainly not spend their days determining which boat can or cannot enter a port and which one gets priority. That is not how it will work. However, in the event of a major crisis, we can see how it might be useful for the minister to have this power in their toolbox.

There is also mention of authorizing logistics activities in ports but it is a poorly kept secret that there are already logistics activities at the ports. It is now written in black and white; it will be done.

The bill mentions releasing quarterly financial statements for ports, which will allow for greater accountability. There is a provision requiring port authorities to establish advisory committees for indigenous peoples, municipalities and communities. Some will call it “meeting mania”, but I would not say that. I think ports need to be accountable to the public, conduct consultations and listen. Sometimes we may have to impose the things that are missing. There has been a lot of unhappiness in the past with the federal government, which does what it wants and sometimes tells others to put up and shut up. We need to make some effort to listen to what people are saying. That is not a bad thing.

There is a requirement for a climate change adaptation plan. No one will object to that. However, is the plan binding and are there quantifiable targets? No, there are no directions, just an obligation to present a plan. However, we are in a climate crisis, whether we like it or not. Parliament has passed net-zero legislation. I find it unfortunate that there is no consistency between this bill, meaning the desire to achieve net-zero by 2050, and port security requirements. This is clearly a flaw.

The Bloc Québécois, and surely members from the other parties, will want ports to assist in the effort like everyone else. Having a plan is not enough in 2023. This is not 2000; it is 20 years later and it is time to go further.

The minister will also have the power to appoint chairs of boards of directors. This raises a red flag. I will talk about that a bit later. Basically, we can see that, from the top of his ivory tower in Ottawa, the minister will be able to micromanage ports. In an emergency, that can be good, but we hope he does not abuse it. The reality is that ports are managed by port authorities. I do not particularly want to see the minister travel to each and every port to micromanage it.

### *Government Orders*

We can also see that, from his ivory tower, the minister can decide who will be the board chair at the Port of Montreal, the Port of Québec, the Port of Trois-Rivières and the Port of Saguenay. That bothers me a bit because, often, the Liberals do not necessarily choose chairs for their accomplishments, their field expertise, their achievements in operations management or their great vision for the future.

For me, and I do not know about the others, putting the words “Liberal” and “appointment” together raises all sorts of red flags. In general, unless there is evidence to the contrary, I have the impression that the Liberals are not necessarily looking for someone who is competent. Instead, they choose someone on the basis of their political loyalty to the Liberal Party, to the minister or to the Canadian government. Unfortunately, if this ever happens, nothing can be done to stop it. That is not what we want. We want someone who is chosen for their skills, because they are the best person for the job, not because they are a friend of the Liberal Party. This is a big problem for us.

Their priority was to introduce a dull, unambitious bill that puts everyone to sleep. Usually, we are at the edges of our seats when the government introduces a bill. However, as trivial as the bill is, the government still found a way to put a partisan touch on it to assume a bit more power.

● (1125)

These are not crisis management powers, but powers to appoint Liberal friends to important positions where they will have a little more control over what is happening in our regions. As we know, ports are the gateway for goods that move across the country.

For me, this is important, even critical. For example, more than half of Quebec’s GDP goes through ports. That is huge. With this bill, the government will not fill these positions with management experts who are accomplished managers. No, they will appoint friends of the Liberal Party so that they are indebted to the minister and will do what he tells them to do. This has the potential for political interference, which I find serious. The government can already appoint staff. It can already appoint people to port boards. It already has its eye on what is going on. It can already develop directives, programs or bills. It can already convene them. No, it wants to decide how things are going to happen and even decide to appoint friends to these positions.

For me, this is a big problem. I hope that, in committee, we will ensure that this part of the bill is removed because, in my view, it does not work. The Liberals had this idea of appointing their friends here, there and everywhere. They have not yet done so, but if we look at appointments, we can see that there are already quite a few Liberal friends on the boards of directors. However, they did not give any thought to the idea of appointing, for example, the people who work in the ports to the boards of directors. There are thousands of workers at these ports and they may have things to say to the boards. That could have been interesting, and we would like to make an amendment to the bill to ensure that workers can be heard when decisions are made at ports. These are the major points that I wanted to talk about today.

*Government Orders*

Often, the government will introduce a boring, anodyne bill, thinking no one will take any notice. However, we did notice one thing, which is that the Liberals have decided to give themselves the power to appoint their friends to key positions, such as presidents of ports. Hell is often paved with good intentions, but when the wrong tools are put into the hands of the wrong people, that leads to bad results. This power, or at least these tools, should not be given to the Liberals. We know what they are like. If they are asked not to touch the candy dish in front of them, but there is no lid and no one is watching, we know what will happen. It is easy to guess. We all remember the sponsorship scandal; we all know what the Liberals are like. They are partisan to the bone, unfortunately. That is a tendency we must fight against and guard against.

Despite the many flaws in Bill C-33, we nonetheless plan to support it because we think it can be improved. We think that what the government is presenting can be improved, which will not be difficult because there is not much to this bill. There is definitely room for improvement. It can be improved and made more palatable, more acceptable.

True, there are some improvements in the bill. I would be lying if I said there were none at all. That said, as long as we are spending time on this bill, we might as well try to make it useful and even better than what the government introduced.

The Bloc Québécois can be counted on to work with the Liberals, provided they decide to work with the opposition instead of trying to shove a bill down our throats without listening to what anyone else has to say. In the past, I have had some very constructive discussions with the previous minister. I have also had discussions with the current minister. I hope he will be as open-minded as his predecessor. He previously told us that he was willing to incorporate several of our proposals into the bill.

In the coming months, during the committee study, we will see whether or not that open-mindedness is genuine. That could obviously have an impact on our final vote after the committee study, when the bill is sent back to the House. If there is no collaboration on the one side, why would there be any on the other? We are here to work for Quebecers, not for Canada. There must be something for Quebec in the bill. Quebecers must benefit in some way, and that is what we are going to ensure. The government can count on us to keep working hard to achieve that.

• (1130)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very interesting speech. I too have concerns about granting new powers to Ottawa, especially regarding rail, but also regarding ports, since that could cause problems.

I would like my colleague to tell me whether, during the committee study, he will be pointing out to the government that there are no measures in Bill C-33 to stop stolen vehicles from being shipped out of Canada. I for one could not find do not see any. One of my constituents told me that he had a tracking chip in his vehicle and that he knew that his vehicle had gone beyond the gate at the Port of Montreal. He saw his vehicle being loaded onto the ship, and he watched it sail away. He was able to track his vehicle as sailed off,

and he alerted the police, but the ship was already beyond the jurisdiction of the Sûreté du Québec.

There may have been 35 or 40 stolen vehicles aboard that ship. Vehicle thefts are driving up insurance rates in Canada, and that affects all Canadians. Are there any measures in Bill C-33 that could reduce exports of stolen vehicles from Canada?

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. The short answer is no, there is nothing about that in the bill. However, it is interesting that my colleague brought this up, because our colleague, the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, who is our public safety critic, came over to see me earlier and told me that this is a big problem.

Bill C-33 amends the Customs Act. It deals with port management. We know that, at this time, lots of stolen vehicles are leaving the country through our ports. I asked my colleague if she had seen anything in the bill that could help with that problem. The answer was no. It is sad, but I suppose that this was not one of the Liberals' ambitions. They already have so few, and this was not one of them.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it sounds as though the Bloc will be supporting the bill to go to committee, and a final vote will determine the terms of amendments. The member has made reference to the fact that he has had some relatively positive discussions with respect to the former minister and is waiting to see what happens with the new minister. I suspect he will find a high sense of co-operation with respect to passing it. I disagree with him. I think there is a lot of modernization within the legislation that will be to the betterment of Canadians.

The question I have for the member is this. Based on the last question, he mentioned that he has a number of changes. He was just posed a question about automobile thefts on ships. Do any of his amendments deal with the suggestion that member has brought forward?

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, we may have amendments to that effect, of course. However, we will have to see if Bill C-33 allows for that. When an amendment is introduced, it has to relate to the text, and there is not much text regarding the Customs Act in the current bill.

We will certainly try to find a way. If we do find one, I hope that we can count on the members opposite to support us. It will take majority support to get that passed.



*Government Orders*

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we see the terrible impacts of deregulation in Calgary right now, with 348 cases of E. coli and children in ICU and on dialysis, because the Conservatives do not believe in the basic protection of health.

The same week that Danielle Smith should have been there for the families in Calgary, she was getting her photo taken with the Saudi princes because they, like Danielle Smith, believe in burning the planet as quickly as possible.

I raise that in the context of this because the Conservatives told us that deregulation would make safety on the trains better and we ended up with Lac-Mégantic.

Why does my colleague think the Liberals are continuing this pattern of not insisting that we have proper safety and regulations? We do not want to have what is happening in Calgary happen anywhere else.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a relevant issue, namely the pattern of deregulation that we have seen in the railway industry and that has continued under the Liberals. It could be said that they are adding some small fixes, but nothing substantial.

The Liberals and Conservatives both eat from the same trough. They are both beholden to big business, particularly Canadian National and Canadian Pacific. CN and CP are so big that they are like a state within a state. The Canadian government is anxious to give CN and CP whatever they want.

If they were ever to form government, I would like to see the NDP adopt a stricter policy toward them. That would make me happy. However, I would need to see it to believe it.

I think Quebec has a different vision. We know that the great railway lines running from one coast to the other are part of the Canadian identity. They are sacrosanct. Going after them would be unthinkable, from a Canadian perspective.

• (1135)

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, our ports are in crisis. Canada, including Quebec, is dependent on trade in goods. The Port of Vancouver currently ranks 347th out of 348 ports worldwide.

Does the member for the Bloc Québécois believe that adding more red tape and regulations will help us be more productive and efficient with respect to trading goods?

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities toured Canada's ports in the spring. Most of the port officials told us that they were planning to expand and that they expect international traffic to increase over the coming years due to our trade. As I said earlier, about 50% of Quebec's GDP goes through the ports, so they are absolutely vital.

Is there anything in the bill that will allow the ports to manage their operations more efficiently? The answer is no. What the bill

provides is greater accountability from the ports toward the government and the public, more data sharing. That is not a bad thing, but it is not going to fix the problems that ports are currently facing. It mainly gives the government more control over the ports. In a crisis, as I mentioned, these are things that may be useful. However, I do not see how the minister could get involved in managing the ports himself on a regular day-to-day basis. It makes no sense.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He touched on this issue briefly earlier, but I am particularly interested in a phenomenon that is growing in Canada, not only at the Port of Montreal, but also at the Port of Toronto, namely vehicles being stolen and exported overseas.

When we ask the Canada Border Services Agency questions about this issue, the CBSA responds that it may not have enough officers to conduct searches. The CBSA says it gets a description of the contents of each container and that, if officers have doubts about what is written in the record, they will conduct a search. However, in many cases, they are just relying on their instincts. There is not necessarily a protocol.

I thought that a bill to amend the Customs Act would offer a good opportunity to put a protocol in place to counter this phenomenon. As I understand it, however, there is virtually nothing about this in the bill. Do I have that right? Should the government hurry up and look into the phenomenon of vehicle thefts and exports?

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, I think that it is essential. Anyone whose car was stolen would be anxious to know whether it went to another country in the days that followed.

We are seeing more and more news reports about this issue. There was one on a country in Africa where, if I am not mistaken, there were cars with the Quebec licence plates still on them. That is crazy. These people did not even make the effort to remove the plates. The cars were brought to the port, loaded onto the ship and then unloaded over there. They kept their licence plates on even after they got there. That is insane. The members on the other side need to wake up.

Unfortunately, there is nothing about this in Bill C-33. If it is possible to improve the situation or at least combat this phenomenon by amending this bill, we are very willing to do so. Since there is very little text in this bill for us to amend, we will have to use our imaginations and get creative. Sometimes, however, if we are too imaginative or creative, procedure will get in the way of our amendments being adopted.

• (1140)

[English]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House today on Bill C-33.

### *Government Orders*

I hope members had productive summers in their ridings. It is good to be back to reconnect with my colleagues on all sides of the House.

Bill C-33, on the face of it, deals with the technical subject matter of port and railway systems in Canada, but I think this bill also exposes a philosophical gulf that exists between those of us in the Conservative Party and, frankly, those in the other three parties, in how they act and vote, if not how they always sound. The Liberals and their coalition partners in the NDP have an approach that emphasizes a big, centralized government that is constantly seeking to weaken the decision-making powers, not only of private individuals, but also of the institutions that are supposed to hold delegated authority and respond to local circumstances and independent economic factors. Their agenda is a centralizing one, pulling that authority away from individuals, with losses of their freedom, and pulling that authority away from institutions that are supposed to be able to operate independently.

We have the Bloc, and I think this was demonstrated by the speaker before me, wanting to rhetorically position itself as being a decentralizer, but in fact, if we look at the way Bloc members vote, we see their support, for example, for the Liberal carbon taxes, in particular the second carbon tax, and it boggles the mind that a party that, on the one hand, says it wants to divide the country and make Quebec its own country, is on the other hand, supporting these kinds of from-Ottawa measures that impose additional costs on Quebecers.

It is becoming clear that Conservatives stand alone when it comes to offering a different vision, which recognizes the role, yes, of the federal government, but also the richness and diversity of experience and capacity that exists across this country and, therefore, supports affirming the decision-making responsibility of other institutions, provinces, municipalities and, in this case, port authorities and recognizes the importance of having a multiplicity of different institutions making decisions that respond to those local circumstances.

This is an important bill in its policy implications. However, it is also an important bill in the way that it demonstrates a Conservative vision of emphasizing strong institutions, respect for arm's-length institutions and divisions of power, our belief in big citizens as an alternative to big government, and the role of mediating institutions.

Bill C-33 is entitled “strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada act”. My preferred alternative title is, “strengthening Liberal control of the port system”. It is not strengthening the port system, but strengthening Liberal control of the port system. It is on that basis, and for some of the reasons I have already indicated, that we do not support it.

I do, though, in passing, want to extend my best wishes to the outgoing minister, who tabled this bill and has since, from what I understand, announced his intention not to seek re-election. I know that he has been in public life for a long time. I wish him very well.

Those who are not as familiar may ask how ports function in Canada. Each port has its own board, and that board is able to act relatively autonomously. It is supposed to act at arm's length from

the government, which includes electing its own chair. It is also supposed to be able to look at the best interests of the port. It is supposed to be able to look at what is in the economic interests of the country, but also of that particular region, taking those local factors into account. It is also supposed to be able to develop structures for engagement and consultation that, while reflecting broad, unifying principles, are appropriate to the particular local circumstances.

● (1145)

The way, for instance, indigenous consultation happens at a port may vary depending on the particular local circumstances, such as the proximity of indigenous nations and so forth. This ability of ports to act at arm's length recognizes that one size does not fit all. It recognizes that expertise, local decision-making and an understanding of local factors are very important in the case of port management and in general when it comes to government decision-making. Creating institutions that can be responsive to particulars of local circumstances is important. This existing structure of ports is a reflection of that reality, and it stands in contrast with the Liberal centralizing vision held, if not officially then certainly enacted by all of the other parties in this place, save for the Conservatives.

This bill seeks to make changes that bring ports, to a greater extent, under the domination of the central government. This is where we obviously part company with the direction.

On the structure of ports, members of the ports are appointed by the federal government. There is a federal role in making these appointments, and that does provide tools for influencing the direction of ports, but it creates a balance that allows autonomous, arm's-length action on a day-to-day level. However, the federal government is still selecting the individuals it believes to be appropriate.

The bill would change the authority structure in a number of ways. It would make the boards subject to ministerial direction and would also allow the minister to appoint the chair. The previous structure was that the minister appointed members of the board, but the board would then elect its own chair, which again still involves a substantial role for the government but gives the board more autonomy in identifying the person who is best positioned to lead the board. The new structure would involve the minister appointing the board members and also the board members appointing the chair. It would also make the board subject to ministerial direction and would mandate certain structures around environmental and indigenous consultations.

Those considerations and consultations are obviously very important, but the specific structures that may be appropriate can legitimately vary depending on the size of the port and the local circumstances. They could well be matters subject to innovation and exchange of information rather than the requirement of standardization.

This is a centralizing Ottawa-knows-best type of Liberal bill, and Conservatives are opposed to it. In many respects, this bill is a missed opportunity insofar as there are things that are important about how we could be strengthening our port and rail system, but instead, the Liberal approach to strengthening anything is to try to strengthen their control or involvement in that particular thing.

We are opposed to this expansion of direct government control over the ports for four main reasons, which I will now proceed to discuss. There is, first of all, a general conviction about the importance of subsidiarity; second, a concern about the current government in particular expanding its management of things; third, the Liberal record on appointments raising some concerns about why the Liberals are trying to pass legislation to give themselves more control and ability to shape direction through appointment; and finally, highlighting how scale differences matter at the port level, and there are particular reasons in this case why having a diversity of structures for how certain issues are engaged with is quite worthwhile.

• (1150)

First, on the principle of subsidiarity in general, I subscribe to the general principle of subsidiarity, which means that decisions should be made at the level closest to the people affected as possible. Better decisions are made when the local experiences of the people affected are harnessed. This comes from a basic recognition of universal human potential for responsibility and creativity. If they harness the views and experiences of more people who are directly involved a situation, they will get better outcomes than if there were a smaller number of people with less immediate experience involved in that decision. A belief in subsidiarity flows naturally from a belief in human dignity and human potential for creativity.

Our constitutional framework is designed to recognize the value of that subsidiarity, which is why not every decision is made by the federal government. We have areas of responsibility of provincial jurisdiction. We have strong municipalities, and we also have arm's-length institutions that act within the federal government. Subsidiarity is not incompatible with the belief that there are also certain kinds of decisions that are of a scale and a nature that do require larger levels of coordination or action by a larger entity, such as, let us say, the national government. The impulse to subsidiarity is not to say that no decisions should be made collectively because there are certain kinds of things where the nature of the scale requires that action.

I want to point out in particular that, in this context, our Conservative plan on housing does involve recognizing the need to push municipalities to do more in getting housing built. This is completely compatible with the principle of subsidiarity because we see a situation in Canada right now where we are so far behind in getting homes built that there is an urgency that requires more pressure to move forward. There has also been a lack of appropriate scale in considering the response to this.

Members will notice in the discussion on this that the Prime Minister has tried, at certain points, to say that this is not really his responsibility and this is not something that he is going to get involved in. However, the Prime Minister has a housing minister. The government seeks to create policy on this. It is just that the govern-

ment's policy has been ineffective. In the plan that Conservatives have put forward, it is about pushing municipalities, setting targets for them and tying federal funding to commitments to move forward. However, it is not about taking away that authority from municipalities or trying to micromanage specific decisions. Rather, it is about using the tools we have to create incentives, define what a national objective should be and reward them for moving toward that objective.

This is just to illustrate that obviously, on certain areas, there is a vital role for the federal government to engage in, but there has to be a healthy interplay. With the Liberals, the irony has been that, on some areas where the federal government needed to engage, they have tried to avoid responsibility. However, the Liberals have, at the same time, tried to intervene, rhetorically if not directly, in areas that are very clearly not their jurisdiction, butting in on things that very obviously have nothing to do with the decision-making power of the federal government.

Again, as it applies in the case of ports, we can see the importance of local decision-making and the impulse of the government to ignore the role of local decision-makers and to move counter to this principle of subsidiarity, which is a principle that, sadly, the Liberals do not believe in.

• (1155)

In their ideal vision of the world, all of the decisions that are of significance to this country would be made by a small group of people inside the Prime Minister's Office, without even harnessing the full energies of our national parliamentary democracy. I think that has had some dire consequences in many obvious cases, and on this point I will move to the next, which is the challenges with the government's centralizing impulse in particular, in a context where the government has demonstrated profound incompetence in all aspects of our national life.

I will not have time to detail all of these points, but in a context where the government is failing to do its job, is failing to make life more affordable for Canadians and has failed on environmental policy, on housing and on many other fronts, it is nonetheless persistent in saying that it wants more control of people's lives and that it wants to be able to exercise more control and direction over previously independent bodies. I will point out as an obvious example, in one particular case, the on-again-off-again labour disruptions, or the back-and-forth associated with that, the harm that was done and the failure of the minister to resolve that situation.

Environmental policy is something that, rhetorically, we hear a lot about from the government, yet the government is missing all of its environmental targets while using environmental policy as an excuse to impose new taxes. The way the Liberals talk about it, if one does not support their tax plan, one is against taking action on the environment.

### *Government Orders*

The reality is that the government's tax plan has made life less affordable for Canadians and has not actually allowed it to achieve any of its targets. Sadly, we see the other parties in the House, the NDP and the Bloc, in lockstep with the government in its insistence on imposing new taxes. This is a space in which the government is trying to take more control for itself again, telling provinces that they have to have a carbon tax or it will impose one directly from Ottawa.

It has not worked on many fronts. We can talk about the government's approach to passports. We can talk about its policy failures during COVID and about the fact that fewer houses are being built today than decades ago, even when our population was smaller. We have a government that has, across the board, been either incompetent or malicious, yet it is seeking more control over institutional decision-making, through Bill C-33. We are not prepared to give them that control.

The third point I wanted to raise around this is that we have a particular concern about the government's desire to use this bill as a tool for strengthening its power of appointment, in terms of its ability to appoint chairs of boards. We have heard numerous stories about the flawed approach the government has taken to appointments, appointing donors or consulting supporter information before making important appointments, trying to whitewash issues by appointing people who have close relationships with the Prime Minister. This is the way the government has approached appointments, so it will not be surprising that there is no appetite on this side of the House to give the government more control over the appointment process when the current system, the election of a chair of a board by the existing members of the board, is working just fine.

I will quickly make my last point, which is that, obviously, in terms of important decision-making, scale matters. There are many different kinds of ports that have very different circumstances because of such massive variations in the amount of traffic that goes through them. We recognize the importance of all ports. We want them to thrive and succeed in ways that reflect their local circumstances and the expertise of those who are running the ports. That means avoiding Ottawa-knows-best, Liberals-know-best and one-size-fits-all approaches to this.

• (1200)

In conclusion, Conservatives recognize the importance of freedom, local autonomy and subsidiarity. We reject the centralizing we-know-best approach of the Prime Minister and of the other three parties in the House that are supporting his vision. I believe that our alternative approach in opposing the bill and emphasizing local autonomy, expertise and the importance of community-based decision making is a much better approach and one that would be much better received by the Canadian public.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will provide a comment on the member's last few statements alone, in which he talked about having some local autonomy and local input. We are expanding looking at ways in which there could be advisory committees to the port boards. People need to realize that when we think in terms of the Conservative Party, its total

disengagement from the federal government's having a role to play should be of great concern.

At the end of the day, the economic security and the whole food chain and the way in which it gets distributed, not to mention all the other economic benefits, are coming out of our ports and out of our railways. We have the Conservative Party saying the government does not play a role and that they want to minimize that role. I would suggest to the member that Canadians are concerned about issues like safety, port congestion and what role the government plays to ease those tensions.

Does the member not see any value whatsoever in regard to modernizing or at least attempting to modernize our port authorities and the safety of our railways? Does he see any benefit in that at all in terms of federal government involvement?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, that question was a target-rich environment, so I will try to get through it as much as I can.

The member began by saying that the bill is about looking at having local committees providing input. No, it is not. The bill is about mandating particular structures around consultation committees, structures that may well be appropriate in many cases, but not in every case.

The member says a lot of things that are obviously not true about our approach and our position. Again, it is important to underline that a belief in the importance of subsidiarity is not a belief that every decision, from military to everything else, should be made by municipalities. Rather, it is a position that, in determining the appropriate scale at which decisions should be made, it is important to make those decisions as close to the people actually impacted by them as possible and engage the broadest number of people possible. However, there are nuances, and I spoke to those nuances. I am willing to again if the member would find it helpful.

Finally, he equates modernization with centralization. He says that if we do not support a power grab by the minister, then we are against modernization. Modernization can mean a lot of different things in different contexts, but insofar as modernization means moving toward the future, or is seen as being synonymous with improvement in the way we discuss these things culturally, then I would say that emphasizing subsidiarity, local control and local responsiveness could well be a better form of modernization than the centralization proposed by the member.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I really liked what my colleague said at the end of his response to the previous question, that the government is equating “modernization” with “centralization”.

That brings me to the question that I want to ask him. Often, in banana republics or poor countries, the system in place allows people to secure a position not because they have the necessary skills or degrees, but because they asked their friend who is a senator or mayor to give them a position as a favour.

Now, we are seeing something similar happening with this government. A minister in this government wants the power to decide who will be president of a port.

Does my colleague see this as modernization, or rather as a continuation of the Liberals' habit of appointing their buddies to positions?

• (1205)

[English]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, the government right now, through this bill, is asking for more power. It is saying it wants to be able to exercise greater influence over ports, and particularly over the process of appointments. It wants to take over what has historically been the role of the board itself, to select its chair. The government wants to appoint that chair itself. The government is coming to Parliament asking for more power when it comes to appointments.

If we are going to evaluate that desire for power, I think it is important to look at how the government has used this power in the past. We can see with the vast powers of appointment the federal government already has that there have been many instances of clearly partisan filters as opposed to competence filters being applied by the government, whether in an attempt to manage away sensitive issues by appointing people who are close to the Prime Minister or by looking at who has donated to the Liberal Party when considering appointments.

I do not think it is reasonable for a government that has so clearly failed to demonstrate a commitment to competency in appointments to then come back and ask the House to give it more power in the area of appointments.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about harnessing the experience of people directly impacted, and that it is not in this bill. I absolutely agree.

The act would create indigenous engagement committees for port authorities. When I talk to Nuuchahnulth people in my riding, that is not good enough. They actually want a seat at the table. They want an appointment for each nation whose territory the port authorities reside on, for whose waterways and lands they are on. That is identified in the truth and reconciliation call to action number 92. It explicitly states that they “call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.”

Does my colleague agree that indigenous peoples should not just be sitting as an advisory committee, but that they actually deserve a permanent seat at the table for every port authority whose lands and waterways they reside on?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague and look forward to working with him on the government operations committee with the revisions that have been made to committee memberships.

### *Government Orders*

When it comes to indigenous engagement, I think it is important for that engagement to happen and for it to be driven by the particulars of the circumstances in terms of where the port is. Just because of location and where indigenous nations are, it seems to me that there would likely be significant variation in terms of the approach taken, depending on where those ports are and what nations are proximate, how many there are and so forth.

The member's proposal is an interesting one, but any kind of mandating and structure from us in Ottawa should be done very carefully, if at all. A better approach would be to recognize the need for local boards to make evaluations and determinations around how this proceeds.

To his point about indigenous representation on the board, it is the power of the minister to make these appointments. The minister currently, without this legislation, has the power to determine who sits on the board. The minister could appoint members. I suppose what he is suggesting is not so much that. Maybe he is suggesting the nations themselves would be able to make these appointments. I welcome him to further illustrate what that structure could look like, and I am sure he will make those points if the bill gets to committee.

• (1210)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak to Bill C-33. Let me begin by thanking the sponsor, the Minister of Transport, and you for allowing me to participate in the very important second reading debate on this bill, strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada act, with regard to improving the safety and security at Canada's marine ports. I believe we can all agree that this piece of legislation is intended to achieve many goals that would eventually streamline the work taking place at our marine ports, increase our supply chain resiliency and ensure the work at our ports is environmentally sustainable, all while increasing safety and security measures to keep our goods safe and protect Canadians from harm.

Before I continue, I will indicate that I will be sharing my time with the member for Niagara Centre.

I want to take the time today to further explore the measures we are proposing to enhance border security at our major marine ports.

The Canada Border Services Agency, the CBSA, has an important mandate to provide border services that support national security and public safety priorities while also facilitating the free flow of persons and goods. Each and every day, at marine ports from coast to coast to coast, the CBSA upholds its mandate by screening and examining imported goods arriving on container vessels. I want to make it clear that in their role, CBSA officers, whose daily activities would be affected by the proposed amendments in this bill, are already authorized to examine all shipments crossing Canada's border to ensure harmful goods are intercepted before they can enter our communities.

*Government Orders*

Today, the government is seeking to modernize the existing Customs Act authorities to resolve long-standing security risks and reduce obstacles to efficient trade at our marine ports. Modernizing the Customs Act would enable the CBSA to further address issues that may leave our marine ports vulnerable to organized crime and that may compromise the agency's ability to achieve its safety, security and facilitation mandate.

These changes are directly aimed at reducing delays and enhancing security at our marine ports. They would also result in long-term cost savings for Canadian importers, the trade community and consumers, and would ultimately help our economy continue to grow by reducing backlogs and lowering the costs associated with delays.

In order to help continue reducing criminal activity at the ports, we are proposing the following three changes to address security threats associated with organized crime, smuggling and internal conspiracies.

The first step the government is proposing is meant to address security gaps and reduce delays by requiring that high-risk shipments are made available for examination upon request of an officer. This would be achieved through Customs Act amendments and the creation of new regulations.

Second, the government is seeking to increase the security of high-risk shipments by introducing an amendment that would require that goods be brought to a secure area upon the request of an officer. This, in turn, would require marine ports to create secure areas that meet security requirements.

Lastly, Customs Act amendments are being proposed to enable the creation of new monetary penalties to help ensure that all entities involved in this supply chain comply with the new requirements. Penalties for non-compliance would be proportionate to health, safety and security risks.

Allow me to further elaborate on the three proposed changes to clear up any ambiguity that members may have regarding them.

In short, the first proposed amendment relates to making high-risk import shipments available to a CBSA officer for examination in a timely manner. The agency has noted that high-risk shipments selected for examination are not always made available by the terminal operators. This leads to supply chain congestion, delays for importers and an increased risk of tampering and removal of contraband while containers await examination by CBSA officers.

As it stands now, there is no defined time period in either legislation or regulation. This amendment to the Customs Act would provide an authority to make new regulations prescribing the time and manner of making shipments available for examination. Furthermore, these obligations would extend to other entities within the supply chain who have the care and control of goods, including terminal operators.

The second proposed amendment would require those responsible for these shipments to bring them to a secure area in accordance with the regulations. Currently, the Customs Act does not provide a definitive or specific obligation to ensure that high-risk shipments awaiting examination are moved to a dedicated secure area within

marine terminals. As a result, shipments are at risk of being tampered with, and their contents, including drugs and weapons, are at risk of being removed by criminals prior to examination.

● (1215)

I acknowledge that some may argue that existing measures are enough. However, there are many documented instances of containers being breached and unknown contents being removed, while remaining unsecured and easily accessible by internal conspirators when stored with all types of marine cargo on port properties.

Can we truly not continue to advance our security measures to keep up and stay ahead of those committing illicit activities? Adding extra layers of security means that Canadians can feel safer knowing that more contraband and dangerous products are being stopped and therefore do not enter our communities.

To help ensure compliance with these new requirements, additional contraventions would be added to the CBSA's existing penalty system, which would allow the CBSA to issue penalties when goods are not delivered within established time frames. Currently, only the person reporting the goods to the CBSA can be compelled to present them, and there is no timeline within which to do so. As a result, only the persons reporting the goods can be held responsible. In the marine mode, this means that the CBSA cannot compel others who may handle these shipments, such as terminal operators, to make them available to the CBSA in a timely manner.

The government is taking action to ensure the right parties take responsibility for their role in the process. This would lead to fewer delays and lower storage fees for importers, as goods would be moved to secured areas at the right time, examined sooner and released once cleared by the CBSA. This is expected to translate into lower costs for consumers down the line. I believe that having lower costs on commodities is something that every member in this House can support.

I hope members can now understand the urgency and need for these amendments to the Customs Act as something that is not driven by politics, but is a security requirement that would benefit the safety of all Canadians. The changes outlined in this bill would ensure that the CBSA continues to fulfill its mandate to protect and secure Canada's borders and incoming goods while further protecting Canadians from harmful products.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a fairly narrowly focused question regarding the leadership of the port authorities. What is the thought process behind the ministerial appointment of a chair as opposed to having it be more locally governed? That seems to add a layer of process. Timing and delays are ostensibly what we are trying to address here. Are there some service standards around the timing of ministerial appointments? What is the basic reason for that change away from local authorities?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, that question is certainly well outside the scope of this piece of legislation, as the member knows. My entire speech was based around the security of containers and the changes to the act that we are putting in place to assist with ensuring that those containers can be kept in a secure location, can be properly monitored by CBSA and, most importantly, can be dealt with in a timely manner that increases the efficiency of our ability to process containers.

I appreciate that the member has a very specific question that is completely unrelated to this bill. I would encourage him to perhaps ask that question in question period, provided that the Leader of the Opposition has released his iron grip on what Conservatives are allowed to say these days.

Nonetheless, I look forward, hopefully, to a question that relates to the substance of my speech.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the question I asked earlier. We know the act creates indigenous engagement committees for port authorities, and I know that is important. However, when I meet with the Tseshat and Hupacasath, whose lands the Port Alberni port authority resides and operate on, for example, and the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, they say they do not want just an appointment to the board made by, say, the province or the federal government. They want a permanent seat at the table.

The operations of the port authorities in their territories have a huge impact on wild Pacific salmon, economic development and, of course, the future of our region. Does my colleague not agree that indigenous nations have a right to, and should have, a permanent seat on the port authorities in their territories, as the ports operate on their waterways and lands?

• (1220)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, again, the question was not about the substance of my speech or the bill specifically, although I will indicate that I do agree with the member that all stakeholders involved in a particular indigenous community should have proper say. I recognize that this is the introduction of and first debate on this bill. After we pass the bill, it will go to committee, and then I think he will have an opportunity to raise those concerns.

If his concerns fall within the scope of the bill specifically, then I am sure the member can advocate for them and communicate with other members of the committee to see that changes are made to the bill to address them. However, in principle, I would agree with him that stakeholders, in particular indigenous communities, should have a say in this, especially as it relates to land that is rightfully theirs.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before the bill we are debating was introduced, a working group looked into this matter. The mandate of that working group, created in March 2022 by the transport minister at the time, was to study recent supply chain disruptions. Factors like pandemics, COVID-19, climate change and flooding were mentioned, among other things.

I think the mandate of the working group is important, but I do not see the connection between that mandate and the bill before us. The bill seems to be an empty shell of the much-vaunted announcement that promised this was the start of a major national supply chain strategy.

My question is this: Basically, what needs to be done for things to change? I will conclude by saying that the measures also refer to addressing the labour shortage. This was not successful at the Port of Montreal. The government passed a special law rather than improving working conditions because workers are also part of the supply chain.

My question is the following: How can this be considered a strategy? How will the problem of a major labour shortage in supply chains be resolved?

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I have heard discussion from other members today in relation to a working group that worked prior to the bill being brought before the House. However, I have been looking at the bill itself, not the work of that group. I will say that if the group and those who did the work feel that something is missing in the content of this bill, certainly when the bill gets to committee, they will have an opportunity to address it at that time.

I focused a lot of my speech on improving the supply chain by ensuring that these containers are dealt with in a proper manner, so I would say that this bill does address efficiency and improving the supply chain.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity this afternoon to thank all members and all parties of the House for participating in this very important second reading debate on Bill C-33, strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada act, with respect to improving the safety and security at Canada's marine ports.

I would like to further describe the rationale for the measures that are designed to enhance the security of Canada's marine transportation system.

*Government Orders*

Transport Canada has the important mandate of promoting a safe, secure, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system. In addition to developing policies and programs for marine security, the Minister of Transport also has the lead responsibility for marine security policy, coordination and regulation across government, a whole-of-government approach.

When introduced in 1994, the Marine Transportation Security Act was intended to address a long-standing omission in federal powers and better equip the government and the marine transportation industry to respond to any threat to the security of people, goods, vessels, ports and facilities in the Canadian marine environment.

In the decades following, Canada's marine security landscape has changed significantly. While concerns around physical disruption perpetrated by terrorist actions still exist, emerging challenges, such as cybersecurity and biosecurity, are challenging our current threat-focused security framework.

Canada's marine transportation system is a central component of our national, provincial and regional economies. It is one of the primary means for moving Canadian exports to market and for imported goods from abroad to arrive in Canada, as well as in the Midwest in the United States, through the networks we have established throughout the many years of partnerships with different sectors. As such, it is an important enabler of Canadian economic growth well into the future.

As an example, my home riding and region of Niagara is an integral part of our economy. Niagara, which is known as a multimodal transportation hub, is essential to the overall Canadian economy and is growing to be one of the nation's most strategic trade corridors, therefore strengthening Canada's overall international trade performance.

Security events, however, can have a significant impact on port and marine-related operations, which in turn directly affect the efficiency of Canada's supply chains. Concerns over security issues, including a dated regime, can lead to the perception of Canada as a weak link in global supply chains that can affect when and where companies decide to invest. Hence, this is the reason for the bill.

Such a perception could adversely affect Canada's relations with other major trading partners and have significant impacts on future opportunities for economic growth and development, like what is happening in the Niagara region as a transportation hub, with respect to the movement of trade and people. Right now the transportation committee is discussing high-speed rail to bring the country closer together and enable us to welcome visitors who can move around our great nation with great fluidity in tandem with the movement of trade within the infrastructure we have established throughout the past century.

A secure transportation system promotes a secure economy, a resilient supply chain and further supports the competitiveness of Canadian ports. In a constantly changing world, Canada's marine system needs a modern security framework to adapt and respond to increasing complex challenges in tandem with other methods of transportation, such as rail, road and air.

• (1225)

Today, as part of Bill C-33, the government is seeking to modernize the Marine Transportation Security Act to ensure that it remains modern, usable, flexible and a consistent piece of Transport Canada's legislative framework. Modernizing the act will enable the government to have access to tools to address new and emerging security concerns, reflecting the challenges, but, more important, addressing those challenges so we accrue over time confidence with future as well as present international investors.

The proposed amendments will introduce new ministerial authorities, such as the power to make interim orders, the ability to require ports and other marine facilities to accept vessels that have been directed to these locations, and the ability to issue emergency directions to persons or vessels to address immediate security threats.

Unlike other marine legislation, the current Marine Transportation Security Act does not provide effective tools to be used in exceptional circumstances across the industries. The ability to make interim orders will align across Transport Canada's legislation and allow the department to take immediate action to deal with security threats or risks, or take action to address a threat to marine transportation security or to the health of persons in the marine transportation system. This will allow us to better protect the integrity and efficiency of Canada's supply chains.

The proposal will also introduce new regulatory-making authorities that will allow Transport Canada to: one, implement a cost-recovery framework; two, address maritime threats and risks to the health of persons involved in the marine transportation system; three, implement formalized information-sharing channels with federal partners; and, four, establish exclusion zones for vessels.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted emerging biosecurity threats, such as global pathogens, which pose significant risks to public safety and the broader Canadian supply chains, as well as those that flow to Canada, into the U.S. and to our binational partners internationally.

The marine environment poses a unique vector for virus transmission, with cruise ships, for example, or vessels interacting in northern and remote communities. An outbreak on board a vessel or at maritime facilities could cause significant impacts to workers' health and security, which would have a direct effect on our supply chains.



Finally, this proposal will support a shift in the approach to marine security since the act was first established. The shift includes enabling the department to enter into agreements with partner organizations to oversee enforcement of the act and its regulations. This will allow Transport Canada to leverage expertise of organizations and the capacity of other government departments, once again, a whole-of-government approach.

The proposed amendments to the act included in the bill will modernize Canada's security framework, but, most important, it will create more fluidity to ensure more confidence in our transportation system across our great nation.

• (1230)

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague across the way for his advocacy of Great Lakes governance and fishery issues. I support him and join him on those issues.

On today's speech, his colleague previously chastised me for asking a question on an issue that was not relevant to the bill, specifically, the movement or the authority of the minister to appoint chairs of the port authorities.

Would my hon. colleague across the way agree that members of the House, particularly if they are speaking in favour of government legislation, should familiarize themselves with it, because, for the record, that is part of the bill?

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's involvement in the Great Lakes issues as well, and I thank him for that.

This is a whole-of-government approach. Essentially, when we look at appointing people to different authorities, and I want to mention that these authorities are federal government authorities, there is a lot of communication that happens between the federal government, the minister, the whole of government, different departments, as well as the authority itself.

I would anticipate and expect that when appointments are made, like all appointments that are being made, there will be a great deal of discussion with the authority itself and the partners that we work with almost on a daily basis. With that said, the right person will be chosen for those positions that would otherwise be appointed by the minister.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since we are discussing railways, ports, and so on, I would like to bring up the fact that last year we learned that CN, the largest railway company in Canada, had no francophones on its board of directors, a flagrant contravention of the Official Languages Act.

The same happened with Air Canada. English-speaking Canada may be less aware of this, but, in Quebec, people are unable to receive services in French, and pilots and flight attendants who do not speak French are often in the news. There are thousands of complaints every day. We do, however, have an official languages act. Technically, these companies are subject to that legislation.

### *Government Orders*

Does my colleague not think that this is a bit of a scandal? Should we not work harder to ensure that these companies comply with the Official Languages Act?

• (1235)

[English]

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Mr. Speaker, the short answer would be yes. We should be dealing with that in partnership with those agencies with which we do business. May I suggest for the member that with this going to committee after the bill moves through second reading, that the member who is sitting right next to him bring that issue up. Of course, we can come forward with some recommendations to help deal with that situation.

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley has spoken to the New Democratic caucus about this legislation and has raised some serious concerns.

The legislation was drafted completely ignoring the recommendations that were brought forward by the national supply chain task force and the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. In its report on railway safety, there were 21 recommendations, none of which have made it into this bill. Six of them, in fact, were on labour shortages, yet we do not see labour shortage mentioned at all in the legislation.

I wonder if the member could speak to how that could be included when the bill is taken to committee and improved upon at that place.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Mr. Speaker, again, the short answer is yes. One of the things we do cherish and respect in the House is the work of committees.

Being on the transport committee since 2015 with her colleague, we look forward to integrating a lot of the reports that we have completed, whether it be the ports modernization review, the St. Lawrence Seaway review, the labour strategy or the task force that looked after supply chains. The intent of the committee will be to come forward with an integration of those recommendations, and, again, as a whole-of-government approach to ensure that all legislation is very consistent with each other. However, most important is that it aligns so that it best serves those who it is supposed to serve, and those are the customers who are within the supply chains. Of course, it would create net fluidity.

Updating the legislation and updating the means by which we want to move people and goods around the committee is ultimately what the committee, the House and this government are trying to do.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, this legislation is incredibly important to people in my constituency. The issue is not just container ships, which have been mentioned in the supply chain, but bulk carriers, particularly of coal and grain.

*Government Orders*

I would like to put it on the record that the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority is massively inefficient and incompetent, and the result is we have a backup of a virtually permanent parking lot in our sensitive marine areas. Freighters and bulk carriers that pay nothing for the privilege of free parking are ripping up the benthic organisms on a daily basis and are damaging the habitat of endangered whales.

The legislation would go some way to create an authority for the minister to insist that these ships be moved, but we will need amendments at committee. I want to flag it right now so that members of the transport committee and the new Minister of Transport become aware that this is a hot issue and we are red-hot angry through Saanich—Gulf Islands, Cowichan—Malahat—Langford and Nanaimo—Ladysmith. Let there be no more; we have had it.

I hope the government is ready for amendments.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Mr. Speaker, I love the candidness of the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. We always know what she is thinking, so I give her credit for that. Absolutely, we do look forward to the member attending committee and coming out with some of those amendments.

As I mentioned earlier in my comments, there is a provision in the bill for the minister to establish exclusion zones for vessels. I am sure we will hear a lot from the member and her partners, who will give us those messages loud and clear. At committee, we will be sure to get that work done on her behalf.

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

One of the most defining moments since I was elected was when the rail lines in my riding, both the CN and CP rail lines, were washed out. There were over 30 wash-outs in the Fraser Canyon. In fact, one day in November two years ago, I was in a meeting with the minister of emergency preparedness. I walked out of that meeting into a media scrum asking about all the latest drama of the Conservative Party of Canada. I nearly lost it, because on that very day when they were asking about the status of a senator in the Conservative caucus, the rail lines in B.C. had been cut off, our highways had been washed out and our entire transportation infrastructure connecting British Columbia to the rest of Canada was not functioning.

We faced some serious challenges in British Columbia, but the press gallery here did not care about that. In fact, it was not even on its radar that British Columbia was cut off. Unfortunately, Bill C-33, written by the public servants in Ottawa under the former minister, falls very short of what we need in British Columbia to ensure Canada has a competitive infrastructure network to ensure we can export and import goods, and so that our marine ports, our inland ports and airports have the infrastructure they need to maintain a well-functioning, competitive economy.

It goes without saying our infrastructure network creates billions of dollars in economic activity every year, 3.6% of Canada's GDP, and employs hundreds of thousands of people. In addition to that, one in five jobs in Canada are directly related to trade. Therefore, those one in five jobs are directly related to Canada's ability to move, store and efficiently transport the goods we produce here and

sell abroad and the goods Canadians consume and import from other countries.

Going back to the landslides that washed out the rail infrastructure both for CN and the CP rail lines in Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, the former minister of transportation started to take very seriously the challenges Canada was facing with supply chains. Good, he did that. He established a task force, to great fanfare, to address some of the pressing issues we had.

I had a chance to look over that report last night. Some of the key recommendations included to unstick the transport supply chain. The report goes into detail about how the Vancouver port authority is ranked right now as one of the worst and inefficient ports in the world. This is largely because of what has already been raised in this debate: we cannot move container traffic out of our ports quickly enough, mainly because we do not have the infrastructure to do so.

The second thing the report called for was to digitize and create an end-to-end supply chain visibility for efficiency, accountability planning and investment in security. I will note this bill does touch upon a few of those things by allowing other ports of entry to go through the CBSA process of marking where our goods are coming and going.

The task force talked about establishing a supply chain office. When I hear that what I hear is the department in Ottawa has not allocated the right number of people in its department to deal with the first problem, which is unsticking the transportation supply chain. What I read in the expert report is that Ottawa has not been doing a good enough job under its current mandate to make sure goods can flow efficiently in Canada.

The fifth point was to engage indigenous groups. This bill does talk a bit about more consultative powers in conjunction with indigenous people. I will note that in my riding one of the largest employers of indigenous people is the rail lines and the Ashcroft Terminal. Yes, there are tensions from time to time, but I do believe the private sector is already taking reconciliation seriously in the number of indigenous people it is hiring, and those jobs go a long way in those rural and remote communities, especially for first nations.

● (1240)

The next recommendation in the report talks about protecting "corridors, border crossings and gateways from disruptions [and interruptions] to ensure unfettered access for commercial transportation modes and continuity of supply chain movement." Again, I see this recommendation tied to the first one, to unstuck the transportation supply chain. We are not doing a good enough job of moving goods efficiently in Canada.

The next recommendation is to engage the U.S., provinces and territories to achieve reciprocal regulations and practices. Again, it is related to the first point, to unstuck the transportation supply chain. We are not doing a good enough job of moving goods efficiently in Canada.

The report discusses revising the mandate of the Canadian transportation authority agency. All in all, with regard to the national task force, the former minister communicated very clearly to Canada and to private enterprise that he was going to take action, that we were going to see some major improvements.

It goes without saying that under the previous Conservative government, billions of dollars were invested in western Canada under the Asia-Pacific gateway.

We had Highway 17 created. Some of our rail lines were twinned in certain places. There were new interchanges and overpasses put in to ensure that goods could move smoothly. We had legislation put in place to improve the commercial viability of our exporters and importers, to make sure that Canadians could get the products they needed and vice versa, globally, again, because Canada is a trading nation.

When we turn to the legislation here today, what I see is a lot of new red tape, new authority and a prescriptive, bureaucratic approach that does not address the key issue that the very minister who put this legislation forward wanted to respond to when he established the national supply chain task force in the first place.

Where does that leave us here today? Small businesses across Canada are decrying the increased shipping costs to access the Asia-Pacific gateway. We have had labour disputes at our ports in British Columbia recently. We have thousands upon thousands of businesses that are not working as quickly as they want to because they are constrained by our supply chains, by our rail networks.

What I want to see from this government, as this legislation moves forward, is to look at rewriting the focus of this bill, to ensure that we accomplish a few key things, namely what measurable improvement can we attribute to this legislation to make goods move more efficiently in Canada? What regulatory hurdles that currently exist can be removed to ensure that our small businesses, our exporters and importers, can get the products they need quickly enough?

I know that in Saskatchewan, farmers are constantly scared about the bottlenecks that we face in British Columbia. Saskatchewan produces some of the best pulses in the world, yet it cannot get those products to market quickly enough because our transportation rail infrastructure is not there.

### *Government Orders*

I know that importers of Korean steel in British Columbia are facing much higher freight costs, largely because of some of the issues raised here today. Those products are sitting on a ship off the coast of Vancouver Island because they cannot get a docking quickly enough at the port of Metro Vancouver. These are all things that this legislation can address but it is not there yet.

It goes without saying that I will not be supporting this legislation but I do hope that, at committee stage, the government can do a 180 and refocus its efforts on the recommendations that are well received from the national supply chain task force, to do something that is going to support small businesses, Canada's overall GDP and competitiveness in a very challenging global economic climate right now.

● (1245)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the closing remarks of the member's speech, he said that he will not be supporting the bill, but he hopes that once it gets to committee, the government will accept the recommendations.

My questions are: First, would the member support the bill if it came back with the recommendations, as he indicated? If the answer to that is yes, then why would he not support the bill to get to committee?

● (1250)

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, until the major issues are unstuck, as the report from the national task force clearly outlines, I do not think the bill can be supported. The minister had an opportunity when he tabled this legislation to rely upon the expert advice he sought in the first place. It would be irresponsible for me to support this legislation in its current format, because the minister himself did not take the recommendations he sought from an expert panel in the first place.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I noticed some gaps in the bill. A major one is the lack of acknowledgement of the impact of climate change. The Northwest Passage is opening up and ports in the Arctic are going to become more necessary. I wonder if the member agrees that, when the bill does get to committee, witnesses will need to be called from the Arctic to talk about the importance of ports in the Arctic.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, I do believe that we need to hear about the challenges that the Nunavummiut face with respect to port access, and that is a very legitimate concern that I think should be addressed in the legislation. Canada is an Arctic nation, and I hope that we give it the attention it deserves at the committee stage.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech.

*Government Orders*

Earlier, he talked about red tape, particularly the additional administrative burden. Along with several of my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois, I recently met with representatives from port authorities. They told us that they were consulted on Bill C-33 but nothing from the things they mentioned during consultations was included in this bill. In particular, they asked for more autonomy to ensure their development.

What stands out on reading this bill is that there is more reporting. They are being asked to do even more.

I would like my colleague to tell us, if Bill C-13 is sent for study in committee, whether he would be in favour of having less red tape, particularly for small authorities that do not always have the capacity to manage all that administrative burden.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, as the member mentioned, I also heard the port directors say that their perspective was not included in the bill.

I hope that the government will listen to the private sector and the port directors at committee stage so that we can improve the bill and promote our economy.

[English]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the speech from my hon. colleague for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon nicely dovetailed with mine on the concern for prairie farmers.

The member mentioned pulse growers in Saskatchewan, but wheat growers in Alberta and barley growers all face the same problem: the massive inefficiencies at the Port of Vancouver where bulk carriers sit idly, which costs everyone. It costs prairie farmers, shippers, customers and our environment in Saanich—Gulf Islands, while these large freighters cool their heels sitting on our coast with free marine parking.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague for his support when my amendments get to committee.

• (1255)

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the amendments of the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands yet, but I hope in good spirit, if they are there to improve the flow of goods in Canada, they may be something I could support if I were on the transportation committee.

I will note, representing the Ashcroft Terminal, that they had three specific concerns that they wanted to see addressed in the legislation, as follows: the inclusion of intermodal containers in the final arbitration process, the continuation of extended interswitching and the contracting terms of the shipper contracts provided in the CTA, which may hurt shipper remedy rights moving forward.

I just wanted to put those three things on the record as well. I kind of botched the third one, but I see I am out of time.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to rise and speak to Bill C-33, an act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the

Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act. That is quite a mouthful, but it is simply known by its short title of “Strengthening the Port System and Railway Safety in Canada Act”.

By way of background, in April 2017, the then minister of transport, the hon. Marc Garneau, launched a review of the Railway Safety Act. Then in 2018, he announced a review of Canada port authorities to optimize their role in the transportation system. In late 2022, the previous minister of transport received the Final Report of the National Supply Chain Task Force, 2022, as other members have noted.

Bill C-33 was brought forward in response to the Railway Safety Act review and the ports modernization review. If passed, this proposed legislation would amend several existing laws, as indicated in the long title of the bill.

What has become increasingly obvious is that urgent action is needed to address supply chain congestion. In fact, this is exactly what the Final Report of the National Supply Chain Task Force 2022 called for: urgent action to immediately address supply chain congestion.

It is rather typical of the government to refuse to take action until the issue has reached a crisis point. We have been waiting four years for a plan to modernize our ports, and this bill fails to address the root causes of supply chain congestion.

While this comes as no surprise, it is nonetheless frustrating that the government continues to propose inadequate legislation to address important issues such as this one. Bill C-33 does not offer solutions to long-standing issues between railway shippers and railway companies. Instead, it seemingly indicates that the status quo is just fine.

There is also nothing in the bill to address labour disputes that impact supply chains. While it does clarify that rail blockades are illegal, which was already known, the real issue here is with enforcement. This clarification will do nothing to change the reality of rail blockades. Only the enforcement of our laws will.

Since this bill was tabled, there has been a change of minister. This may be due to a realization by the government that it has failed on this file. It may be an attempt to save face by shuffling ministers around, pretending that the Liberals have recognized their shortcomings and that changes will be made.

However, the pattern has been set. The government will continue to put forward flawed policy and centralize power in Ottawa. Speaking of centralizing power, the ports are supposed to operate at arm's length and work in the best interests of both the national economy and the supply chain. However, the previous minister of transport made it clear in his speech on this bill and while answering a question from my colleague, the member for Chilliwack—Hope, that the government is shortening the arm's length and trying to exercise more control over the ports.

This is an area of deep concern. Ports must have the freedom to operate effectively. This starts with letting them elect their own leadership. The ports do not need Liberal ministers to choose the chairs of local port boards. Ministerial authority to appoint the chair reduces the independence of ports.

This raises the following question: Why does the government believe that it should be the one to appoint the chairs of port authorities? It has not come forward with any reasonable explanation for this measure. Canadians do not need more centralized decision-making in Ottawa.

An unfortunate vice of the government is its hubris, which causes its members to think that they have the Midas touch, despite breaking all that they touch. One only needs to look at how the Prime Minister has run his cabinet for the last eight years, dictating to it and centralizing power in the PMO. This has resulted in disaster after disaster.

● (1300)

Another aspect of this bill that would hamper the work of Canadian ports is the new reporting requirements. These requirements would reduce the efficiency and competitiveness of Canadian ports, and they would be especially burdensome for smaller ports. This is yet another hallmark of the Liberal government: extending its control over larger enterprises and drowning smaller businesses in red tape, reaching the point where they are completely reliant on the government.

Furthermore, overly prescriptive and bureaucratic red tape would increase costs, which would inevitably be passed on to Canadian consumers. Additionally, the new proposed advisory committees could restrict the ability of ports to make decisions that would improve their capacity and efficiency.

Businesses do not need more government regulation; they need more freedom to be able to operate efficiently on their own. They do not need the government to tell them how the business should be run. The people who work in this industry and at these ports know better what they need to do to increase efficiencies. Imposing a one-size-fits-all approach to ports across the country does not take into consideration the unique challenges at different ports.

Decision-making by local port authorities is key to modernizing and improving the efficiency of ports around our country. Again, the additional ministerial powers in this bill would limit local decision-making by port authorities, leading to further delays in modernizing our ports. This, in turn, would reduce their efficiency and impact competitiveness. The result would be higher costs passed on to consumers, contributing further to the cost of living crisis that the government has created in this country.

### *Government Orders*

One piece missing from this bill is the provision of any solutions to long-standing issues between railway shippers and railway companies. This is a crucial part of the supply chain. However, the government has left this out, demonstrating that it has no intent to properly fix the issues that were highlighted in the task force report. This shows a worrying lack of understanding of the important aspects of the supply chain. Instead of taking the opportunity to make changes and address this issue, the government seems to be content to let the opportunity pass as it continues to double down on poor policy.

While Conservatives will always support measures that strengthen our supply chains, we cannot consent to efforts from the Liberal-NDP coalition to centralize power in Ottawa and put ports under the thumbs of Ottawa gatekeepers. Conservatives will not support propping up ineffective gatekeepers, which have only made life more difficult for Canadians. The Liberal-NDP coalition needs to work to remove gatekeepers, not validate them by granting them more power and responsibilities.

Conservatives cannot support an increase in red tape and bureaucracy, especially in our supply chain. While the Liberals want port authorities to be aligned with their objectives, as stated by the previous minister, we believe that ports should operate in the best interests of the national economy and the supply chain.

With a country the size of ours, we need an efficient supply chain in which all parts work well together. I believe that the government should go back to the drawing board and draft a bill, which it could present to this House, that makes good, substantive changes to our supply chain and addresses the concerns that were raised by the task force.

A bill purporting to address supply chain congestion must address all the concerns from stakeholders and remove the “Ottawa knows best” solutions that seem to be a hallmark of the government. This bill does neither.

● (1305)

[Translation]

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I really liked the end of my colleague's speech. She referred to the “Ottawa knows best” approach that is often taken. In her speech, she also spoke about the centralizing power that the Liberal-NDP coalition is trying to develop. I completely agree with her.

However, her remarks are somewhat inconsistent with what I heard yesterday. Her leader said that he was going to make infrastructure support for cities conditional on them meeting their housing targets, even though we do not know what those targets are. Is that not an “Ottawa knows best” approach? Is that not just another form of centralization?

I would like my colleague to explain that.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the observations by my colleague in regard to the Ottawa-knows-best approach that the government tends to take. I agree with him that we see more of the same in this bill.

I know that the final report of the national supply chain task force called for urgent action to immediately address supply chain congestion, and I am sure he would agree with me that the bill that has been tabled in the House does absolutely nothing to address the concerns of the task force. Again, additional ministerial powers would simply limit decision-making by local port authorities, which I know members of his caucus are very concerned about, and would lead to further delays in modernizing our ports all across this country.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in her speech, my colleague talked about something that is worth elaborating on so that we can understand her position. She has an opportunity to illustrate her point to those watching us.

Even though there is not much to Bill C-33, there is still something that bothers me, specifically the minister's will to have control over the appointment of board chairs of ports across Canada, in other words deciding who goes where. Worse yet, we know that when Liberal ministers do this sort of thing, the people who are selected are not accountable to the public. Their objective is not to develop the ports, but to please the minister. Most of the time, the people who are chosen are friends of the minister or friends of the Liberal Party.

I would like to know whether my colleague thinks that this aspect of the bill is an improvement.

*[English]*

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to listen in on the debate on this bill. I would suggest that another hallmark is that the current government is well known for appointing its friends and Liberal supporters, not only to benefit itself when it comes to decisions made by decision-making bodies but also to line the pockets of Liberal insiders and friends. I absolutely do not believe they have done anything to address that status quo in this bill.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, every morning past my little house in northern Ontario, we hear the big rumbling of the train. I always love that sound. My family worked the trains, and when I hear that train whistle in the distance, I feel good. However, that train carries huge tankers of sulfuric acid from the smelter in Rouyn-Noranda, and it goes past my house.

Every morning as I hear that rumble, I want to know that those smelter cars are on tracks that are safe and that our workers are able to make sure they can look after them, because a derailment of that nature would be catastrophic in our region of the north where we have fragile lake systems. It would be catastrophic anywhere in this country, particularly going through many of the cities and communities across the country. We saw the disaster at Lac-Mégantic where so many people died because of a lack of regulation.

I want to ask my colleague about the importance of this. We have been told self-regulation works. It does not. We need to see strong measures to make sure that what we are transporting across this country is transported safely, for the workers, for the communities and for the environment. There is the necessity of making sure the federal government lives up to its responsibility of ensuring that is done.

● (1310)

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives understand that not only is an efficient transportation system key to ensuring reliable supply chains, but also a safe transportation system, including a safe rail transportation system, is key. We need reliable supply chains if we want to grow Canada's economy. We support measures that strengthen our supply chains, and I believe safety is one of those measures.

**Mr. Parm Bains (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to be speaking about strengthening the board governance of Canada's strategic ports. My riding of Steveston—Richmond East is home to all of the above: rail, air and sea. It is an island city by nature, one which I look forward to the Speaker's visiting sometime.

The governance model that underpins Canada's port authorities was designed to establish responsible stewardship of these key strategic assets and to position them as commercially oriented actors that can act credibly in the marketplace. The day-to-day operations of these port authorities are directed by independent boards of directors that are responsible for ensuring that port planning, decisions and operations are made firmly within the public interest. In this context, the Minister of Transport retains the critical role of setting the strategic direction that guides the work of these boards.

For 20 years, this governance model has served Canada well. It has provided Canadians with world-class services while ensuring that capacity grew in support of Canada's economy in a gradual and financially sustainable manner. At the same time, Canada and the world have evolved. Our trade with the world is growing and is increasingly diversified. The shipping lines that support the trade have consolidated and are building even bigger ships, and the logistical connections between transportation services and shippers are growing in intensity and technological innovation. These developments underline the importance of ensuring that our ports can adapt to serve our national supply chains and global connections to the world.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that ports undertake their national mandates in very local contexts. As Canada's ports have grown, so too has public interest in their operations. In the eyes of indigenous and local communities, port governance is not only a question of orchestrating safe marine trade but is also now, more than ever, intertwined with environmental sustainability and our important national agenda for reconciliation. Simply put, Canada port authorities are being called upon to be more adaptable and responsive to an increasingly complex operating context. Things have changed since they were created over 20 years ago.

At the centre of government's approach to ensuring that port governance keeps pace are three important objectives: ensuring that port boards have the right people in the right positions to manage these strategic assets, structuring ongoing engagement with indigenous and local communities to better inform decision-making, and enhancing reporting to enable better public engagement, accountability and oversight. I will speak to these three objectives in turn.

Having the right composition and people in place on boards of directors is key to supporting enhanced board performance. This is why the government is proposing to add an additional prairie province director on the boards of the Thunder Bay and Prince Rupert port authorities in recognition of the role these ports play in the export of prairie commodities. In addition, greater flexibility is being proposed to enable more than one municipal directorship in instances where a port is located in more than one municipality. Recognizing board leadership of these strategic assets is critical, and Bill C-33 proposes to enable the Minister of Transport to designate the board chair from among and in consultation with the directors.

With respect to engagement with indigenous and local communities, this bill proposes to establishment structured mechanisms to enable more meaningful and ongoing dialogue. The port modernization review undertook extensive stakeholder consultations. During these engagements, it was noted that the depth and quality of relationships among port authorities, indigenous and local communities can vary. Such relationships are key to aligning expectations and goals and to informing port decisions that have economic, environmental and social implications. As a result, this bill proposes the establishment of three separate advisory committees at the port management level for engaging with indigenous nations, local communities and local governments. These committees would enable more meaningful and structured opportunities for engagement.

• (1315)

The third key governance objective this bill seeks to advance is increased reporting as a means of promoting transparency in port planning and operations, including environmental performance. Bill C-33 would reinforce port authorities' due diligence in planning by requiring them to provide land use plans on a five-year cycle. This would facilitate input from local communities and stakeholders in the port planning process. In addition, the proposed measures would modernize financial reporting and disclosure requirements that align with internationally recognized standards. Bill C-33 would further require port authorities to publicly report on greenhouse emissions and establish climate adaptation plans. These measures would position ports to be leaders in managing climate risks. Importantly, these new environmental reporting requirements would align with the government's ambitious climate change agen-

### *Government Orders*

da and would be consistent with the requirements for other public institutions.

To promote ongoing improvements to port governance aimed at ensuring that these entities remain best in class, Bill C-33 would require port authorities to undergo a triennial assessment of board governance practices. This is an important best practice in corporate governance that befits assets of such national importance. These assessments would evaluate the effectiveness of and adherence to governance practices, including those related to record-keeping practices, the use of skills matrices and the promotion of diversity in recruitment. The results of these assessments would be shared with Transport Canada to inform future policies that help port governance remain best in class. Taken together, these important governance reforms would establish more proficient, transparent and accountable port authority boards consistent with the important role played by ports as instruments of public policy.

These measures build on the successful foundation established in the 1990s, when the Canada Marine Act was first enacted. They would update port governance to modern realities and serve to better align national and local realities, and they would do so by maintaining ports that are nimble market actors and can better support Canada's connections to the world.

We are pleased to advance these reforms. Bill C-33 would fundamentally reposition Canada's port authorities and maintain these world-class facilities that underpin our critical supply chains and national economy.

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat the question I asked this morning because I did not get an answer.

I have been listening to the debate since this morning, and I am not sure what to make of it. We are dealing with a bit of a catch-all bill on ports and railway companies. However, the earth is burning right now, with forest fires raging everywhere. We have never been so ineffectual in the fight against climate change. We also have a housing crisis, and 3.5 million housing units need to be built in Canada. It is absolutely ridiculous. In 2022, Canada spent \$50 billion on the oil industry. Meanwhile, there are 10,000 homeless people in Quebec.

*Government Orders*

Is Bill C-33 the only thing the Liberal government has to offer in response to all the crises erupting across the country?

[English]

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, there is quite a bit in there, and yes, it is important. I talked about Steveston—Richmond East, where I am from, which is surrounded by water and has all the supply chains, being the gateway city that it is.

We do take all of those things into account, and we have seen the leadership of the boards and the consultation that I spoke about, which are needed in order to make all of these decisions. For example, the Port of Vancouver takes into account marine animals and the sounds coming from the ports. These kinds of improvements are going to continue to be made, and this bill reflects all of those decisions.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to follow up on comments made by my colleague.

I cannot believe that this speech was about the board and the focus of the board. Right now, what we are in need of is some management of the traffic in the port. The operations in the water need management. I was out on a port tour this summer in Vancouver, and it is the Wild West of port traffic. No one body has authority over that, and it certainly is not the boards or elected municipal politicians who are going to manage it.

This is a serious problem. This is a safety, transparency and equity problem. How is this bill going to increase equity, increase safety and improve governance at the ports?

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised. This is about collaborating, listening to local communities and understanding the unique needs they have. The speech was about consultation, taking advice and listening to communities and what their needs are to make these decisions. They are important decisions.

I do not know why the member would not want to work with the community that is so important to the areas we represent.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my Liberal colleague's speech earlier. Obviously, words matter. One part of his speech caught my attention, and I would like to go back to it.

He said that one of the bill's objectives is to ensure that port boards have the right people, that the right people are sitting at the table. Who are these right people? Does he mean to say that the people there now are not the right people? Does he mean that the wrong people were appointed in the past?

The government actually has the authority to make numerous appointments to the boards of directors. In fact, this bill specifically discusses the appointment of port board chairs.

In the minds of members on the other side, does “the right people” mean Liberal Party supporters?

• (1325)

[English]

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, the work we do here is for the people. It is about the people. We need to listen and collaborate.

In no way does the bill say they have to be from one party or another. What I said was they need to represent the communities that are impacted by the supply chain. We saw the negative impacts of this during COVID. We need to see to the needs of the people who are operating on these corridors and take their advice. We need experts from the industries. Those are the people we need to listen to.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is a fantastic home. Our country spans more than half of the northern hemisphere and crosses more than six time zones. It is quite incredible. We are the second-largest country by way of geographical size and have the most extensive coastline, spanning more than 240,000 kilometres. It is amazing.

Our home is vast, and the early years of Confederation were spent ensuring that our nation would be built in such a way that it would allow all of this land to be united. From coast to coast, Canadians built infrastructure that was necessary to move goods from one end of our country to the other and to equip themselves to be able to send our goods across the water to other countries. Rail, of course, played an incredible role in this and continues to play a role in our country's ability to get trade goods to market and within the confines of own country.

The project of our very first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was a masterpiece of sorts. It was the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was meant to unite us as a nation. It was meant to serve our economic well-being as a country, and it did just that. In fact, it was so visionary that it continues to do just that.

Rail and national infrastructure were pivotal to how our nation was built, and we remain united today. As these means of transport and infrastructure were set up, both on the national and subnational levels, our economy grew and we fashioned ourselves as a nation committed to trading. To this day, we are an export nation. It keeps us strong, but only as much as our infrastructure is strong.

Canada is blessed with a plethora of natural resources, abundant land and incredibly hard-working people who will get the job done, that is, when the government frees them up to do so. Canadians work hard. They work hard between every coast in this country to build, grow, harvest, mine and collect the fruits of their labour and then get it to market. Our domestic economy feeds and fuels the world. In fact, there is such great capacity in this regard that I truly wish the government would get out of the way and allow us to excel.



Nevertheless, our rails and ports provide the means for our industries to deliver what Canada has to offer to the world and to bring to Canada what the world has to offer to us. The infrastructure across our great land provides the opportunity for every worker, farmer, business owner and their family to be sustained. It allows them to get the goods they need for their households and their businesses.

Rail is literally in the centre of my home city of Lethbridge. We are home to the High Level Bridge, which spans the Oldman River. It is the largest railroad structure in Canada and the longest trestle bridge in the world. It is at the core of our centre.

Canada's railways and ports are more than just the infrastructure that gets stuff from point A to point B. Infrastructure is a piece of the Canadian nation-building legacy, and it is the vital artery of our economy, which is not just our present but also our future. To believe in our infrastructure and keeping it strong is to believe in the Canadian people, our country and its vibrancy going forward, because without a thriving economy we cannot have a thriving people. Without infrastructure to get product to market, we cannot have a thriving economy. Therefore, infrastructure is essential to our economy, which is essential to the strength of our people and this dear country we love.

Let me be clear. Our infrastructure in this country has its fair challenges, in particular infrastructure around transportation, so I understand the desire to address those challenges, fix problems and look for greater efficiencies and greater effectiveness. However, this bill does not do that. This bill does not answer the call that was put out for meaningful change. Overall, this bill is an abysmal failure in that regard.

● (1330)

Bill C-33 is a failed attempt to strengthen the port system and railway safety. It amends several acts in order to do that. It was drafted in response to the Railway Safety Act review and the ports modernization review.

It was delivered with promises to improve affordability, to improve safety and to improve efficiency, and it was delivered by a minister who is no longer functioning in that capacity. I wonder if that is perhaps a bit symbolic of the confidence we should have in the bill. More than that, the draft of the bill, the content of the bill, speaks for itself in terms of how much confidence we should have in it.

Bill C-33 fails in so many ways to address the issues that are at play. For starters, it fails to address the urgent need to alleviate supply chain congestion. This was outlined in the final report put forward by the national supply chain task force. Stakeholders have said that there is nothing in this bill that would improve supply chain efficiencies. For example, there is nothing in this bill to address labour disputes that impact supply chains.

Furthermore, the bill does not solve long-standing issues between railway shippers and railway companies. There is also nothing in the bill to address the Port of Vancouver's inability to load grain in the rain. Folks, let us be clear here: It is Vancouver; it rains all the time. If we cannot load in the rain, when are we loading? If we are not loading, how are we getting product to market? Wait.

### *Government Orders*

We are not. That is why we basically have a congested parking lot known as the Port of Vancouver.

It is a problem. It is driving up the cost of goods and is making it so that some of our store shelves do not have products on them to begin with. This bill had the opportunity to address some of these key issues, but it failed.

I hear all the time from those in my riding about their frustrations concerning these things. They simply want to get their product to market in a reasonable fashion. Farmers want to get their grain onto trains so those trains can go to ports and those ports can let others take the commodity across the ocean. That is how this needs to work. That was the potential of this bill. It had the potential to address these issues.

It is a failure in and of itself that it did not. However, on top of that, the bill decided to heap on even more bureaucracy and more red tape to make things even more difficult. Not only did it fail to solve the issue, but it actually creates more issues. There is a good piece of legislation for everyone.

As I mentioned, our port is already a mess, but the government has decided to apply a bit more red tape to see how much more of a mess it can create, so out comes Bill C-33. In this bill, the government decided to implement a new advisory committee. No doubt this could restrict ports in making decisions to improve their capacity and efficiency. That is a problem.

Bill C-33 would also increase the ministerial authority to appoint the chair of port authorities, therefore reducing the independence of our ports, which are supposed to operate at arm's length from the government. Additional ministerial powers would limit local decision-making and would lead to further delays in the modernization of our ports. In the end, the overly prescriptive and bureaucratic red tape would increase costs, which would then be passed on to consumers, consumers who are already paying through the roof due to the government's inflationary spending and carbon tax.

Clarifying that the railway blockade is illegal certainly will not reduce disruption. Imposing a one-size-fits-all approach to ports and to railways across the country does not recognize the unique challenges faced in this vast nation. The entire bill is symbolic of a government that is incredibly out of touch and not willing to listen to the true needs of this nation. For this reason, I will not be voting in favour of the bill, and I would urge the House to act in the same way.

● (1335)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is one thing I did not get a chance to bring up in my speech, but my colleague from Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques mentioned it. The Conservatives are criticizing the fact that the ports will have additional red tape imposed on them. That is a concern we share.

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We agree with the Conservatives that the bill does not meet the expectations of port representatives. The representatives made certain requests, but none of them are included in the bill. That said, we do see value in some of the additional accountability measures, such as the idea of setting up advisory committees to forge links with cities, local residents and indigenous communities and to help develop climate change adaptation plans.

We have a question, however. The legislation imposes a one-size-fits-all approach. The same rule applies to everyone. The problem is that some ports, like the ones in Vancouver and Montreal, are bigger, while others, like the one in Saguenay, are quite a bit smaller. I am more familiar with Quebec than I am with Canada, but it seems to me that there must be small ports in other areas of Canada that might have more trouble than the others in dealing with these rules.

We would like to propose an asymmetrical approach so that the smaller ports are not forced to meet certain requirements, such as filing quarterly financial statements. Preparing those statements takes a lot of time, energy, financial resources and accounting work that could be put to better use in these smaller ports. The federal government does not need quarterly financial statements for small ports.

[English]

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, I think where the hon. member, I and my colleagues can agree is that we are looking for that supply chain clog to be resolved. We are looking for greater efficiencies and effectiveness. We are looking to actually resolve the real problems that exist. I think where we agree is that the bill would not do that. In fact, it would not only fail to address the issues that currently exist, but the bill would create more problems.

My hon. colleague is highlighting the fact that a one-size-fits-all approach is being taken, as if every single port across the country is the exact same and therefore should be subjected to the same sort of scheme. We are this vast country. We are this vast land. We are this massive geographic nation. We have to come up with something different. There has to be something more efficient, more effective and more unto the service of Canadians rather than unto the service of bureaucracy.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a quick question. This bill is going to pass second reading and go on to the committee. I would be very interested, whether it would be directly through the committee or even through me, to hear the member's comments and/or amendments she would like to see made to the legislation. Maybe she can comment today on what specific amendments or changes she would make to really strengthen the legislation to then serve the purpose it is intended to serve.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, if I were eating in a restaurant, my server brought out a dish and maybe there were a couple of hairs or a fly in there, and I would send it back, I would not say to sprinkle some cheese on it and it would be fine. I would ask that the meal be tossed and that a new meal be brought to me. The same is true with the bill. Let us toss it, let us restart and let us get it right.

• (1340)

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, there was a portion of the member's intervention where she described Nunavut to a tee. Because of the lack of investments that have been made in Nunavut, our economic opportunities have been well below the rest of Canada. Ports are an important opportunity for Nunavummiut to be part of generating and contributing to Canada's economy. With climate change, we have seen the Northwest Passage opening up a lot of traffic and therefore there is the need for more ports to be established in the Arctic region.

I wonder if the member agrees that when the bill comes to committee, we need to ensure there are witnesses called from the Arctic to ensure that Nunavut's unique needs will be met through the bill.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to visit Nunavut and 11 of its remote communities. It was an absolutely spectacular opportunity. I walked away with such an appreciation for the vastness of the north, and the uniqueness and specialness of that area.

One of the things I observed, and she is drawing attention to it, was the lack of access to goods and resources. It is putting those who call Nunavut home at a significant disadvantage compared to the rest of the country.

The whole vision behind national infrastructure, in particular the railroad and the ports, was to unite the country and give us equal access to goods, both in and out. I absolutely believe that we should be bringing witnesses forward who can testify to the fact that Nunavut has been underserved and that changes are needed in order to do better for the sake of our unity as a nation.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill C-33, the strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada act.

The parliamentary secretary asked a great question about how we could fix this bill once it went to committee. Being on the Standing Committee on Agriculture, the bill was very interesting to me, especially being from Saskatchewan where we are landlocked. The railways are an important mode of transportation for our commodities. It is a bit disappointing that this has missed the mark in improving the efficiency of the railway system and ports.

I will talk about agriculture for most of this speech, because it is interconnected between agriculture and our supply chains in our transportation system.

Like most of us did, I had a lot of time this summer to go around the riding and visit folks. I was able to get the member for Thornhill out to Regina this summer, and we got her on a combine. We were combining lentils just outside of Regina. We were also able to get the chief superintendent from the Depot Division, F division, on a combine as well. That day we were combining durum.

What these all have in common is that once they go from the field to the combine to the bins, the next step is to get them to the port. That is the transportation system we have in the country.

The thing that happens so often, almost like clockwork every winter, is a slowdown of the trains because they cannot pull as many cars because of the cold weather. We really need to focus on this and have more options available to get our commodities to market. We have heard this time and time again from producers across Saskatchewan and the Prairies.

I know my friend from Red Deer—Lacombe would hear many of the same complaints from producers and from the agriculture sector as a whole. They are very good at getting their yields off the field; the problem is getting them to port.

My colleague, the member for Lethbridge said it very well, that one of the aspects we were looking to strengthen is the efficiency of the port system. Not being able to load grain cars and ships in the rain in Vancouver is a substantial problem. This could have been addressed in this legislation to strengthen it.

Bill C-33 would amend seven existing laws, including the Canadian Marine Act, the Customs Act, the Canada Transportation Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, the Marine Transportation Security Act and the Transportation Appeal Tribunal of Canada.

My colleague from Lethbridge talked about the ever-increasing bureaucracy and red tape that was added in this current iteration of Bill C-33. We do not need more red tape when it comes to our ports. I think everyone in this chamber would agree that we have to be more efficient at transporting our goods. Canada is an exporting economy. We see that now more than ever in Saskatchewan.

We have some big players in Saskatchewan. The head office of Viterra in Saskatchewan. I talked to its CEO and he put it very clearly that we needed more efficiency at the Port of Vancouver. We did talk about this bill a little this summer when we ran into each other. He was looking forward to seeing what was in it. I had a chance to give him a call the other day and he was quite disappointed. In fact, many stakeholders have been disappointed in what this bill has provided so far.

Some of the people who were not consulted on the bill were CP Rail, the Association of Canadian Port Authorities, Canadian Marine Pilots, Western Grain Elevator Association, Port Nanaimo, Canadian Canola Growers, Global Container Terminals and the Chamber of Shipping.

One of the comments from CP Rail was that after working on this for four years that it was a whole bunch of nothing. That is one of our main stakeholders with regard to the bill. When one asks what could be done better, we could have a conversation with CP on how this bill could be improved. I hope CP Rail representatives are on the witness list when we get this to committee.

Another one of the people who could be consulted is a man from Saskatchewan, Murad Al-Katib of AGT Foods. This company transports and ships across the world. One thing he says is that getting container ships is a difficult thing to do in Canada.

● (1345)

What we could do is have conversations with the people on the ground who need the railway system improved. One thing I would like is to have the witness list include some of these people when

### *Government Orders*

this legislation comes to committee, people like Murad Al-Katib and companies like Viterra. These people have used the port system.

The Port of Vancouver is the gateway to the world for us as exporters. There are efficiencies we could improve on, obviously. Like I said earlier in my speech, we really need to be able to load grain cars in all weather. We have to do it safely, of course, but we need to be able to do it in all kinds of weather.

When we are trying to get our goods to market, in talking to the railways about the huge inefficiencies, another thing we could do is get some pipelines built. If we take some oil cars off the railways, then we would have the ability to actually ship more grain on a daily basis.

When it comes to Saskatchewan, and my colleague from Alberta agrees, there is no more efficient way to ship oil than through a pipeline. We have seen through other legislation like Bill C-69, the no-more-pipelines act, that we cannot get things built in this country.

When we talk about the overall vision for infrastructure across this country, that vision needs to include more pipelines being built to get oil from west to east. We do not have those conversations. There needs to be infrastructure debate in this chamber about how we are going to move forward into the 21st century. This also includes building pipelines. It includes the electricity grid as well, because we need to become more efficient when it comes to shipping materials across our beautiful country.

One of the other things I found very interesting is some of the amendments and the impacts they would have on the ports, such as the proposed amendment to expand Canadian port authorities' mandate over traffic management, including vessels moored or anchored. We talk about expanding the port authorities' mandate. Have we had that discussion with the port authorities? Do we know if they have the capacity to even expand that mandate? That is the question I have for the parliamentary secretary, and hopefully we can get that answered when we are in committee.

Another question I have is on enabling the development of inland terminals. Have they talked to some of the proponents that would be building and expanding these terminals and what they need to see in this legislation?

Another amendment would be to streamline the review process for port authorities' borrowing. Obviously, that is something we could have a conversation about and discuss in committee as well. On establishing new regulatory authorities to oversee Canada's marine security framework, whenever there is talk about expanding authorities, I would like to have conversations on what that means to shippers and distributors across the country.

*Government Orders*

I would also like to have the conversation about how we are going to be able to get goods then across the ocean. We talk about getting to the port. We also need more efficiency when it comes to having the ability to load ships with grain. We need to be building more capacity to ship LNG. We have had Germany and Japan come to our country and ask for help when it comes to LNG. One of the reasons we cannot do it is because we do not have the capacity to load these vessels to get the LNG to different areas of the world. That is a conversation we should be having as well.

The United States built five, six or seven LNG terminals over the last three or four years and we have built nothing. We have become a country where it is almost impossible to build infrastructure under the current government. People want to be able to invest in our country, but the goalposts keep moving on when we can actually get something built. We are then really having trouble attracting foreign investment to our country because they do not see how we would have the capacity to export.

We have lost hundreds of billions of dollars in this country over the last eight years because of investment flowing from Canada straight to the United States. This is because investors believe our infrastructure is not sufficient to be able to transport the goods they want to produce in our country.

• (1350)

We have a wealth of natural resources and we do not have the ability to get those resources to port and then to the destination after that. Therefore, this bill, unfortunately, misses the mark in trying to create more efficiencies at the Port of Vancouver. It misses the mark and increases our capacity on the railways. For that reason and many reasons, after reaching out to stakeholders, they do not like the bill, we do not like it either and we will be voting against it.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have to give some credit to the member for Regina—Lewvan for really engaging, and I think that is the whole point of the process. Now that the bill is going to pass at second reading and go to committee, we are now going to have the opportunity to engage. I take, with great respect, a lot of the comments that he made and a lot of ideas that gave, and I am hoping he can bring those to committee and/or at least pass them on to me so I can bring them to committee.

At the end of the day, what we are trying to do here is all about leveraging government investments. I know in my riding, for example, we were able to leverage \$175 million for a project where the private sector and government got together and made the projects happen.

The last thing I want to mention in leading to my question is that one does not work in isolation of the other. Whether it is a ports modernization study, whether it is a St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation review, whether it is a supply chain review, they all work together and are fluid.

With all that the member has proposed and brought to the attention of the House, does he intend to bring it to the committee and be part of the process so that this legislation would do exactly what it is intended to do?

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be bringing some of our ideas to committee, either by me, if I can sub in, or through my wonderful colleagues who are on the committee that this bill will be going to.

I appreciate the ability to add to the witness list because there are a lot of agriculture stakeholders who need to be consulted about this legislation and amendments need to be proposed to make it better. My hope is that when the witnesses and experts in the field of transportation come to committee to talk about what was missed in this bill, our colleagues from the Liberals and NDP will listen and not just shoot down their ideas.

• (1355)

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a bit about history. In 1913, the National Transcontinental Railway was completed a few kilometres from Senneterre. Today, we are talking about rail safety, tracks that are too old throughout my riding and Quebec, safety concerns with the transportation of goods, gaps and red tape.

What does my colleague think about a secure area to reduce port congestion?

[English]

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, many of us can have conversations about aging infrastructure in our ridings across the country. Something that has been overlooked in the last eight years is putting money into infrastructure, especially in transportation, in almost all aspects. We should have the conversation around adding more money to infrastructure.

The government is very good at wasting money on pet projects, but when it comes to putting money into infrastructure, it has failed miserably. We have seen the Asian infrastructure bank fail, we have seen the Canada Infrastructure Bank fail and not build one project. I think all of us should be able to bring forward infrastructure projects in every riding. There are 338 ridings across the country where the government could put money into something that will actually help Canadians and stop wasting money on pet projects.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague say the old Conservative mantra that they are going to build pipelines, pipelines, pipelines. I was reading the indictment of the people of California against Exxon-Mobil, Shell, Chevron, Conoco, Phillips, and it says:

Rather than warn consumers, the public, and governments, however, Defendants—

That is big oil:

—mounted a disinformation campaign beginning at least as early as the 1970s to discredit the burgeoning scientific consensus on climate change; deny their own knowledge of climate change-related threats; create doubt in the minds of consumers...

...Defendants have promoted and/or profited from the extraction and consumption of fossil fuels...

This has forced the state of California and the people of the world to pay for the damages. What we are seeing is the big tobacco moment.

My hon. colleague is saying big tobacco and big oil will continue to pollute the planet and it will be good. I would suggest that he read the indictment from the state of California against all the big five oil companies that knowingly discredited climate science and are knowingly destroying our planet.

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, I am so glad that the member is catching up on California law and the state of California. Our leader has been going to Timmins—James Bay so often. We are getting so much support, and there will be a Conservative member. He could actually retire in California after the next election.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech my colleague just made addressing some of the challenges that are faced, certainly when it comes to Bill C-33.

There are some significant trade challenges that the prairie provinces are facing when it comes to getting our commodities to market. I know some of the trade challenges are starting to make headline news.

I am wondering if my friend and colleague from Regina—Lewvan would be able to comment on that.

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comment. Obviously he knows a lot about agriculture.

We are having huge issues getting our goods to market. I am looking forward to hearing his speech in the not-too-distant future on how we could help make sure our agricultural producers are supported and how we could help them get their goods to market.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### MAHSA AMINI

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, Jina Mahsa Amini would have celebrated her 23rd birthday. Now, we are commemorating her passing.

A year has passed since the tragic murder of Jina Mahsa Amini, but her story and the names of countless others reverberate through the hearts of Iranians everywhere. Today, on the remembrance of her birthday, we reunite in commemorating her life, amplifying the Iranian people's persistent call for freedom and an end to such violence.

The global community has heard this call, and Canada has stood vigilant, watched, listened and responded to the evolving circumstances with more and more strict sanctions, as their pain is our pain, and their fight is our fight. This journey is one with promise,

### Statements by Members

as we move towards a future where voices resonant freely and where rights are unassailable.

From the floor of the Canadian House of Commons to all Iranians in Iran and across the world, our message is clear: Canada stands with them today and always.

Women, life, freedom. *Zan, zendegi, azadi.*

\* \* \*

● (1400)

### FIRST RESPONDER HEROES

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the wildfires in my province of British Columbia have been absolutely devastating.

Sadly, yesterday, we learned that four more young firefighter lives were lost. They were driving home through Walhachin, B.C., after battling fires in my riding of Cariboo—Prince George. Their deaths are another stark reminder of the sacrifices these brave men and women make every day. Our hearts are absolutely broken by the news, and our thoughts are with their families, friends and colleagues.

Real heroes do not wear capes. They do not have super powers, and they do not drive fancy vehicles. Real heroes get up each and every morning, put on their uniforms and step out the door. They wear shirts with patches on them that say, “paramedic”, “ambulance”, “firefighter”, “police”, “RCMP”, “doctor” or “nurse”. They step into harm's way just to protect us.

We must remember why we were sent here, which is to make life better for Canadians and to protect those who protect us. We must never take their service for granted.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of those who have fallen, and to those who are still standing strong. I thank them for their service.

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### GOVERNMENT POLICIES

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I spent my summer knocking on constituents' doors, connecting with them at community events, and visiting their small businesses and local organizations that are making a positive impact on the lives of many Frederictonians.

As a member of Parliament, my duty is to bring their voices and concerns to Ottawa to represent them to the best of my abilities and fight to ensure their needs are met. At a time when global inflation has driven up the cost of necessities such as groceries and housing, people are worried about their families. That is why I am focused on bringing forward solutions.

*Statements by Members*

We are taking action to build homes more quickly, drive down the cost of housing, stabilize the cost of groceries and support families at a time when they need it the most by implementing universal \$10-a-day child care. We are removing the goods and services tax on the construction of new apartment buildings for renters, and we are helping small businesses stay afloat by extending the CEBA loan repayment deadline. These are immediate, targeted measures to provide relief.

I am so proud to be part of a team that invests in the well-being of all Canadians. There is always more work to do to build a more inclusive, equitable Canada where everyone can thrive, and we are ready to face these challenges together.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRANBY INTERNATIONAL SONG FESTIVAL**

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what do Jean Leloup, Pierre Lapointe and the member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix have in common? They have all participated in the Granby International Song Festival, also known by its French acronym, FICG.

This summer, the FICG celebrated its 55th anniversary. For the occasion, the team decided to rename the top prize “Fabienne” in honour of one of its most illustrious winners, singer Fabienne Thibeault.

The festival has a well-earned reputation for promoting the French language. We need only think of all the francophone artists who have performed there over the years. With such original ideas as the young songwriter contest and the country music weekend, the festival raises the profile of not only the region, but also francophone music and culture as a whole, even on the international stage.

As a friend and admirer of the FICG, I would like to congratulate Josée, Erick-Louis and the entire festival team on their excellent work, and I wish the Granby International Song Festival many more years of success.

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**BEECHWOOD CEMETERY**

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa—Vanier as it celebrates its 150th anniversary. Beechwood Cemetery is the National Cemetery of Canada, the National Military Cemetery and the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery. It is entrusted with the duty of honouring the memory of those who have gone before us and commemorating our heritage for future generations.

[English]

Since 1873, Beechwood Cemetery has been an important landmark for both Canada and the city of Ottawa, with a long-standing focus on community, dignity and remembrance.

● (1405)

[Translation]

In addition, with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, Beechwood Cemetery has highlighted the true nature of the impact that individuals buried in the cemetery have had on indigenous peoples in Canada.

[English]

Beechwood Cemetery is the final resting place of many distinguished Canadians, including Robert Borden, Tommy Douglas, Ray Hnatyshyn and my predecessor Mauril Bélanger.

I invite all members of the House to visit the Beechwood Cemetery, an important and symbolic place, to join me in celebrating its 150th anniversary.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I stand today to remember the second anniversary of the horrific murders of 16-month-old Noah McConnell and his mother, Mchale Busch. On September 16, 2021, a registered, repeat sex offender took their lives and altered the life of Cody McConnell, father and fiancé. Because of this devastating act, Cody has pushed for changes that would mean no one else has to suffer what he went through and continues to go through every day.

Along with presenting my private member's bill, Noah's Law, petition e-4460 was created by the member for Red Deer—LaCombe. The petition calls upon the government to impose stronger conditions against those sex offenders who are highly likely to repeat. The deadline to sign this petition is this Saturday, September 23, and I encourage all Canadians to sign the petition.

Let us work to empower the most vulnerable and prevent this from ever happening again.

\* \* \*

**FALL FAIRS IN KITCHENER—CONESTOGA**

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start by wishing my wife, Brenda Louis, a very happy anniversary today. Brenda's support and belief in me is why I am here in the House today.

It is fall fair season in Kitchener—Conestoga. Our community has welcomed back the Wellesley Township Fall Fair, the New Hamburg Fall Fair and the Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival. Fairs bring us a sense of nostalgia while connecting us with our roots and the values of hard work and community, which have defined Canadians for generations. They help build connections between urban and rural communities, bridging the gap between farms and cities. By showcasing the hard work and dedication of our farmers, fairs help raise awareness about the importance of agriculture and help inspire our next generation of farmers.

My thanks to the volunteers, boards and agricultural societies for their dedication and perseverance. I will be joining friends and flipping pancakes at the Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival on Saturday, September 30. Everyone is invited. I hope to see everyone there.

\* \* \*

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in August I had the privilege of leading a delegation of defence committee members to Europe.

In the U.K., we saw Canadian soldiers teaching Ukrainian recruits how to navigate minefields without blowing themselves up. These young men will shortly be on the battlefield to defend Ukraine against the murderous thugs of Putin's invasion of western Ukraine.

In Latvia, we visited the Canadian-led enhanced forward presence, which coordinates a complex operation of multiple other nations, languages and operating procedures. We also visited the very impressive UN cybersecurity centre, which briefed us on cognitive warfare.

In Estonia, we visited with and were briefed by British troops and Estonian officials. In Poland, the Americans showed us their huge military presence close to the Russian and Belarusian borders.

Mere months ago, none of this was necessary. Now, it is very necessary. All of the delegation wishes Canadians could see our very impressive military men and women in action.

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#### ONLINE PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal government, Traffickinghub continues to operate with impunity. New undercover videos confirm that MindGeek continues to profit off these videos of CSAM, sex trafficking and rape. This is what survivors have said all along. The Canadian company is facing nine lawsuits with 195 victims, and these courageous survivors tell me that their fight continues to take these videos down off of MindGeek websites.

I raised this issue over four years ago. In 2020, The New York Times embarrassed the Liberals into acknowledging it. The ethics committee has made over 14 unanimous recommendations, and MPs from all parties have spoken out. The Liberal response has been nothing: no legislation and no justice for survivors. MindGeek's response was to bring on Liberals on their board and change their name. Even Germany is banning MindGeek to protect its kids.

Conservatives have common sense solutions such as Bill S-210 and Bill C-270. Survivors need justice. It is time to bring it home.

#### Statements by Members

• (1410)

#### SHIREEN ABU AKLEH EMERGING REPORTER AWARD IN SOCIAL JUSTICE JOURNALISM

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow evening Carleton University's journalism program will launch a new scholarship in honour of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

Carleton is the first university outside of the Middle East to recognize her in this way by creating the Shireen Abu Akleh Emerging Reporter Award in Social Justice Journalism. The award will grant \$5,000 each year to a Carleton journalism student to undertake a social justice reporting project.

Shireen's brother Tony Abu Akleh has travelled to Ottawa to take part in a special tribute concert being held tomorrow evening in the Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre.

Shireen was a trailblazer, among the first female journalists in the Arab world to be seen on TV as a war correspondent, complete with a flak jacket and helmet. We pay tribute to the remarkable legacy of Shireen Abu Akleh, a role model for generations.

\* \* \*

#### LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, who is our Conservative leader?

Many know him as the common sense leader this country needs. His schoolteacher parents know him as the boy they adopted and raised in their modest home in Calgary. His dad knows him as the son he took to early morning hockey games. His neighbours know him as the boy who delivered the morning newspaper. His children know him, in French, Spanish and English, as "Papa".

I know him as the man who helped show me the ropes on Parliament Hill in 2015, as we worked on a poverty reduction study at the HUMA committee, where he warned the government to do no harm with its policies. However, eight years later, the numbers speak for themselves. Eight years of bad policy does harm Canadians, and we have seen it under the government. Therefore, when he says, "It doesn't matter who you know or where you're from, but rather who you are and where you're going", those are not just empty words. He has lived it. It is common sense. Let us bring it home.

\* \* \*

#### CARBON TAX

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there was a time not that long ago when Canadians would be making the choice about where they wanted to go out for dinner after a hard week's work. Today, however, just visiting a grocery store is a stressful time, and folks are forced to visit food banks in record numbers.

*Statements by Members*

After eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians have resorted to working multiple jobs and cutting back on necessities just to make ends meet, and it keeps getting worse. With the Liberal carbon taxes, everything is more expensive. As an example, the average farmer will be forced to spend \$150,000 per year on that tax alone. It is time the Liberals realized that, when they tax the farmer who grows the food and the trucker who ships the food, the price of food is going to go up. Canadians cannot tolerate this absurdity and are quickly realizing that the Liberal Prime Minister is just not worth the cost.

There is a clear choice for better. Canada's Conservatives are ready to bring common sense back to this country by axing the carbon tax and bringing home lower prices so Canadians can put food back on their plates.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***30TH ANNIVERSARY OF MÉTANOX.CA**

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Gatineau's chamber of commerce is back it, kicking off its fall activities by celebrating the 30th anniversary of Métanox.ca.

I am very proud that this family business, which is dedicated to manufacturing and machining products, has been so successful. The company relies on a dynamic team that seeks out innovative projects that contribute to Gatineau's economic growth. I would therefore like to congratulate the management, employees and all those who contribute to the company's success. I would also like to thank Gatineau's chamber of commerce for highlighting our entrepreneurs' achievements.

Happy 30th to Métanox.ca.

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*[English]***NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today, on the International Day of Peace, New Democrats are taking real action to promote peace and justice. This week I brought forward Motion No. 95, calling on the government to finally commit to nuclear disarmament.

As Ukraine valiantly fights for its freedom and for a more peaceful and just world for all of us, nuclear disarmament is needed more than ever. It is clear that we must do more to make sure that evil men like Vladimir Putin cannot hold the rest of the global community hostage with nuclear threats.

Canada has a history of building peace and supporting disarmament. I think of champions such as Paul Dewar and Douglas Roche, among many others. However, from Canada opposing international justice efforts for Palestinians to its selling arms to the murderous Saudi regime, it is clear we have a lot of work to do.

If Canada truly believes in nuclear disarmament, it must attend the TPNW in New York in November. We must sign the treaty and use our voice within NATO to encourage other countries to do the same. Peace is everyone's responsibility, and Canada must do its part.

• (1415)

*[Translation]***DENIS SANTERRE**

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Denis Santerre.

Denis passed away on Friday after a lengthy battle with Parkinson's disease. On behalf of the people of Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, and on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I offer my deepest condolences to his loved ones and his family.

Denis was reeve of La Matanie from 2017 to 2019 and mayor of the municipality of Baie-des-Sables for 12 years. It is in that context that I knew him.

When I was elected, he immediately invited me to meet with him. He picked me up in his car and gave me a tour of the village, sharing its history and all the secrets of the people who live there. We quickly developed a relationship of trust and friendship.

Denis was a good, generous and warm-hearted man, a man who gave his heart and soul to our region, of which he was so proud.

I thank Denis for his contribution to our community. May he rest in peace.

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*[English]***HOUSING**

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the current Prime Minister, Canada is in housing hell. He is just not worth the cost. While he simply offers apologies and photo ops, by contrast, our Conservative leader is offering solutions, with the building homes not bureaucracy act to fix what the Liberals and NDP broke. As a former mayor, I can say that this is exactly the type of leadership we need in this country right now.

We would reward cities that actually build homes and penalize gatekeepers that block them, remove GST on affordable rentals, sell 15% of surplus federal properties for housing and, finally, force federal executives in housing to meet a 60-day standard by scrapping their bonuses or even their jobs if they do not get it done. It is common sense to give performance bonuses only when someone delivers results.



There used to be a deal in Canada that if someone worked hard, they would get a home. The Liberals and NDP have broken that, and Conservatives will be the ones to fix it for them.

\* \* \*

#### MEMBER FOR WINNIPEG SOUTH CENTRE

**Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I rise in this House for the first time, I am overcome by a profound sense of gratitude and responsibility. I want to thank the people of Winnipeg South Centre for putting their faith in me to reflect their voices in this chamber and beyond.

Our community is diverse, vibrant and filled with people who aspire to have a better future. Together, we will tackle the challenges that matter most to them. Issues such as reconciliation, mental health access, affordable housing and climate change are at the forefront for people in my riding and demand our attention and resolve.

[Translation]

I come from a region that is defined by its multilingual identity. I am proud to be a product of Canadian bilingualism.

[English]

I am also a proud westerner. Like my father before me, I will defend the interests of our region and help create a better life for the future on the prairie. At every opportunity, I will build bridges as we work collectively to improve the lives of the people we represent.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### HOUSING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, documents released today show that the Bank of Canada's governing council is worried about creating false expectations regarding interest rates.

The Minister of Finance created those false hopes two months ago when she said that we had won the battle against inflation. Since then, inflation has gone up by 43%. It is higher here than in the United States. This could force another interest rate hike for Canadians, who are the most indebted in the G7.

Will the government eliminate its inflationary deficit at last so we can lower interest rates and save Canadians' homes?

[English]

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives. Last time the Conservative leader gave advice to Canadians, he advised them to buy crypto. The last piece of advice that Canadians will take is from the leader who talks about interest rates.

### Oral Questions

Today, we introduced a bill to tackle the cost of living in this country and issues with respect to housing. Canadians know we have their backs. We will fight for them every step of the way.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

### THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the cat is away, the mice will play. How many others are going to be auditioning for the Prime Minister's job out there? It is okay, they will not be there long regardless.

In the meantime, we have a forthcoming crisis the government helped create. Its inflationary deficits mean that the cost of living is rising faster here than it is in the United States. Inflation is up 43% in two months; this after the finance minister said it was gone.

Why will the Liberals not get rid of their inflationary deficits and taxes so Canadians can eat, heat and house themselves?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives across the aisle, our government actually has a plan to support Canadians, whether it supports 11 million Canadians with the grocery rebate, 4.2 million Canadians with the workers benefit or six million Canadians by indexing old age security.

Unlike the Conservatives, our government actually has a plan. Every step of the way, we will focus on Canadians and what they need during this economic time.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, judging by the applause level, it looks as though the fellow from Shawinigan has a bit of a lead in the leadership race right now.

Unfortunately, Canada has a lead in having higher inflation than the United States of America does. Even the Bank of Canada's governing council expressed concern that it was giving false hope about interest rates. The recent inflation report that came out shows that the bank may have to raise rates again on the Canadian people, who are the most indebted in all of the G7.

Will the government reverse its inflationary deficits before rates rise and bankrupt Canadians?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I may give the Leader of the Opposition an A for making jokes, but when it comes to the economy, it is something different. Canadians know that.

What the Conservatives should look at is what we did today. We talked and introduced a bill that would make a difference in the lives of Canadians. That is what Canadians expect, not for us to make fun of each other in this chamber. They expect us to work for Canadians.

*Oral Questions*

Today, we introduced a bill that would make a difference in the lives of Canadians. I enjoin all the members of this House to work with us and make meaningful measures for Canadians, so we can help people in their time of need.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do tell the occasional joke, but none of my humour meets with the joke that is the government's economic plan. It is a joke that has given us the worst inflation in 40 years, doubled the national debt, doubled rent, doubled mortgage payments and doubled the needed down payment for Canadians to get into a home. A Torontonian has to save 25 years for a down payment; they used to be able to pay off a mortgage in that time.

Will the Liberals reverse their disastrous inflationary policies so that Canadians can finally eat, heat and house themselves?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is fascinating that, after we started talking about housing, the hon. member put forward a plan that tinkers around the edges, which experts have indicated demonstrates a lack of understanding of the urgency and scale of Canada's housing crisis.

For example, we have advanced a measure that would get rid of GST on apartment construction. He has now made a commitment to put it back on for middle-class homes. He has made a commitment to cut the program that is now changing the way that cities build homes in London and Calgary and will impact many cities across the country.

We will advance policies that make a difference, not just hang something in the window and be a pretender as he is.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what my plan on GST would do is make sure we do not give tax breaks for \$10 million penthouse apartments, as that member is proposing to do.

We want the builders who qualify for it to have affordable apartment rentals so that Canadians could actually live in them. God forbid, the limousine Liberals want all the money to go to the penthouse apartments.

As for the minister's program, \$4 billion and a year and a half later, it has not built a single, solitary house, and it has only promised 2,000 homes; he would need 1,500 of those announcements to get to the number we need.

Why will the Liberals not get out of the way so that we can—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is concerned about building affordable homes, he should talk to the people who advocate for the building of affordable homes. They are telling us to advance a full GST measure, not a half measure, because that is what is going to get homes built in this country.

The Leader of the Opposition plans to cut the housing accelerator fund, which is changing the way that cities build homes. He would

literally cut money that would build homes and is planning to tax the people who build them. If he cannot see that this would not work, he should go back to his image consultant and tell them that he needs to start wearing glasses again.

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

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** Order. I want to remind both sides that pushing the envelope is one thing, but going over is another. I am hearing it from both sides. I want everybody to consider that when they are asking or answering the questions.

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the minister responsible for housing admitted that there are strings attached to the \$900 million Quebec is supposed to get to build social housing. The thing is, social housing is not his responsibility.

Is he telling people in distress, who may soon be unable to pay their rent or who are at risk of ending up homeless, that they are being held hostage by the Liberals' desire to centralize?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Yesterday evening, I had a productive and positive conversation with my Quebec counterpart, Minister Duranceau. We are working in partnership with Quebec to establish programs to support people who need more affordable housing.

[English]

We are going to continue to work with provinces and our partners at different levels of government to establish programs that support vulnerable people, including in Quebec.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are wasting time while people are suffering. We know how to solve the problems of poverty, housing and homelessness. We are capable of funding social housing and we are capable of helping seniors who are struggling to make ends meet with the increased cost of living. Oil companies made \$200 billion in profit last year, but the government does not have money for social housing or seniors.

Do the Liberals have the same level of compassion as the Conservatives?

*Oral Questions***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we have eliminated subsidies to the fossil fuel sector. We are working with all sectors of the economy, including the oil sector, to ensure that we create an economy that is clean, but also creates good jobs for Canadians.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is the result of Liberal and Conservative budget cuts to social housing and co-operative housing programs. Now we are learning that the elimination of the GST on housing construction does not include a definition of affordable housing. It is absolutely ridiculous, insulting even. What planet do the Liberals live on? Housing is a fundamental right. People's lives are at stake.

Will the Liberals put people before profits and build two million social and co-operative housing units?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I would like to remind him that, for the first time, the federal government has not only adopted a national housing strategy but has also appointed a federal housing advocate.

On this side of the House, we believe that all Quebecers have the right to housing. That is why we have made historic investments with Quebec, to ensure that all Quebecers have a roof over their heads.

[English]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals finally listened to the NDP and tabled their housing plan to remove the GST from building new homes, but people in London are getting evicted by rich developers. Liberals and Conservatives have spent the last 30 years creating this housing crisis and have caused people in my riding, like the tenants of Webster Street, to be pushed out of their buildings so a corporate landlord can be even greedier.

The Liberal plan does nothing to stop profiteering landlords from throwing people onto the streets, so please, will the government steal another idea from the NDP and announce a housing acquisition fund so co-ops and non-profits can keep people in their homes?

• (1430)

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the hon. member knows by now, we had the opportunity to visit her community in the city of London, where I met with non-profit housing providers who are doing extraordinary work on the ground to support people and prevent them from falling into homelessness. She may have also seen that we worked closely with the city and council under Mayor Josh Morgan's leadership to invest \$74 million, which is going to change the way the City of London builds homes going forward. In the next few years, it will add thousands of homes to the supply in that city, which will drive down costs, make housing more affordable and allow people to enjoy life in a complete community in the city of London. We are proud of that work.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after doubling the cost of housing in this country, the Prime Minister thought he would appoint someone to fix the mess he made who was in charge of immigration when they put refugees on the streets and under bridges and when they had international students sold into prostitution and human trafficking. He says that I need glasses. This is the same minister who lost a million people. He literally lost track of a million people who came into the country.

Can the minister please tell us, glasses, binoculars or otherwise, how one loses a million people?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think members can see how thin-skinned the Leader of the Opposition can get when he gets a piece of his own medicine.

International students are a credit to this country. They are the future of this country and are an asset that is very lucrative, and we cannot let them down. Clearly we need to work with the provinces to make sure they have proper housing, and we have to crack down on agents who are giving them false hope across the country, but let us not make this a partisan issue.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the question was how one loses a million people. How is it that the Prime Minister scoured his entire front bench, and hopefully he even gave a little attention to his beleaguered back bench when he was shuffling the cabinet, and the one guy he could find to fix the doubling of housing costs that he incurred as Prime Minister was the guy who lost a million people, the guy who will go down in history in the Guinness Book of World Records as having lost more people than have ever been lost in the history of the world? How is it possible they could not find anyone better than that to put in charge of housing?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives stay focused on us, we are going to stay focused on Canadians. While the Leader of the Opposition is making personal attacks, we are going to continue to support the personal lives of Canadians. Whether that is by helping them through tough times like COVID or helping them through difficult times right now with inflation, we are going to continue to be there for Canadians, and that will remain—

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

**The Speaker:** I am having a hard time hearing the hon. minister. Let us try the other end of the list here. The hon. member for Spadina—Fort York, if he does not mind, can give me his question, and then we will come back to the list and see if everything calms down a bit.

The hon. member for Spadina—Fort York.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, on June 9, I asked the government if it was aware of an apartheid era visa process at our high commission in South Africa. The government said it takes racism seriously and has rolled out anti-racism training in visa offices, including in South Africa. However, I recently met with Canadian High Commissioner Chris Cooter in Pretoria and, astoundingly, he said he was not aware of any racism issues.

Who am I to believe, the government, an IRCC committee report that specifically identified mission racism in Africa or an out-of-touch high commissioner?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly our government institutions are subject to systemic racism. We should not deny that. Better than that, we need to act on it. It is why I have instructed my deputy minister to work with her team to make sure that we are addressing racism and systemic racism across the government but particularly in Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

If we look at the statistics online with respect to African migration, the statistics have gone up. We need to do better and we need to look at the way we process those things because we need to have a discussion about race in this country.

\* \* \*

• (1435)

**FINANCE**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, it is crystal clear that he is not worth the cost. His deficits are driving up inflation. Even his finance minister knows this. Just one year ago, she said that her goal was to “not pour fuel on the fire of inflation”.

Then what did she do? She grabbed the jerry can and poured \$60 billion of new spending on that dumpster fire. The result was higher inflation, which means higher interest rates, which means Canadians will have bigger mortgage payments and may not be able to stay in their homes.

Time is running out. When will the government stop its inflationary deficits so that Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I heard from Canadians, what every member of our government heard from Canadians, is that they want lower rent and lower grocery and food prices.

Today we introduced legislation that will help do just that. The affordable housing and groceries act will remove the GST from the construction of rental housing in order to build more homes in this country faster. It also strengthens Canada's competition laws in order to help stabilize prices for all Canadians.

We are laser-focused on the needs of Canadians and we are responding substantively. What are the Conservatives doing?

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that their inflationary spending is evaporating any benefit that Canadians might hope for. The Prime Minister

admitted in this House that any benefit their programs might have provided Canadians was completely wiped out by higher inflation and higher interest rates.

The former Liberal finance minister knows this. John Manley said, “This is a bit like driving your car with one foot on the gas and the other on the brake generally.... That’s not a good plan for controlling the direction of your vehicle, not a good plan for controlling the direction of the economy either.”

This reckless driving is forcing Canadians out of their homes and pushing food off their table. When will they stop the inflationary deficits so that Canadians can stay in their homes?

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about affordability, just this week, up to \$619 has arrived in Canadian families' bank accounts. That is \$619 to help with groceries, school supplies and new sneakers. The Canada child benefit has helped lift literally hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. We will continue to do all we can to support Canadian families.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, news reports this morning show that in all of Canada, Quebecers are struggling with inflation the most. Housing costs have climbed by 16.7%, while mortgage interest costs have jumped by 37% and gasoline by 51.5%.

The Prime Minister seems intent on making things worse with his ongoing inflationary spending and gas tax hikes.

Will the Prime Minister put an end to his inflationary policies to give Quebecers a break and keep mortgage payments from going up again?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know why the Conservatives are having a hard time connecting with Quebecers. Quebecers simply do not buy their policy of fiscal restraint. The Conservatives want to cut employment insurance, cut seniors' pensions and cut child care subsidies.

We sent \$6 billion to the Quebec government for child care, and the Conservatives want to cut that too.

\* \* \*

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is just a load of hogwash. People in Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles understand that being a Liberal is not all it is cracked up to be.

The Bloc Québécois and the Liberals know that the carbon tax is driving up the cost of goods and contributing to inflation. The Bloc members are claiming to be the adults in the room, but do they know that the children of Quebecers are the ones who will have to pay the price?

As we saw again today in the media, voting for the Bloc Québécois is very costly.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that he does not intend to listen to the Bloc Québécois and that he will abandon his plan to drastically increase the gas tax?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

He was talking about today's news. I am sure that he saw the news that we introduced the act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Competition Act, which will do three things for people in his riding. First, we will deal with the issue of competition in Canada, the first reform in decades, which will bring about less consolidation and more competition at lower prices. Second, we will reduce the GST on housing. Third, we will extend loans for small businesses.

When my colleague reads the news, he should read all of it because that will help the people of Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles and Quebec.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister would no doubt have gotten a better reception at the World Petroleum Congress in Alberta than he did at the Climate Ambition Summit in New York. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General introduced him for who he is: the leader of one of the largest expanders of fossil fuels in the world.

Quebec comes across as a hero in the fight against climate change, while Canada comes across as a zero, a climate hypocrite.

When will this government start taking the climate crisis seriously?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

We are seeing the effects of climate change across the country, and we know that we have to do more. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge an important announcement that the minister made yesterday about methane emissions. He said that Canada will exceed its target of reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by 2030.

We are reducing pollution and creating good jobs in a clean economy.

## Oral Questions

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment, Mr. Bay du Nord himself, found a way to be the only person in New York putting Quebec's environmental policies down. Seriously.

If the government had invested as much money in the fight against climate change as it did in Trans Mountain, we might believe it is serious about this. Frankly, it should start throwing more tree seedlings in the ground before it throws Quebec under the bus because Quebec is serious about climate change.

When will this government start being part of the solution, instead of the problem, in the fight against climate change?

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the Government of Canada has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 62 megatonnes since 2019. That is one-quarter of the target we set for 2030.

Yes, we still have a long way to go. We still have work to do. We will do that work in partnership with Quebec, with the provinces, and with the territories. We will achieve our objectives because we are determined to secure a better future for our children.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned world leaders that humanity is at the “gates of hell”. Meanwhile, big oil defenders like Canada are sitting in the ticket booth, ready to make money.

There is often talk of protecting the environment for future generations, but those days are over. Forest fires, floods, marine heatwaves, biodiversity taking a hit: all that is happening now. We are seeing it every day, around the world. We need to change course now.

What is the government waiting for? When will it take the climate crisis seriously?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

We are eliminating inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and encouraging smart government investments to increase Canada's competitiveness.

In budget 2023, we also announced our \$120-billion clean economy plan to grow Canada's clean economy and create good-paying jobs.

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[English]

## HOUSING

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a couple from Langley, British Columbia, who were interviewed said their mortgage payments went up \$2,700 a month to \$6,300 a month. Now the Liberal finance minister is trying to convince Canadians that her plan to bring down inflation is working. It is not. It just went up again.

*Oral Questions*

After eight years, the NDP-Liberal government's spending has driven up inflation, which has driven up mortgage interest costs by 31%. The Prime Minister is just not worth the cost.

When will the Prime Minister stop his inflationary deficit spending so Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I share my hon. colleague's concern about the real, serious pain that families are feeling across this country, but let us not ignore the sources of some of these challenges: global inflation as a result of the war in Ukraine, as a result of climate change and other global factors. We are going to support Canadians through these times, including by helping them with the cost of housing.

One of the major initiatives that we launched last week is to remove federal tax on home building in Canada. This is the kind of thing that will add to Canada's national housing supply and reduce inflation when it comes to the cost of living for many Canadians.

I hope the Conservatives will join us by advancing a full measure, not a half measure that tinkers around the edges.

• (1445)

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is serious is that Canadians are seriously worried about losing their homes, and the government continues to take zero accountability.

It is also former Liberal finance minister John Manley who said that the NDP-Liberal government's deficits pressed on the inflationary gas pedal which forced the Bank of Canada to press harder on the brakes with higher interest rates. He says that like driving a car, this is "not a good plan for controlling the direction of the economy."

After eight years, Canadians are losing hope and they are hurting. When will the Liberal-NDP government stop the inflationary spending so people will not lose their homes?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague opposite that Canadians are hurting, and that is exactly why I do not understand why the Conservatives do not want to help Canadians.

The legislation that we tabled today will help build more homes for Canadians right across the country, and that will lower rents and mortgages for all Canadians. The legislation that we tabled today will also strengthen Canada's competition laws, which will help keep prices, such as for groceries, lower in the country.

I certainly hope that the Conservatives will support this bill. Will they?

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is how bad it is. Last week, I met a senior named Don in my Barrie—Innisfil office. He told me that when he renews his mortgage, he will be left with just \$600 a month from his pension because of the increases in interest rates caused by this NDP-Liberal government's inflationary spending. In fact, recent CMHC data shows 24% of people with mortgages are struggling to make their monthly

payments, and it is getting worse. Don, like many seniors, now realizes that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister finally stop his inflationary spending so Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the first things we could do to help seniors is to make sure that the age of retirement, when they receive OAS, is 65 and not 67.

We have increased OAS and helped over 3.3 million seniors. We have increased the GIS that is helping 900,000 seniors. We have lifted 45,000 seniors out of poverty. We will keep going.

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this week, as wildfires continue to burn across northwest B.C., the Prime Minister is in New York at the UN General Assembly where he is being called out for allowing the massive expansion of fossil fuels. Meanwhile, we have the CEOs of Canada's richest oil and gas companies telling us they are going to double down on what they do best: profiting and polluting.

The minister promised the rules for a hard cap on oil and gas emissions would be out months ago. The clock is ticking, our children are watching. Where is the emissions cap?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, Canada has developed, and it has been acknowledged by our international partners, one of the most detailed and ambitious climate plans in the world, but we are doing that in a manner that will also promote economic prosperity as we move through the economic transition.

We have brought into place measures relating to the oil and gas sector, including methane reductions and putting a price on carbon pollution. We have indicated we will be moving forward with 75% methane reductions by 2030 and with a cap on oil and gas emissions. We will certainly be moving through that process as we continue the consultations, both with the sector and with other stakeholders.

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**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government has turned it backs on persons with disabilities, who have endured a summer of skyrocketing housing prices, declining access to health care and increasing food prices.

Canadians with disabilities are already twice as likely to live below the poverty line, and the Liberals have not provided them adequate support. This has left Canadians with disabilities unable to pay their bills. These are not luxury items; these are basic needs.

Will the government finally create the disability emergency relief fund for which the community has been calling?

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, passing Bill C-22 was a major milestone and a strong and unwavering commitment to creating a more inclusive and barrier-free Canada. It is because of the relentless advocacy of the disability community. The benefit is yet another concrete step to significantly reduce poverty and support Canadians who need it the most.

In the true spirit of “Nothing without us”, we will continue to engage with Canadians and persons with disabilities on the design and delivery of the benefit. We are going to get it right, and we are going to make sure that the disability community feels that it is part of this engagement process.

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● (1450)

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week, the House debated Bill C-49, an act to amend the Atlantic accords, which is crucial legislation to drive Atlantic Canada's clean energy future. It is supported by the Governments of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia, the clean energy industry, indigenous communities and business stakeholders throughout the region, yet there is only one party in the House that has signalled its intent to be against it, and that is the Conservative Party.

Could the minister shed some light on his conversations with Progressive Conservative Premier Tim Houston and, in St. John's, Liberal Premier Andrew Furey, on their perspective of the importance of this crucial bill?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague, the member for Kings—Hants, for raising this important issue and for his leadership on energy issues in Atlantic Canada.

This legislation is supported by both the premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the premier of Nova Scotia, because it makes economic and energy sense for Atlantic Canada. By not supporting this law, the Conservatives are standing in the way of good jobs for Atlantic Canadians, investment in our communities and, more important, action on climate change. On that last part, we are not surprised at all.

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#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are only 736 dangerous offenders currently in custody, or were in custody, in 2022. These are the worst of the worst offenders, people like Paul Bernardo, pedophiles and repeat rapists. The most violent of records get this designation.

#### Oral Questions

In Canada, federal penitentiaries with minimum-security designations generally do not have fences. People can just walk away, yet 57 of these dangerous offenders, the worst of the worst, were in minimum security last year.

What will this minister do to rectify the situation so that dangerous offenders cannot just walk away?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important when we are discussing issues as important as public safety to not put in the minds of Canadians that dangerous offenders simply walk away from federal penitentiaries. My colleague on the other side knows that is not the case.

These are among the most serious offenders in our federal correctional system, and this government will do everything necessary to ensure the safety of Canadians and to ensure that these dangerous offenders serve their prison sentences in the appropriate security institutions.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister can tell that to the hundreds of victims of those 57 dangerous offenders in minimum security, especially at time when violent and sexual crimes against children are up 126%.

The government is asleep at the switch when it comes to housing, asleep at the switch when it comes to inflation, asleep at the switch when it comes to crime. Now it is asleep at the switch when it comes to public safety and jails.

The government may not be worth the cost financially. It is not worth the cost when it comes to public safety after eight years. When will the government wake up or will it just stay asleep at the switch?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just because our colleague on the other side repeats the same silly phrase does not make it true.

Our government has never been asleep when it comes to community safety, when it comes to investing in police services, border security and undoing some of the cuts of the Harper government to our border services particularly to keep guns and drugs out of Canadian streets.

Our government is committed to doing everything necessary for the safety of Canadians, including having a robust and strong correctional system.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in May, serial rapist and murderer of young girls, Paul Bernardo, was transferred from maximum security to a medium-security prison, and Canadians were reasonably outraged by this.

### Oral Questions

After two whole months on the job, the new Minister of Public Safety has failed to move Bernardo back to a maximum-security prison where he belongs. Worse, new data tells us that hundreds of dangerous offenders, the worst, most violent criminals in the country, are in medium and even minimum-security prisons.

The minister has the authority to move Bernardo and others like him to maximum security prisons. Why has he not done so?

• (1455)

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, just because our friend on the other side continually asserts something does not make it real.

My responsibility is to ensure that the Correctional Service, by law and according to regulations, treats the most serious offenders in our prison system with the appropriate level of security. The decision to transfer inmates from one correctional institution to another is in the hands of the appropriate officials at Correctional Service of Canada.

Our government will continue to do everything necessary to hold these dangerous offenders to account.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister does not get to escape his responsibility to Canadians. It is his duty to ensure that the most vile killers do not get an easy ride and that their victims get justice in our country.

Subsection 6 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act allows the minister to legally issue directives regarding dangerous offenders like Paul Bernardo. To be clear, the minister has the power to move him back to a maximum-security prison today, yet he is choosing not to. Why?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what our government is choosing to do is to invest in all the necessary instruments to ensure that our communities remain safe.

We are investing in the Correctional Service of Canada precisely to ensure that these most dangerous criminals serve their time in the appropriate facilities. We are investing in border services, something the Conservatives gutted, to keep illegal guns and drugs from entering our country.

Our government will continue to support victims, but will continue to ensure we have a robust criminal justice system that treats everybody with the appropriate security.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, some pictures went viral on social media in Quebec this summer. They were not pictures of vacations or family get-togethers. They were pictures of the pathetic state of the Quebec bridge.

The Liberals have been promising to restore it since 2015. Three elections and three ministers of transport later, the only development we are seeing is that there is more rust. A year ago, mayor

Bruno Marchand said at a press conference, “It is time to stop messing around”.

Can the minister tell us when the government will stop messing around?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Quebec bridge is an absolutely essential link for the city. It plays an extremely important role.

We said that we would move forward with the project. We are in talks with CN and it is going very well. At the same time, we are talking to the Government of Quebec.

We made a promise and we will keep it.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let me again quote the mayor of Quebec City, who said, “we are still in the process of negotiating who will own the structure and who will maintain it. It saddens me and discourages me.”

The entire region is discouraged after eight years of broken Liberal promises. The new Minister of Transport is also the Quebec lieutenant. He speaks on behalf of all federal Liberals in Quebec. It must not turn his back on Quebec as his predecessors did.

When will he announce results?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just because the Bloc Québécois is discouraged does not mean that the people of Quebec City are discouraged. The people of Quebec City are much more resilient than the Bloc Québécois. They also trust the government, which is in talks with CN and the Quebec government.

I myself attended a meeting last week. It was a private meeting with Mayor Bruno Marchand, who is pleased with the project's progress. He knows full well that we will deliver results, and that is exactly what we plan to do.

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[English]

### CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are seeing record inflation as grocery prices skyrocket, thanks to the carbon tax.

Tiff Macklem, the Bank of Canada governor, agrees that Trudeau's tax on gas and groceries increases inflation. In the case of onions, the cost is up 69%. We do not have to wonder why food bank usage at the University of Ottawa is up over 258%. The Prime Minister is simply not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister eliminate the carbon tax so students can afford to eat?



• (1500)

**The Speaker:** I am sure everyone is aware, but I will remind everyone: When referring to someone in the chamber, we refer to them by their riding or their position, not by their name. It is just a small reminder. I know we have been gone for the summer, but I am just bringing it back to members again so next time it will not happen.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment.

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a serious and responsible government needs to have a plan for affordability and climate change, and more and more we are learning that the Conservatives do not have a plan for either.

This summer, while Liberals were in their ridings meeting with their constituents, a few Conservatives, like the member for Cumberland—Colchester, the member for New Brunswick Southwest and the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South, were enjoying Chateaubriand and porterhouse steaks on behalf of billionaire climate-change-denying lobbyists. While we are spending time in our ridings getting to know the issues that affect our constituents most, our climate action incentive sends more money back to 80% of all households. The Conservatives do not have anything to say about climate change.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Journal de Montréal reported today that Quebecers are struggling more with inflation than anyone else in Canada. They have the Liberal-Bloc coalition to thank for the drastic tax hikes. More and more bread is going unbuttered now that butter costs an extra 36%. Breakfast cereal costs 32% more, and a piece of red meat for supper costs an extra 30%.

After eight years, the Liberals have overtaxed everything. It comes as no surprise that Quebecers' cupboards are becoming as bare as their pockets. Will the Liberal Prime Minister and his Bloc partners drop their plans to force a second carbon tax on Quebecers?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it surprises me to hear my colleague present the facts that way. Instead, he should be focusing on the fact that today, the government is presenting legislation to reform Canada's Competition Act. We want less consolidation and more competition to lower prices. That is the way to make things right.

I am disappointed to hear my colleague ask this kind of question rather than inform Canadians at home that today, the Liberal government and the Liberal caucus tabled an historic bill to help Canadians in times like these.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to alert Canadians and Quebecers to another troubling revelation in today's paper: The cost of living is rising faster in Quebec's regions than anywhere else. Why is that? Because fami-

### Oral Questions

lies in the regions need one car, sometimes two, to do their work and live their lives.

What is the biggest expense? Gas, obviously. Exactly what the Liberal-Bloc coalition is targeting for drastic tax hikes. In the regions, a vote for the Bloc Québécois will be even more costly. Will the Prime Minister and the leader of the Bloc Québécois walk back their irresponsible plan to drastically increase the cost of gas, yes or no?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member is not aware that the price on pollution in Quebec comes from the Government of Quebec. In any event, we need a plan to fight climate change. That is hugely important for our children and grandchildren. We also need a plan for affordability and for an economy that will make a major contribution to a low-carbon future. We have all those things.

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### THE ECONOMY

**Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the summer, many people in my riding of Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle expressed their concerns about the rising cost of living. I share those concerns. Could the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry please inform the House of the steps our government is taking to make life more affordable?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank my colleague for her question, because she spoke from the heart and shared what all Canadians are feeling. That is exactly what we have done. Today, after convening the CEOs of the major grocery chains to Ottawa to express the frustration of millions of Canadians, we, the Liberal government, introduced an historic bill to tackle inflation and affordability.

We will reform the Competition Act, something that has been needed for decades. We will give new powers to the commissioner of competition. We will eliminate mergers that go against the rules of competition, we will tackle deals that prevent small grocery stores from setting up shop—

• (1505)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

*Oral Questions**[English]***CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal carbon tax is driving up the cost of food. University student Walt McDonald must choose between eating his food bank meal for breakfast or for lunch. The Dalhousie Student Union food bank says that 10 years ago, it served just extra snacks to students. Now, students are using the food bank for their weekly meal plan. After eight years, the Prime Minister is just not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister stop forcing students to use food banks and axe his inflationary carbon tax, yes or no?

**Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed this past year, from September 2022 to September 2023, it has been a tough time in Nova Scotia. We have had three natural disasters. We have had floods, hurricanes and fires. That has impacted us financially with three billion dollars' worth of costs. It has impacted lives and it has cost lives. We have a plan to address that.

However, what I hear in the chamber time and time again from the opposition and the opposition leader, who has also been here a year, when it comes to the environment and to renewable jobs in Atlantic Canada that will be coming to us because of the Atlantic accord, is grifting, gaslighting and general goofiness.

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what an out-of-touch answer.

After eight long years of the Prime Minister's tax-and-spend inflationary policies, Canadians are recognizing that he is just not worth the cost. His carbon tax is raising the cost of everything. He does not understand that if the government taxes the farmer who grows the food and taxes the trucker who ships the food, ultimately it is Canadians who will pay the price. Potatoes, onions and canned soup are all up more than 70%.

Will the Prime Minister finally listen to Canadians and axe the tax so they can afford to eat?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would say that we are very cognizant of the need to address affordability issues. That is why eight out of 10 Canadian families actually get a rebate that is more than they pay. It also is part of a climate plan.

I would say it is appalling in my view that the member opposite and his party have no plan to address the climate issue. Given what we saw in northern B.C. in terms of forest fires this summer, it is a shame they have not addressed the climate issue. It is a shame for our children, our grandchildren and the future of this planet.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the new little guy from Shawinigan that I read the paper. This morning, we learned that Quebecers are feeling the biggest pinch from inflation. It was on the front page of the *Journal de Québec*. The carbon tax is one reason for that, and who supports it? The Bloc Québécois.

The Liberal-Bloc tax is really hurting Quebecers. What is worse, the Bloc Québécois wants the government to drastically increase the carbon tax, increase it even more. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is going to cost drastically more.

Will the Prime Minister reject the Bloc Québécois's request to increase the carbon tax at Quebecers' expense?

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, *[technical difficulty]* on climate has put us behind in the fight against climate change. In any case, the Bloc Québécois was unable to stop them from gutting the environmental regulations.

What Quebecers know is that the cost of climate change and its consequences, with the storms and forest fires that we have had, is much higher than the price on pollution. Making the right to pollute free again would be a serious mistake for future generations.

\* \* \*

*[English]***CHILD CARE**

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that families are struggling with the high cost of living but that the Canada early learning and child care system is helping them cope. In my riding of Newmarket—Aurora, over 3,200 children are enrolled in this program, and I know it is making a huge, positive difference for their families.

Can the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development tell the House what her next steps in implementing this plan are?

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right. Many families are struggling right now, and we know how important child care is to families. That is exactly why we are building a nationwide system.

In Newmarket—Aurora and across Ontario, families are feeling the 50% reduction in costs already, saving literally hundreds of dollars each month. "What is next?" my colleague asks. We have already created or announced 50,000 new spaces. We have 200,000 more spaces to go.

• (1510)

## HEALTH

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, natural health products need to be safe, effective and properly labelled. Over 80% of Canadians rely on these products as an important part of their daily health regimen, yet people are worried about the new Health Canada changes. They are concerned that health products will be more expensive and less available, with serious impacts on small business.

Will the Liberals assure people that natural health products will be available, affordable and appropriately regulated?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course it is extraordinarily important that Canadians know the natural health products they take are safe. It is very disturbing that there were more than 700 cases last year where there was a serious adverse health impact, including hospitalization, as a result of taking a natural health product. Therefore, making sure the products are safe for Canadians, and at the same time ensuring that there is a fair program for small and medium-sized businesses to ensure they are not adversely affected, is what we are focused on.

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## B.C. FIREFIGHTERS

**The Speaker:** Following a discussion among representatives of all parties, I understand there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence in memory of the four wildfire firefighters who lost their lives near Walhachin, British Columbia.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

\* \* \*

[English]

## POINTS OF ORDER

### ALLEGED DUPLICATION OF PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

While crime in Canada is up 40%, I would like to report a theft in the House of Commons. My private member's bill, Bill C-339, to eliminate the efficiencies defence in the Competition Act, has been stolen by the Liberal government and presented as its own piece of legislation. The entire bill—

**The Speaker:** I am going to rule that one out from the beginning.

I am getting a signal from a former Speaker that there might be something here. I am trusting his word, so I will let the member continue to see where he is going.

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Mr. Speaker, it has to do with the management of Private Members' Business. My private member's bill finished first reading on June 8. It is scheduled to have its first hour at second reading on November 21.

## Points of Order

When the government presents, as its own, legislation that was in front of the House as a private member's bill, it takes away from parliamentarians who have, oftentimes for the first time in their career, worked hard to bring a private member's bill before this House. It is bad precedent when a member who has already introduced a bill to the House has it taken by the government, as the member loses their spot in the queue to present private members' business.

For future parliamentarians and for this instance, the same-question rule or the rule of anticipation will come into effect should the Liberal government bill make quicker progress, which, given that most House debate time is controlled by the government, is likely to occur. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am asking you for your assurance that I and future parliamentarians have recourse to the provisions of Standing Order 92.1(2), or, if necessary, that you will invoke your authority under Standing Order 94(1)(a) to “make all arrangements necessary to ensure the orderly conduct of Private Members' Business” in the event that my bill enters replenishment yet winds up in one of those legislative dead ends if the government bill vaults ahead of mine.

To this end, I would refer you to the ruling of your predecessor on November 4, 2011, at page 2984 of the Debates, concerning the procedure of an irregular private member's bill. It states:

...I am reluctant to deny the member what is likely his only opportunity in this Parliament to have an item on the order of precedence....

In light of the unique nature of this particular situation, the member...will be permitted to substitute another item onto the order of precedence. The substitution shall be done pursuant to the spirit of Standing Order 92.1....

The procedure and House affairs committee subsequently recommended an amendment to Standing Order 92.1, which the House adopted in 2015 as Standing Order 92.1(2), facilitating the replacement of items in situations where a private member's bill is dropped “for having been ruled out of order by the Speaker”.

In the interests of fairness, to ensure that precedence is looked at to the fullest extent possible and for future parliamentarians, I would ask for the Chair's assurance that, if the progress of my bill, Bill C-339, becomes doomed because it was big-footed by the Liberals' sudden and new-found concern with attacking the skyrocketing cost of living and competition law, I have recourse to replace my bill with another item on the provisions of either of these Standing Orders.

• (1515)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we certainly were not aware of this concern. If you would afford us the opportunity to come back to you before a ruling on this to provide some comments, we would greatly appreciate it.

**The Speaker:** I want to thank the hon. member for Bay of Quinte, as well as the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle for the advice. That was very good of him.

*Business of the House*

We will take that into consideration and come back to the House with something concrete.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**UKRAINIAN CHILDREN**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, given that,

- (i) according to a report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, thousands of children have been forcibly deported by Russia from Ukraine to the Russian Federation,
- (ii) the International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova for the war crime of illegally deporting Ukrainian children to the territory of the Russian Federation,
- (iii) the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe have strongly condemned the practice of forced transfers and deportation of civilians, including children, by the Russian Federation,

the House:

- (a) condemn, with equal firmness, the Russian authorities for the war crimes and genocide constituted by the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to the territory of the Russian Federation, in particular through an abusive selection process known as “filtration” and “re-education camps”; and
- (b) call for an immediate end to this practice, and for Ukrainian children to be returned safely to Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[English]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, since this is the first Thursday sitting of the House of Commons with a new government House leader, I would like congratulate my counterpart on the appointment. I wish her all the best in this role on a personal level, but maybe not on a political level. I want to thank her for some of the fruitful conversations we have already had.

I thought I would ease into the flow of the Thursday question by keeping it rather simple and straightforward. Given the fact that the latest inflation numbers were much higher than expected and the fears of an interest rate hike are coming, and given the fact that so many Canadians cannot afford to make their mortgage payments at existing rates, will the government House leader not just inform the House as to the business for the rest of the week and next week, but inform us of whether the government has any plans to cancel its inflationary deficit spending so that interest rates can come down and Canadians can stay in their homes?

• (1520)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his warm congratulations, and as this is my first time at providing the Thursday statement, I would also like to say that I look forward to working with him and the other House leaders to advance legislation.

This afternoon we will continue with second reading debate of Bill C-33, which deals with strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada.

I actually have some good news for my hon. colleague. When it comes to affordable housing, debate on the the bill we introduced today on eliminating the GST for rental housing will begin at noon on Monday. I am sure he is very much looking forward to that. It was introduced this morning by the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. We will continue with this legislation on Tuesday as well, and I hope we can count on the support of all parties in this House to advance it for Canadians to bring down the cost of housing and the cost of groceries.

On Wednesday we will resume debate on Bill C-49, amending the Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act.

Finally, I would like to inform the House that next Thursday, September 28, shall be an allotted day, which I am sure the member will be pleased about.

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**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE****PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I believe if you seek it, at this time you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That the membership of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be amended as follows:

Mr. Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation) for Mr. Turnbull (Whitby) and

Mr. Duguid (Winnipeg South) for Mr. Fergus (Hull—Aylmer).

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### STRENGTHENING THE PORT SYSTEM AND RAILWAY SAFETY IN CANADA ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-33 comes at the end of a series of initiatives taken by the Canadian government over the past six years. Beyond the various committees that could have addressed the matter in previous Parliaments, let us consider the following initiatives.

In 2018, there was the ports modernization review. In 2022, there was the final report of the supply chain task force, which was tabled in the House in October of the same year.

The objectives of Bill C-33 are as follows: to eliminate systemic barriers in order to create a more fluid, secure and resilient supply chain; to expand the mandate of Canadian port authorities in relation to traffic management; to position Canada's ports as strategic transportation hubs; to improve the government's understanding of ports and port operations; and to modernize provisions relating to rail safety, security and the transportation of dangerous goods. I will focus mainly on that last point.

Bill C-33 contains a series of proposals affecting the following federal acts: the Canada Marine Act, the Canada Transportation Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Customs Act and the Transportation Appeal Tribunal of Canada Act.

First of all, I would like to say that the Bloc Québécois will be voting in favour of this bill so that it can be referred to committee, since a number of improvements could be proposed. We will have to be responsible and trustworthy enough to undertake the legislative and regulatory tightening required for the amendments that are to be debated.

A decade has passed since the unspeakable tragedy in Lac-Mégantic that claimed the lives of 47 people and left an entire community forever scarred. For people in Quebec, this tragedy is an unavoidable part of any conversation about rail safety, which, as I said, is the subject of my remarks.

Certainly the supply chain element is interesting, and there is plenty to say about that. I want to focus on rail safety without necessarily tying it to the supply chain issue. There have been recommendations, round tables, consultations, reviews and audits. That all served to inform people, but none of it can replace what really matters, which is a regulatory and legislative framework.

In all honesty, we have to acknowledge that the work that was done in 2017-18, the many Transportation Safety Board reports that identified recurring safety issues and deficiencies, and the Office of

### Government Orders

the Auditor General of Canada's observations on the matter all sent a clear signal that we need to study Bill C-33.

I have said it before and I say it all the time: Words matter. Using vocabulary that is clear, and prescriptive if necessary, is already a step in the right direction. There is so much data and benchmarking available that I will be the first to admit that guiding regulatory policy in this sector is a huge undertaking. Companies have a duty to help us help them.

In 2022, there were 225 main-track accidents in Canada, 18% more than the 10-year average for this type of track, which is the rail network's main artery. The country's largest rail union is speaking out about fatigue, working under pressure and understaffing in the sector. These problems are addressed in Bill C-33.

Among our neighbours to the south, elected officials are pointing the finger at the role of precision scheduled railroading, known as PSR. It is a railway management system created by none other than Hunter Harrison. If members have read anything about Lac-Mégantic, they will recognize Mr. Harrison's name. PSR was introduced at Canadian National in 1998 and at Canadian Pacific in 2012. It has been the favoured management system of most major rail companies here and in the U.S. for more than a decade.

● (1525)

The objectives of PSR, according to its infamous creator, are to provide frequent and reliable service, control costs, optimize assets and operate safely. He even added that there should be fewer employees, but they should be made to work harder.

In practical terms, it is a management approach designed with maximum profitability as its priority. This system aims to put longer, faster trains on the rails more quickly in order to keep operating costs as low as possible, all with fewer staff. The average length and weight of CN trains have tripled since 1990. This is directly linked to the implementation of this PSR system.

When unveiling financial results in 2018, CP emphasized the importance of PSR. It was important for profitability. When Le Devoir analyzed the company's annual reports in 2023, it discovered that CP's profit margins shot up almost 500% between 2012 and 2022. I just want to remind everyone that the Lac-Mégantic tragedy took place in 2013. Furthermore, 2012 was no ordinary year in CP's history. That was the exact year Mr. Harrison, the creator of PSR, joined the company.

*Government Orders*

Why am I addressing rail safety from this angle? I am talking about it because the pursuit of profitability using PSR management is the fraternal twin of the culture of self-regulation that has prevailed in Canada for far too long. The power to change things involves the ability to exercise that power, which is regulatory. Of course, we need to protect the supply chain, workers and remote communities. However, we need to understand that it would be a mistake to continue with self-regulation or to encourage more self-regulation in the rail industry.

I want to quote an article from *La Presse* on this very subject. It states: “Ottawa sets guidelines for the companies, which develop their own security system and usually do their own inspections.” That means that the companies do everything. The article goes on to say, “According to experts, the problem is that, in recent years, Transport Canada has resolutely become a department with an economic mandate, and it is neglecting its safety mandate.”

The article quotes one source as saying, “There were even memos from the minister reminding us that we were an economic department...In short, we were there not to stop trains but to keep them running.” That quote is from 2013, the year the Auditor General of Canada published her audit on rail safety at Transport Canada, the year of the Lac-Mégantic tragedy.

In 2022 and 2023, the supply chain got a lot of attention, proving that the railway is vitally important to the economy. To not engage in some thoughtful deliberation on the potential of the railway and the best safety practices in terms of monitoring, reporting and record-keeping would, in my opinion, be a missed opportunity and an irresponsible choice.

I believe that the long-awaited Bill C-33 has some progressive aspects that could be improved upon in committee. Generally speaking, the creation of secure areas to reduce congestion in the ports, the creation of financial penalties for safety breaches, the strengthening of safety management systems, and the prohibitions on interfering with or damaging railway structures or operations are measures that the Bloc Québécois welcomes.

As elected members, we have a responsibility to ensure that members of the public know they are safe in areas where railway activity is present, not just for now or in a week, but for the long term.

• (1530)

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order, or usual practice of the House, at the conclusion of today's debate on the second reading stage of Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, all questions necessary to dispose of the said stage be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** All those opposed to the hon. member moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

[English]

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

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one of the concerns I have with this bill is that there seems to be a downloading of authority to Ottawa in various aspects of this bill. I would ask my colleague from the Bloc Québécois about this. Certainly we have seen how increased bureaucracy, increased red tape, has not actually led to a safer circumstance, whether that be on our rail system, in our ports or in negotiations with labour and whatnot. It has not actually increased the efficiency or safety of our ports and railroads.

Does this member share my concern about whether this downloading of more authority and more processes in offices in Ottawa is an effective solution to addressing some of the challenges this bill purports to address?

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure I understand what downloading of responsibility my colleague is talking about. As I understand the bill before us, elected officials have the power to impose requirements on companies.

However, if my colleague's question is about giving companies greater freedom, I am totally against it. At present, the Government of Canada simply sets benchmarks and then the companies do as they please. This is what has happened. This is the reason Canada's rail safety regime is so lax.

• (1535)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her comments. This is extremely important.

Under the Harper government, rail safety regulations and inspections all became a thing of the past. They were replaced by a self-management system, which put company directors in charge of managing rail safety. Since that time, the number of deaths has grown, and several tragic, horrifying accidents have happened. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has done nothing to correct this irresponsible move by the Harper government.

I would like my colleague to tell us how important it is to reinstate rail safety inspections with federal government oversight to improve rail safety.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, I will start by being positive. There have been some improvements, such as reducing train speeds, enhancing track inspection requirements, and making tank cars sturdier. However, according to Ian Naish, a former director at the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, the changes were marginal.

Yes, a lot more work needs to be done and only the government can do it.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as we know, Canada was built on the railway and has since trended toward constant deregulation. That, of course, led to the Lac-Mégantic disaster. The only thing that has increased since that tragedy is the transportation of oil by train, which has increased dramatically. That is the only thing that has changed since 2013.

This bill proposes increased regulation for goods. A few years ago, however, a group of people from Saint-Hyacinthe launched an initiative in my riding called Convoi-Citoyen. They ventured onto the tracks and discovered exposed wires and tracks sitting on wet soil instead of cement.

Should we not also be addressing inspections of the tracks themselves?

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, I too know people from Mégantic. They are inspecting the rail lines themselves. Some might say that they do not have the right to do so, but the work will not get done otherwise, and they do not want to go through that again. That is obvious. No one wants to go through that again.

Yes, we absolutely must be more prescriptive in what we ask of rail carriers.

[English]

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to debate the important issues that Canadians face.

Before I jump into the subject matter of Bill C-33, I would note that yesterday represented the second anniversary of the 2021 election. In that regard, I would note my deep appreciation to the people of Battle River—Crowfoot for the opportunity to continue serving them in this place, to be their voice in Canada's Parliament. A big thanks goes to my wife, Danielle, my kids and my whole family for their support, as well as my staff, volunteers, campaign team and everybody it takes to make elections happen.

It is interesting that the Liberal Prime Minister, in the course of the last election, promised that if he were elected with a minority, he would call an election after two years. That is another broken promise by a Liberal who cares more about power than he does anything else. He also promised, I would note, after which I look forward to jumping into the substance of Bill C-33, that he would not join a coalition with the NDP, despite Conservatives suggesting that this would be an inevitable result. They laughed at us then. We turned out to be the ones who were telling the truth, and the Liberals were exposed for once again misleading us and holding on to power at any cost.

As we get into the debate on Bill C-33, once again we have before us a bill where, if we read the preamble, there is very little to disagree with. I have said this often when it comes to Liberal bills. The Liberals are great at making announcements, proposing things and saying they are doing things, but when we dig into the substance of what we have before us, it certainly falls short.

### *Government Orders*

We have a bill that touches on a whole host of different things when it comes to our rail sector and our ports, including some of our deep sea ports. There are seven acts that would be affected. In Canada, as a country, both the rail and sea transport sectors are absolutely fundamental to the success of our nation. We have to be able to transport our goods and resources, whether the raw resources that come from the ground or the value-added resources in every segment of the economy that are produced everywhere across our nation. We need to have a transport sector that we can trust and that is reliable, safe and secure and that not only Canadians can trust, but also, when it comes to investment, our customers around the world can look at our system and know and trust that it is doing the right thing.

Concerns have been highlighted. Transport ministers seem to fall at an astonishing rate. In 2017, a few transport ministers ago, the now-retired Marc Garneau, who was then transport minister, launched the statutory review of the Railway Safety Act. Over the course of the last number of years, we have seen different steps in that process. It was in October of last year that the previous transport minister received the final report from the national supply chain task force; now we have this bill before us. However, when it comes to whether this bill deals with the concerns that have been highlighted, we are increasingly hearing that it does not, pure and simple.

I would note that one of the first issues that I dealt with, as did many of my colleagues after we were elected in 2019, was the rail strike just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were blockades and protests that had virtually ground our economy to a halt. In fact, it would have been very interesting to see what the impact on the economy of the Liberals' mismanagement of that situation would have been. We did not have the opportunity to see direct impacts of that. Of course, we know that in the aftermath, we immediately went into the COVID pandemic, and our focus for the last number of years obviously changed dramatically.

The bill we have before us would change aspects of railway safety, including security. There are prohibitions and some changes to the way that things would be classified. We need to ensure that railway companies are able to address security and, when it comes to ensuring that appropriate clearances for the staff of rail companies are provided, as well as that there are continual reviews.

• (1540)

I would just note that when it comes to the review portion, it is great to ask for statutory reviews but I am sure I am not alone, like many in this place, who would note that statutory reviews rarely happen when they are scheduled to. I will be asking the Library of Parliament to go through and look at all of the statutory reviews that are currently missing.

It is great to talk about a statutory review, but it is nothing more than boilerplate language. It does not do much good if one does not actually plan to review it.

*Government Orders*

I believe that some of these things are laudable in their intent but when it comes to the substance of whether they accomplish it, many Canadians do not realize that railway companies actually have their own police forces because of some of the history associated with the importance of that as a sector of our economy and the growth of our country. Some of the dynamics of that and, in some cases, legislation that is almost as old as the country itself needs to be reflective of present-day reality. These are important questions that have to be asked when it comes to committee.

This is the sort of bill that truly takes a huge amount of time to get into some of the substance so I will go very high-level here.

One of the challenges that has been brought to my attention is that there are two things that take place. One is that Ottawa gets a whole lot more authority which, interestingly enough, the Bloc supports, which is an irony, I would suggest.

At the same time, they are downloading a whole bunch of the work to port authorities that do not necessarily have the resources to accomplish the objectives that will be brought forward if this bill is passed unamended.

What I fear will be the case is that we will have more red tape and more bureaucracy slowing down the decision-making process when it comes to our ports. We know how essential that is. It was only months ago that we had a strike at the Port of Vancouver where it, certainly in western Canada, ground our economy virtually to a halt. I believe it was half a billion dollars a day in economic impact and it will take months to clear the backlog.

When it comes to products, whether it is dried commodities like agriculture, whether it is oil or the carbon-based products that are essential for so many economies around the world, which Canada has a strong record of being able to provide, we have to make sure we do this right.

I think that it is not the answer to increase bureaucracy and download responsibility without understanding the impacts that this will bring about on the people who are actually responsible for making sure that our economy is moving. I say "moving" very specifically.

I would bring up an example that emphasizes my point.

Today in question period, the Minister of Health brought up natural health products. I know all of us in this place have heard a lot about natural health products over the course of the summer.

The unfortunate trend is that this government is desperate to make changes on things that do not actually help, especially when one sees the irony that the government is making a whole bunch of regulatory and bureaucratic changes to natural health products that nobody asked for and certainly very few people I have spoken to, whether in the sector or outside it, support, yet it is pushing this down the throats of small business owners, of Canadians and one of Canada's most trusted sectors.

That same health minister supports the selling of hard drugs on our streets.

I bring this up because it highlights the irony that one has a government that seems to be quick to propose things, to look for ways

that it can increase the size of government, the inefficiencies associated with that and the red tape that impacts the ability for the economy to function, but when it comes to actually delivering, it fails and its priorities always seem to be in the wrong place.

The questions I have asked certainly need to be addressed at committee. I hope that serious amendments can be made so that we do not allow that same trend to slow down a sector that is already being slowed down by a Liberal government that is simply out of touch.

● (1545)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I welcome my colleague back to the House, as we are all back to do work for the people.

One thing he did not mention in his speech was what the Harper regime did in devastating railway safety. Members may recall that what the Harper regime did was it simply eliminated the kind of inspection regime that is so important to guarantee railway safety by replacing it with self-servicing safety management systems that are run by corporate CEOs themselves.

That resulted in, which we are all aware of, some of the most disastrous accidents. The most tragic losses of life over the last few years have come as a result, in part, by moving away from inspections and the shift to self-managed safety with the safety management systems. We see, in this bill, no real reflection of what is needed to ensure that we rebuild those safety systems and federal inspections.

Does my colleague agree with me that the Harper regime made a mistake in self-managed safety? Does he agree with me and the transport committee that we need to re-enhance railway safety, which is something the bill does not do?

● (1550)

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I opened my speech acknowledging that it has been two years since the last election. It was not long after that the NDP members broke their word to the people of this country, along with the Liberals. They suggested during the election that they would never form a coalition and they would never form a government with the Liberals.

We now have NDP members who seem to be regretting the fact that they have their own government, in actual fact and operational fact, in this place when it comes to being able to accomplish anything. They are now frustrated that their partners in crime, so to speak, are not doing what they want.

My suggestion is simply this: If the member is so concerned about the government they support not accomplishing what they want to bring forward, maybe they should have thought twice about entering an agreement they were not honest about in the first place, as they are not actually able to get anything out of it.

That is certainly a question I hear often. What does the NDP get out of it? Certainly—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Kings—Hants.



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by recognizing that the member opposite has a tremendous beard, and I mean that with all sincerity. He has been growing it over the summer and it looks “Tom Mulcair-esque”, but I know he will not appreciate that comment as much.

The government has put forward a number of pieces of legislation this week that are non-cost in nature; they are legislative reforms. One was Bill C-33, but there was also Bill C-49, which is about enabling tremendous economic opportunities in the energy sector in Atlantic Canada.

Has my hon. colleague opposite had the opportunity to talk to the member for South Shore—St. Margarets, the member for West Nova, the member for Cumberland—Colchester or the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame about whether they are in support of this bill? This is what the premier of Newfoundland and Labrador is asking for, as is the premier of Nova Scotia. Has he had a conversation with them?

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I will let the comment about my facial hair stand in the record now forever, but I thank him.

I would like to correct the member because the member asked a question in question period that I found really interesting. It was about how there is support for the bill that he referred to. However, he is quick to point to when premiers and stakeholders will support a bill, while failing to acknowledge when they oppose bills.

What is interesting is the bill he refers to, Bill C-49, specifically references provisions that were implemented through Bill C-69 from a previous Parliament. The very premiers who have said they want energy development, which we all do, whether it is new tech or something associated with traditional energy, also asked the government to repeal Bill C-69. They are now talking out of both sides of their mouths when it comes to the government—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Repentigny.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, Quebecers experienced the tragedy first-hand. It has been studied. We know that the regulations and inspections were insufficient.

We also know that in the business model I mentioned in my speech, precision scheduled railroading, or PSR, the company leaders' compensation is based on whether they have been efficient with PSR. However, PSR involves cutting down on inspections and staff and does not take human fatigue into account.

I do not understand why some people keep saying that we actually need less regulation. It seems to me that this tragedy shows we should be non-partisan on this issue.

[English]

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I find it interesting that a member of a sovereigntist party would suggest that bureaucrats in the nation's capital are better at managing this sector of the economy. One would think it is better understood that increasing bureaucracy is not necessarily the solution. We need to make sure we have

strong, effective regulations, not simply more red tape that would not accomplish the objective.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-33, legislation that would amend several acts and pertains to Canada's ports and railways. The legislation was initiated following reviews by the government, beginning in 2017 and 2018, respecting railways and ports, as well as the issuance of the final report of the government's national supply chain task force.

It is no secret that we have serious supply chain issues in Canada that have been exacerbated under the Liberals. After eight years of the Liberals, is it any surprise that our supply chains have worsened? Of course it is not, because after eight years of the completely incompetent Liberal government, everything in Canada is broken. Housing is no longer affordable. We have seen 40-year high inflation, an unprecedented spike in violent crime and a supply chain crisis. That is what we get after eight years of the Liberals. It is a total and utter disaster for Canada.

Consistent with that, what we have from these incompetent Liberals is the bill before us, which they have touted as the solution to modernizing Canada's transportation systems and strengthening Canada's supply chains. The best that can be said of the bill is that it is a missed opportunity.

Do not take my word for it. Take the words of key stakeholders. For example, CP Rail characterized Bill C-33 as a whole bunch of nothing. What a ringing endorsement from one of our largest national rail lines. This is in the face of what the government's own task force on supply chains characterized as a breaking point when it comes to the transportation supply chain system in Canada.

As bad as a whole bunch of nothing is, Bill C-33 is likely worse than a whole bunch of nothing because, in fact, the bill would likely exacerbate supply chain backlogs as a result of more red tape, more fees and more government. That is the position of the Chamber of Shipping and the Association of Canadian Port Authorities. Indeed, the Association of Canadian Port Authorities said in respect of Bill C-33 that what we do not need is more government. However, that is precisely what we would get with Bill C-33: more government, in the way of more red tape, additional regulatory burdens and duplicative reporting requirements for our courts.

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Last March, when the then minister of transport, the member for Mississauga Centre, spoke to the bill at second reading, he claimed that it would reduce cost pressures, thereby making life a little more affordable for everyday Canadians. How can the member for Mississauga Centre, the failed and now former minister, square that assertion with the reality that is Bill C-33? It means more red tape, more regulatory burdens and more reporting requirements, the combination of which is going to increase costs that will be passed down to everyday Canadians. They are new costs in the face of a cost of living crisis manufactured as a result of the disastrous policies of the government, from out-of-control inflationary deficit spending to carbon tax 1 and carbon tax 2, which are increasing the cost of everything, including essentials. Now we have this.

• (1555)

For this bill, the key objective of which is to purportedly address supply chain challenges, more can be said about what is not in the bill than about what is in the bill. There is nothing in the bill that provides for railway service reliability. There is nothing to address long-standing challenges between our railways and shippers. There is nothing in the bill that provides for port authorities to make decisions based on what is in the national economic interest and the best interest of supply chains. There is nothing in the bill that addresses issues of labour disputes and the impact that such disputes may have upon supply chains.

Last summer, in July, we saw the very significant cost of labour disruption with a weeks-long strike at federally regulated B.C. ports. It was a strike that was completely unavoidable. It was a strike that was entirely foreseeable for those with regard for a simmering labour dispute once before.

Where were these incompetent Liberals? They were asleep at the switch until it was too late, and there was a significant cost in major disruptions to workers and businesses. Each day the strike lasted, there was nearly \$1 billion in trade that was tied up and impacted. It cost the Canadian economy half a trillion dollars. It was a half-a-trillion-dollar hit to our economy, not to mention the damage it did to Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner. That is what we get with these incompetent Liberals. In the bill, predictably, there is nothing to address situations like this, and it is not just the strike that happened last summer. We saw other strikes. We saw other blockades. We have seen inaction and indifference from these Liberals.

While the bill would do nothing to address supply chain issues, despite the rhetoric of the government, it would provide for more Ottawa in the way it would centralize decision-making. It would add to port authority boards representatives from government entities, diluting representation from port tenants. That means that the suppliers and shippers, who know best about supply chain challenges, will have diluted control, all while increasing control for Liberal-appointed, Ottawa, know-nothing bureaucrats.

Then there are advisory boards that the bill would provide for that are poorly defined in their powers, but they could have the impact of impeding decisions of port authorities to grow, expand and modernize, which is exactly the opposite of what is needed to address real supply chain issues. Then we have the minister appointing chairs of port authorities, as the minister said, to align port au-

thorities with decisions of the Liberal government instead of what their mandate ought to be, which is to advance the national economic interests of Canada.

This is a badly thought-out bill, a badly drafted bill. The Liberals ignored much of the feedback they received during the consultation process. The appropriate thing for them to do would be to scrap the bill, go back to the drawing board and get it right.

• (1600)

[Translation]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, this is my first speech since the resumption of Parliament. I wish everyone a good session.

I thank my colleague, whom I hold in high regard. We met this summer.

People say that this bill lacks substance and does not go far enough. Given our experience and that in committee, and considering what I heard from my colleague, I think some suggestions should be made in committee before we reject the bill's intent out of hand, particularly as it relates to safety. That is a critical part of this. What happened in Quebec must never happen again.

Does he agree with me that we should give ourselves the opportunity to do a thorough job in committee, and then he can say no?

• (1605)

[English]

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Laurentides—Labelle, who I have a lot of respect for. I have enjoyed working closely with her on the procedure and House affairs committee.

I agree with the hon. member that rail safety is of utmost importance. One of the shortcomings of this bill is that it does not go far enough to enhance rail safety. The transport committee did a rail safety report, which has been sitting on the shelf for several years. It contains a number of good recommendations, but none of those recommendations have been incorporated into the bill.

The problem with this bill is that there are too many problems with it. If it were a matter of fixing a few things here and there with some amendments, then we could support it going to committee. However, the problem is that there are too many issues, particularly on the port authority side. It is on that basis that we cannot support the bill. It is on that basis that we are calling on the government to go back to the drawing board.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, Lori Desrochers and Pamela Fraser are two people who have family members who perished in separate instances as workers for CN Rail. These deaths were not investigated by an impartial government or police investigation, but were investigated by CN Rail's own private rail police and corporate risk management. Since then, unfortunately, the families have received no justice and CN Rail has faced no consequences.

Does the member believe that railway corporations should be able to avoid being held accountable for the death and injury of their workers by investigating themselves?

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, let me express my condolences to the families. I am not familiar with the facts of each of those incidents.

However, rail safety must come first. We need to have appropriate legislation in place and an appropriate regulatory regime to ensure accountability across the board and to ensure that the safety of rail workers comes first.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague from Laurentides—Labelle. We are here to work and to study the issues. Naturally, the government has its faults, including its failure to do nothing at all for long stretches of time. Then, oops, taking action becomes politically expedient. At that point, it will do pretty much anything as quickly as it can, a bit like what happened in Mégantic, as my colleague mentioned earlier.

There was talk of track work and expropriations occurring before Transport Canada had issued any authorizations. At a minimum, this raises questions about how the government manages its files. However, our duty as an intelligent opposition is precisely to take the government by the hand now and then and show it what to do.

I urge my colleagues to come sit in committee and speak freely. We can make important changes to a bill in committee. When I think of the people of Mégantic, I feel it is our duty to do this work.

Have I moved him at all?

*[English]*

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member for Berthier—Maskinongé's speaking about addressing some of the problems and failures that resulted in the tragedy at Lac-Mégantic. There is no one who has been a stronger champion for addressing rail safety measures arising from the issues from Lac-Mégantic than my colleague, the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

This bill is fundamentally flawed. It is a bad Liberal bill, and we, in the official opposition, are not in the business of supporting bad legislation coming from the government, which is being propped up by the NDP. I am certainly not prepared to support a bill that key stakeholders, such as the Chamber of Shipping and the Association of Canadian Port Authorities, have made clear would make the supply chain crisis worse, not better.

• (1610)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour for me to speak in this venerable House on behalf

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of the residents of my riding of Davenport, which, for those who do not know, is in downtown west Toronto.

I am here to talk on Bill C-33. The formal title is very long, but I am going to say it. It is an act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act, which is being called the strengthening the port system and railway safety in Canada act.

It is a really long title, but basically it is a bill that would modernize a number of bills that impact our supply chain here in Canada. It would enhance our competitiveness as a nation, encourage more investment, allow for more input from local and indigenous stakeholders, improve environmental sustainability, integrate more environmental considerations and so many other things.

The global economy continues to be in flux as we have a war going on in Europe, which is impacting the world, and inflation, which we are all trying to tackle, and as there continues to be global power shifts. As all of these things continue to dominate what is happening in our world, it is absolutely imperative that we strengthen our internal economy and do all we can to be more resilient within our country. Strengthening our supply chains is one key way for us to be able to do this.

Of course, there are so many other ways to do this. There are some members in the House who know I am a huge supporter of eliminating interprovincial trade barriers and harmonizing regulations, and it is one of the other ways we could build resiliency into our economy and grow our GDP, at no to low cost, but that is not what I am here to speak about.

I will continue to focus on Bill C-33. With whatever time I have left, I am going to focus on three key things. One is what this bill is proposing to change and why. The second thing I want to talk about is why this bill is important for the residents of my downtown west Toronto riding of Davenport, and third, I will talk about why these changes are super important for the Canadian economy.

On what this bill is proposing to change and why, we have spoken a lot about this, not only today but also on other days we have debated this bill, so I am not going to be saying anything new, but over the last few years, Canadians have experienced supply chain challenges and the associated economic impacts first-hand.

Government and industry have also struggled to adapt in the face of disruptions, and there have been many. We have had the pandemic. We have had extreme climate events, which are not going away. This is going to be the new normal. We have had changes in trade patterns, which will continue. We have also had Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has had huge implications agriculturally on energy supply and many other things.

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All of these numerous stresses have exposed limitations and weaknesses in our national transportation system, which has been absolutely the backbone of our economy. It has also underscored the importance of supply chain resiliency going hand in hand with system efficiency.

As a result, our federal government has engaged in a number of reviews and talked to a number of stakeholders and industry leaders, and we are proposing a number of changes to improve our supply chain resiliency across our country. One of the many changes we are proposing is Bill C-33.

Bill C-33 would do the following: amend current legislation and modernize the way Canada's marine and rail transportation systems operate; remove systemic barriers to create a more fluid, secure and resilient supply chain; expand Canada's port authorities' mandate over traffic management; position Canada's ports as strategic hubs to support national supply chain performance and effectively manage investment decisions for sustainable growth; improve the government's insight into ports and their operations; and modernize provisions on rail safety, security and transportation of dangerous goods.

All of these measures would also support the flow of essential goods and would implement tools to mitigate risks and impacts of future supply chain challenges. Taken together, all these measures would improve the competitiveness of Canada's transportation system and support operations that are safe, secure, efficient and reliable.

• (1615)

That is why we have introduced Bill C-33. In terms of the second part of why this bill is important for the residents of Davenport, colleagues may find it surprising that, in my 12-square-kilometre riding in downtown west Toronto, I have three separate railway tracks. One is owned by Canadian Pacific and the other two used to be CN lines, but they are now owned by the local regional transit system. In any case, these three lines are part of our lives in my riding.

The first reason I care about this bill is that safety is top of mind for Davenport residents. We know that lots of materials and chemicals are being transported by the CP line that is running through this riding. This bill actually gives the Minister of Transport the ability to better protect Davenport residents. There are a number of different provisions that allow him to do that. It also gives the minister the flexibility and agility to respond to any changing situation along the railway lines, whether this is due to flooding or any other climate impacts, extreme weather events or other exceptional circumstances.

The other thing the bill would do is allow our government an increase in flexibility to quickly mitigate security threats to supply chains and to further enhance resiliency of our supply chains during times of emergency. That would also enhance the safety in my riding of Davenport; safety is important.

I will also say that a big issue for my riding is learning to live right on top of, not just next to, these railroads. A lot of the provisions that we are changing have not been updated in over 50, 60 or 70 years. The act will be changing provisions in a way that will al-

low our government to be a lot more responsive and a lot more agile in making changes, ensuring that we are considering the public and other stakeholders who will inform decisions around our rail safety regime and that it is more up to date and reflects the realities of today.

Maybe the last thing I would say is that, in my riding of Davenport, I have a lot of wonderful businesses. Any time there is an issue with ports or railroads, the businesses are impacted, and I hear about it if there is a hiccup in any way. When we had issues with the Port of Montreal or the Port of Vancouver, I definitely received calls from a lot of worried businesses in my riding. A huge stress for businesses is when railway lines are not running as efficiently as they could be. They are absolutely elated that we are introducing this bill and that we will be making a number of improvements.

Why are these changes important for the Canadian economy? I think we have heard a lot about that. I will add maybe four things from my perspective.

The movement of people and goods is absolutely critical for our economy. Ensuring that our ports and our railroads are working as efficiently as possible is critical for us. The more reliable they are, the more it is going to encourage national and international investment in our railroads, our supply chains and our ports, which we absolutely need at this point in time. That is the second reason. Businesses do not like surprises. They like everything running on time, so having these changes that are being proposed is absolutely vital.

I will also say something that comes directly from Davenport residents, who have said, "Julie, I had a business. I didn't think about expanding." However, more reliable ports and railway lines will actually allow businesses in my riding and right across Canada to update or expand. That will be really helpful to us and to our economy, both now and in the future. Overall, as I mentioned initially, we should be doing all we can to create a more reliable and resilient internal economy.

I will conclude by saying that, over the last few years, we have experienced a lot of supply chain challenges. They have had huge impacts on our economy. That is why we have introduced Bill C-33 in order to make sure we start addressing those issues. Our government will always take concrete action to strengthen our supply—

• (1620)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I have to interrupt the hon. member.

It is time for questions and comments. The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will put this to the member for Davenport: If this bill is so great, as she seems to think it is, why do key stakeholders, such as CP Rail, characterize it as a whole bunch of nothing? Why have other stakeholders, such as the Chamber of Shipping and the Association of Canadian Port Authorities, said that this would exacerbate supply chain issues because it would increase government regulation and red tape? Can the member explain how it is that the minister said that this would reduce the cost burden, in the face of a massive increase in red tape?

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Madam Speaker, I will say that this bill has come together as a result of numerous consultations with a number of stakeholders and industry leaders across the country. It incorporates a lot of their suggestions. I can equally have a full page of all the people who are very happy to see this legislation move forward and believe that it is critical for us to have in order to improve our safety, the reliability of our supply chains and our overall economy here in Canada.

I will say to the hon. member, though, that this bill is not meant to solve every single problem that we have within Canada in our supply chains. However, that is why we will continue to work with Canadians and all stakeholders to continue to improve our supply chains and do everything we can to have a prosperous economy that benefits—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the Lac-Mégantic tragedy happened in 2013, and Bill C-33 was introduced in 2023, 10 years later. Ten years passed between those two events, and the Liberals were in power for eight of those 10 years.

Why is it that, even in urgent situations where people are in danger, the Liberal MO is always to put things off indefinitely, introduce a bill that is too weak and spout a bunch of empty rhetoric only to sit on its laurels and justify doing nothing for another 10 years?

[English]

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Madam Speaker, I think we all remember the absolutely awful tragedy that unfolded in Lac-Mégantic, where 47 lives were lost because of a tragic rail incident. We have taken a number of measures to strengthen the safety of our rail network, and this bill would provide additional measures, including the registry of dangerous goods and additional authorities for the Minister of Transport to ensure that we further build on the safety of our rail network.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, on July 6, 2013, a Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway train derailed and exploded in Lac-Mégantic, killing 47 people in one of the worst rail tragedies in our history.

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Philippe Falardeau made a documentary entitled *Ceci n'est pas un accident* or this is not an accident. This disaster could have been predicted as a result of government policies that were initially introduced by the Conservatives but then maintained by the Liberals.

Unfortunately, Bill C-33 does not fix anything. Self-inspections, the lack of a two-driver requirement and the absence of requirements for brakes on these vehicles mean that a tragedy like this could happen again.

Are the Liberals open to amendments in committee to ensure that this type of tragedy never happens again?

[English]

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Madam Speaker, as I said, it was absolutely awful on July 6, 2013, when 47 people perished from the derailment of the 72-tanker-car train transporting crude oil. I mentioned that our government had already taken some actions, and this bill would provide further, additional measures.

I would say a couple of things to the member. In my riding of Davenport, where we have a CP Rail line that also carries dangerous materials, it is something that is top of mind for me, as well as for many other people within the riding. Our government will never stop trying to improve the safety and security measures of our railway system to ensure the safety of Canadians. Of course, we are always open to excellent suggestions and recommendations during committee.

● (1625)

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this bill is typical Liberal government legislation. It would make things more difficult for Canadians, Canadian jobs and Canadian ports. The Liberals get a star, though, for increasing bureaucracy, regulations and red tape. It is a red star, which was a symbol, I believe, of a certain country not so long ago. This would not help our ports, and would lead to more inefficiencies and costs.

The Association of Canadian Port Authorities said that more government is not the answer. That is what we are seeing in this bill: more government. This bill would only add regulatory requirements and costs to the stakeholders, which would be passed on to Canadians. We are an exporting and importing nation. This forms a very important part of our economy. We are being stifled with regulations.

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I was looking at a report today, written by the World Bank Group and S&P Global Market Intelligence about the container port performance index. These groups analyzed ports across the world; I believe it was 348 ports. They looked at wait times as an indicator of overall efficiency and said that international trade is very much affected by an efficient or inefficient port. A poorly functioning or inefficient port can hinder growth and have a profound impact.

I used to be a teacher of social studies, and I know of a lot of cities. When I was looking over this list, there were a lot I knew and a lot I did not know. On this list I saw, for example, Manila, Alexandria in Africa, Freetown and Mogadishu in Somalia, which is a failed state. I saw ports in Europe, in South America and all over the world. It listed the Canadian Port of Vancouver. Where is it on this list of 348 ports, which includes, as I mentioned, ports in failed states? It is number 347 out of 348. We are supposed to be a first world nation. This is terrible, and it falls fully in the lap of the Liberal government.

Why do I say that? For example, there was a Globe and Mail article in June that said that Canada used to be in the top 10 for ports a decade ago, 10 years ago. After eight years under the Prime Minister, I think we can put together what has happened in this nation. We have a Liberal-NDP government that is crushing our country through bureaucracy, through red tape and through socialism, or government control.

I go door to door during campaigns and other times and talk to people. People are very receptive in my constituency, but I find the people who are most receptive are from eastern Europe. Why is this? It is because they fled socialist governments and came to Canada for more freedom. They tell me that they are seeing the same trends in Canada under the Liberals and NDP as they saw in eastern Europe.

During the Cold War, the picture we would see would be long lines for bread. People would get there early in the morning to wait for the product, because everything was so slow. It is a by-product of socialism, of crushing government control.

• (1630)

We are seeing some real problems here. With the ports, for example, we have just a long, clogged-up port system. The efficiencies are not there. What the bill would be introducing is just more red tape, more inefficiencies.

I talked to a German tourist and was disappointed by what he told me. He has been to Canada at different times. He said that Canada seemed to be on the decline economically. He says that it does not have the vitality he used to see in the past.

We can thank the Liberals. We can thank the NDP for this. They will blame supply chains. Well, they are right. This bill could have been addressing supply chains. It does not; it makes things worse. They blame the war in Ukraine. There have always been wars happening. That is enough excuses from the Liberal government. It needs to stop making things worse for Canadians. There is an expression, "Everything he touches turns to gold." Well, with the Liberals, it is quite the opposite. Everything they touch seems to be turning to ashes through their wastefulness and strangling regulations.

CP Rail said this about the bill: "After working on this for four years, it is a whole bunch of nothing." I think this is actually being complimentary, because the bill is actually negative, worse than nothing.

There is a critical infrastructure project that was planned for years. There was a commitment by CP Rail and the Port of Vancouver, and it was led by the harbour authority, which was under the control of the federal government. That project has been put on the back burner now, because in four years, the price has tripled and is out of control. If we look at the increase in costs, it is primarily due to regulations, bureaucracy, assessments and studies. It is not even in the actual building of it, and it is out of control, taking years to get this project done.

I saw a little video clip from the Netherlands on X. It showed an underpass, which is what we wanted to get done in Pitt Meadows, that was built in one weekend. It shows all the pictures. We cannot get it done in years, let alone one weekend. These sorts of inefficiencies and regulations are just strangling us, and it is impacting the cost of living and inflation.

The Liberals are trying to deal with inflation by raising interest rates. Canadians are suffering. They wonder why the price of everything is going up. There are taxes and inflation. It is because of Liberal mismanagement, how they blow Canadians' money.

There was a project by a private corporation, the TransCanada pipeline, a pipeline that was going to be built for \$7 billion. The Liberals bought it, and now what is the cost? It is \$30 billion to \$40 billion. It is out of control. They have no control. This is impacting.

They should actually focus on things like the Canadian Border Services Agency. Other ports, smaller ports such as the Port of Nanaimo and the port at Port Alberni want them in there to get more efficiencies.

• (1635)

Division deemed demanded and deferred

It being 4:35 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of Bill C-33, an act to amend the Customs Act, the Railway Safety Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the Marine Transportation Security Act, the Canada Transportation Act and the Canada Marine Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act, are deemed to have been put and a recorded division is deemed to have been requested and deferred until Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

*Private Members' Business**[Translation]*

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, Housing.

*[English]*

The hon. deputy House leader is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 5:30 so we can start Private Members' Business.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Do we have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

*[English]*

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC)** moved that Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to another Act (interim release and domestic violence recognizance orders), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, I am deeply honoured to be here today talking about Bill S-205, which ultimately is about electronic bracelets. It is an act to amend the Criminal Code and make consequential amendments to other acts regarding interim release and domestic violence recognizance orders.

This is a very important moment for women and domestic violence survivors. It is a very big deal, and I am very honoured to have this opportunity. However, I can take absolutely no credit for this at all. It is Senator Boisvenu, a senator from Quebec, who has really done all of the work here. Senator Boisvenu has been leading the charge in both chambers on standing up for victims. It is an incredible body of work he has done in his career, and I sincerely thank him on behalf of all the women's groups that I have met with. His efforts have made a tremendous difference in their lives. It is wonderful to see someone standing up for victims of domestic violence and women in general who are impacted by many things like this. It is great to know a real crusader who stands up for women on such a regular basis.

I will brag a little more about him. Senator Boisvenu is the founder of the Murdered or Missing Persons' Families Association. He is the co-founder of Le Nid, a shelter for abused women in Val-d'Or, Quebec. He is also the founder of the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, which is an incredible document that I encourage all parliamentarians to read. Again, I am very honoured to sponsor his legislation in the House of Commons.

I will start off with a story about a woman who had a very difficult time with domestic violence and whose life and safety would have been greatly improved if something like this had been in place when she was going through a very difficult time in her life.

Her name is Elisapee Angma. She was a 44-year-old mother to four children and worked in an early childhood centre in Kuujuaq in northern Quebec. In November 2020, her ex-partner had been ordered not to try to contact her or to be in her presence in an act of denunciation after he was accused of assault with a weapon. Her ex-partner subsequently broke this order on three different occasions over the span of three months. After his last breach of conditions, he was again arrested by police and the Crown in the case opposed his release.

However, five days later, despite objections from the director of criminal and penal prosecutions and fears that he would reoffend, her ex-partner was released pending further proceedings. On the morning of February 5, 2021, Ms. Angma was found suffering serious injuries and was rushed to hospital where she succumbed to her injuries and died. Her ex-partner was found deceased in his home later that day.

The tragic reality is that Ms. Angma's death could have been prevented. Women's rights groups have warned that this release was the chronicle of a death foretold and that the numerous breaches should have been taken into account. Our justice system failed. It failed her, it failed her four children and it failed many women like her.

This bill is looking to address this and save the lives of women like her today and for many years to come. It is very important that all members of Parliament from all parties take serious consideration of their support for this bill. There should be no more stories like this in Canada. If we can prevent them with tools like this, then we should. This is really a story of one too many. We all have tragic cases in our communities like this. In Canada, a woman is murdered every 48 hours. Just last year, 184 women were murdered in Canada, of which 60% were killed by an intimate partner.

Leaving an abusive partner and seeking legal action is an act that takes immense courage and resilience, and those women deserve to be protected. However, our judicial system seems to focus far too often on releasing criminals and what is good for them rather than protecting the vulnerable victims. When a person is arrested by police for domestic violence, the police or the judge may release that person on an interim basis pending trial. In the Criminal Code, this mechanism falls under compelling appearance of accused before a justice and interim release. The judge or the police can set conditions that the accused must meet or be returned to custody. Once the conditions of release are set, the accused may be released until the date of their trial, which is the really difficult period when a lot of women have been abused and murdered.

Currently, there is no monitoring mechanism in place to ensure that potentially dangerous behaviour by the accused is detected. Many victims of domestic violence have lost their lives or have been victims of attempted murder at this stage in the judicial process. This bill would directly impact that specific area of vulnerability for women.

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• (1640)

I will give a little more testimony. This is from Diane Tremblay, and just to forewarn the House, what she talks about is a bit graphic. However, I think it is relevant for the context of this debate and how important it is that we bring forward tools like this to protect women in domestic violence situations. She has tremendous courage.

She appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs to give her testimony about this important bill. It was deeply moving, and I will read a bit of what she described of the ordeal she suffered for years. The court had ordered her partner to stay away from her, but he violated that condition and caused her significant harm. Her words were as follows:

My abuser would put the dresser in front of my bedroom door to keep me from leaving so that he could force me to have sex while I screamed and cried. Sometimes, my children could hear me....

I told them that I was upset and that it wasn't serious. My abuser even put a lock on the door to keep the children out. He was showing them that he had control over their mother. Julien rebelled a great deal, and rightly so. However, I told him to go away and that I had everything under control....

My abuser threatened to kill us every day, so I kept quiet to protect my children.

It is difficult to read that testimony. I cannot imagine the courage it took for her to put it on the public record when she appeared before committee in the Senate.

This man did these things to her while he was ordered not to be near her. Had there been an electronic bracelet on him at the time, the police could have better enforced the protection order for her. Again, it is a very difficult thing, but unfortunately her story is not unique in this country or around the world. There are a lot of women who suffer this type of abuse by their intimate partner.

What stood out to me most during the four years that she suffered was that she argued she did seek help from the justice system several times but did not receive the protection she needed. There are many stories that many of us have heard, and certainly I have heard them in my role as shadow minister for public safety.

Bill S-205 would correct this in many ways. It is a critical step that would prevent the deaths of women and children fleeing situations of domestic violence. This bill would offer the electronic bracelet as a means of supervision when a person who is released on bail or is subject to a court-ordered recognition poses a risk to the safety of his or her spouse and breaks the cycle of domestic violence. It would empower judges to impose the wearing of an electronic bracelet on a violent spouse or ex-spouse as soon as he or she is released and pending trial. This bill would primarily protect vulnerable women and children trying to flee these situations of domestic violence.

On the issue of electronic monitoring, we have looked to other countries, such as Spain and France, which have introduced similar electronic monitoring systems. There is also a great success story here at home in Quebec. The Province of Quebec passed legislation that requires offenders who have been found guilty of domestic violence and released from a provincial prison to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet. Quebec has taken this amazing provincial step. This bill would add this across the country, and that is a very important first step for all women in Canada.

In my remaining moments, I would like to outline some of the impacts of this bill.

In December 2022, there were 650 offenders released in Quebec who will be wearing the electronic bracelets. That is 650 people's families and children who may be protected because of a provincial bill just like this one. It is now up to the federal Liberal government to take responsibility and pass this bill to complement that provincial legislation. Quebec requires the electronic bracelet solely for those who release from provincial prisons. It really does not impact federal offenders. This bill would do that.

It also proposes therapy to end the cycle of domestic violence. I think this is a very excellent preventative step built into the legislation. We know that in some cases therapy can be effective, as some people have substance abuse problems or have issues in their history that they need to work through. If we can rehabilitate some of these individuals, then we should try. That is built right into the bill. It also offers court-ordered therapy as another alternative to protect victims of domestic violence. This was suggested by one of Canada's best known psychiatrists, Dr. Chamberland, as a tool to counter domestic violence at its source and prevent the deaths of innocent women and children.

The bill would ensure our judicial system prioritizes the rights and protection of victims over the release of criminals. Again, this is very important to the Conservative Party and many others in this chamber. That really is the foundational value of this bill.

• (1645)

The bill also includes several provisions designed to enable victims to be consulted about their safety and to be better informed of the judicial process, something I repeatedly hear from victims groups. They would like more information and they would like access, and this bill would do that.

We really should be looking to pass this bill quickly. The quicker we do it, the more women and children who can be protected. As I mentioned a few times in the House, the latest StatsCan data on sex abuse against children, for example, is up 126% over the past eight years and sexual assaults are up 71%. Things are going in the wrong direction. Now more than ever, we need legislation like this to protect victims of domestic violence.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to get up in the House to speak about this. I want to conclude with one more testimony from a woman named Dayane Williams, who is a survivor of domestic abuse. With respect to this bill, she said:



If he [her abuser] had been wearing a bracelet, yes, I could have gone to the gym. I could have had my freedom...it will ease my anxiety and I can have my freedom back. I'm in therapy, and they tell me that I have to go for walks, that I have to go to the gym, that I can't stay locked up [but] I am constantly thinking about the possibility of him attacking me when I'm with my children. If he decides to kill me, I am not safe.

She went on to say:

If he's wearing a bracelet and approaches my location, the police will be there before I call 911. The bracelet will alert them. He has committed a crime, but he gets to walk around as if he's done nothing, and I'm the one who has to hide at home. Right now, he has won — he has his freedom and I do not. I don't have freedom.

That is quite a powerful testimony in favour of this bill. I am sure members would agree.

In conclusion, Bill S-205 would save lives, particularly those of women and children. It would save survivors and the many victims of domestic abuse considerable stress, anxiety and, frankly, terror. I hope that all parties will give this bill serious consideration to quick passage. I look forward to working with them to make that happen.

**Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for sharing those stories. Her speech was very powerful and quite moving. Frankly, I applaud her for bringing this bill forward.

I know that the member is aware of a previous bill that passed through this House, Bill S-233, regarding the consideration of electronic monitoring in intimate partner violence cases. There is some potential for conflict between the two bills, so my question is this: Is she amenable to some amendments that might prevent that from happening?

• (1650)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, I believe the member has also received a new role, and I congratulate him very much on that.

It is an excellent question. I believe he is mentioning Bill C-332, which was passed. My understanding is that there is a bit of a nuanced difference that is key. Certainly, Bill S-205 proposes an electronic bracelet after an abuser has appeared in court and before he, and we will use "he" for now because it is mostly males, as we know, is sentenced and released. That is the difference there. This is a critical time, as I outlined in my speech, during which many abusers reoffend.

Certainly, if tweaks need to be made to get this over the finish line, I think all parties would welcome that discussion, I know we would as well, as long as it does not make the bill weaker in any way. If anything, we want to make it stronger if at all possible, so I am happy to work with him and other members if there is a way we can make it even better.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated the many stories that were included from the survivors of intimate partner violence.

My question is around some of the challenges I have been hearing around the connectivity of the bracelets and how we best navigate forward, in particular what I have been hearing from those who live in rural communities. It is a challenge, of course, that I am certain, with appropriate resources, could be overcome. I wonder if

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the member is hearing similar concerns and any solutions that might provide the mechanisms for this to be more successful in those areas.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, I sincerely appreciate the question. It is an excellent one. I suppose it may be about a rural connectivity issue, though I am not an expert in exactly the technology of how electronic bracelets work. However, it is an excellent flag that is worthy of some research. I am from Manitoba, where we have a vast geography of a lot of communities where there is domestic violence happening.

If there is funding required to ensure that these electronic bracelets work in rural and remote communities in Manitoba and across the country, then that is something that should be part of the discussion at committee. I would hope the federal government would work closely with municipal and provincial governments to ensure that funding is secured for this. We are not talking about a lot of people, but a very specific group of victimized individuals who I believe are worthy of the investment it would require to ensure that these electronic bracelets would work anywhere in the country.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I think this is an important bill that demands action, but intelligent action, obviously. The question I want to ask is not intended as an objection to the bill. It is simply a question.

Naturally, we cannot put a price on the safety of our citizens, especially in cases of domestic violence. This is clearly how we need to approach it. However, I wonder if my colleague has thought about the resources it will take. I would not want to be placed in a situation where we voted for legislation but are having trouble in implementing it.

My previous colleague referred to bracelets, and that may be one option. However, we also have to consider incarceration, and even longer periods of incarceration for certain groups of repeat offenders. This will require spending, which will probably fall on the governments of Quebec and the provinces.

Has anyone considered all this?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, maybe we need the Government of Quebec's expertise. Someone from Quebec could appear before the committee to tell us about Quebec's experience with the cost of electronic bracelets and how they handled things with police officers and correctional services.

My colleague asked an excellent question. I want to work with him and the other members of the committee to examine this in order to ensure that things work very well in practice.

[English]

**Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join the second reading debate today of Bill S-205, an act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to another act, interim release and domestic violence recognizance orders, which was passed in the Senate this past April.

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I think all members would agree that the objective of Bill S-205 is laudable. The proposed amendments aim to better protect victims of intimate partner violence, which is the most common form of police-reported violent crime against women, particularly against indigenous women and increasingly against those who have other intersecting identities. Overall, the government supports the bill, as I believe its objective is important. However, as I will discuss further below, I am concerned about some of the proposed changes.

Bill S-205 seeks to address the issue of intimate partner violence through changes to the bail and peace bond regimes in the Criminal Code and by making consequential amendments to the Youth Criminal Justice Act. In particular, Bill S-205 would require courts, prior to making a bail order for an offence involving actual, threatened or attempted violence against an intimate partner, to ask prosecutors if the victim had been consulted about their safety and security needs. The courts would also be required to ask the prosecutor whether victims have been informed of their right to request a copy of the bail order made by the court.

Bill S-205 would also expand the existing intimate partner violence reverse onus for bail so that it would apply not only to accused who were previously convicted but also to those previously discharged, conditional or absolute, for an intimate partner violence offence. The government has done this exact change in Bill C-48, which received unanimous consent in the House earlier this week, and I hope will pass the Senate very quickly. In a reverse onus situation, the accused has the responsibility to demonstrate that detention in custody while awaiting trial is not justified. In addition, Bill S-205 would require a justice to consider, on request by the Crown, whether the accused should wear an electronic monitoring device as a condition of release.

Earlier this year, Bill C-233, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Judges Act, violence against an intimate partner, received royal assent. My colleague, the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, brought forward that important legislation, and I was very proud to support it. The bill also included a provision related to electronic monitoring that could apply in cases involving intimate partner violence.

Bill S-205 would undo this change, which is one of my concerns. Undoing my colleague's bill would mean that, if this bill were passed, electronic monitoring would be identified as an explicit condition of bail that could be imposed in all cases and not just in cases involving violence against an intimate partner, as is now the case because of the changes enacted through Bill C-233. This is something that we would need to review at committee to ensure that the two pieces of legislation work together.

Last, the bill would create a new peace bond specific to cases involving intimate partner violence with a duration of up to two years, or three years if the defendant was previously convicted of an intimate partner violence offence. I want to reiterate that I support the objective of this bill, but I believe the changes should be considered by the status of women committee to better align the proposed amendment with its objective.

These changes could also minimize the potential for unintended negative impacts on groups who are already overrepresented in the criminal justice system and ensure coherence with the existing

criminal law. For instance, the requirements for courts to ask if an intimate partner has been consulted about their safety and security is duplicative of existing provisions. The Criminal Code already requires courts to take into consideration the safety of any victim of an alleged offence when crafting a bail order and to include in the court record a statement that they did so. Duplicating provisions always carries the concern of creating confusion with prosecutors and judges, and we want to avoid that at all costs.

Other concerns centre around the proposed amendments regarding electronic monitoring. As I mentioned, Bill C-233 amended the Criminal Code to explicitly provide that a court consider the imposition of electronic monitoring as a condition of release for an accused charged with an offence involving the use, attempt or threat of violence against their intimate partner. In contrast, the current provisions of Bill S-205 would explicitly list electronic monitoring as an optional condition for any offence, which has much broader application. If we want to focus on protecting victims of intimate partner violence, we need to be clear about the intention on whom the courts should be focusing on for use of electronic monitoring.

• (1655)

Available data shows that the poverty rate for indigenous people living off reserve and for racialized individuals far exceeds that of non-indigenous and non-racialized populations. I am worried that this broad application of electronic monitoring will negatively impact these groups who, as we know, are already overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

There is also cause for concern that should electronic monitoring be explicitly added to the Criminal Code as a potential condition for release on bail, it could become more routinely imposed, even in cases where it may not be warranted.

For these reasons, I do not support the electronic monitoring changes as drafted in Bill S-205. I am, however, generally supportive of the changes to enact a peace bond specific to intimate partner violence. At the same time, I see ways in which this provision can be improved.

For example, consideration should be given to amending the provision that states who may apply for the peace bond. Currently, the provision is drafted so that the person who fears that injury would be caused to them, or their children, can apply for the peace bond. I believe that it might be more appropriate to broaden this so that anyone can apply, for example, a police officer.

I also think it is worth considering whether the proposed duration, conditions and procedures of the new peace bond should be amended so that they are consistent with peace bonds already contained in our Criminal Code.

About a month ago, our government called gender-based violence an epidemic, as have a number of municipalities, including my own in the city of Toronto. It is important that we work to combat gender-based violence in all its forms, including intimate partner violence.

I know that we are all committed to taking action to address intimate partner violence. This was demonstrated by the passing of my colleague's bill, Bill C-233.

I look forward to working with all parliamentarians to continue advancing this important objective, while remaining mindful of the unintended consequences some provisions of this bill may cause.

• (1700)

[Translation]

**Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House on behalf of the Bloc Québécois and confirm that we believe that Bill S-205 is a good bill. We intend to support it, at this stage at least, so that it can be referred to committee and studied both rigorously and seriously.

I agree with my colleague opposite regarding some of his reservations about electronic monitoring devices. The Criminal Code already contains some related provisions, and a pilot project has been set up by the Quebec government. I look forward to hearing from police officers, and perhaps Crown prosecutors and defence lawyers who are already working with these provisions. We can benefit from the experience they have gained over the past few months.

It will not be easy. Let us not forget that electronic monitoring devices come with technical challenges. There are also more philosophical issues. I agree with my colleague who said that we must be careful. Electronic monitoring bracelets must not become a sort of fail-safe mechanism that the courts give themselves by almost systematically ordering offenders to wear these devices when they are released on bail. I think these devices should be used sparingly in serious cases such as those set out in the bill. We will have to ensure that the provisions we adopt are written in a way that is consistent with our intention. We have to proceed carefully on this issue.

I also have some concerns about the biological samples. We know that biological samples can be useful in many cases, and I think we need to make use of them in such cases. There too, however, we must be careful. The electronic monitoring device and the order to provide a biological sample, two measures that are often systematic, violate the rights and freedoms of every citizen under the charters in place.

When rights as fundamental as the right to bodily integrity and the right to freedom are on the table, legislators must act prudently and with restraint. I do not think anyone in the House wants us to end up in a totalitarian state where everyone is subject to strict,

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rigid rules that are not necessarily justified in all cases. When it comes to these provisions, I recommend prudence.

That being said, we in the Bloc Québécois are very concerned about the issue of intimate partner violence, and that is why we want to support Bill S-205 so it can go to committee. In recent months, the number of intimate partner violence cases has surged. I do not remember the exact numbers, but rates have gone up by a few dozen percentage points over the past two or three years. This is disturbing, and we need to work on it in earnest.

The notion of domestic violence is also being broadened. It already includes violence between intimate partners; however, this bill creates a notion of domestic violence that includes not only intimate partners, but also the partner's children, and even the children of the alleged abuser if there is reason to fear that the abuser may attack their own children. Obviously, we agree with this. We need to ensure the safety of everyone, anyone who is in any way involved with an individual who is considered to be dangerous. It is an interesting provision, but again, we have to be vigilant and ensure that we do not overstep the bounds of what is reasonable.

In addition, this bill will also expand victims' rights by requiring courts to consult with victims before issuing release orders.

• (1705)

Take for example an abused woman who fears for her health or safety should her spouse be released. Under clause 810, the victim or person who fears for their safety will be consulted. They already were, but now it is included in the provisions of the Criminal Code and they will have to be consulted before the order is made. I think that is good and will contribute to reducing the number of tragedies we hear about far too often and lament in the House so frequently that it has become unsettling.

Another aspect of these provisions to which we need to pay close attention is discharge. Until now, certain parts of release orders were applied as soon as the individual was convicted of a violent crime. This concept is being broadened so that they will be applied when someone is found guilty or discharged for crimes set out in the act. I agree that discharge implies that the individual has already been found guilty or has already pleaded guilty, but the fact remains that the individual was discharged and, in principle, the crime for which they were discharged should not be subsequently held against them. I say "in principle" because we are undermining that principle. Is it justified? Personally, I think it could be. As I was saying earlier, I look forward to hearing from expert witnesses on this, both Crown prosecutors and defence attorneys. These are major changes that could have a significant impact on many Quebecers and Canadians. This needs to be examined carefully.

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The recognizance provisions I just mentioned will now apply to teens as well through amendments to the Youth Criminal Justice Act. This is another matter we need to examine carefully. Just how far are we willing to go in terms of imposing extreme conditions on teenagers? In some cases it may be warranted, and in others, it may not. In any case, the matter will have to be carefully considered, and the scope of our bill clearly defined to ensure that it helps stop crime and improve our society, not make it too repressive.

My colleague spoke of harmonizing the different provisions. I support that as well, but I disagree with his decision to vote against electronic bracelets. I have a lot of concerns and apprehensions about electronic bracelets, but I think they are useful at times. We will have to consider the matter carefully, listen to everyone and, once again, learn from the experiences of other jurisdictions, including Quebec.

• (1710)

[English]

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to stand today and speak in support of Bill S-205.

This bill, which would amend the Criminal Code with respect to interim release and other orders related to intimate partner offences, is a critical step towards addressing the pressing issue of intimate partner and gender-based violence in Canada.

About every six days, a woman in Canada falls victim to violence at the hands of her partner. This is not acceptable. Rising gender-based violence was already a crisis before the pandemic and things have only gotten worse. The number of women and girls killed in Canada from a male accused partner increased by 27% in 2022.

We also know that indigenous women and those living below the poverty line are more at risk of intimate partner violence and have less access to supports. The situation is so dire that cities across Canada, including Ottawa, Toronto and Kitchener, here in Ontario, have recognized intimate partner violence as an epidemic. To make matters worse, the Liberal government has only implemented two of the 231 calls for justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

We know that because of a history of colonialism and racism, which continues today, unfortunately, indigenous women are even more likely to be victim of abuse than their non-indigenous counterparts. The calls to action need to be implemented today, and should have been implemented long ago.

Despite this epidemic of violence, the Liberals have cut \$150 million from 600 women's shelters across the country. At a time when an epidemic of intimate partner violence is tragically higher than ever, it is most certainly not a time to make cuts to shelters for women and families fleeing violence. In my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, I hear from women who remain in homes with partners who abuse them because they have nowhere to go. The few options that could be made available are too often full with long wait lists. Women fleeing violence need timely, safe and accessible options available when they need them.

To make matters worse, I speak with women who remain in unhealthy relationships with concerns and red flags of abusive behaviour because they cannot afford to leave. This is yet another example of ways in which the increased cost of living and lack of affordable housing is disproportionately impacting those most vulnerable in our communities. As more and more struggle to make ends meet, safe spaces are even more important and are inevitably in higher need.

I cannot reiterate enough the importance of people having access to their most basic needs, and when they do not, our communities as a whole feel the consequences. They need an affordable place to call home, food on the table, access to head-to-toe care including mental health supports, and a guaranteed livable basic income. We know that poverty and violence are undeniably interconnected.

When people are living happy, healthy lives through accessing their basic human rights as a bare minimum, we see less violence in our communities. The government has an obligation to take all necessary measures to protect women and to end violence. They should be providing a robust support system for all those escaping abusive relationships, but that is not what we see today.

While Bill S-205 contains measures that represent progress in supporting survivors of intimate partner violence and making our justice system more sensitive to the safety of women, gender-diverse individuals and children, New Democrats acknowledge that more must be done.

There are legitimate concerns from women's organizations, as an example, regarding electronic monitoring that must be heard and addressed during the committee's deliberations, notably, the reliability of these devices in rural and remote areas where Internet is not always accessible or stable.

I think about a quote from Martine Jeanson, founder of the Maison des guerrières, that I thought was particularly important for us to hear. She says:

Electronic bracelets may not be perfect, but the information they provide may be able to save a lot of lives. Bracelet monitoring isn't all flawed; there are lives that will be saved. It won't be the only thing women rely on, but right now, they have nothing to rely on. They can't see their abuser coming, whereas with this measure, they'll have a chance. However small this chance you are giving us may be, they'll have a chance to know their abuser is coming. If I had had access to bracelet monitoring, what happened to me would not have happened, no matter how likely it was to work.

• (1715)

It is clear that there are problems with electronic monitoring devices that need to be overcome, but if the device can save just one life, give one person a chance to flee to safety and provide a life-saving warning of their abuser being close by, these are problems that can be worked through.

Electronic monitoring has been proven to reduce recidivism and rates of intimate partner violence in the United States. I have an example we can look to. In Connecticut, counties using GPS monitoring saw a significant decrease in domestic violence-related murders since the implementation of electronic monitoring. Quebec, right here in Canada, also has electronic ankle monitoring to protect victims of domestic violence, since 2021.

Although this bill provides some help, it alone will not address intimate partner violence. This is why my NDP colleagues and I will continue to push the Liberal government to provide necessary resources for low-barrier shelters in urban, rural and remote communities; reverse the \$150-million cut to women's shelters; and introduce timelines and targeted funding to implement all calls for justice from the national inquiry looking into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and two-spirit people.

What is vitally important is that when women express fear, they are believed, and that timely and appropriate action is taken. Marnie Boers, a dedicated domestic abuse advocate in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, shared with me that women know their abusers best. Unfortunately, they have been too often navigating the abuse for many years. They understand well the risks, patterns and signs when things are escalating.

One pattern that is clear is that too many women become victims of domestic abuse after a separation. When women fear for their safety, they need to be taken seriously, and again, appropriate and timely actions must follow. We are seeing over and over again the dire and unacceptable consequences when action is not taken and women are not believed.

The changes resulting from this bill would significantly benefit survivors of intimate partner violence by ensuring that their safety and security needs are considered. Intimate partner violence is a national crisis. The statistics and the impacts on women, girls and two-spirit people are deeply troubling. We have a responsibility to act swiftly and decisively to prevent and eliminate intimate partner violence and support survivors. We know that Bill S-205 is a step in the right direction, but the work is far from over to begin saving lives.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the chamber to speak to Bill S-205, an act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to another act, bail and domestic violence recognition orders.

This important bill was introduced by my esteemed colleague in the Senate, Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu, a great defender of victims' rights. For over 20 years now, he has worked tirelessly to ensure that our justice system is one that cares for victims and their families. He founded the Murdered or Missing Persons' Families Association and created the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. He has left us with an immense legacy, and I would like to pay tribute to his colossal and necessary work. I thank Senator Boisvenu so much.

Just as necessary is the bill we are discussing today. Its purpose is to amend the Criminal Code to explicitly state that victims must be consulted about their safety and protection needs. This is another step towards protecting victims of domestic violence, most of whom are, unfortunately, women.

### *Private Members' Business*

This new proposal goes one step further than Bill C-233, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Judges Act, violence against an intimate partner, which was passed last June, and which I proudly voted for as a Conservative. This legislation amended the Criminal Code so that the judge is required, "before making a release order in respect of an accused who is charged with an offence against their intimate partner, to consider whether it is desirable, in the interests of the safety and security of any person, to include as a condition of the order that the accused wear an electronic monitoring device." Wearing an electronic bracelet is therefore only considered in cases where the accused has already appeared before the judge and is awaiting trial.

In the case before us today, the principle remains the same, but it broadens the scope of admissible offences. This means that a greater number of defendants could end up with an electronic bracelet, thereby protecting a greater number of women.

When a woman has the courage to denounce her attacker and initiate a legal process, she exposes herself. She puts herself in danger. As legislators, we have a duty to give all the necessary tools to those who apply these laws to protect victims throughout the judicial process. This proposed legislation is an excellent way of doing so.

The electronic bracelet is not a miracle cure, of course, but it does have its proven benefits, which is something we have heard. I was so happy to hear the member for Kildonan—St. Paul talk about the over 650 offenders in Quebec who are wearing one of these electronic bracelets under provincial legislation during that process time, which we know is one of the most difficult and risky times for those people who have been victims of intimate partner violence. We know that during this time, as things are heating up, many perpetrators will return to those victims and revictimize them with continuing violence.

I look at this piece of legislation as the chair of the status of women committee, and we did a study of Bill C-233 under Keira's law. Under Keira's law, we talked about what intimate partner violence looks like and the impact to not only the families but also the entire community. I heard the member earlier talk about a woman who could not leave her own home because of her safety. This is exactly what the electronic bracelet is supposed to do. It is supposed to give that little bit extra to ensure that a victim feels safe in their own community and is able to leave their home with safety.

*Private Members' Business*

A woman who has been a victim of crime has had many things torn away from her or him. However, I believe in over 87% of the cases the victims are women when it comes to intimate partner violence. Ensuring that a woman is able to go out of their home is not only about her safety but also, in many cases, about her family and children. This is something we need to take into consideration, which is women being able to live a life of freedom that, in many cases, they never had within an abusive relationship.

As I was looking at the bill, I looked specifically at the two things Senator Boisvenu had brought forward. We were looking at ensuring that this electronic bracelet was put on to ensure that women and girls who had been victims of intimate partner violence were safe. These electronic bracelets are something that we should be discussing as an option because there are problems.

• (1720)

It was great to listen to my NDP colleague talk about GPS monitoring. That is something that I think is really important but it has to do with more than just this legislation. There is other legislation that would ensure the government actually makes sure that Canadians are connected. Although this unit would work very well in our urban centres, we need to make sure that the government is going to ensure the infrastructure necessary for these GPS units that are going to be on perpetrators' ankles. We need to make sure that they can be found. In order for this piece of legislation to work, I am going to ask that the government makes sure that we connect Canadians. We know that in remote areas, maybe on reserves or in different parts of communities like my own, calls will be dropped. We need to make sure that when women are in a community that they are safe, that those bracelets are working and that they can rely on them.

One of the most important things is this. We know that in between the time when defendants are put out and the time of their trials there is a huge problem with them committing re-violations and revictimizing. There are some solutions to that. That is exactly what Senator Boisvenu has put forward, solutions to help victims of crime, to help women. In many cases when we look at femicides we can see that these numbers have continued to drastically change. Today I was trying to look at new statistics. By the end of the year in 2022, there were 184 women and girls killed here in Canada. We know that many of these murders were by people the victims knew. There is a correlation between intimate partner violence, family violence and the knowledge of the perpetrator. It is not an unknown attack.

We know that every 48 hours a woman is killed here in Canada. We need to do something about that. A lot of this has to do with why women do not go forward and explain to people what is happening. Why do they not go and say to the police, "I do not feel safe"? Why do they not go forward to ensure that this person is being charged for the crime that has been committed?

We have to understand that there are so many things going on with a woman. Sometimes it is because of financial insecurity that she cannot leave a perpetrator. Sometimes it is the coercive control where she does not think that she will ever be able to leave. Sometimes it is because, at the end of the day, she knows that if she leaves she may not be alive. That is why it is so important that

when we are having these conversations we understand how difficult it is for women to come forward, to know that they are being heard and to know that they are going to be safe in their communities. Once they have come out publicly, it is extraordinarily difficult. I am so proud that this is another measure that we can take to ensure that women are going to be safe.

I have this as a solution. It is an amendment after section 810 of the Criminal Code which creates a new order specific to domestic violence. I am just going to read this. It reads: "To address the second problem, the bill creates a new 810 order in the Criminal Code that is specific to domestic violence and that provides for more severe conditions that are more suited to cases of domestic violence. The new order extends by one year the duration of the blanket order to which the defendant may be subject and amends some provisions. The new order will also include requirements to wear an electronic bracelet, attend addiction treatments or programs on domestic violence and counselling and refrain from using social media. We need to make sure that we are ensuring that women are safe."

I want to quote something about why this is so important. This has a lot to do with the senator who put it forward. I am going to quote today from his speech because it is not only that gentleman who has gone through this issue. As I said, there were close to 200 women who were killed in 2022. These are unbelievable numbers.

I want to read a quote from the senator's speech because it is that passion that he brings to the subject, not just the passion but the compassion for those victims who have gone through this. It reads:

As you know, since my daughter Julie was killed, I have been deeply committed to fighting violence against women. Over the past three years, I have travelled the country and met with hundreds of women. With pain and dignity, they openly shared with me their stories and experiences with the violence they had to endure, often for years.

Their testimony was very emotional, sometimes hard to listen to and often sickening. These women survived attempted murder, aggravated assault, sexual assault and psychological violence. These things happened repeatedly over the course of their ordeal.

These women experienced some very scary moments. Most of them still bear the scars of that violence. Since 1970, we have seen a steady decline in homicide in Canada. However, what makes femicide different from homicide is that the majority of the women were murdered in a family violence situation, after reporting their abuser to the police. More often than not, these murders were foreseeable.

• (1725)

That is exactly what this bracelet is doing. This is what the legislation, Bill S-205, would do. It would put another measure in to ensure that women are safe. At a time when violence continues to be on the increase, when we see more sexual violence, when we are seeing children being violated and more family and intimate partner violence, we need to ensure that we are doing the right thing.

I urge everybody to pass Bill S-205.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak to Bill S-205, an act to amend the Criminal Code and make consequential amendments to another act regarding interim release and domestic violence recognizance orders. I know that the member for Kildonan—St. Paul spoke about the incredible work Senator Boisvenu has done with regard to this work throughout that senator's career, but to have this bill brought forward through the Senate really shows the passion that the senator has with respect to this.

I would note that the bill originally goes back to 2021. It followed through the Senate process and went through committee in 2022, report stage at the Senate and, finally, third reading, before it made its way over to this chamber earlier this year. Of course, we are debating it this evening in hopes that we can get this through to committee, so we can have a more fulsome discussion about how we can advance the objectives that are set out in the bill.

I should state at the outset, as the parliamentary secretary did prior to me, that the government is certainly in support of the legislation. There are some slight concerns, and we are interested in a couple amendments. These primarily stem from the fact that some of the proposals that are put forward in the bill were actually already addressed in the bail reform bill that was debated in the chamber earlier this week. That bill ultimately passed on a unanimous consent motion at all stages and was sent off to the Senate.

As such, while we are seeing legislation here being sent to the Senate, at the same time, we are getting legislation back from the Senate, specifically with respect to the same issue. Nonetheless, I think it highlights the importance of the particular initiative set out in Bill S-205. I think we can all work together in a collaborative, non-partisan manner for the safety of women, in particular, throughout our country. That is exactly what we are going to get through a collaborative process that leaves the partisanship out of it and really focuses on protecting some of the most vulnerable in our community, as we saw this week with the unanimous motion to pass the bail reform bill at all stages.

Bill S-205 specifically addresses the issue of intimate partner violence through changes to the bail and peace bond regimes in the Criminal Code and making consequential amendments to the Youth Criminal Justice Act. In particular, Bill S-205 would first require courts, prior to making a bail order for an offence involving actual, threatened or attempted violence against an intimate partner, to ask prosecutors if the victim has been consulted about their safety and security needs. The courts would also be required to ask the prosecutor whether victims have been identified in their right to request a copy of the bail order made by the court. It would also expand the existing partner violence reverse onus for bail so that it applies not only to accused who were previously convicted but also to those previously receiving a conditional or absolute discharge for intimate partner violence offences.

It would also require a justice to consider, on the request of the Crown, whether the accused should wear an electronic monitoring device as a condition of release. Electronic monitoring devices would be identified as an explicit condition of bail that could be imposed in all cases, not just cases involving violence against an intimate partner, as is now the case because of changes enacted in Bill C-233.

### *Private Members' Business*

Finally, it would create a new peace bond specific to cases involving intimate partner violence. This would have a duration of up to two years, or up to three years if the defendant was previously convicted of an intimate partner violence offence.

That outlines what the bill seeks to do, and as I indicated, some of these steps have already been covered in the bail reform bill that left the chamber earlier this week, particularly around the reverse onus provisions.

● (1730)

It is important to emphasize that our government remains unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that victims of sexual assault and gender-based violence are treated with respect and dignity. We will always fight to better protect victims of intimate partner violence, which is the most common form of police-reported violent crime against women. As we have heard, including from the sponsor in this chamber, the member for Kildonan—St. Paul, a number of incidents have occurred that could have quite possibly had different outcomes had better supports, as proposed in this bill and other legislation, been in place.

We have taken steps to clarify and strengthen sexual assault laws to ensure that victims are treated with the utmost respect and are protected with an improved legal framework. We have demonstrated our commitment to bringing forward Bill S-12, legislation that gives more agency to victims and survivors of sexual crimes, in response to the Supreme Court to ensure that the national sex offender registry remains in operation.

As I indicated, we are supportive of this bill. We think it is extremely laudable in the sense that combatting intimate partner violence is absolutely in line with the objectives of not just the government, but indeed the entire House. However, through many of its proposed reforms, we are largely seeing duplicates of existing provisions in the Criminal Code. Nevertheless, it proposes additional targeted criminal law reforms that would help to reinforce the ability of the criminal law to address intimate partner violence and improve victim confidence in the criminal justice system.

Accordingly, the government supports this bill, as I indicated, with amendments to ensure its coherence with existing criminal law and to address legal, operational and policy concerns within the bill.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

● (1735)

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

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

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

[English]

## HOUSING

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this adjournment debate arises from a question I asked early last June, a question that pointed out that natural disasters, fires, floods, hurricanes and tornados are making it increasingly difficult for Canadians to afford, or even obtain, home insurance.

Since then, we have had a terrible summer, a summer that was off the charts. Catastrophic wildfires raged from Nova Scotia to Northwest Territories and to British Columbia and Vancouver Island even. Floods and a tropical storm followed the fires in Nova Scotia, and tornados hit Alberta and other provinces. It is impossible to ignore that we are living in the effects of climate change, and those effects are costly. In 2022, insured damages from extreme weather events in Canada were over \$3 billion. The 2021 heat dome and atmospheric river events cost more than \$5 billion in British Columbia alone.

These annual costs have more than quadrupled over the last 15 years, and all the projections are that they will continue to increase until we manage to eliminate our carbon emissions. Even if we eliminated those emissions tomorrow, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere would remain constant for centuries, and the current level of extreme weather would continue. While many individuals and governments seem reluctant to make sufficient investments in climate action to reduce those emissions, it seems they are also reluctant to acknowledge the costs of inaction.

For an increasing number of Canadians, the impacts are life-changing, with the loss of homes to fire or flood, or the loss of crops and income to drought or frost. However, all of us will see rising costs as climate change intensifies. One sector will lead that way, and that is home insurance. As insurance companies face higher claims year over year, they will have little choice but to increase premiums.

That has already started to happen. Even more concerning is the increasing trend in the United States, especially, to simply not offer home insurance at all. In California, major companies such as Allstate and State Farm have stopped selling new home insurance policies because of the frequency of catastrophic fires. Similarly, in Florida, insurance companies are not taking on new customers or renewing existing policies because of flooding associated with rising ocean levels and stronger storms. Those who can get insurance are paying an average of \$4,000 per year.

The residents of Port aux Basques here in Canada who had their homes washed out to sea by hurricane Fiona did not receive anything from their insurance companies because storm surges are not covered. I met with the Insurance Bureau of Canada earlier this year, and it pointed out that it is becoming difficult to buy a home in fire-prone areas of the country during the summer. Most companies simply will not provide new insurance when there is an active wildfire close to home, which is 25 kilometres to 100 kilometres in some cases. In many recent years, this stopped home sales in the Okanagan Valley, where I live, as one cannot get a mortgage without insurance. It is also becoming harder to get flood insurance on homes. In fact, over 10% of Canadian homes are in high flood-risk areas and cannot be insured.

Climate change impacts are not limited to fires and floods. I have been talking with people in the wine industry in the Okanagan Valley about the effects of last winter's early frosts that cut this year's grape harvest in half and killed many vines outright. I am hoping we can find support from the federal government to keep this important industry moving in British Columbia.

● (1740)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for highlighting the costs of inaction on climate change. When he asked the question back in June, I remember we were debating on many occasions the Conservative Party's seeking to make pollution free in this country, even though we could not see into Gatineau because the smoke was so thick here in Ottawa.

I would like to begin by expressing my deepest sympathies to the people across the country who have experienced extreme weather events. This summer alone, thousands of Canadians across the country have been displaced. Severe storms, floods, wildfires and heat waves have all forced families out of their homes.

Canadians face real financial risk posed by these disasters and want affordable property insurance. Disasters caused by natural hazards can be difficult to insure, and leave some Canadians financially vulnerable. That is why we will be launching a new insurance-based approach to address gaps in coverage and help Canadians get the insurance they can afford.



As a first step, we are working to stand up a low-cost flood insurance program aimed at protecting households at high risk of flooding and without access to adequate insurance. All levels of government have a role to play in improving Canada's resiliency to disasters caused by natural hazards such as floods. Therefore, we will be partnering with provinces and territories to develop and implement the program. We will also be working with the insurance industry on solutions for earthquake insurance and other evolving climate-related insurance-market challenges.

Insurance is just one part of the federal government's work to improve climate resiliency. It complements the work we are doing on flood risk management, such as the creation of an online flood risk awareness portal. At the same time, we are ensuring that any new investments we make in housing are climate compatible and help move Canada toward achieving its 2050 goal of net-zero emissions.

I do not have time to outline all of the initiatives we are undertaking, but I will mention quickly the national housing strategy, which is a 10-year, \$82-billion plan to prioritize projects that includes energy-efficient criteria that go above and beyond the National Building Code. Further, programs like Canada greener affordable housing will help affordable housing providers to make deep energy retrofits to existing housing.

Climate change and related climate disasters are the top concern for people and families across the country. The federal government is working closely to protect these Canadians during these times.

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Madam Speaker, I have been talking to the minister about the new insurance program that is being conceived. I look forward to seeing the details on that when it comes out, hopefully later this fall. I am also glad that the member mentioned earthquake insurance. It is not related to climate change obviously, but it is something that is of deep concern in coastal British Columbia.

However, it is clear that we really must recognize the devastating impacts of climate change on the lives of Canadians. To reduce the human and financial costs of these extreme weather events, we must make bolder investments to reduce our emissions and to prepare our homes, businesses and communities for future challenges. Over the coming years, these investments will save 10 times their cost in avoided damage and loss of personal property and will also allow us to live longer, healthier lives.

• (1745)

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is right: We need to do better. Our government is taking steps to protect Canadians from the impacts of climate change. Extreme weather events brought on by climate change pose risks to Canadians' homes, their sense of security and their financial futures. We are helping them access flood insurance that protects them now. We are investing in climate-compatible housing and that will contribute to a safer, more climate-friendly future.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, September 25, at 11 a.m., pursuant to order made earlier today.

(The House adjourned at 5:45 p.m.)

## APPENDIX

[Translation]

Address

of

His Excellency Volodymyr Zelenskyy

President of Ukraine

to both Houses of Parliament

in the House of Commons Chamber, Ottawa

on

Friday, September 22, 2023

*His Excellency Volodymyr Zelenskyy was welcomed by the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, by the Honourable Raymonde Gagné, Speaker of the Senate, and by the Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons.*

**Hon. Anthony Rota (Speaker of the House of Commons, Lib.):** Your Excellency President Zelenskyy, Prime Minister, Speaker Gagné, party leaders, hon. members, distinguished guests, welcome to this momentous event, the second joint address to Parliament by His Excellency Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine.

[English]

On behalf of my colleagues, we are honoured for your visit. As we come together under one roof, we take a moment to celebrate the friendship and shared values of our countries. We celebrate our people and the history of co-operation between Canada and Ukraine, and we celebrate solidarity.

[Translation]

I will now invite the Right Hon. Prime Minister to speak.

[English]

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, parliamentarians, honoured guests and friends, we gather today at a pivotal point in history. This is a time of incredible uncertainty. Attacks upon the rules-based international order threaten to upend the peace and prosperity that have been the bedrock of Canada's success. This is a challenge on a generational scale, a challenge that history will judge us on, a challenge we must confront with lion-hearted courage. The world can find no better inspiration than our friend here with us in our House today, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and his wife, the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska.

One year, six months and 29 days ago, Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, unleashing a campaign of violence and brutality that has left countless dead and forced millions to flee, but for one year, six months and 29 days, the people of Ukraine have defended their homes, their language and their freedom to choose their own future. They have fought back with a courage that has inspired the world, and they have been led by President Zelenskyy, a great champion of democracy.

[Translation]

President Zelenskyy, in March of last year, you addressed our Parliament virtually. Last June, I addressed your parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, in Kyiv. I was touched to see so many Canadian flags.

Today, we are pleased to have you here with us to talk about your country's fight for democracy and freedom. It is an opportunity to remind us that Russia is continuing its assault and Ukrainians are sacrificing their lives.

President Zelenskyy, you and I speak regularly. We have talked about what is happening with the Zaporizhzhia nuclear generating station and the ecological destruction brought on by Russia's tactics. We talked about the human toll, the abducted children and the people who are being taught to hate.

[English]

I have seen Putin's destructive evil first-hand during my visits to Ukraine since the war began. I saw it in the bombed-out neighbourhoods, in the bridges that had been reduced to twisted steel, and in the abandoned homes. I also saw it in the faces of your citizens. They walk down the streets and sit in cafés, daily life seemingly persisting, but with everyone I spoke to, I saw in the back of their eyes the weight of this war, the fear for their fellow Ukrainians on the front lines, and the anxiety that another air-raid siren would go off at any moment, that there would be the loss of a loved one.

The toil of this war on the mental health and well-being of Ukrainians is immeasurable. I know, First Lady Zelenska, that you are dedicated to the work to address this, so today we are providing funding to support mental health care in Ukraine as we continue to applaud your tremendous leadership in these difficult times.

When rule-based orders crumble, so much is lost. One example of how this breakdown manifests is the horrifying, preventable hardship of Russia blocking grain exports, which is worsening hunger and starvation among the world's most vulnerable people.

President Zelenskyy, you and the Ukrainian people are holding the rule-based order in the balance. You are on the front lines, not just of the fight for Ukraine, but also in the fight for the kind of future you are all going to be living in.

[Translation]

Rules matter. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the bloodiest and deadliest conflict humanity has ever known, the world's nations agreed on a shared set of principles and rules for establishing peace. For three-quarters of a century, these rules have brought historic prosperity. They have encouraged trade, given citizens the confidence to invest in their future, and helped millions of people escape poverty. There is not one place that has not prospered thanks to peace.

[English]

What Putin has done is a break with civilization. It is a violation of our common humanity. It is an attempt to disassemble the rule-based order that protects our freedom. It is a move to weaken democracy and assert autocracy. Putin governs with deception, violence and repression. He imprisons his own people and stirs up ugly sentiments of xenophobia and racism. However, his imperial delusions in Ukraine have been met with a fierce defence, a defence that is strong, not just because of the support from friends around the world, but because those who fight for their freedom will always fight with their whole hearts.

[Translation]

That is why we all have to fight with every means at our disposal. We have to stand tall and strong against violations of national sovereignty and attacks on international law. Violations of rules-based law must be called out and violators held accountable for their actions. This has always been our government's position.

That is why we unfailingly oppose authoritarian governments and stand on the side of those who uphold international law, universal human rights and the right of all peoples to choose their own future. That is why we remained true to our principles when Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor were arbitrarily detained by China.

[English]

There are countries that are bending or breaking the rules, political forces that are pandering to demagoguery. We are all experiencing a rise of disinformation, some state-sponsored, some politically motivated, that twists facts and refuses evidence and science. In this era of uncertainty and of resurgent great power competition, rules are what will protect us. It is not enough for them to just be written down somewhere. We must advocate for them, stand up for them and live by them.

History will judge us on how we defend democratic values, and Ukraine is at the tip of the spear in this great challenge of the 21st century. That is why Canada and Canadians are there for Ukraine and why we stand so unequivocally against Russia. It is why people across Canada have welcomed with open arms over 175,000 Ukrainians, some of whom are here with us today.

There are those here who have come from Bucha and Kharkiv. They are part of a group of Ukrainian scientists who have found safety in Canada, and their expertise in the clean economy is helping the world unwind its dependence on the fossil fuels weaponized by despots like Putin. We also have leaders from the Ukrainian Canadian community, like Orysia and others. They come from the Canadian Prairies, where so many Ukrainian immigrants have settled for over a century and have led the charge in helping their communities welcome refugees fleeing Putin's bombs, everything from collecting clothing donations to helping them find homes.

We are also joined by Agnes and Susan, who lost their brother Anthony, a humanitarian volunteer, just 12 days ago. He was killed in a Russian strike while trying to help civilians in Donetsk oblast, innocent people who are being brutalized by the Kremlin's unprovoked aggression. Today, our gallery is filled with Ukrainians who have come to show their support and gratitude for you, Volodymyr, but I think we all need to take a moment to thank them for their bravery, their generosity and their solidarity with the values of democracy.

[Translation]

President Zelenskyy, I have made it clear that our government will stand by your side for as long as it takes. Canada has provided close to \$9 billion in military, financial and humanitarian support since Putin started his war of aggression.

[English]

Today, we are making a longer-term, multi-year commitment that provides predictable, steady support to Ukraine. It will include \$650 million over three years for 50 armoured vehicles, including medical evacuation vehicles that will be built by Canadian workers in London, Ontario. We will also send F-16 trainers for pilots and for maintenance so Ukrainians are able to maximize their use of donated fighter jets.

[Translation]

We will continue to work with our partners, including within NATO, to provide ongoing support. We will also continue to provide economic support to Ukraine over the next year to ensure that it remains a strong, dynamic and prosperous democratic country.

However, our greatest hope is that you will not need military or financial support for much longer and that peace will soon return—although it cannot be false peace based on a compromise imposed by the aggressor.

For lasting peace, we must stand up to Putin and reject his attempts to take the world back to a time when might makes right. Lasting peace means clearly establishing that borders must be respected, regardless of the size of the neighbour's army. This peace must ensure that Ukrainians regain the right to choose their own future.

[English]

Canada stands with the principles of Ukraine's peace formula. We believe that peace must respect the UN Charter, be based in international law and preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity. This is the peace we must fight for, and that is what Ukraine has done for one year, six months and 29 days.

Putin thought he would make quick work of marching on Kyiv. Putin thought President Zelenskyy would cave in the face of personal peril, but sir, you have not. You have galvanized the world. You have made the bonds between democratic allies and friends stronger than ever.

Volodymyr and Olena, to see you here today in this chamber, to see so many proud and courageous Ukrainians here today after everything you have all endured, is a testament to the commitment of your country and the strength of your fight.

[Translation]

President Zelenskyy, you have shown the rest of the world what true leadership is all about. Even in the most difficult times, you fight with a sense of hope and you remain committed to the safety and progress of your people.

[English]

In times like this, the world needs leaders who understand that true strength is not about wielding power, but about empowering others. True strength is not about crushing your opponent with brute force and lies. It is about respecting the humanity and dignity of everyone. It is about governing from a basis of truth and compassion. In times of crisis, holding fast to positive values like this can be a lot harder than resorting to fear and resentment, but it is well worth it.

When the history books are written, we know what they will say of you: that you were among those who stood up for their principles no matter how hard, among those who stood up to bullies, among those who protected the less fortunate, among those who unified people in the face of fear, among those who defended the rules and upheld the law, among those who put justice, hope and freedom above all else.

We know that democracy is one of the greatest expressions of freedom. It gives us the right to have a voice, to choose our own future, to be protected by a system with justice and accountability. However, democracy does not happen by accident and it will not continue without effort. We must defend it and strengthen it with all that we have.

Volodymyr, my friend, you have a unique understanding of this. You stare down Putin every single day, and we will be with you and all heroes of this courageous fight for as long as it takes. *Slava Ukraini*.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my distinct honour to welcome President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine to address this House.

**His Excellency Volodymyr Zelenskyy (President of Ukraine):**  
*Heroyam slava.*

Thank you so much.

Dear ladies and gentlemen of Canada, before I start, I just want to remind you of one thing. This thing is very important to understand for both Ukraine and Canada. It is what we are up to and what we need to do and do together.

In 1983, the city of Edmonton's history was closely linked to the destiny of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Canadian community. In Edmonton, the first monument in the world to the victims of the Holodomor was built. It was built to remember the genocide against the Ukrainian people, the genocide ordered and perpetrated by Moscow. It was the first-ever Holodomor monument in the world. At the time, Ukraine did not yet have memorials commemorating the victims of the genocide of Ukrainians because Ukraine was under Moscow's control back then. This fall will mark the 40th anniversary since that first and very important commemoration of the victims of the Holodomor.

A lot has changed since then. Ukraine gained independence. Ukraine is restoring its own historic memory. Dozens of other countries' parliaments and governments have already recognized the Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian people. This year alone there have been 11 such recognitions, and I am sure the world, the whole world, will recognize the truth about the Holodomor.

However, there is something that has not changed either in 40 years since the monument in Edmonton was built or in the 90 years since the Holodomor: Moscow now, as always, is bent on controlling Ukraine and makes use of all available means to do that, including genocide. It is a genocide what Russian occupiers are doing to Ukraine. When we want to win, when we call on the world to support us, it is not just about an ordinary conflict; it is about saving the lives of millions of people, literally the physical salvation of ordinary women, men, children, our families, whole communities and entire cities.

Russia's destruction of Mariupol, Volnovakha, Bakhmut or any other city or village in Ukraine must not go unpunished. Life and justice must prevail everywhere in Ukraine and for all Ukrainians. This Russian aggression must end with our victory so that Russia will never bring back genocide to Ukraine and will never, ever try to do so. Moscow must lose once and for all, and it will lose.

Dear Speakers, the whole Parliament of Canada, dear Justin, Mr. Prime Minister, ladies and gentlemen of the government, dear representatives of all the communities and cities, and all citizens of Canada, in my opinion, one of the most sterling qualities of your country is that justice is not an empty word for Canada. Another extremely important fact about you is that you never ever make a political bet on hatred and enmity, and you are always on the bright side of history.

During the First World War and in the time between those terrible wars, and during the Second World War and the Cold War, you

always defended freedom; you always defended justice. I had no doubt that you would choose the side of freedom and justice when Russia launched a full-scale war again Ukraine, but it is never enough only to choose the right side. You also need to be able to be a leader on this side, and you are. You are a leader, and I thank you for that, Canada.

Thank you very much for your political support for Ukraine. This is truly support of a leader, and it is global in scale. When you are fighting for something, when you are fighting for good in human nature, false neutrality looks obviously immoral. One sees that true leaders, while the others are afraid to be real, to speak out or to fight, have only two options: to change or to be looked down on. I thank you, Canada, for being a real example of leadership and honesty for so many around the world, an example that inspires others to defend life.

Canada's support for Ukraine with weapons and equipment has allowed us to save thousands of lives. This includes air defence systems, armoured vehicles, artillery shells and very significant assistance in demining. Thank you so much.

Canada's leadership in sanctions against Russia for this war on terror really encouraged others in the world to follow your lead. I am especially grateful for your extremely strong, 100% leadership support of the Ukrainian movement to NATO. Your strong participation in training our soldiers, which is very important, is already a tradition. Canada trains those who defend the world: thousands and thousands of pilots during the Second World War, and thousands of Ukrainians now. Training is what makes victory strong and makes victory indispensable. Thank you for this.

Thank you for your economic support, for helping Ukraine get rid of its dependence on Russian nuclear fuel. This is progress not only for us. Ukraine and Canada, together with their partners and friends, are demonstrating to everyone that it is quite realistic to completely cut off our ties with dubious Russian nuclear technologies, in addition to being purely technological danger.

The Russian nuclear industry also serves Moscow's political expansion. Russia uses nuclear technology and the construction of nuclear power plants, like gas and oil, for political attacks against the sovereignty of other nations. Russia is trying to break the sovereignty of others through its manipulation of energy resources, all energy resources, so the more nations that are free from Russian energy resources, the sooner energy in the world will once again become just an energy resource, not a weapon against sovereignists.

Another important area of our co-operation is literally justice. Today, in talks with Prime Minister Justin, we discussed the Canadian initiative for the G7 to set up efforts to confiscate Russian assets. Those funds that Russia and its henchmen use to pay for their war should be used to fairly compensate for the damage caused by war and terror.

Active and global work is also required to bring Russia to justice for the crime of aggression itself, and for absolutely all crimes from this aggression: all deaths, every deportation of every child, every adult. Every life needs to be protected and every attacked nation needs justice to rule. The world needs it too so that other potential aggressors can see that war ends in verdicts for the aggressor. I urge you, Canada, to extend your ability to lead other countries, especially in the matter of justice, of prosecuting the aggression, of compensation for aggression, of making the aggressor feel how strong justice is.

Most of all, I would like to thank you, Canada, for the purely human thing: for making Ukrainians feel at home when they are here in Canada. Thank you. This is not just a legacy of history; this is a legacy of character.

The Ukrainian Canadian community is about millions of Ukrainian destinies that have become the destiny of Canada, with all its diversity of communities, freedom, love, courage, our special innate call for justice, the ability of our people to share comfort wherever they go and to build and create, not to ruin or humiliate. Ukrainian flags in Canada are a part of everyday life as an absolute trust to Canada in Ukraine. In fact, such proximity provides many answers, including answers to questions about this war. Can we give up? No. Can we betray the good in human nature? No. Can we agree with evil? No. Can we allow our identity to be erased? No. Ukraine and Canada are the same. We stand and we fight for life.

Ukraine, not genocide, will be victorious in this war. People will be the winners, not the Kremlin. Freedom will be the winner. Justice will be the winner. You can know this for sure about us because you know it for sure about yourselves, that you would never submit to evil.

[Translation]

Thank you, Canada.

[English]

One day soon a monument will be built, maybe in Edmonton, as they will be in other cities of the world and in the cities of Ukraine, to honour the victory of our people in this war, our common victory with you, the people of Canada, with all your communities and your legacy of good.

Ladies and gentlemen, today my beautiful first lady and I had the honour of meeting with the Governor General of Canada, Her Excellency the Right Hon. Mary Simon, and she taught me a word from her mother tongue: *ajunnata*. She said the meaning of this word is, “Don’t give up. Stay strong against all odds”, and so shall it be. *Ajunnata*, Canada. *Ajunnata*, Ukraine.

*Slava Ukraini.*

[Applause]

**Mr. Speaker Rota:** Thank you, Mr. President.

[Translation]

I now invite the Hon. Raymonde Gagné, Speaker of the Senate, to address the House.

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Speaker of the Senate):** Mr. President, First Lady Zelenska, Prime Minister Trudeau, Speaker Rota, hon. parliamentarians, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, hello.

Mr. President, it is a great honour and a real privilege for me to thank you for your very powerful and very inspiring words. We are all honoured to have you here.

The last time you addressed this Parliament, just a few weeks after Russia’s full-scale invasion of your country, you urged us to imagine how the Ukrainian people were feeling, imagine what it is like to be bombed and invaded without provocation, imagine what it felt like to grasp the significance of the invasion. Russia was attacking not only Ukraine’s territory, but its very sovereignty.

Mr. President, I can safely say that we heard you. Your words resonated in the chambers of our Parliament, in our committee rooms and our offices, and in the four corners of our country.

[English]

Shortly after I became Speaker of the Senate of Canada, I was asked about the importance of role models, and I expressed my belief that, if you see it, you can be it. Mr. President, a new generation is seeing you. Having worked with young people in the field of education for over 35 years, and as a mother of two male adult children, I am heartened by the model you are showing. Young people around the world are seeing that a democratically elected voice is the real form of power.

[Translation]

Mr. President, for more than 18 months, you have been a symbol of leadership to the people and a source of inspiration to the world. Whether speaking from a bunker or a podium, in a meeting room or on the front lines, you have never given up, never wavered or hesitated. You embody the spirit and resilience of the Ukrainian people.

I am surely not the first to mention this, but who could possibly forget February 25, 2022? You were standing in the centre of Kyiv, the main target of the Russian invaders. It was one of the most perilous and uncertain moments of the war, and you delivered a powerful message when you said, “We are here”.

[English]

Your people have carried forward this resolve at Hostomel, at Kharkiv and beyond. While we draw inspiration from their stories, we also recognize the realities Ukrainians have faced, including withstanding thousands of artillery rounds every day; grieving the unrelenting loss of family, loved ones, colleagues and neighbours; patiently working through treacherous mine fields while drones circle overhead; defending against waves of attacks on civilian infrastructure; and taking steps where and when they can to recover and rebuild.

Mr. President, your people's resilience in the face of such aggression compels the international community, in your now famous words, to be here for Ukraine, however long it takes. Our message today, which you can bring back to your people, is equally clear: The Canadian people stand with Ukraine. We are not going anywhere.

[Translation]

On behalf of all the senators, all the MPs in the House of Commons and, of course, all Canadians, I want to thank you for your courage, your determination and the inspiring words you have shared with Canadians and people the world over today.

*Slava Ukraini.*

**Mr. Speaker Rota:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[English]

Mr. President, as has been noted today, you join a very small group of world leaders who have addressed a joint session of our Parliament for a second time. Among those leaders, one stands out for his oratory, his leadership in the face adversity, and his strong determination to fight on behalf of his people and on behalf of what is right. That leader was the late African president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela.

In his first address to the joint session of our Parliament, Nelson Mandela said of the Canadian people, "They are to us like brothers and sisters from whose warm embrace we shall never be parted." Mr. President, I want you to know that we feel like that still with Ukraine.

[Translation]

I am sure you share the same sentiment after your visit today, Mr. President. It is more than just a metaphor. The ties between Canada and Ukraine are family ties, ties between our two peoples strengthened by the Ukrainian-Canadian community, which is 1.3 million people strong.

[English]

Your words today also remind us of another world leader who addressed both our Houses during a time of war. On December 1941, during World War II, British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill travelled to Ottawa and delivered an impassioned speech

on behalf of his people to rally for the continued support for his country at war. It was a defining moment of history, and one that must never be forgotten.

We have here in the chamber today a Ukrainian Canadian war veteran from the Second World War who fought for Ukrainian independence against the Russians and continues to support the troops today even at his age of 98. His name is Yaroslav Hunka. I am very proud to say that he is from North Bay and from my riding of Nipissing—Timiskaming. He is a Ukrainian hero and a Canadian hero, and we thank him for all his service. Thank you.

[Translation]

As freedom is being attacked in many countries around the world and autocrats are banding together, Ukraine's resistance is rallying democracies and pushing us to action.

[English]

Resistance often starts at the top with you, Mr. President, but also with the Verkhovna Rada, where the business of parliament, the people's business, has never stopped. I know that parliamentarians in this chamber have marvelled at the courage and determination of our counterparts. Ukrainian legislators have pursued their critical work despite the continued warning of missiles and drones, despite the threat to the well-being of their families and homes and despite the overwhelming challenges of recovery and rebuilding.

Throughout this terrible war, I have had the great privilege of developing a great friendship with my counterpart, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, Chairman Stefanchuk. Like you, Mr. President, he advocates for his country with passion and with poise, and like you, he has conveyed what is at stake: Ukraine's freedom, but also the preservation of the rules-based international order, which is a fundamental part of the future of the democratic world.

Most recently, he spoke at the G7 Speakers' summit in Japan. At that time, he shared with me a drawing from a young Ukrainian girl who thanked Canada for our support and our shared wish that all Ukrainian children should live under peaceful skies. It moved me to tears and it moves me there again.

[Translation]

It is moments like these and ties like those that remind us that we must stand with Ukraine to face the threat against its sovereignty.

[English]

Mr. President, Canada has stood with Ukrainian people throughout their proud history, and that will not change. We will continue to stand for justice and peaceful skies over Ukraine. Thank you once again for addressing our Parliament.

*Slava Ukraini.*

[Applause]







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