



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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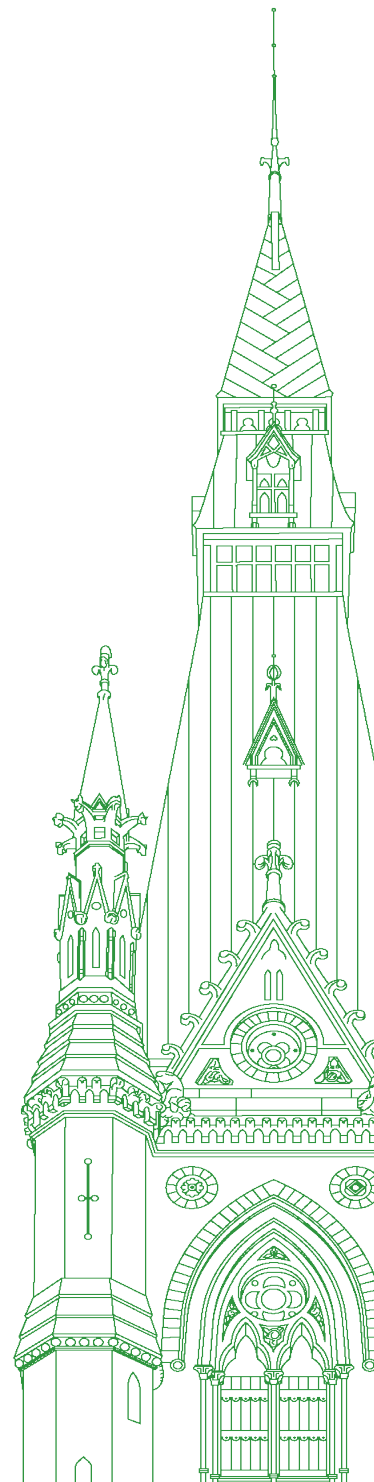
# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

**Volume 151 No. 244**  
Wednesday, November 1, 2023

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1400)

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

[Members sang the national anthem]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, keeping our communities safe is important to Brampton residents. While community safety is a shared jurisdiction with the provinces and municipalities, this government has been working hand in hand with law enforcement and other partners. We are strengthening Canada's Criminal Code and our community safety by keeping repeat violent offenders in prison with Bill C-48 and supporting the CBSA with historic investments that make our border secure.

Most importantly, we are working collaboratively with our law enforcement partners in Peel and right across the country to combat auto theft. I know that fighting car theft is an important issue. This is why, earlier this year, we made an important investment of \$120 million in Ontario to combat gangs. In partnership with CBSA and other agencies, Peel Regional Police has successfully recovered over \$130 million worth of stolen vehicles this year and put many criminals behind bars.

We are committed to continuing to work to strengthen measures to combat auto theft to ensure a safe environment for Brampton.

• (1405)

**The Speaker:** I would remind members, as much as possible, to stick to their 60-second time limit for Statements by Members.

The hon. member for Prince Albert.

### RAIDERS WALL OF HONOUR INDUCTEE

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Bruce Vance of Prince Albert, who was inducted into the Raiders Wall of Honour.

Bruce spent 14 years with the Raiders and was responsible for bringing many special events to our community. He is also the former president of the Crescent Heights Community Club, the former co-manager of the Mann-Northway Northern Bears and co-founder of the Girls Prairie League Softball.

Despite being diagnosed with colon cancer for the second time in 2020, Bruce continues to take on whatever challenges life may throw at him. Just this past year, the Northern Bears hosted an event with his team jerseys. They auctioned off the jerseys and raised \$23,000 for the Victoria Hospitals Foundation and the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan.

Bruce is an idol in our community. We thank him for his service and ask him to please keep up the good fight.

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### RON W. IANNI FACULTY OF LAW BUILDING

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor—Tecumseh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this weekend, I attended the grand reopening of the Ron W. Ianni Faculty of Law building at the University of Windsor after transformative renovations.

I met generations of alumni, like Frank and Peter, who made the drive to Windsor to reconnect over the two-day celebration. On hand were the chief justices of Canada and Ontario. The \$38-million renovation is truly spectacular. The architects pulled off the impossible: inserting light into a stone. The moot court is a showpiece, with gorgeous views of the campus, the Ambassador Bridge and Assumption church. A generous gift provided by the Rodzik family, the court is fully accessible, and one of the three rooms is set up to host smudge ceremonies.

Seeing all the alumni and donors highlighted the real sense of family and pride that are the hallmark of University of Windsor law. I know my predecessor and the founding dean, the late Hon. Mark MacGuigan, was smiling proudly on this day too.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]***70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZOO DE GRANBY**

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for many people, “Granby” means “zoo”. Founded in 1953, we owe the non-profit Société zoologique de Granby to the mayor at the time, Pierre-Horace Boivin, a visionary and animal lover.

In 2023, the Zoo de Granby is celebrating its seventieth year. Over the decades the zoo has thrived, modernized, and created moments of wonder and family memories for young and old alike. Besides being a major economic driver and tourist attraction for the region and for Quebec, it has a critical mission to protect species and promote conservation and biodiversity. These efforts have earned it an international reputation.

All of Granby proudly celebrates the zoo: giant statues of exotic species have been placed around the city, including a pink elephant near Lac Boivin, a blue gorilla and a yellow meerkat.

Let us take advantage of this anniversary year to visit, or go back to visit, the Zoo de Granby.

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**JACQUES FORTIER**

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in June, the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Sherbrooke awarded Jacques Fortier the title of Eastern Township resident of the year for 2023. He received the honorary title of Grand Estrien with all of the humility he is known for, despite his impressive record.

Jacques Fortier is a passionate and active supporter of his Sherbrooke community. He has supported residents for 45 years as a claims adjuster, including during the great ice storm and the Lac-Mégantic tragedy. He is also a very active volunteer, especially in the health care network, where he led a major project to renovate the Hôtel-Dieu de Sherbrooke hospital complex and played a key role in setting up the centre mère-enfant. A huge sports fan, he significantly contributed to the return of major junior hockey in Sherbrooke and is still involved with the Sherbrooke Phoenix.

He is unwaveringly supported by Marie-Claude, the love of his life. Together, they are a remarkable couple, always there for their community.

His involvement speaks to his boundless generosity and selflessness. My congratulations to Jacques Fortier, our Grand Estrien for 2023.

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*[English]***CARBON TAX**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the flailing Liberal-NDP Prime Minister flip-flopped and admitted that he and his scam of the century, the carbon tax, are just not worth the cost.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada confirmed scrapping this inflationary scam would bring down the cost of everything and put a massive dent in the inflation crisis. It is hypocritical for the Prime

Minister to only put a pause on this tax where his polling numbers are low yet punish those Canadians who do not vote Liberal by quadrupling it.

Liberals sold this carbon tax scam to Canadians by telling them they would get more back in phony rebates than what they would pay into it and that somehow it would fix the environment. Both have been proven false. Even a Liberal minister admits that Liberal MPs are utterly useless and have no voice in their own caucus.

Only our common-sense Conservative leader will axe the tax to keep the heat on and bring home lower prices for all Canadians. Why does the out-of-touch Prime Minister not shove the carbon tax scam and his woke policies where his polling numbers are, in the gutter?

\* \* \*

● (1410)

**LONDON AND DISTRICT BUSINESS HALL OF FAME  
INDUCTEES**

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour two new inductees into the London and District Business Hall of Fame. The first is Allan Drewlo, president of Drewlo Holdings. He helped make the company one of the country's largest leading real estate development and property management firms. On top of that, he is an important philanthropist in our community. He has supported, among others, the Kidney Foundation, the London Food Bank, Mission Services, Habitat for Humanity and the Grand Theatre. He continues to be steadfast in the community's vision for the future.

Jill Wilcox, the owner of Jill's Table, is the second. She is an award-winning specialty food and kitchen store entrepreneur in London. In addition to running a very successful business for more than 25 years, Jill has been a leading entrepreneur, organizing cooking classes and culinary tours to Europe. She is another philanthropist. Since 2012, she has helped fund food-related education projects in support of Investing in Children, Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Growing Chefs and others.

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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND  
LABRADOR**

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am extremely honoured to recognize the stellar career path of the Honourable Judy Foote, a colleague and a friend to many of us in this House. As she is leaving her position as Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, I would like to thank her for her dedicated service to Canadians for over 30 years in politics.

*Statements by Members*

Ms. Foote brought the best practices from the place where she started, in education and television journalism. She made history, being the first female lieutenant governor for her province. As the Prime Minister announced earlier, Ms. Foote brought passion, energy and an unwavering dedication to serving Canadians during her historic mandate. Her diverse experience of public service enriched not only her province but the whole of Canada.

On behalf on my family, my colleagues and me, I want to thank my dear friend. We wish her all the success in her future endeavours.

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**CARBON TAX**

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the desperate NDP-Liberal government's plan to pause the carbon tax on home heating will not help 97% of Canadians. This includes residents of York Region. They rely on natural gas and propane to heat their homes.

The Rural Economic Development Minister said an exemption was not offered across Canada because those regions did not vote Liberal. News flash: 70% of York Region is represented by Liberals. It seems there is no carbon tax relief for York Region families because of the incompetence of Liberal MPs in Markham, Richmond Hill, Aurora and Newmarket.

These York Region Liberals are just not worth the cost. Instead of treating Canadians like contestants on a reality show, pitting them against each other and picking winners, losers and survivors, how about we axe the tax and vote all these Liberals off the island?

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, making sure Canadians are safe and feel safe in their community is a priority for our federal government. It is not optional; it is not political.

In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, public safety is at the centre of many conversations. We know the federal government has a leading role to play. Vaughan residents support the co-operation and collaboration seen from all levels of government, law enforcement and victim advocates working together to crack down on crime, keep guns away from our streets and protect Canadians.

Canadians asked that we strengthen the justice system to keep repeat offenders behind bars. As a response, our government introduced Bill C-48 on bail reform, which would amend the Criminal Code and reinforce public confidence in Canada's justice system.

We also introduced a national freeze on handguns, supported the Province of Ontario with \$120 million to combat guns and gangs, and provided over \$500 million to CBSA to protect our borders. By providing the funding, working with all levels of government and passing impactful bail reform legislation, we are doing everything it takes to keep Canadians safe.

• (1415)

[Translation]

**CARBON TAX**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, scarcely a year ago, in the House, we Conservatives asked the government to cancel the carbon tax on home heating. All parties in the House voted against us, including the Bloc. It is costly to vote for the Bloc.

Last Thursday, because he is plummeting in the polls, the Prime Minister announced a temporary pause for home heating oil. He did this only with his Atlantic members. Why? The Minister of Rural Economic Development explained it: The other regions just have to vote Liberal.

Where are the members from Quebec when it comes to protecting taxpayers' money? Are they with the Bloc, which wants to radically increase the carbon tax?

Not only is this measure unfair to 97% of Canadians, it is also divisive. Even the Liberal carbon tax's architect, Catherine McKenna, said she was heartbroken over this Liberal flip-flop. The current Minister of Environment said that if saw another one, he would slam the door. Things are not going well with the Liberals.

For us, Conservatives, it is clear. Eliminating the carbon tax is just common sense.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CARBON TAX**

**Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Liberal-NDP government is desperate. Its polling numbers are in a free fall, and it will now do anything to stay in power, even telling Canadians, "Vote for us, or we'll tax you more."

In pausing his carbon tax until the next election for Atlantic Canadians only, the Prime Minister has admitted that his gimmicky carbon tax rebate did not give them more than they paid in, yet he stands here and tells rural Ontarians that we are getting more back than we pay in. He seems confused, but Canadians are not. They know that the Prime Minister cannot be trusted. They know he is not worth the cost.

*Statements by Members*

Seniors in my community are telling me they are worried about their heating costs. Some have even told me that they cannot buy fresh vegetables any more. When will the Prime Minister stop the games, treat all regions fairly, axe the carbon tax and give all Canadians a break?

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**ORLÉANS**

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday, I had the privilege of attending the poppy campaign kickoff of the Orléans Royal Canadian Legion. It was an honour beyond words to place the very first poppy on the lapel of esteemed veteran retired warrant officer Serge Millen, a gesture symbolizing our immense gratitude for his service and sacrifice to our country. Let us all help our Canadian legions by donating to them and by wearing our poppy with pride.

In addition, I extend my warmest congratulations to Andrea Baird, owner of AKA Beauty Concepts, as she celebrates a decade of successful business in Orléans. I was so impressed by Andrea's leadership after she was told me that her salon is certified as a sustainable salon by Green Circle Salons. That means that up to 95% of the beauty waste is recovered and recycled, giving beauty waste a new life and joining the fight against climate change.

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**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last week, Canadians were collectively heartbroken by the barbaric act of intimate partner violence that took the life of Angie Sweeney and her three young children in Sault Ste. Marie.

As we grieve for Angie and her children, we must redouble our efforts against intimate partner violence. Gender-based and intimate partner violence in Canada has increased for five consecutive years. In 2021, the rate of IPV was 336 victims per 100,000 people. Women and girls represent almost 70% of victims.

[Translation]

In 2021, the rate of gender-related homicides of indigenous women and girls more than tripled compared to the total number of gender-related homicides. In Ontario, the number of women and girls killed as a result of acts of violence involving a male offender increased by 39% between 2018 and 2022.

[English]

This epidemic cannot continue. We must implement the recommendations from last Parliament's justice committee report on stopping coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate relationships. Women need us to stand up for them now more than ever.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

[Translation]

**FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we have seen succes-

sive moratoriums and closures in our vital fishing sector, but since 1992 the federal government has provided no compensation, no valid options to help our fishers face hard times.

To date, fishers of mackerel, herring, yellowtail, winter flounder, turbot and now shrimp have been hard hit or threatened with closure. Add to that the problems with lobster, North Atlantic right whales, the overpopulation of seals, and now clams and seaweed harvesters. Workers in processing plants are also struggling.

There is a real fishing crisis, and new-generation fishers are becoming hard to find. Our fishers' patience and resilience have limits. The good news is that fishers and scientists have solutions to offer, including alternative or sentinel fisheries, communal licenses, integrated ecosystem management and financial compensation. The fishing community knows the ocean and everything living in it, and it wants more than anyone to protect the resource and renew it.

We must act, and quickly. The Bloc Québécois hears them, supports them and will make their voices heard.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, outright incompetence is how senior officials to the Prime Minister describe the scandal around the \$1-billion green slush fund, \$40 million of which is under investigation for suspicious payments.

Leaked audio has been recently released, and members will not believe what a Liberal government official had to say about it. He called this fund "a sponsorship-scandal level kind of giveaway". After eight years of the Prime Minister, he is simply not worth the cost.

The unholy alliance of the NDP and the Liberals, with its spending, scandals and corruption, has now caused sponsorship scandal 2.0. The previous Liberal sponsorship scandal began with an Auditor General investigation. Today, we learned that the Auditor General is now investigating the taxpayer abuse at the \$1-billion green slush fund.

Liberal corruption must stop. Common-sense Conservatives will finally clean up this mess.

[Translation]

#### MEMBER FOR BOURASSA

**Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to have sat for 16 years as an MP at both the provincial and federal levels—and as the only member of Haitian origin, I might add. However, the time has come for me to take my leave.

I thank the Prime Minister for this opportunity to serve Canadians.

[English]

I thank all members and staff of the House of Commons for their friendship.

[Translation]

I thank the Quebec CPA Order for the Emeritus Certified Accountant award and the title of Fellow. I thank UQAM for the special tribute award for teaching. I am grateful for the Governor of Canada Medal regarding my work at the Canada Revenue Agency. I thank the Hon. Jean Charest for his sincere friendship. I thank all the residents of Viau and Bourassa, my brothers and sisters, my supporters and my employees. From the bottom of my heart, I thank my wife, our children, their spouses and our grandchildren.

*Manman, Papa, mèsì anpil pou toutè sakrifis nou fè pou mwen.*

It was with a lot of emotion that I informed the Prime Minister that I would not be seeking re-election.

*Avèw Map Maché.*

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

#### CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister flip-flopped and paused his carbon tax on heating oil, it did nothing to help Quebec. Quebeckers will have to pay the second carbon tax, which will drive up the price of both gas and groceries.

Why is the Prime Minister raising taxes for Quebeckers? It is to finance a \$1-billion fund. A senior official was caught on tape saying that this is just like the sponsorship scandal and that it is outright incompetence.

Why is the Prime Minister forcing Quebeckers to pay for another Liberal scandal?

• (1425)

**Hon. Diane LeBouthillier (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a brief question for the Conservative leader. What is the Conservatives' plan to protect the environment? The answer is simple: They have no plan and no solutions. A real solution would be to develop a plan to fight climate change. A real solution would be to protect our environment for future generations.

#### Oral Questions

The Conservative leader must know that Canadians do not have the memory of a goldfish. They know what the Conservatives do when they are in office. It is chop, chop, chop. The Conservatives are not worth the risk.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised that Wednesdays would be Prime Minister's question period. His public itinerary indicates that he is in Ottawa, and he was even spotted in the building.

The question for the Prime Minister is about the carbon tax chaos he has unleashed. He has paused the tax on some heat for some people, leaving the Government of Alberta to threaten a lawsuit, the Government of Saskatchewan to threaten to not collect the tax, NDP provincial parties in the west turning against it and some first nations saying the entire thing is illegal.

Will he reverse all of this chaos and just axe the tax?

**The Speaker:** Before I have the hon. minister answer the question, I would like to remind all members that it is important for one to not do indirectly what one cannot do directly.

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us bring the temperature down and talk about exactly what we have done here.

We have accelerated the replacement of home heating oil with heat pumps. It is a national program. If the Premier of Alberta and the Premier of Saskatchewan want to make sure that people who heat their homes with oil in those provinces have access to the same heat pumps, do members know what they can do? They can join three Atlantic provinces and B.C. and sign up for a plan to help low-income people in their province. Will they do it? Time will tell.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the question was for the Prime Minister. He has unleashed carbon tax chaos across the country.

After saying he would never bend, he backed down because I kept beating him in these debates in the House of Commons. He has put a two-year pause on some heating oil for some people, causing Saskatchewan to threaten not to collect the tax, Alberta to threaten a lawsuit, six provinces to come out against the plan and first nations to say it is illegal.

If he is so proud of himself and what he has done, why will he not stand up now to defend it?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition seems to be too busy patting himself on the back to do his homework.

*Oral Questions*

At the end of the day, heating oil costs anywhere between two and four times the price of natural gas. It is a particular driver of energy poverty in this country. We have taken steps forward to improve affordability by enabling the implementation of heat pumps, which will save people up to \$2,500 a year, but we are doing so in the context of a plan to fight climate change, something he has said nothing about in the year since he became the Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I feel bad for the Liberal minister, who has been abandoned by his leader. The leader of the Liberal government will not even stand and defend his own decisions.

We know that on Thursday, after having his door beaten down by terrified Liberals about to lose their seats, he decided to flip-flop and bring in a temporary pause on a tax until after the election, dividing Canadians once again into two different classes.

If the Prime Minister is so proud of how he has divided people, if he is so proud of how he is forcing Canadians to choose between heating and eating, why does he not have the guts to stand up and say so now?

• (1430)

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell the House who is feeling abandoned by their leader. It is Conservative Albertans, New Democrat Albertans and Liberal Albertans, because Danielle Smith is trying to take Albertans out of the Canada pension plan.

What do we hear from the Leader of the Conservative Party? We hear weak sauce and platitudes. The pretender to the throne can stand here today and give a full-throated defence of the Canada pension plan, while his 30 Alberta MPs stand in silence. Will he or will he not? I know we will. Albertans can count on us defending them every single day, along with their pensions.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that carbon tax question was for the Prime Minister on Prime Minister's question period day. I know I do not have my glasses on, but that guy does not look like the Prime Minister.

I have a very simple motion, which says, "That, given that the government has announced a 'temporary, three-year pause' to the federal carbon tax on home heating oil, the House call on the government to extend that pause to all forms of home heating."

Will the Prime Minister have the courage to stand up and indicate whether the vote on this motion will be a free vote for his members?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those of us on this side of the House prefer to do good public policy rather than simply playing politics. I know that is an idea that seems to be foreign to the Leader of the Opposition.

Heating oil is two to four times more expensive than natural gas. It is a particularly acute issue for people in a number of provinces, not just in Atlantic Canada. The program that we are putting in place applies across the country. It is to ensure that we are address-

ing concerns around affordability in a thoughtful way, while also addressing concerns around climate change, which I am sure their children will tell them is a very important issue.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois motion we are voting on shortly calls on the government to review its immigration targets starting in 2024, after consulting with Quebec and the provinces about their integration capacity.

The minister, however, is preparing to unveil his immigration targets even though no one has been consulted. During a scrum today, Quebec's immigration minister confirmed that there had been no consultation.

Instead of doing one thing and voting the opposite, will the minister cancel his press conference and consult Quebec before announcing his immigration targets?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, that is not true. We are constantly consulting with Quebec. There is direct communication between our public services every day.

I would also like to point out that I have spoken directly to the Quebec minister about these targets, the integration target and sponsorship for refugees. I have asked her to make an extra effort.

We are certainly consulting. We disagree sometimes, but I would ask the member to look at the plan that talks about the Canada-Québec accord and says that that is to be determined. The entire determination process remains in the hands of Quebec City. It is perfectly good consultation.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there has to be a limit to spouting nonsense. Quebec was not consulted about the federal government's immigration targets. Quebec has said as much. This means that the targets the federal government is going to announce do not take into account Quebec's integration capacity.

Does the minister know how many additional classrooms will have to be opened to accommodate the children of families immigrating here in 2024? Does he know how many teachers, psychotherapists, speech therapists and special educators will need to be hired?

If the minister does not have those answers, will he at least cancel his press conference and look for the answers with Quebec and the provinces?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in an hour and a bit, people will have a chance to see the plan, and I would ask them to take a look at it. As for Quebec, the Canada-Quebec accord has been in place since 1991. Under this agreement, we send Quebec \$700 million a year. Do we demand accountability? No, we do not, because that is the relationship we have with Quebec. Perhaps we should be asking questions, but the fact is that Quebec has complete freedom to use this money to adapt its integration capacity, and we are going to support it.



● (1435)

[English]

### TAXATION

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has made it very clear that only those who vote for Liberals will get relief on their home heating, which has divided Canada and undermined the fight against the climate crisis. Canadians want to do the right thing, but they cannot, for example, navigate the onerous government programs for a heat pump. They end up giving up.

Therefore, instead of dividing Canadians, will the Prime Minister tax the excess profits of oil and gas companies and use that revenue to help all Canadians?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I would encourage the hon. leader of the New Democratic Party to do his homework. In terms of an onerous program, people who actually are going to be in receipt of a heat pump go in and sign up online; three days later, they get a cheque to ensure that they can do the installation. There is no onerous program. At the end of the day, we have developed a plan to address a key affordability issue in a manner that is consistent with fighting climate change. It is good public policy, and we will carry it out.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government has been clear. Anyone who wants a bit of help with their home heating has to vote Liberal. Duplessis would be proud. Who benefits? The big oil and gas companies benefit as they keep taking in federal subsidies and raking in record profits.

Will the Prime Minister put a stop to these Duplessis-style politics and give all Canadians some help?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the program we are talking about today applies across Canada and it is very important. We introduced a program to ensure affordability, but also to make sure that we could fight climate change. It is a good policy that is very important for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

### CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Prime Minister. The lone Liberal MP in Edmonton was asked, “Western Canada is being left out of this whole home heating oil and the exemption for home heat from the carbon price. Should natural gas be added to that?” He said that he is not concerned at all. He then went on to say that if Albertans want to have the exemption, they can switch their furnaces over to oil. Does the Prime Minister agree with the member from Edmonton Centre that Albertans should spend thousands of dollars putting in a more emitting source of energy just to avoid paying the carbon tax?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker,

### Oral Questions

the hockey team that plays in my home city is called the Oilers and we just handed a defeat to his former team, the Flames.

That being said, if I misspoke, let me be clear in this House. Albertans right now can actually use a federal program to go from natural gas to a heat pump with a \$5,000 credit from our government or a \$40,000 interest-free loan. It is the green homes program and the green loans program. If Premier Smith wants to extend free heat pumps to Albertans to get off of heating oil, she can join Atlantic premiers and work with the feds to make exactly that happen.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can understand why the Prime Minister did not want to stand up and defend that comment from the Liberal member.

This comment is similar to what we heard from Paul McLaughlin. He is the president of the Rural Municipalities of Alberta. He said, “If I have an understanding that I can buy heating oil—which is effectively kerosene—and I can buy it with no carbon levy, I would change all my grain drying and my barn heating to heating oil.... I’ll tell you right now, there are folks doing the math.”

Therefore, the government is now incentivizing farms to spend money shifting from natural gas drying and heating to oil heating, which has higher emissions. This makes no sense. Why will the Prime Minister not just shake off this lunacy and axe the tax?

● (1440)

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member does not understand this: Heating oil is two to four times as expensive as natural gas. It is a particularly acute issue with respect to heating and affordability. He should also be aware that the exemption is for three years, during which time, people are expected to implement heat pumps to ensure that they actually have an affordable way to address this issue, but in a manner that is consistent with fighting climate change. This is certainly something that the hon. leader either does not believe in or does not think is important.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while the question was for the Prime Minister, I am glad the member answered, because he reminded Atlantic Canadians that it is just a pause. If they re-elect the Prime Minister, they will get a massive tax increase on their home heating oil.

Where is all the money going? We now know that 60% of Canadians pay more in carbon taxes than they get back in rebates. The difference is funding the wasteful government. We now know that a senior member of the Liberal government's bureaucracy compared their billion-dollar green fund to the sponsorship scandal, saying that it was massive “incompetence”.

Who got rich, and who will have to pay?

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry welcomes the decision of the Auditor General to conduct an audit. He also welcomes the invitation he received to committee next week, where he will be answering Conservative questions with respect to this entire issue. I would also note that the organization has agreed to co-operate fully and is enabling all documents and information to be provided to the Auditor General.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now the carbon tax chaos continues. The incoming leader of the Liberal Party, Mark Carney, has weighed in and said, "I would have looked for other ways to provide ... support than the route chosen, not least because what is important is that clarity in terms of the overall plan, the overall direction." Now we have an incoming Liberal leader taking potshots at an outgoing Liberal Prime Minister who is in hiding.

How much longer can Canadians deal with this carbon tax chaos before we get an election and choose a common-sense Conservative plan?

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, before I give the floor to the parliamentary secretary to answer the question, I would like to remind all members, out of profound respect for the position and office of Leader of the Opposition, to please take a look at the statement I made regarding decorum in the House, in terms of understanding what all members have to do in their work.

The parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is 2023, and if someone does not have a plan to fight climate change and protect the environment, then they do not have a plan for the economy or for affordability either. It is very clear that the Conservative plan is just to cut funding for social services, such as the Canada child benefit, seniors funding and the dental benefit, which has just recently surpassed helping 200,000 children. The Conservative plan to fix global inflation by cutting people's services is not going to work. It is risky, irresponsible and absolutely reckless, as is the Conservative leader.

**The Speaker:** Again, I would like to remind all members, in their questions and answers, to make sure they are not impugning individual members. On matters regarding their courage, intelligence or even their presence in the House, I ask members to exercise restraint and decorum. We can have passionate debates in the House and do so within the rules that have been established by this place.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

• (1445)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, instead of answering my questions and engaging me in debate, the Prime Minister forces yet another random Liberal to read off PMO talking points about the carbon tax payoff that is unfolding in this country. He has one province threatening lawsuits and another not collecting the tax at all. He has NDP provincial govern-

ments and parties turning against him even though he is in coalition with that same party.

Will the Prime Minister end the carbon tax chaos and agree to my motion to simply treat every single Canadian equally and take the tax off so Canadians can keep the heat on?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the hon. member is actually listening to the responses, but at the end of the day, heating oil is two to four times as expensive as natural gas. It is a particularly acute issue with respect to affordability. We have come up with a program that will enable folks to put in place something that will save them significant money while being consistent with the fight against climate change.

It is, I would say, appalling that in this day and age we still have a party in the chamber, the Conservative Party of Canada, that has no policy on and not even any belief in the reality of climate change. It is time that changed, and Canadians will make that happen in the next election.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said he would have Wednesday Prime Minister's question period, that he would show up for work and answer questions, but here we are less than a week after he had to back down and pause his signature policy, the massive new carbon tax. His plan now is to quadruple that tax to 61¢ a litre, forcing seniors everywhere to choose between eating and heating.

If that is really the right thing to do, then why does he not have the guts to stand up and defend that policy before Canadians here and now?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the price on pollution is one part of a comprehensive approach to addressing the climate issue. It is implemented in a manner that is affordable. The majority of Canadians get more money back than they pay on the price on pollution.

Having a thoughtful approach to climate change is an important part of being a real and realistic political party in this country. We cannot actually have an environmental policy without a climate policy. We cannot actually have an effective economic plan for the future without recognizing the reality of climate change. It is time the Conservatives entered the modern era.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois motion that the minister will be supporting later today is about successful immigration.

Immigration cannot be successful when thresholds do not take integration capacity into consideration. Indeed, the Conference Board of Canada indicated yesterday that the number of disappointed immigrants who end up leaving Canada has skyrocketed. In 2017 alone, 60,000 immigrants left; two years later, it was 67,000. Problems with access to housing and economic integration were among the reasons cited.

Will the minister get back to work and consult Quebec instead of announcing immigration thresholds that are completely disconnected from our integration capacity?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, we have to keep increasing our efforts to integrate newcomers.

The flip side of those numbers is the unprecedented volume of people who want to come to Canada. I do not blame them, but the reality is that so many people want to come here because Canada is a welcoming country.

I think that criticizing Canada and Quebec by saying that we do not have the integration capacity shows bad faith and is essentially a refusal to listen to what is going on in the country.

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

**The Speaker:** I would encourage members who have not been recognized by the Speaker to allow the ones who have to ask and answer questions.

The hon. member for Saint-Jean.

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec has confirmed that it was not consulted.

This means that the immigration thresholds that the minister will unveil shortly do not take into account the availability of health care. They do not take into account space in our schools. They do not take into account child care spaces. They do not take into account capacity for French-language training. They do not take into account the housing crisis. They do not take into account the infrastructure that needs to be built to support population growth.

Did the the minister consult his astrologist to come up with the thresholds he will be announcing shortly?

• (1450)

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not going to talk about astrology. The member opposite was in the House when I gave my speech yesterday but she must not have been paying attention or she would have heard the details of what we are doing with Quebec to ensure that there is co-operation and coordination.

We have disagreements, of course, but what she does not understand—and this is odd because the agreement has been in place for as long as the Bloc Québécois has existed, since 1991—is that this falls under Quebec jurisdiction.

## Oral Questions

[English]

### FINANCE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the irony is, and this question is, for the Prime Minister, that the carbon tax chaos is unfolding within the Liberal tent itself. We saw last week, just as I was about to hold a thunderous rally with a thousand common-sense Nova Scotians to axe the tax, the Prime Minister was in a sweaty ball on the ground. He had to flip-flop and hold a hastily called and humiliating press conference.

Now, Mark Carney has come out against his flip-flop, and Percy Downe, a loyal Liberal senator, has called for the Prime Minister to resign because of his fiscal irresponsibility. Is that why he is hiding under his desk and refusing to answer questions today?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, other than trying to find ways to do indirectly what he is not actually allowed to do directly, the one thing that is consistent about the Leader of the Opposition is that he loves to pat himself on the back continuously.

At the end of the day, what we are interested in on this side of the House is good public policy. We have put into place a plan that will assure affordability for Canadians, that applies across the country and that does so in a manner that actually addresses the reality of climate change.

Once again, it is appalling and a shame that the Conservative Party does not believe in climate change and has no plan to do anything about it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Senator, Mr. Percy Downe wrote:

The opportunity for a [Conservative] government was created by a lack of fiscal responsibility [by the Liberal] government, and the damage it caused our economy is now showing up in the opinion poll numbers. Within the Liberal Party, many members who are in favour of fiscal responsibility...have given up on this current iteration of the [Liberal] party.

Hence, the leader should resign. However, he will not stand and answer questions, even though his itinerary shows that he was in this building today.

If the Prime Minister will not show up and do his job, which I will, why will he not get out of the way?

**The Speaker:** Over the last two weeks, many members have taken it upon themselves to quote my statement back to me, and I am quite happy to defend that statement as your Chair. Again, I will say that it is important for us to recognize that all members of the House have duties, regardless of which side they belong to, duties that sometimes take them out of the chamber. That is the reason why we try not to mention whether or not a member is present in the House. It is part of the duties.

We are going to continue. I believe the hon. House leader is going to answer this question.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find the last thing that the hon. Leader of the Opposition said particularly troubling, because it is Canadians who decide who sits in the House; it is not the Leader of the Opposition.

*Oral Questions*

Let me be very clear that it is troubling but not surprising, because when he was the minister of democratic reform, he made it harder for 150,000 of Canada's most vulnerable citizens to vote. He was also sanctioned by Elections Canada for violating electoral law. While what he is saying is completely inappropriate, it is unsurprising, given his track record and his lack of respect for democracy.

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

• (1455)

**The Speaker:** Order.

Could I ask the member for Surrey—Newton to please allow me to continue?

Colleagues, I ask all members to please exercise discretion. These are the things which you all raised with me and others in terms of improving discretion. Temperatures are running hot today. May I ask all members to respectfully sit down until I recognize them to speak, please?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

\* \* \*

**CARBON PRICING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can understand that as the Liberal members watch their Prime Minister in a panicked huddle, in the fetal position, shaking and trembling, they are losing control of themselves. The last few days of carbon tax chaos have been very hard on them, and now their leader is defending them.

The minister says we should let Canadians decide, so why do we not pause the carbon tax on all home heat until the vote, when Canadians will decide whether they want the Prime Minister's plan to hike the 61¢ a litre or my common-sense plan to axe the tax for everyone forever?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are several things that we as Liberals are united on. We are united on the fact that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to destroy the action that our government is taking on climate change, not only our government but governments across the world that are finally turning the tide. He wants to go back to the time when they were attacking climate action. We are united in the fact that we led the G7 in 2022 in growth, that we are going to be number one again in 2024 and that 64,000 jobs were created in Canada.

Which country would he change places with when he denigrates Canada? What country does he think is better? This is the greatest country in the world, and we will stand up for it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have someone now auditioning for the job of prime minister. When the cat is away, the mice will play, but we do not need any more of this chaos.

If the NDP would actually do its job and hold the government to account, it would announce today that its members would vote in accordance with the views of the NDP in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and now Manitoba, all of whom agree that people in cold climates, whether it be in Timmins, Kapuskasing or Churchill, should enjoy tax-free heat.

Will they vote to keep the heat on by taking the tax off, or will they once again serve the out-of-touch Prime Minister?

• (1500)

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times, and perhaps the hon. Leader of the Opposition has not heard me, home heating oil is up to four times as expensive as natural gas. It creates challenges with respect to affordability for Canadians.

We have come forward with a plan that applies in every province and territory in this country. It will address that particular issue in a manner that will be affordable and will ensure long-term savings for families, but will do so in a manner that continues the fight against climate change, a fight against climate change that would not happen if he was on the other side of the House.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a Palestinian refugee camp was bombed by the Israel Defence Forces. We saw lifeless children being pulled out of the rubble. We heard agonizing screams of the worst human suffering.

Palestinians in Gaza are being used as human shields and being bombed for crimes they have not committed. Canada cannot stand by while innocent people die. We must demand a ceasefire and a release of all hostages now.

How can the Prime Minister defend abstaining from the UN's call for a ceasefire?

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think every member of this House of Commons is looking at the situation in Gaza and Israel as a crisis that is of proportions that are dire and are causing us to lose sleep at night.

We continue to negotiate the best way possible for hostages to be released. We continue to work at getting humanitarian aid into the area and getting Canadians out. We will continue to monitor the situation even as hearts are breaking.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the media is reporting that members of the Canadian Forces are currently in Israel. Canada cannot participate in this blood bath and in the deaths of innocents.

The Prime Minister is not calling for a ceasefire and is abstaining from the UN's call for a ceasefire.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that no Canadian troops will participate in the war?

[English]

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear: We are not providing military assistance to Israel. What we are doing is providing force protection for Canadians and assisting the Canadian embassy in Israel with contingency planning. This is similar to the CANSOFCOM presence and assistance we have provided in other instances, including in Sudan.

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#### CHILD CARE

**Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on building a Canada-wide early learning and child care system, but we know that this will not be possible without the hard work of all our early childhood educators. Attracting and retaining educators is critically important, and for too long, their working conditions and compensation have not met the desired standard.

To the minister, what is our government doing to change this situation across the country and in my home province of British Columbia?

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, early childhood educators deserve to be well compensated and respected. That is why on Monday, alongside the Province of British Columbia, my colleague, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, announced a two-dollar-per-hour wage increase for eligible early childhood educators, effective December 1 of this year.

In the first two years, British Columbia has created an additional 10,000 child care spaces, and parents have been saving up to \$550 per month per child. This is what happens when governments work together. We can deliver even more for Canadians.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

#### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are struggling to eat as well as heat and house themselves, but money from the carbon tax is lining the pockets of Liberal insiders. One government official said that it is “a sponsorship-scandal level...giveaway”.

It is clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost when his \$1-billion green slush fund already has \$40 million under investigation. One insider, Annette Verschuren, is a friend of the Prime Minister. It turns out she is also chair of the board.

Can the Prime Minister stand up and tell us how much his friend received in contracts from his billion-dollar slush fund?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the Conservative member began his question by talking about the affordability crisis here in Canada but did not end it that way.

#### Oral Questions

Allow me to address the fact that Canadians are struggling right now and that the supports we have put in place are helping them to make ends meet, whether they are supports through our child care program or supports to Canadians who are having a hard time paying their rent or mortgage. We have lifted over 2.3 million Canadians out of poverty since coming into government. These programs work and we will continue to make sure that Canadians benefit from them.

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is astounding to hear the member say this program works. This program is under investigation, and \$40 million is the subject of gross mismanagement and conflicts of interest in the Prime Minister's billion-dollar green slush fund.

After eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, it is picking Canadians' pockets with the carbon tax and putting it into Liberal insiders' pockets. The Prime Minister clearly is not worth the cost.

His friend is chair of the board. She is receiving contracts. Can the government tell us exactly how much of the money it has taken out of Canadians' pockets he has put into the pocket of his friend?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier with respect to SDTC, the Minister of Innovation welcomes the decision of the Auditor General to conduct a full audit. The SDTC has agreed to provide all of the information and documents necessary to the committee. I understand the Minister of Innovation will be appearing before the committee next week in order to answer everyone's questions.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Liberal government, another Liberal scandal involving the mismanagement of public funds has come to light. This time, it has to do with the \$1-billion green fund that is currently under investigation by the Auditor General.

That fund comes from the money collected through the carbon tax, which the Bloc Québécois supports and wants to radically increase. Today, Daniel Leblanc reported on CBC that a senior official said, “That is almost a sponsorship-scandal level kind of giveaway.”

Will the Prime Minister rise in the House and clearly indicate which Liberal friend benefited from this misplaced generosity?

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we expect the organizations to adhere to the strictest standards of governance. As I was saying, the Minister of Innovation welcomed the decision by the Auditor General of Canada to proceed with an audit. The minister himself is appearing before the committee next week to answer questions.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the report, whistle-blowers are very disappointed at how slow the federal government is to act. Again in the report, a senior official states that this is about “sloppiness”, “laziness” and “outright incompetence”.

That is how this senior official describes this management of public funds by this Liberal government. After eight years of this Liberal government, here is more evidence that it is not worth the cost.

What interest did the Prime Minister have in dragging his feet in this case, which, unfortunately for all Canadians, brings up sad memories, namely the sponsorship scandal?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can confirm today that the department has been working in close collaboration with the Office of the Auditor General of Canada on this issue from day one. As I said, the Minister of Innovation welcomes the decision of the Auditor General to proceed with an audit and he is prepared to answer questions from the Conservatives and all members of the committee next week.

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**SMALL BUSINESS**

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 250,000 businesses are at risk of bankruptcy if the federal government does not push back the deadline for repaying the Canada emergency business account loans without loss of subsidy. If the government thinks it is expensive to help businesses, it has not calculated how much it costs to abandon them. How many companies will be unable to repay the loans in full? How many collections will it have to undertake to get its money back? How many workers will end up on employment insurance?

When will the minister finally realize that causing 250,000 bankruptcies is going to cost her dearly?

• (1510)

**Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Small Business, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government understands that small businesses are still trying to recover from the pandemic. That is why we recently announced a one-year repayment extension, more refinancing flexibility and more time to access loan forgiveness.

This is in addition to our increase in the Canada child benefit and \$10-a-day child care, which has enabled more women to enter the workforce than ever before.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, presenting information in this fashion is called disinformation. It is unbelievable that we have to explain to the government that forcing 250,000 businesses to go bankrupt is not economically viable,

but we will keep trying. The government thinks that taking a hard line with our SMEs helps curb inflation. On the contrary, all these bankruptcies will increase the scarcity of goods and services, which could impact the prices people have to pay. This could in turn drive up the cost of living while hurting local economies.

Why take such a risk when the government could simply show some flexibility with our SMEs?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think that scaring our SMEs is a good idea. We were there for them with the Canada emergency business account, wage subsidies and rent supports. The federal government provided \$8 out of every \$10 of relief during COVID-19.

We are there for SMEs, and we are making the transition. It is now up to commercial banks to continue the work. We encourage businesses to make the transition as well, but we are still there and programs still have three years of flexibility and many different terms and conditions.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change said that he will not grant any more carbon tax exemptions while he is minister. He seems to think that people in the Atlantic provinces are the only ones suffering as a result of these taxes. Meanwhile, what is the Bloc doing? The Bloc is asking the government to drastically increase the Liberal taxes. It seems as though the Conservatives are the only ones who care about Quebec's interests.

I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Will he get out of the way so that we can cancel the carbon tax across the country?

**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, again, I repeat that there is no federal carbon tax in Quebec.

Not only do the Conservatives still not have a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent climate change, but they also have no vision on how to adapt to the effects of climate change. That is not just irresponsible; it is incompetent.

[English]

**Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week, a desperate Prime Minister admitted his punishing carbon tax is making life more expensive for all Canadians. He also said that if re-elected, the NDP-Liberal government will quadruple the carbon tax on home heating, gas and groceries. After eight years, the Prime Minister is now admitting he is just not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister stop the gimmicks, stop the temporary measures, stop the bogus claims and axe the carbon tax for all Canadians for good?

**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, if there was ever any doubt, the leader of the Conservatives has made it perfectly clear for Canadians that the Conservatives have no plan to fight climate change. They want to take Canada backward on climate action. The Conservatives all ran on a promise in 2021 to price carbon, but when they ditched Erin O'Toole, they ditched any progressive values they once had and the words “climate change” from their vernacular.

Their lack of a plan on climate change is risky and irresponsible. They should get with the program and realize that climate change is a real problem in Canada and around the world.

• (1515)

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the panicking Prime Minister is plummeting in the polls and the nervous Nellie Atlantic Liberal MPs are whining to please help save them. The NDP-Liberal government's solution is to put the carbon tax up 61¢ after the next election. In other words, people should vote Liberal to quadruple the carbon tax after the next election or vote Conservative to axe the tax. The flip-flopping Prime Minister now admits he is not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister come clean and tell Atlantic Canadians how much the carbon tax will cost after the next election?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to come back to the Conservative leader's comment about the thunderous rally that was held on the east coast and perhaps refer to the gigantic one that was held in my riding.

There is a user on Twitter called “The Answer Is No”, and it is kind of funny. They spread it around and criticize me quite often too. The trick is that they ask a question but the answer is always no. Last week, his question was whether the Conservative leader's gigantic rally drew more people than a Saturday at the St. John's dump. The answer was no, it did not. As one Mount Pearl resident noted, there were more people at the Cowan Plaza Bingo.

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[Translation]

## HEALTH

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 has proven how important it is to prepare for pandemics. Vaccinations are one of the most effective tools we have to help protect public health from COVID-19 in general and to prevent severe forms of the illness.

Can the Minister of Health tell the House about his visit to the new Moderna factory in Laval and its impact on Canadians?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question and his excellent work.

## Oral Questions

Clearly, vaccines have saved millions of lives. Canada's response to the pandemic was one of the best in the world.

I had the privilege of visiting the new Moderna plant in Laval last Friday. It is a site where future vaccines will be manufactured here, in Canada. Producing the next vaccine here, in Canada, is extremely important to protect our health and safety.

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[English]

## CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the desperation of the NDP-Liberal government proves the Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

Liberals admitted that the carbon tax exemption was not granted to western Canadians because they do not vote Liberal. The minister from Edmonton Centre and the member for Calgary Skyview are either so ineffective that the Prime Minister just ignores them or they actually agree that Alberta should pay more to keep the heat on.

Will the Prime Minister take the heat off home heating for all Canadians, yes or no?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, we have the opportunity in Alberta to join the federal government and provide heat pumps for those who need it, but let us look at the facts.

What have the MP for Calgary Skyview and the MP for Edmonton Centre, who happens to be me, done for Albertans? We have worked with the Liberal government to cut child poverty by over half. We have delivered a Canada child benefit to our ridings. We have implemented \$10-a-day child care, and we got a new pipeline to tidewater, which is something the members on that side of the aisle could never accomplish. Two Liberals have done more than 30 MPs in six years. They do not like it, but we do, and so do Canadians.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is finally admitting he is not worth the cost. He removed his punitive carbon tax on home heating oil, temporarily relieving the burden on the backs of 3% of Canadians.

Over 90% of Saskatchewan households are heated with natural gas. Are there higher taxes for them because they do not vote Liberal? Well, Saskatchewan cleaned its house in 2019, and now coast to coast to coast, Canadians are calling for a majority common-sense Conservative government that will axe the tax.

How about them apples, Mr. Prime Minister?

*Oral Questions*

● (1520)

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said a couple of times, heating oil is up to four times as expensive as natural gas. It creates affordability challenges. We have put into place measures that will ensure affordability and save families up to \$2,500 a year going forward, but in a manner that also addresses the climate crisis.

I would say to the hon. member, she also may want to do her homework on the programs in place that enable the replacement of natural gas-fired furnaces with heat pumps. It is called the greener homes loan.

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now, Quebecers know that voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly.

The Bloc Québécois voted in favour of the second carbon tax. The Liberal government decided to create two classes of Canadians: people from Atlantic Canada and everyone else. Quebecers and other Canadians will not get the temporary carbon tax rebate. The Prime Minister says that it will not make any other exceptions. It is outrageous.

After eight years, this government has lost control and Canadians are getting poorer. Can it regroup and cancel the carbon tax for all Canadians?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am rather shocked by the participation of my colleagues from Quebec who are in the Conservative Party.

I would like my colleague across the way to ask his colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent why, when he was at the National Assembly of Quebec, he said he was so happy with the carbon exchange. He said:

[We are] glad...that there will be a greenhouse gas emissions registry, and the fact that this information will be made public confirms to us the desire for transparency that unites us all here in this chamber.

It is truly shameful to speak out of both sides of one's mouth.

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member for Sudbury.

\*\*\*

[English]

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Ms. Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to the detriment of our economy, the Conservative Party is blocking two vital pieces of legislation that would create sustainable jobs, bring workers to the table and build important renewable energy projects.

First, it blocked workers from speaking at committee. Then it cancelled debate in this chamber, and now it is filibustering the natural resources committee to stop consideration of Bill C-50 and Bill C-49.

Could the minister inform the House of the importance of the sustainable jobs act and the Atlantic accords act?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her hard work for her community and for workers across Canada. The Atlantic accords act and the Canadian sustainable jobs act are key to unlocking generational economic opportunities for Canada.

The Atlantic accords act would allow for the development of an offshore wind industry, which would create thousands of jobs in Atlantic Canada. The sustainable jobs act would bring workers to the table and equip them with the tools and skills they need to thrive.

I call upon the Conservative Party to end its wasteful filibuster and allow committee members to consider these bills. It should heed the call of premiers, industry, workers and the House to advance Bill C-50 and Bill C-49. It is simply wasting time and the money of taxpayers.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP moved a motion at the health committee to launch an independent public inquiry into Canada's COVID response. Shockingly, the Conservatives joined with the Liberals to defeat this common-sense proposal.

New Democrats believe that Canadians deserve transparency on and accountability for how their government handled every aspect of the pandemic. No stone should be left unturned. Can the Prime Minister explain why his party teamed up with the Conservatives to block this overdue, essential inquiry?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his work in this space.

As he knows, and as I mentioned earlier in question period, Canada had among the best responses to COVID-19 anywhere in the world. Thanks to vaccines and to other measures, we saved literally hundreds of thousands of lives, which is something we should be deeply proud of.

We are going to be conducting not only the review that the member is talking about but also a forward-facing review. There are all kinds of reviews now to take the lessons that we learned during the pandemic and apply them to our entire health system.

I want to thank everybody who was on the front lines of keeping us safe. We are going to honour that work by making sure we learn and do everything we can to keep people safe.



● (1525)

## HOUSING

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, 24 Liberal MPs supposedly represent Toronto. Using the Minister of Rural Economic Development's handbook to get things done, how come none of those 24 MPs are standing up for people sleeping on Toronto streets?

They are also missing in action to get the government to honour its promise to assist Toronto with our COVID budget shortfall. Many Torontonians will struggle to heat and, hopefully, keep their homes this winter. They would like a carbon tax deferral too.

While the two Liberal MPs from Alberta can hold their regional caucus in a phone booth, can the Prime Minister explain how this Toronto 24 have simply disappeared?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member fails to mention the advocacy of Toronto MPs who pushed for this government to invest no less than \$290 million for the City of Toronto so that it could respond to homelessness challenges. That is exactly what is happening. We will continue to work with that municipality and with other municipalities across the country.

This is an unacceptable situation that we find ourselves in, but we have a choice. Do we respond, and how do we respond? We respond with co-operation. We respond by working together. That is what we will continue to do.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the recipients of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Awards, including the winners of the John C. Polanyi Award, the Brockhouse Canada Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering, the Donna Strickland Prize for Societal Impact of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research, the Synergy Awards for Innovation, and the Arthur B. McDonald Fellowships.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise before my colleagues in the House today to respond to a concern raised yesterday regarding a response I gave to the Bloc Québécois.

I used some language yesterday that I will not repeat for the purposes of this point of order. I understand that the words I used may have offended some people. I therefore withdraw them and apologize.

## Points of Order

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. minister not only for withdrawing his comments, but also for apologizing. That is very kind of him. I think it enhances the decorum of the House.

[English]

**Hon. Marc Miller:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Pursuant to subsection 94(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, the 2023 annual report to Parliament on immigration.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been in the House for many years, and I have always been respectful to the Chair and tried never to be disrespectful. However, today, it went beyond my tolerance when you, Mr. Speaker, were not respected.

The rule of the House is that when the Speaker is up, every member should sit down. The Leader of the Opposition did not follow that. He was so arrogant that, time and time again, you told him, but he never sat down. That is why—

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

**The Speaker:** It is important for all members to respect not only the regulations but also the traditions of the House. There is certainly an understanding that, when the Speaker takes his or her feet, all members should sit down.

I did not ask for a while, but when I asked, I would note that the members did all sit down. I appreciate that they followed this important tradition of the House.

The hon. member for Lakeland has a point of order.

● (1530)

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, certainly I would not be one to raise any issues about decorum, because I think it is fair to suggest that I am a fairly assertive advocate on behalf of the people of Lakeland after eight years in the House of Commons. I certainly would not want to be hypocritical. Mr. Speaker, you have noted the importance of decorum, of how we speak to each other and of ensuring that the temperature can remain low as we do our duty on behalf of Canadians in this place of democracy for the common people. However, given this, I would note that, during question period, the member for Ajax quite directly challenged whether our leader and Conservatives truly care about Canada, the future of this country and, ultimately, all constituents, as well as whether we are patriots.

I can say not only on my own behalf and certainly that of the leader, but also on behalf of every single member of Parliament in the Conservative Party, and I would like to assume in every other party, that we care deeply about this country and Canadians. I hope I can be forgiven afterwards for doing so, because I did not ask for permission in advance. I just wanted to raise that for your consideration, Mr. Speaker.

*Business of Supply*

**The Speaker:** I would like to thank the member for Lakeland for bringing up the issue of decorum. I would also like to cut the member a bit of slack. All members, from time to time, can be very passionate about their debates, so they know that there will be interventions that are made. I made that clear in the statement about decorum, which I am glad the member supports. I am glad, listening to the applause from members in the House, that all members support improving decorum in this place and following the guidelines that have been set out from the Chair.

I will certainly take a look at that issue. I was a little preoccupied today, trying to make sure all members were acting in a decorous manner. If I missed that, I certainly will look. However, raising the issue about any hon. member's commitment to their ridings, to their region or to their country is something we should all avoid. Every member here has taken the steps to represent their communities, and they do so with honour. We need to make sure we never question that, as we should also make sure we do not question members, as I indicated, about their courage, presence in the House and so on. I encourage all members to refer to the statement I made two weeks ago.

I thank the member for Lakeland for that. I thank the members who supported her and applauded her for making that intervention, and I would truly hope that, for the rest of the day and going forward, we will all try to avoid what happened here today during Oral Questions.

I thank all hon. members for that.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1535)

[Translation]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—IMMIGRATION THRESHOLD AND INTEGRATION CAPACITY

The House resumed from October 31 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:35 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Saint-Jean relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

• (1545)

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

(Division No. 438)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboulttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton

Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hallan	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Hoback	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khanna
Khera	Kitchen
Kmiec	Koutrakis
Kram	Kramp-Neuman

Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lamoureux  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Leslie  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Maloney  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrissey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Petitpas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Savard-Tremblay  
Scheer  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh  
Sorbara  
Sousa  
Ste-Marie  
St-Onge  
Stubbs  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thompson  
Tolmie  
Trudel  
Uppal  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal  
Viersen

Kusie  
Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lametti  
Lantsman  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Essex)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Majumdar  
Martel  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
McPherson  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Rota  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Schieffe  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Soroka  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Strahl  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Vignola

Villemure  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Williams  
Yip  
Zarrillo  
Zuberi— 323

Virani  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilkinson  
Williamson  
Zahid  
Zimmer

### Private Members' Business

#### NAYS

Nil

#### PAIRED

##### Members

Brunelle-Duceppe  
Lemire  
MacAulay (Cardigan)

Champagne  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Ng— 6

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from October 27 consideration of the motion 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.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-205 under Private Members' Business.

● (1600)

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

(Division No. 439)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Alghabra  
Allison  
Anandasangaree  
Arnold  
Arya  
Atwin  
Badawey  
Baker  
Barlow  
Barron  
Battiste  
Beech  
Bennett  
Berthold  
Bezan  
Bittle  
Blair  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Block  
Boissonnault  
Bradford

Aitchison  
Aldag  
Ali  
Anand  
Angus  
Arseneault  
Ashton  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Barsalou-Duval  
Beaulieu  
Bendayan  
Bergeron  
Bérubé  
Bibeau  
Blaikie  
Blanchet  
Blaney  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Bragdon

*Private Members' Business*

Brassard	Brière	Majumdar	Maloney
Brock	Calkins	Martel	Martínez Ferrada
Cannings	Caputo	Masse	Mathysen
Carr	Carrie	May (Cambridge)	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
Casey	Chabot	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Chagger	Chahal	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Chambers	Champoux	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Chatel	Chen	McLean	McLeod
Chiang	Chong	McPherson	Melillo
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper	Mendès	Mendicino
Cormier	Coteau	Miao	Michaud
Dabrusin	Dalton	Miller	Moore
Damoff	Dancho	Morantz	Morrice
Davidson	Davies	Morrison	Morrissey
DeBellefeuille	Deltell	Motz	Murray
Desbiens	Desilets	Muys	Naqvi
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal	Nater	Noormohamed
Dhillon	Diab	Normandin	O'Connell
Doherty	Dong	Oliphant	O'Regan
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Patzner	Paul-Hus
Drouin	Dubourg	Pauzé	Perkins
Duclos	Duguid	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz	Plamondon	Poilievre
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Powlowski	Redekopp
Ellis	Epp	Reid	Rempel Garner
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Richards	Roberts
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Robillard	Rodriguez
Ferreri	Fillmore	Rogers	Romanado
Findlay	Fisher	Rood	Rota
Fonseca	Fortier	Ruff	Sahota
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Sajjan	Saks
Fraser	Freeland	Samson	Saraï
Fry	Gaheer	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Gaïney	Gallant	Scheer	Schiefke
Garon	Garrison	Schmale	Seebach
Gaudreau	Gazan	Serré	Sgro
Généreux	Genuis	Shanahan	Sheehan
Gerretsen	Gill	Shields	Shipley
Gladu	Godin	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Goodridge	Gould	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Gourde	Gray	Singh	Small
Green	Guilbeault	Sorbara	Soroka
Hajdu	Hallan	Sousa	Steinley
Hanley	Hardie	Ste-Marie	Stewart
Hepfner	Hoback	St-Onge	Strahl
Holland	Housefather	Stubbs	Sudds
Hughes	Hussen	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Hutchings	Iacono	Thériault	Therrien
Idlout	Ien	Thompson	Tochor
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Tolmie	Trudeau
Johns	Joly	Trudel	Turnbull
Jowhari	Julian	Uppal	Valdez
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Kelly	Khalid	Van Popta	Vandal
Khanha	Khera	Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Kitchen	Kmiec	Vidal	Vien
Koutrakis	Kram	Viersen	Vignola
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Villemure	Virani
Kusie	Kusmierczyk	Vis	Vuong
Kwan	Lake	Wagantall	Warkentin
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Waugh	Webber
Lametti	Lamoureux	Weiler	Wilkinson
Lantsman	Lapointe	Williams	Williamson
Larouche	Lattanzio	Yip	Zahid
Lauzon	Lawrence	Zarrillo	Zimmer
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Zuberi — 323	
Lehoux	Leslie		
Lewis (Essex)	Liepert		
Lightbound	Lloyd		
Lobb	Long		
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)		
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor		
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire	Nil	

NAYS

## PAIRED

### Members

Brunelle-Duceppe  
Lemire  
MacAulay (Cardigan)

Champagne  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Ng— 6

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

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

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 25 minutes.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 11 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### FINANCE

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Finance, entitled "Merger of Royal Bank of Canada and HSBC Bank Canada".

[Translation]

#### TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities entitled "Building a More Climate Resilient Canada".

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

I want to thank our clerk, our analysts, the interpreters and the committee members for their usual amazing work.

[English]

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a supplemental report on behalf of my Conservative colleagues on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. I echo the committee chair and express our gratitude to the witnesses, staff, analysts and clerk.

While we support several recommendations in the report, we believe it is vital to highlight key concerns, including the widening infrastructure gap, largely due to Liberal bureaucracy and its failures, which is a pressing issue. Layering more red tape on this will not

### Routine Proceedings

help fix that. Also, with the housing affordability crisis, we need to prioritize affordable energy-efficient homes. More bureaucracy, which is contained in the recommendations in this report, is not the answer. Common-sense Conservatives want to see results: more keys in doors and building homes, not bureaucracy.

More details on this and other recommendations in our supplemental report are included.

• (1605)

[Translation]

#### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 51st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 92(3)(a), the committee reports that it has concurred in the first report of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business advising that Bill C-339, an act to amend the Competition Act (efficiencies defence), should be designated non-votable.

#### LIAISON

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 107(3), I have the honour to present, in both official language, the seventh report of the Liaison Committee, entitled "Committee Activities and Expenditures: April 1, 2023 - August 31, 2023".

This report highlights the work and accomplishments of each committee, as well as detailing the budgets that fund the activities approved by committee members.

\* \* \*

### ALBANIAN HERITAGE MONTH ACT

**Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-361, Albanian Heritage Month Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill entitled the Albanian heritage month act. The bill, if passed, would designate the month of November every year as Albanian heritage month across Canada.

I would like to thank the member for Toronto—Danforth for seconding this bill. I hope all members of the House will support it.

Canada is home to many Canadians of Albanian heritage. Their contributions to our economic lives, our cultural lives, our social lives and much more span from coast to coast to coast. This bill, if passed, would give us another opportunity to celebrate Albanian heritage month. It would give us a chance to celebrate those contributions. It would also give Albanian Canadians and all Canadians another chance to say this:

[Member spoke in Albanian]

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

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

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, presented on Tuesday, February 14, be concurred in.

I will be sharing my time with my great colleague from Yorkton—Melville.

This is an important report from the foreign affairs committee that focuses on the many actions required from Canada to continue and strengthen our support for the people of Ukraine. This week, at the Subcommittee on International Human Rights, we had harrowing testimony noting that as part of its illegal, genocidal invasion of Ukraine, Russia is using child abduction. Children are being abducted from Ukraine and brought to Russia, and this is part of the genocidal campaign of the Putin regime. It was harrowing testimony, and we will be hearing directly from victims at next Tuesday's hearings. This underlines how critical it is that we stand with Ukraine, that we fight for freedom and that we stand for truth and justice.

During yesterday's testimony, the point was made about Ukraine's territorial integrity that territorial integrity is not simply or primarily a matter of land. It is a matter of people. When Russia takes over or tries to take over territory, it is not just stealing land. The Russian regime is involved in a campaign of stealing people, of forcing people into its authoritarian orbit, of sexual violence and of stealing children from their families. Therefore, when Ukraine fights for territorial integrity, when it demands respect for territorial integrity, this is not just or primarily a matter of land; it is a matter of people and preventing the Putin regime from stealing people.

This report, a unanimous report from the foreign affairs committee that we are seeking to concur in today, has many different recommendations, all of which are important and many of which speak to justice, to bringing the aggressor to justice and to the steps Canada can take to do this, including, for instance, supporting the special tribunal for the crime of aggression. Recommendation 4 speaks of expelling diplomats. The report includes some creative ways of getting information to the Russian people, such as "supporting a free and open internet in Russia through the use of technologies such as virtual private networks". There are many recommendations that are valuable and would be relatively uncontroversial in this House.

I want to focus my remarks on two recommendations. Those are recommendation 12 and recommendation 15. Recommendation 12 of this report says, "That the Government of Canada not grant a sanctions waiver to Siemens Energy Canada Limited for Nord Stream 1 pipeline turbines as long as sanctions remain in effect."

This was an important recommendation because last summer, instead of working to bring Canadian energy to Europe to displace Russian oil and gas exports and instead of trying to use Canadian

energy as a tool to reduce European dependence on Russia, the government was granting an exception to sanctions to allow the export of turbines to facilitate Russian energy exports to Europe. Rather than helping to create jobs in Canada and supporting energy exports from Canada to Europe, the government was more interested in allowing turbines that would facilitate the export of energy from Russia to Europe. Russian energy exports have been critical for the Putin regime as it tries to maintain its war. Its selling of energy is fuelling the violence we are seeing.

The area where the government has been the weakest when it comes to supporting our allies in their fight against the Putin regime is not understanding the importance of energy security and not understanding the crucial role that Canada could play there. It is a win-win-win. Exporting our energy, developing our energy sector and supporting the rapid export of energy resources to Europe are good for European security and good for our economy.

Often we talk about energy as an economic issue only. It is an economic issue but also a global security issue, because most of the world's democracies are geographically small, densely populated nations that rely on energy imports. As long as those nations are buying gas from Russia, they are sending back money that is being used as part of this horrific campaign of genocidal violence against Ukraine.

● (1610)

Canada, as a geographically large and sparsely populated country rich in natural resources, has a unique and special role to play if we develop our energy sector and we export that energy, displacing that dependence. Last summer, instead of thinking about this economic opportunity and security imperative, the government was granting a turbine to facilitate continuing exports of gas from Russia through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline. This was a massive betrayal of our allies in Ukraine. The ambassador from Ukraine came before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development and was very clear that this was not at all what the Ukrainian government wanted. The Ukrainian government recognized the vital importance of allies standing united in opposing those sanctions, and the government failed.

That is recommendation 12. It is important the House concur in that recommendation as a sign of support for Ukraine and to be clear that never again should we allow the kind of weakening of sanctions we saw last fall. Finally, after months, the government pulled back on that permit after sustained opposition pressure, but frankly it sent a very negative and counterproductive message at the time.

Finally, I want to speak about recommendation 15. Recommendation 15 calls on the Government of Canada to list the Wagner Group, a Russian mercenary organization, as a terrorist group under the Criminal Code. This would be a critical step. The Wagner Group is responsible for horrific violence in Ukraine but also for violence in other parts of the world. The Wagner Group is notionally a private military organization with close affiliations with the Russian government. Historically, of course there have been some structural changes since the abortive coup and some further developments since this report was tabled, although it still makes good sense to list the Wagner Group as a terrorist organization as per this recommendation, as well as to look for the ways in which the institutional architecture of this oppression shifts as the Russian government responds to the abortive coup.

The call for the listing of Wagner Group as a terrorist organization is important in terms of delivering justice for the people of Ukraine and holding these violent terrorists accountable. It is also important for people of many other countries. There are many countries in Africa where the Wagner Group has been operating and has been, in effect, stealing from the people of those countries and has been responsible for absolutely brutal campaigns of violence within those countries. We see the increasing deployment and use of the Wagner Group in particular in Africa responsible for so much death and destruction and a kind of neocolonial policy of the Russian government trying to subject African countries and deploying this violence against vulnerable people.

The Liberal government has refused calls to list the Wagner Group as a terrorist organization. There was a unanimous consent motion in the House calling for that listing. There was this recommendation of the foreign affairs committee, a unanimous recommendation I believe, calling for the listing of Wagner as a terrorist organization. This is another way where we need to see the Liberal government step up in terms of its support for Ukraine.

There are many different positive recommendations in terms of bringing the Putin regime to justice and providing military and humanitarian support for Ukraine. These are all recommendations Conservatives support. We strongly support the actions required for quickly delivering the support necessary to the people of Ukraine.

Again, I want to particularly highlight these two recommendations, where the government has been unfortunately missing in action. Number 12 is on energy security. If Canada is going to support Ukraine effectively, we must attend to the energy security dimension of this conflict. We must attend to the reality that the Russian regime relies on energy exports in order to fund this aggressive war. Canada can provide an alternative for countries that have in the past been dependent on Russia.

We must attend to the energy security dimension and we must recognize the terrorist groups like the Wagner Group that the Russian regime is using for violence in Ukraine, for violence at home and indeed for violence around the world.

Concurring in this 10th report, including recognizing the importance of those particular recommendations, would go a long way. We are proud to propose that the House take these steps today to make these important acts of recognition.

### *Routine Proceedings*

• (1615)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I made an error in my vote on Bill S-205. I wish to vote yea. I ask for unanimous consent from this House to have that changed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the House would agree with me that we are witnessing a certain level of hypocrisy today.

On the one hand we have a Conservative Party that likes to pretend it is supporting what is taking place and Canada's position with the allied forces against what Russia is doing in Ukraine. Today, we were supposed to be debating Bill C-57, which plays a direct role with respect to Canada-Ukraine relations and what is taking place in Europe today. Instead of debating that bill, not only for the first time but now for the second time, the Conservatives are preventing it from being debated and being passed to go to committee.

The question I have for the member is this. His colleague, the member for Cumberland—Colchester, said that Bill C-57, the Canada-Ukraine trade deal, is woke. He said that Canada is taking advantage of Ukraine at a time of war by bringing in the bill. Is that why the Conservative Party continues to play the game of preventing the debate on Bill C-57 and it going to committee?

• (1620)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, it is clear the member does not want to talk about listing the Wagner Group as a terrorist organization. It is clear he does not want to talk about the important work that needs to be done around supporting European energy security.

I can tell members that our party strongly supports free trade. We want to have strengthened trade on energy. We believe there is an urgent need for Canada to do more to engage in energy partnerships in co-operation with other countries.

I think it is also clear that the government's priorities, when it comes to international engagement, have not actually been on leveraging the opportunity and importance of energy security. It likes to say the word "trade", but it does not believe in the opportunities that come with trade in natural gas and other commodities that Canada is blessed with and has an opportunity to use to advance global security.

Our party stands with Ukraine. We stand on the side of strong free trade that recognizes the opportunities and benefits to all countries. I think energy security is a key part that the government is missing, which is why this report is so important.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, naturally, this is a very important report. I would have liked to talk about Bill C-57, but this is an important report nonetheless.

*Routine Proceedings*

I would like my colleague to talk about recommendation 6. For a long time, the Prairies of western Canada were considered Canada's breadbasket, that is, the place to source wheat and other grains. Ukraine has taken on this role globally.

What consequences does war have on the world's food supply? How can recommendation 6 help avoid food security problems around the world?

[English]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. Ukraine is critical for global food security. We have seen the implications of this conflict, this brutal invasion of Ukraine, in that it has been much more challenging for Ukrainian farmers who grow food for their own communities and for export. There are many countries in Africa, for example, that are very much reliant on imports of food from Ukraine. Therefore, it is an important area that recommendation 6 deals with in regard to the Government of Canada strengthening global food security and recognizing the role Ukraine plays in joining in the efforts to support the Black Sea grain initiative.

Russia has continued to play games in this area to make it more difficult to continue to export grain. Of course, the circumstances of a war have created great challenges for Ukrainian farmers. It underlines the importance of this conflict. Negative implications are not just limited to Ukraine but are global in their reach. We need to act urgently to support the people of Ukraine in their struggle to restore territorial integrity and a strong victory as soon as possible.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we heard from the member about the many important things in the 10th report, and I do not disagree with him about the importance of the report.

However, given that it was adopted unanimously in the committee, and now that we have had those important recommendations brought to the attention of the House, would the hon. member not agree that if we simply had no more people rising to speak on this, we could pass it, deal with the report and move on to other equally important business of the House?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, it was a unanimous report, but I would draw the attention of the member, respectfully, to the government response, which does not concur with all the recommendations. In particular, the government did not concur with recommendation no. 15.

I believe it was actually a member of his party that put forward the unanimous consent motion to recognize the Wagner Group as a terrorist organization. Certainly, Conservatives had been calling and continue to call for the listing of the Wagner Group as a terrorist organization as well. We have seen no action from the government. It has not listed the IRGC, despite the will of the House, and it has not listed the Wagner Group, despite the will of the House.

The Liberal government has been soft on, and reluctant to recognize, terrorist organizations as terrorist organizations. In support of the people of Ukraine, also recognizing the many victims of Wagner in Africa and other parts of the world, it is important that we talk about it, and take action on recommendation no. 15.

• (1625)

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to the concurrence of the 10th report on Ukraine.

I am of Ukrainian heritage. My mom's parents came here after World War I and began a whole new life here in Canada. Because of that, Ukraine has a special place in my heart, although growing up, I knew very little about it because of some of the challenges my grandparents faced in coming over and in having experienced war. When I would talk to my grandmother about Ukraine, she knew actually very little about the history other than that the borders changed a lot, and she was not exactly sure where she had come from.

Ukraine has faced a lot of challenges throughout its history, and I am proud of the fact that Canada was the first, I believe, to recognize Ukraine's independence.

I also had the opportunity to visit Ukraine as a brand new member of Parliament. We sometimes hear the question of why members of Parliament should even do that and whether it is a waste of time. From my personal experience, it has enriched me greatly in my ability to do my work in this place. I was able to go after the war had started on Ukraine's border with Russia earlier on, and it was overwhelming to have the opportunity, in Kyiv, to go to the hospital and to see the injured soldiers and the conditions under which people were trying to take care of them. At the time, 20 Canadian surgeons were there. We did not get a chance to see them or to interact, because they were very busy, first of all, doing surgeries and, second, working on a textbook for the hospital, because the hospital had not experienced these types of injuries in a long time and did not have the capacity to do the surgeries it needed to do. Canadians were there on the ground in that hospital, helping out. As well, my own communities played a part in making sure there were new ambulances provided to Ukraine,

Our relationship with Ukraine is significant, and I am very grateful for my heritage and for the fact that the previous ambassador, Andriy Shevchenko, came to my riding to visit, with the huge Ukrainian community we have there. They talked so appreciatively of Canada's support for them in the past, and I cannot help but boast about the fact that here in Canada, Ukrainian community members are committed to their lives here in Canada, as was the case with my mom and dad. In the midst of all of that, they have done such an amazing job of maintaining their culture and their heritage, with their appreciation of their language, dance, food, dress and special occasions, that it has impacted my life.



*Routine Proceedings*

I just want to give a shout-out to the wonderful Ukrainian community in my riding of Yorkton—Melville and our opportunity to work together with it in light of the circumstances that are going on with the horrific war in Ukraine at this time. It is due to an invasion by Russia that has been absolutely horrific, yet Ukrainians stand tall and continue to work. I know of veterans, being involved in Veterans Affairs, who have made the personal decision to go over to help train and provide resources to the Ukrainian army in these circumstances, and they find it an incredible privilege to be able to do that on their own effort. I have had circumstances in my riding where two individuals did pass away while there.

As a new member, when I would be part of a delegation that would welcome Ukrainian dignitaries, we were asked over and over again, in early 2016, why the government had removed our satellite surveillance system that was available to them and that showed the border line along Russia so Ukrainians could know for sure and be able to show the world what was happening on the ground. For some reason, the government took that away and would not reinstate it, and to this day I do not understand the rationale for why it chose to do that. Even now, the reality is, in so many of these wars, that the people on the ground suffer regardless of which side of the border they are on.

• (1630)

I do want to show the fact that, in my heart and mind, of course there is sympathy for the people whose lives are ruined on the ground in their own countries or in serving their governments, but, in this case, there is no question that Ukraine needs and deserves any help we can give it. I appreciate the work that was done on this concurrence report and the recommendations that are here. I will just mention, very briefly, the one that is near and dear to my heart, which I know that the government has responded to, but again, when I read its response, it is somewhat vague in the true level of support that we should be giving. This is in regard to recommendation 13. I will just read it: “That the Government of Canada adopt as a policy goal the enhancement of the energy security of Canada’s democratic allies, while fully complying with Canada’s domestic and international obligations related to climate change.”

On a political level, constantly in the House, accusations are made. On this side of the floor, the importance of balancing our economic growth and our economic resources with protecting our environment is constantly belittled and not reflected truthfully in regard to our perspectives on the importance of our environment. I sometimes feel that the response of the government is to blame Canadians beyond what is deserving. Of all the countries in the world that could be helping Ukraine in the circumstances it finds itself in, where Russia has been its source, let us say, of oil and gas, it is not there. The reason it is not there is that it is choosing to negatively impact the best oil and gas in the world that could have been available in the way that this country needed and that Germany needed.

The idea of “no business case” goes beyond the pale, because there definitely is a business case, especially when we are talking about global energy security and sustainable energy, good, clean energy, rather than what Russia is doing. Geopolitical stability would have happened sooner and far better, with far fewer lives

lost, if we had acted the way that we know Canadians can act, to make something happen in a case where it is needed.

Of course, in terms of diversification of energy resources as well, Canada is on the cutting edge and has been for a long time, as 75% of the research going on in regard to alternative energy sources has been done by our oil and gas industries. They are exemplary in the world, and we should be proud of them. Instead, what we are doing is causing an economic lack of benefit for Canadians in the name of environmental responsibilities, which are talking points and messaging that is not accurate and is causing a great deal of angst in our country and, as result, in Ukraine specifically at this point in time.

The economic benefits are great. The opportunity for global security is great. If we were to actually move ahead in the way that I know, on this side of the floor, we see the ability of Canada to do.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I could tell a certain sense of understanding of the issue and, indeed, the support felt for Ukraine.

With regard to the timing of this particular concurrence motion, I cannot help but wonder what is going on here. The last time we debated this issue, the member for Cumberland—Colchester got up and said that we are taking advantage of Ukraine and that the legislation we were supposed to debate today regarding the free trade agreement with Ukraine is “woke”. Since then, we have not been able to debate this, because every time we bring it forward and put it on the calendar or on the Order Paper for debate, Conservatives move concurrence.

I genuinely believe that the member supports Ukraine, but can she tell me whether that support is felt throughout the Conservative Party, and, if not, whether that is one of the reasons why Conservatives are preventing us from moving forward with the legislation on free trade with Ukraine?

• (1635)

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, the member's words towards me were kind. He is definitely right that this is an issue that is extremely important to me. That was remarkable. Sorry, that was a bit of a jab back in the midst of a compliment.

That being said, I can assure the member that Canadians on this side of the floor serving in the House support Ukraine 100%. It was under the Conservative government that we recognized it as a nation when it separated from Russia. If we look around Canada, there are Ukrainians everywhere, but notice how many of them have settled in and are committed to Saskatchewan and Alberta. That should tell the member right there, on the basis of where they choose to live, how much we value them as Canadians.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member and I work together on the veterans committee, and I enjoy working with her. However, I do wish that we were actually debating the Ukraine trade agreement, as we were hoping to do.

*Routine Proceedings*

I have looked at the recommendations of this particular report. Right now, we are doing a very important study in committee about women veterans, and I see that recommendation 2 talks about having the “Government of Canada work with Ukraine and other international partners in support of the documentation, investigation and prosecution of sexual- and gender-based violence committed during Russia's war against Ukraine, and provide support to survivors.

All too often in war, women and children are targeted very specifically. I wonder whether the member agrees with this, and how she thinks Canada can better support it moving forward.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, I do love the veterans file, and I know that the member does as well.

I find it so incomprehensible that violence against women and children is used as a weapon of war, in war of all kinds. This is something that is taking place, and it is very disconcerting. However, just from the study we have been doing on women veterans in our own country, there is a lot there that I have to say we need to work on with our international partners, and we need to get our act together here at home as well.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, recommendation 15 asks the government to list the Wagner group as a terrorist group.

My question aims to inform the public, given that most people believe the rumour that Wagner wanted to attack the Russian government, its own government, so that the war would end more quickly. The government allegedly ousted the group's leader eventually. The general public may not understand why a group that said it wanted to attack the Russians would be considered a terrorist organization. I understand, but I think the general public needs to have a better understanding.

[English]

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, it is not something I have a lot of background on. However, I know that this organization is for hire and that it is there to do the bidding of whoever pays it the money. They are terrorists and should be dealt with accordingly.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 St. Albert—Edmonton, Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand to talk about Canada, Ukraine and the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Before I get under way, I want to emphasize just how encouraging it has been to see a team Canada approach to dealing with what is taking place in Europe. We have had organizations, such as the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, along with different political entities of the House, different stakeholders, provincial governments and municipal governments, that have expressed nothing but love and care for Ukraine. We have seen phenomenal solidarity with Ukraine.

We are looking at the report that was brought forward today, and I would like to quote the response to the report that was provided by the minister. In the closing to the letter, she states:

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I thank the members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for their multi-partisan support for Ukraine, which is crucial to Canada's ability to be a steadfast ally of Ukraine, and for remaining so actively engaged on this critical area of Canadian foreign policy. This issue is above politics; it's about defending democracy and defending the right of freedom and sovereignty.

This is a letter from the minister to the committee members, and it responds to 15 recommendations, all of which are well detailed. It is a public document. Anyone who is following this debate can get a copy of the response to those recommendations. The study itself is still not complete. As I am speaking right now, the foreign affairs committee is continuing to have that dialogue.

I should add that I will be splitting my time with the deputy House leader.

I want to break my comments up into two areas. One is the report, and I just made reference to it. I will talk about the contents of the report and the way the committee has worked together. I applaud that, but there is no reason whatsoever for us to be debating the report today. The second is what we should be debating, which is Bill C-57, the Canada-Ukraine trade deal.

This report is still being studied at the foreign affairs committee. The purpose of the Conservatives bringing forward this motion today has more to do with playing a game on the floor of the House of Commons than it does with the critical issue of what is taking place in Ukraine today. That saddens me. By doing this, they are politically intervening with what we could be debating today, Bill C-57.

Back in September, President Zelenskyy visited Canada. At a time of war, the President of Ukraine came to Canada to meet with parliamentarians of all political stripes. He signed a trade agreement with the Prime Minister of Canada. We now have an agreement, and it means so much more than just economic ties. We recognize the true value of this trade agreement. It goes far beyond just economics. It is a very powerful statement. It says to Europe and the world that Ukraine is a sovereign nation that will have trade around the world.

• (1640)

What we are talking about, or what we should have been talking about this afternoon, is how this unique trade agreement would enable Ukraine and Canada to build upon a very special, friendly relationship, which we have had for decades. We have 1.3 million-plus people of Ukrainian heritage, and that was before the displacements from Ukraine. Many of them are in the Prairies, but they are all throughout Canada. They are very much interested in the debate, whether it is the debate in the chamber or at the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs. There is also a great level of interest in all areas as to whether we will be able to get Bill C-57 passed before Christmas.

Canada is in a great position to send a strong message, a message of leadership to the world, about our relationship with Ukraine by passing this legislation. Sadly, today is not the first time in which we have witnessed the Conservative Party of Canada filibuster this legislation. It is upsetting. It is upsetting because I see, first-hand, as Canadians see, what is taking place in Europe. The expectations for us to pass this legislation is, I believe, very high. It is the right thing to do.

This should be a non-partisan issue. I would suggest that, when it comes time to actually have that debate, if the Conservative Party would allow that debate, then the government should not have to bring in time allocation for it. I would suggest that, at this stage, if the Conservatives wanted to show good will, they would agree, unanimously at this point, to see Bill C-57 at the very least go to the committee stage. They should reflect on their behaviour and what they are doing.

• (1645)

I referred to a question I asked the member for Cumberland—Colchester. My colleague, the deputy House leader, made reference to it as well. The Conservatives continue to filibuster the Ukraine trade deal, but one of the last Conservative speakers to speak was the member for Cumberland—Colchester. Imagine what he said in his speech. He said the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement is “woke”, that Bill C-57 is “woke”, and that Canada is taking advantage of Ukraine by having a trade agreement when Ukraine is at war.

That aspect concerns me greatly. I do not know where the Conservative Party really is on the issue because we have raised it before, and they are not providing comments. The Conservative Party in the past would say that it supports the concept and principles of free trade. No government in the history of Canada has signed off on more free trade agreements than this government. We have the expertise. It is a good trade agreement, not only for Canada, but also for Ukraine. Why is the Conservative Party not allowing this legislation to move forward? If it does not support the legislation, then it would be fully understandable, but if it supports the legislation and wants to get behind the trade agreement, why not allow it to pass and allow it to be debated?

I am going to be sitting down in a minute, and I trust that there will be a question from the Conservative Party. Maybe in that question the Conservatives can explain why they do not support the bill being debated or, at the very least, if they will consider allowing unanimous consent to see it go to committee so that we would have an attempt at getting it passed through the entire system, including the Senate, before Christmas. If we all want to get behind what is taking place in Europe and Ukraine today and continue to be non-partisan about it, I think that would be the right thing to do.

• (1650)

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons to be debating this concurrence motion. We have a government that was very slow to act in helping any of our allies when war first broke out in Ukraine.

At the natural resources committee, I even suggested that we get liquid natural gas and our oil products to our allies much quicker than even the minister when he went to Paris at that time. The government came out early and said it could not do that. Then it

### *Routine Proceedings*

changed its mind, just as it has done on so many of these natural resource issues, particularly of late with the carbon tax issue in the Maritimes.

There are some situations with the recommendations in this report, and the Wagner Group is just one of them. I am wondering why the Liberal government is so hesitant to recognize them as a terrorist organization.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the detailed explanation of all of the recommendations is addressed in the letter.

It is a false argument to say that we need to debate something everyone was supporting. This particular report is being used as a tool to prevent debate on the free trade agreement with Ukraine. That is what this is doing. The committee is meeting today, and it is continuing discussions.

It is false argument. If the Conservatives want to continue to have a debate on whatever issue in the House, they have an opposition day tomorrow. They could have used the entire day to debate this. However, that is not the purpose. Conservatives are using this to prevent debate on Bill C-57.

The honourable thing to do would be to agree that Bill C-57 would pass, hopefully unanimously, before the end of this week, so that we could get it to committee and have a chance to pass through the entire system before Christmas. That is the best thing we could do for Ukraine and Canada's relationship, making a powerful statement to the world.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would undoubtedly prefer to be addressing the Canada-Ukraine agreement as well. That said, it would seem that the problem, whether hypothetical or real—that is not for me to debate—lies in the government's response to certain recommendations, notably recommendation 15.

Sometimes it is better to get to the bottom of things and ask the question outright. Why has the government responded to recommendation 15 in this way? If the government were to explain so we could understand, it might calm things down and we could get back to studying Bill C-57.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, there are 15 recommendations in total, and in the government's detailed letter, a 12-page response to the recommendations, it indicated that it would take note of it.

The member started her comments by talking about the trade agreement. The best I can tell, at least the Bloc, New Democrats and Liberals want to see that trade agreement pass through. All of us anticipated that that would be what we were debating today.

We are talking about a report that everyone agrees with. No one is questioning it. The report is being used as a tool to prevent debate on the trade agreement. If the Conservatives do not support the trade agreement, then fine, they should say so. They should have the courage to stand up to say that they do not support the trade agreement.

*Routine Proceedings*

Otherwise, why are the Conservatives preventing the debate from occurring? Why will they not let the trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine go to committee? I highlighted the fact that we even had the president, during wartime, leave Ukraine to come to Canada to sign the trade agreement. It is a good agreement. The legislation is there. We should be passing it through the system.

My appeal, once again, to the Conservative Party is for them to stop wasting the time of the chamber. Let us debate Bill C-57, and let us get it to committee. Let us make a powerful statement to the world, jointly, in a non-political fashion, by supporting Ukraine at this difficult time in history.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that report number 10 comes from the department of redundancy. It is an important one, but it is something that we should not move forward. I have been pushing the issues over cybersecurity, especially as an opportunity through the Ukraine trade agreement, to be something that would also create Canadian jobs and Ukrainian jobs and protect Ukrainians and us. I wonder if there is something else that the member has as a priority.

• (1655)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, numerous reports come from committees. One could virtually come up with a report for concurrence almost on a daily basis.

There are a lot of aspects in terms of how this particular trade agreement would broaden the range of goods and services. It includes things such as infrastructure rebuilds. There are all sorts of positive things in this trade agreement. That is the reason I was actually looking forward to listening to that particular debate, and I was hopeful that we would be passing that legislation today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I just want to remind everyone to try to be judicious in their questions and answers so that people can participate in the discussion.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader for sharing his time with me. He has done a very good job of setting up the context in which Conservatives are using the concurrence motion today to try to stop the debate on a very important issue. I am going to highlight what has been going on with regard to this.

I think Canadians deserve to know that there is a divide within the Conservative Party in terms of how its members feel about supporting Ukraine. I cannot believe that those words just came out of my mouth, but it is the reality. I can tell the House how I have come to this conclusion.

Throughout the spring, the minister responsible worked with Ukraine and the officials over there to set up this free trade agreement. When we got back to the House in late September, the terms of the trade agreement were put on the table. It was on October 17 that the bill was placed on the table for consideration.

We first called the bill to be debated in this House on October 23. We had one day of debate on it. The following day, we called the bill to be debated a second time. I spoke at that time. I gave what is

probably one of the most non-partisan speeches I have given in this House, whether we believe it or not. I gave that speech because I assumed that the House unanimously supported Ukraine and the efforts that we could make in terms of a trade relationship with it to better the economy and the people of Ukraine.

Much to my complete and utter surprise, the first question that came after my speech was from the member for Cumberland—Colchester. He rose and said this:

One of the concerns I have is the way that Canada appears, in my mind, in spite of the incredible “woke” legislation that is woven into this free trade agreement.

The member questioned whether Canada was taking advantage of Ukraine, questioned the legislation and questioned why we were even involved in this agreement. That is just the beginning; there is more.

What has happened since then? The next day, the Conservatives rose in the House and tried to get unanimous consent on a motion on division. I would like to explain to the public what that is, because it is very important in the context of my argument. When someone puts forward a unanimous consent motion, it means that the House unanimously consents to adopt legislation, but on division. That is the key part. When we say “on division”, that means there are some in the House who are in disagreement, but they do not need to be identified. It is clear that the Conservatives have some members on their side of the aisle who are not in favour of this legislation.

That motion was put forward, but we did not let that happen. We did not let that unanimous consent motion carry, because we determined that we were not going to let them hide from their vote on this. If they are not standing with Ukraine, they should have the decency to stand in this House and tell Ukraine that.

The next time this came back to the floor was today. We brought this forward again, and what did the Conservatives do? They used a tactic to avoid this debate. They brought forward a concurrence motion, understanding full well that three hours would have to be put toward the motion and that, based on the time we have today, we will not be able to get that legislation through. Conservatives want to carry this bill on division and do not want their members to speak to it; the Canadian people have a right to know who those members are. We know one is the member for Cumberland—Colchester, but which other Conservatives are not in support of Ukraine or this trade agreement with it? Canadians deserve to know and, as long as we are in this House, we are not going to let the Conservatives try to carry this legislation on division and let this bill go through. They are going to have to stand in their place.

We might get to a point where, in the Conservative caucus meetings, the whip says she does not care how members feel, but they are all going to vote in favour of this. We might also get to the point where the Conservative whip allows some of them to abstain from voting. However, I can tell everyone that we are going to get to a point where we vote on it.

• (1700)

Conservatives can play these games all day long, and they can bring forward more concurrence motions such as this. However, I guarantee one thing: the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader and I will continue to call them out over this. If they do not support Ukraine, then they must stand in this House and explain why.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned that he, like me, would like to talk about and debate Bill C-57 to see what it has to offer both Canada and Ukraine. The purpose is not to take advantage of anyone, but to help a country rebuild as soon as possible.

Let us slightly shift direction. I would like to ask my colleague what he would have talked about if we had had the opportunity to discuss Bill C-57. What highlights of this bill are important to remember?

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, for starters, we should probably recognize what did not happen there. Normally, a Conservative would lead to ask me a question, but not a single one of them rose. I appreciate the question from my colleague from the Bloc, and I spoke at length to Bill C-57, as I indicated, the first time it came around.

This is an opportunity for Canada to work with Ukraine and look forward into the future on how we help it rebuild when it wins the war; its people will win that war. When they do, Canada will be there with them through trade relationships and opportunities to work together to rebuild their nation. They deserve it from us. They are certainly in agreement with wanting that trade legislation. The only people I know who do not seem to be in agreement with it are some Conservatives.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for the opportunity to put a question to the hon. member.

There are heartbreaks beyond heartbreaks, and they seem to be unending since October 7. One of them is the dreadful irony of Hamas's brutal attack on Israel, which has taken the world's attention, for obvious reasons, off Ukraine. It has been described, and rightly so, as a gift to Vladimir Putin.

I will read a statement from President Zelenskyy, because I was deeply moved by his condemnation of Hamas in this moment, while also recognizing that Israel's government has been the only one of our allies, the only modern, industrialized, western democracy ally of Canada, that has never put a sanction on Russia. Israel has not responded to Ukraine's dreadful situation of invasion and brutal assault from the illegal war by Russia. Zelenskyy himself is a Jewish leader. However, none of that contaminated his statement. He said very clearly, "Let the value of human life and the intolerance of terror be the principles that will finally unite the whole world." He also said, "Wherever they aim their missiles and whomever they attack, terrorists must lose. And this is important for the whole world."

### *Routine Proceedings*

Again, we must not lose our focus in assisting and being there for Ukraine. At the same time, we must not ignore the breaching of international law, the bombing of civilians and so on in what is happening now, as Israel has an absolute right to defend itself.

• (1705)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands was absolutely correct when she said that the unfortunate reality is that some of the attention has been taken off Ukraine. That is why it is our job to keep the pressure on. One way we can do that is by continuing to push forward legislation such as this and building relationships with the people of Ukraine, so we can work together with them and not let the spotlight be taken off them and the struggles that they are going through.

We have to remember that Ukraine will win this war; in my mind, it is inevitable. Its people are fighting for their country. They have been invaded by Russia, in particular, Vladimir Putin, but there is no doubt that they will win. We need to be with them so that we can help make sure that, when the time comes, they can rebuild their country, be more prosperous, be more democratic and be more committed to world peace as a result of that.

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am tabling the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1697, 1700, 1701 and 1708.

[Translation]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, you are no doubt familiar with the expression, "with friends like that, who needs enemies". I feel this expression is particularly appropriate today, and today is just a new episode in a series of actions taken by the Conservatives that I believe will prove extremely harmful to Ukraine.

It takes a lot of gall for the Conservatives to launch this debate today on the motion to concur in the report on Ukraine. I will explain.

It took months for the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development to concur in this report, which was supported nearly unanimously by the committee members. Indeed, the Conservatives decided to filibuster the work of the committee, which made it impossible for us to concur in this report. Not only did this filibuster unduly delay concurring in the report, it also prevented the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development from travelling to Ukraine for a first time.

I will come back to this, because our Conservative friends also prevented the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development from going to Ukraine a second time.

*Routine Proceedings*

The first time was because of their filibuster, which lasted months. I think I can safely say it lasted three months. I will digress for a moment. I have said repeatedly that the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development should be the least partisan House committee. Deep down, we are not so far apart in our values. Furthermore, it is to our benefit to present a united front abroad, especially concerning the war in Ukraine, and yet it took months for this report to finally see the light of day.

The Conservatives decided to present a motion to concur in this report today. Please understand me: It is an excellent report. I will come back to that in a few moments. However, why are they choosing to debate it today? Why choose to do it this afternoon, at the very same time the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is sitting? I was supposed to speak in committee, but I had to ask my colleague from Shefford to take over on short notice because I had to come give a speech to the House for the concurrence of a report from this committee. Could the timing have been any worse?

Even worse, the subject the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is debating is humanitarian aid for Ukraine. Who started this debate at the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development? As members may have guessed, it was the Conservatives. The Conservatives are filibustering themselves, as it were. We are debating one of their motions at the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, but at the same time, we must debate concurrence of this report on Ukraine in the House. What bad timing.

Worse yet, the Conservatives chose to hold this concurrence debate when we were supposed to be discussing Bill C-57. My colleagues referred to it earlier. Bill C-57 deals with implementing a free trade agreement with Ukraine. The Conservatives are delaying the passage of a bill that would ratify and implement a free trade agreement with Ukraine.

● (1710)

It seems like the Conservatives are constantly trying to prevent us from getting Ukraine the help it needs. What did Ukraine need today? If we want to put ourselves in the shoes of our Ukrainian friends, our Ukrainian allies, we must ask ourselves what they needed today from the House of Commons.

Did they need the House to make progress toward the passage of a bill on free trade between Canada and Ukraine, or did they need us to concur in this report on Ukraine today, rather than three weeks, three months or nine months ago?

In other words, we could have concurred in this report some time ago. The Conservatives, however, chose to move concurrence on the very afternoon we should have been discussing the bill to implement the free trade agreement with Ukraine.

I do not believe that Ukraine needed this report concurred in today. Ukrainians needed it months ago. They needed the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development to finally come out with this report months back. However, the Conservatives decided to throw sand in the gears and delay everything. This just shows how constructive our Conservative colleagues are. They never miss an opportunity to throw sand in the gears.

Our Liberal colleagues failed to get the message after the last election that they would have to govern as a minority government and take everyone's opinion into account, but I think our Conservative friends also failed to understand that their role is not to stop Parliament from functioning, but to ensure that Parliament moves forward. Every time that the discussion turned to Ukraine, the Conservatives put up roadblocks.

They blocked the adoption of this report. It took months before we could adopt it. The Conservatives spent a long time filibustering on a completely different issue: the fact that we wanted to undertake a study on women's sexual health. Of course this topic bothers them, because the word "abortion" was mentioned. It means the intentional termination of a pregnancy, and they think that it is terrible. Instead of letting us proceed with the report on Ukraine, they spent months throwing sand in the gears. In the end, they did not prevent us from launching the study on women's sexual health. We even completed it. However, they did obstruct the work of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for months, which delayed the adoption of this report for months.

Because of their obstruction, we were unable to complete the request for a mission to Ukraine. They decided that we would no longer travel, that parliamentarians should not travel anymore. Last summer, they once again refused to let the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development travel to Ukraine. As I said at the outset, with friends like these, who needs enemies?

The Conservatives keep repeating that they love Ukraine and are determined to defend Ukraine. In reality, however, they are not walking the talk. They keep looking for ways to throw sand in the gears every chance they get. It is extremely unfortunate. Ukrainians need our support, which includes increased trade between the two countries.

● (1715)

The implementation of this free trade agreement has been delayed because, once again, the Conservatives are using completely futile and unproductive parliamentary guerrilla tactics that only delay what must be done. That is what is the most detrimental. This report was delayed for months before it was finally adopted. The Conservatives delayed it to stop the committee from doing a study on women's reproductive health, which was finally able to take place. All the Conservatives are doing is delaying what needs to be done. This free trade agreement needs to be implemented, and it will be.

However, once again, we are being forced to deal with the tactics of the Conservative Party, which is self-filibustering in that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is sitting right now to study the matter of providing humanitarian and food aid to Ukraine as a result of a Conservative Party motion. It makes no sense.

When this report was made public, I said that I was very proud of the work that was done by the members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, but I also said that I was very embarrassed. This report sets out 15 recommendations and contains some very worthwhile proposals to better support Ukraine in its fight against Russia, which have not yet all been implemented by the government. As I said earlier in my speech, it took months to release this report.

At that time, I also had the opportunity to say that the war has showcased how extremely dependent western economies are on oil and gas. Our Conservative friends reacted by saying that we were going to sell more to our European allies, not realizing that the other observation coming out of this war is that we need to get away from oil and gas post-haste. We need to support Europe so that it can get moving on the green shift as quickly as possible and reduce its dependence not only on Russian oil, but on oil in general.

I said at the time that this study is not finished. It will continue as long as the war continues. That is why the committee is meeting even as we speak. That is why I said that the committee will soon go to Ukraine, which, thanks to the Conservatives, has not been able to happen until now.

I said that this is an interim report because other things are going to come up. The war is not over; it is ongoing. We have to pay attention to what is happening and adjust our recommendations as the situation evolves. That is what is being done at the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development as I give this speech.

Once again, our Conservative friends said that the Russian ambassador needed to be expelled. I mentioned the fact that we decided the time might not be right for such an action, although it is still an option. The lines of communication have to stay open. I am calling on our Liberal friends to show some consistency, because even though the Russian embassy remains open here, and the Canadian embassy is still open in Moscow, diplomatic communication has ended for all intents and purposes. There is no contact anymore.

● (1720)

We obviously support the sanctions regime that has been put in place against Russia, Belarus, oligarchs and banks of all kinds. The fact is—and this was the subject of our observations—that we are not in a position to accurately determine the extent of the assets and the nature of the frozen assets. The government made a point of passing legislation allowing it to seize assets to help rebuild Ukraine, but it still does not seem to know how to proceed legally in that regard. We have been unable to determine the nature and extent of the assets seized. This has been hard to assess for the simple reason that the government decided to outsource this responsibility to the private sector and the banks, without giving them any specific information about what was expected of them.

### *Routine Proceedings*

We understand that banks might be a little uneasy about having to sanction customers. The federal government has therefore shirked its responsibilities, which means that we are not really in a position to have a clear idea of what is happening with the sanctions. The monitoring process is difficult to follow. Of course, we have to coordinate with our allies, but we also have to take into account our own specific conditions.

We talked about the fact that a certain number of Russian banks have been excluded from the SWIFT international system, which is very good news. The problem is that there are still some Russian banks on the SWIFT system. What do members think happened? Transactions simply moved from certain banking institutions to others, so now they are getting around the sanctions, often with help from third-party states, which is enabling Russia to continue waging war on Ukraine. All these measures need tightening up.

Our agriculture critic noted that some sanctions even seem counterproductive. I am thinking of the ones targeting grains and seeds, which are punishing our own producers and making Russian products more competitive on international markets than Canadian products. In that case, the result goes against the desired objective.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development started studying our sanctions regime. We are currently finalizing a report on that. We see that there is still a lot of work to be done.

I will close by saying that it is a good report and it is a good thing that it is being concurred in. However, I will reiterate the question I asked earlier: Was today the right day to move concurrence? I do not think so, and I think I have demonstrated that, for a whole host of reasons, the strategic and tactical choices that the Conservatives made turned out to be harmful for Ukraine. We are seeing yet another example of that today, which is extremely harmful.

● (1725)

**Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to begin, I would like to thank my Bloc Québécois colleague for his speech and his work, as well as for his solidarity with and support for the Ukrainian people.

We know that since the Leader of the Opposition has been in that role, he has yet to speak out and call for additional aid for Ukraine, whether military, humanitarian or financial. He has not criticized the genocide currently taking place in Ukraine. He repeats what people like Donald Trump are saying in the U.S. about Russia and the impact the war is having on Canada and the west.

Does my colleague think the Leader of the Opposition truly supports Ukraine? Does he think that is why the Conservatives are filibustering right now to stop debate on the Canada-Ukraine free trade bill?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron:** Mr. Speaker, I think I demonstrated in my speech that the Conservatives have not been good friends to Ukraine, as shown through their repeated actions. I would like to believe that they are sincere when they claim to support Ukraine. However, as I mentioned earlier, the Conservatives do not seem to walk the talk when they take action.

As members know, I moved a motion in the House to condemn the kidnapping of Ukrainian children and their deportation to Russia. I do not want to reveal any behind-the-scenes secrets, but during the negotiations with the various parties that finally led to the unanimous adoption of this motion, there were reservations about using the term “genocide”, even though the House had already recognized the genocide. The motion was adopted with the support of the Conservatives, and I thank them for that. However, why the reservations? Obviously, when we pointed out that we had already voted to recognize this genocide, those reservations became a bit illogical, so we were able to move forward.

I have the impression that, although the support may be sincere, their actions are pretty clumsy. What we are seeing here is clumsiness at best, and I do not even dare say what it would be at worst.

[English]

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleagues that sincere actions are exactly what I was talking about in relation to my question to one of my Liberal colleagues just a short while ago. I was the one who first called for some of the natural resources we have to go to our allies fighting with Ukraine to try to make sure they were not as dependent on Russian oil and gas as they had to be. That was a clear signal Conservatives do support Ukraine in its efforts to try to, and it will, beat Russia. I must be clear on that.

Many of my colleagues and I have invited and have been very happy to accept many Ukrainian couples, individuals and families who have come to Canada in our constituencies. It is very important we put on the record we were the first to suggest we help our allies in Ukraine to get the kinds of resources they needed.

I am just wondering if these parties, the Liberal and the Bloc, have any idea what the natural resources could have done if they had been put into Ukraine earlier and why they did not support that movement earlier. The Bloc wants to leave this same energy in the ground. The Liberals did not want to get it there early enough, and yet the Liberals blocked the Canadian turbine here going back to Russia. The Liberals sent it over there. I wonder if the Bloc was supportive of that.

• (1730)

[Translation]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron:** Mr. Speaker, I want to make a connection between the question that I was just asked and the one that I was asked earlier. Sometimes, we feel as though the Conservatives support Ukraine as long as it is advantageous or profitable to do so. Sometimes, we have to wonder whether they support Ukraine because they actually support Ukraine or because they want to sell oil to Europe. I think it is very wrong to always be introducing the idea that we should be selling more oil to Europe into debates about support for Ukraine. It is as though the Conservatives just discovered a new, unexplored market that they want to tap into at all costs.

As I said in my speech, this conflict has brought to light not only Europe's extreme dependence on Russian oil, but also the western economies' extreme dependence on oil in general. To sell more oil to Europe, we would first have to have all of the necessary infrastructure to be able to do that, and we do not. Rather than looking to set up that infrastructure, we must first and foremost help our European allies to make the necessary green transition. That will help them to reduce their dependency on Russian oil and reduce their dependency on oil in general.

[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his comments, particularly in light of another Conservative filibuster that is really holding up progress at a time in the world when we see growing atrocities. I find it deeply troubling to take up time in this House during such a critical period in Canada and globally. It is a colossal disrespect for people in Canada and across the globe who are struggling right now, including in the many conflicts that are occurring and brewing around the globe.

I want to ask my colleague, however, for his thoughts on recommendation 12, which states:

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

I know that the Conservatives have a very narrow focus in terms of any sort of international conflict. It always seems to go to oil and gas. I would like to hear my hon. colleague's thoughts on that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron:** Mr. Speaker, that recommendation sort of became outdated when the Nord Stream pipeline became inoperable. However, a few weeks ago we found out that the Government of Canada went behind closed doors and granted more exemptions under the sanctions regime. I denounced that approach, which is nebulous to say the least.

It seems that this government does not make anything public until it appears in the media or there is a threat of it appearing in the media. After the incident with the Nord Stream turbines, we were surprised to learn that the government allowed other exemptions under the sanctions regime. As in the case with the turbine, I think it is important for the government to explain why it granted these new exemptions.

Unless it can be demonstrated, as I just did for the seeds, that the result goes against the desired objective, then we can expect the sanctions to have potentially adverse consequences here at home. We have to be able to endure this if we want to be able to effectively support our Ukrainian allies.



• (1735)

[English]

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the hon. member's observations with respect to the Conservative Party. It is puzzling, to say as a generous observation, and hypocritical may be less generous.

However, I am particularly interested in the ultimate hypocrisy that we are not here debating the free trade agreement, which was scheduled, but debating something else. It is an expression on the part of Ukraine to join the family of nations that wish to govern themselves by the rule of law. In some peculiar way and, I would say, even hypocritical way, we play into Vladimir Putin's hands, who is just simply playing for time.

Does the member join me in the worry that by not debating it and by not entering into this agreement, in fact we are not only playing into the playbook of the Russian leader but also that Ukraine is simply dropping from the media cycle and it leaves Ukraine very vulnerable?

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member's time is up but I will allow him to answer the question.

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron:** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I simply want to say that I agree in every way with what our colleague just said. The most deplorable part of it all is that we know this legislation will get passed. The really annoying thing is watching the Conservatives constantly setting up roadblocks to delay what needs to be done.

This bill will be passed and the free trade agreement will come into force for the good of Ukraine and Canada, but the Conservatives' utterly shameful partisan procedural manoeuvring will have delayed the process by several days.

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I just want to start by saying how disappointed I am that we are having this debate on a concurrence motion, when we should be debating the trade agreement with Ukraine.

I just have to stand here and express the profound grief I am hearing from so many across my riding of North Island—Powell River. When the illegal war began when Russia invaded Ukraine, there was a feeling of profound heartbreak. There are a lot of Ukrainians in my riding who came together to fight really hard to do all they could.

I remember being on the phone with constituents who were telling me that they were calling their families at home and that in the background, they could hear the explosions. They were so worried about where their family members were and whether they were safe. There were conversations during which explosions would happen, and then the line would die. I have sat, as I hope many people in this place have, with people who are refugees from Ukraine and are so terrified because they do not even know when it is going to be safe to go home. They are worried about their loved ones.

This is really important, and here we are discussing a committee report that was unanimously agreed upon, instead of talking about

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how we could work to make this country stronger and better, and how we could work with Ukraine in a positive way. It is important that as we have these discussions, we remember that we are the voices of our constituents and that so many of them right now are hurting profoundly. It is important because we know that when this happens, it destabilizes other countries. That destabilization has an impact on all our communities and our country. The people in our communities who are related to those folks in other countries have a profound response, and we must recognize that.

That leads me, of course, to think about my personal pain and heartbreak connected to the profoundly terrifying experience we are seeing right now in Israel and Gaza. All of us in this country are seeing things on the screen, and it is painful for us to see them. I cannot imagine living that. Our leader has been very clear, repeatedly, in this place and in the media, that we condemn unequivocally the terrorist violence of Hamas, which has killed thousands. I have heard from the Jewish community, in my riding and outside my riding, of the profound pain, concern and trauma it is experiencing right now because of this action. What we are witnessing in Gaza is beyond overwhelming. We know that children are being killed at a rate we have not seen in a very long time, and that women and the elderly are indiscriminately attacked. So many are dying. Civilians of these countries are dying. We must all stand together to say that is not okay.

The NDP and our leader have been very clear. We are calling for an immediate ceasefire. I despair that the government has not chosen to stand up with respect to this issue. When we see what we are seeing, we have an obligation, morally, to call for a ceasefire and to do all that we can as a country to stand strong against it. We all know, historically, what it looks like when we do not.

How many apologies do we have to make in this place because we do not stand up and do the thing that is right when it is time to do it? Right now, in our own country, anti-Semitism and anti-Palestine hate are increasing. Islamophobia is increasing. People are afraid. They are afraid for themselves, for their loved ones and for our children. When we do not stand up collectively, we create a much less safe environment for everyone. That is really important. When we think about our privilege in this place, we have to think about how we take that power and what we do with it, and when we do things, what that means for people who do not have the same voice as we do. People are not safe. We all have to stand up against that.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1740)

I remember speaking with a dear friend of mine who escaped the Holocaust, just barely, and lost so many loved ones to concentration camps. She no longer believed in God. She no longer believed that anything in the world could allow this to happen. I remember those conversations with her and the terror she had experienced. One of the things I will never forget is that she said she did not believe in God but prayed for peace unceasingly. Every day, she prayed for peace because she did not want anyone to experience what she had experienced, and she did not want anyone to lose the family that she had lost. I hope that all of us are remembering that, every time we do not do all that we can for peace, we are really disrespecting those who are gone.

In this time as well, when we are seeing an increase in foreign interference in our elections and when we are seeing communities being destabilized because of an active agenda of some countries to interfere, we have to again remember that every step we take matters, that people are watching and looking for leadership and stability. They are looking for consistency. I call on the government again. Please stand up and say that it is time for a ceasefire and that our voice, collectively, as Canada, is calling for that, so civilians get what they need to survive and so we can do everything in the name of justice, moving forward.

To come back to the concurrence motion, it is about Ukraine, and I am going to talk about it. Again, I want to remind all the listeners at home and, of course, especially in North Island—Powell River, that this is something the Conservatives moved. It is a concurrence motion, which means we are not debating the bill we were supposed to debate today, which is on having a trade agreement with Ukraine. The report that we are right now spending this time debating was supported unanimously. We are debating it to say, again, that we are going to agree with the report.

I think it is important that this committee is the foreign affairs committee. Right now, that committee is meeting. What they are meeting about is the situation at the Russia-Ukraine border and the implications for peace and security. Right now, that work is happening in another space in this place, and it is really important work. The Global Institute for Food Security is talking. The United Nations' World Food Programme and the Grain Farmers of Ontario are also some of the witnesses today. They are talking about the importance of this, so why are we here when this work has already been done? Why are the Conservatives making us debate something that has already been agreed upon? I think there are political reasons, and it is very disappointing. If they have a problem with the bill that is in front of the House, then let us debate it. Let us do the work of the House and look after that.

I have to say that, in my riding, not too long ago, we had an amazing couple of events called Still Standing With Ukraine. The Comox Valley Ukrainian Cultural Society put them together. It was a couple of events just to bring awareness again to what was happening in Ukraine and to highlight some of the refugees locally within our region who are in our communities and who are doing the best they can when they are under such emotional distress because of what is happening in their own country. They were beautiful events where we got to see some profoundly amazing Ukrainian dancers from Alberta who came out to fundraise, to make sure that

the people here in our area have the supports that they need. I want to give special thanks to Janette Martin-Lutzer, who is the ED there and who did just a phenomenal job of educating people. I just think it is so important.

I want to say that when this happened in my riding, when Russia attacked Ukraine, we had so many phone calls to our office. Tons of people were calling. They wanted to do all they could to help, so we collected a list. It was a significant list of constituents. We were able to create an email list, and then our office went out and found everybody in the region who was doing work to support refugees who were coming. We were able to bring them all together. We did a town hall. A lot of people showed up for the virtual town hall, and all those organizations and groups that are doing incredible work in the riding were able to talk about what they were doing, how they were doing it and how people could help. It was amazing.

● (1745)

Something I am so proud of in my riding is that when people need help, we come together. There is a large Syrian family in our riding. A lot of people came together to support that family, and every time I see the leaders of that family, I am told about all of the success because of what the community invested and because the community stood up. Again, for this, I have been profoundly moved. People come together. They want to support people who are struggling and suffering, and we need to make sure those supports are in place, so why are we here debating this when there is so much work to be done?

I will talk about some of the recommendations and show the people that all parties agree. One of the recommendations is "That the Government of Canada continue to play a leading role in the pursuit of justice and accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in relation to Russia's war against Ukraine." I agree with this, and I think it is something we should be talking about in the context of what we are seeing happen in other places in the world. Of course we want to see the Government of Canada stand up. Hopefully every party here agrees, and according to the report, all parties do agree, that we should do that. We should stand up for human rights and for justice. I know people in my riding are calling for that. They want to see action taken. They want to see accountability, and they want to know that human rights are being protected and that Canada is doing everything possible to make sure those human rights are being protected.

Another recommendation is “That the Government of Canada work with Ukraine and other international partners in support of the documentation, investigation, and prosecution of sexual- and gender-based violence committed during Russia’s war against Ukraine, and provide support to survivors.” This is a particular passion of mine. We know that in every war, women and children are the focus of much violence. As well, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is targeted for horrific crimes that we should never see happen, but that we know, unfortunately, do. We need to make sure there are processes put into place. I know that in my work in the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, we have talked about how important it is for women, peace and security that these things are documented and that we make sure that international law has the capacity to take information. Things are changing quickly, and information is recorded often on social media. Something we need to make sure of is that, if things are recorded and they can be verified as clear sources, that information can be used under international law to hold people to account for the violence they do during wartime.

There are a lot of conversations. I am glad to see that all parties agree that this is important. We need to protect people. We need to have very strong international law so that when people do terrible things like this, they know they are going to be held to account.

Another recommendation is “That the Government of Canada work with Ukraine and other international partners to prosecute individuals principally responsible for Russia’s crime of aggression against Ukraine by supporting the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine or another similar mechanism.” It is a little bit rich to be in this space having this conversation, knowing that the work is being done in committee, and here we are agreeing to agree instead of talking about how we are going to support Ukraine in the trade deal. We are at the part where the legislation has not even gone to committee yet. Let us get it to committee. If there are concerns, let us do the work in committee. That is where the work happens.

• (1750)

Again, I am frustrated. At a time in the world when we are seeing so much incredible violence and when young people across this country are worried about that violence and are worried about the climate crisis we are in and the fact that we are teetering on the brink of profound outcomes that could leave the world physically unsafe for people to even be in, why are we wasting time in this place when we could be doing the work that needs to be done? There are serious things happening in this country and other countries that we have to take a leadership role in as Canada, and this is what we are doing instead.

It is really important that we talk about the recommendation to “strengthen global food security, and the role of Ukraine as one of its guarantors, and join the efforts with Ukraine on the Black Sea Grain Initiative in the Global South.” The reality is that we have sanctions. I have seen the graphs in my work at the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association. The sanctions had an impact, which was then lost. We need to support this country, and I hope we can get on to more important business.

### *Private Members' Business*

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings on the motion at this time. Accordingly, the debate on the motion will be rescheduled for another sitting.

• (1755)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to bring to your attention that during my speech, I made reference to the fact that Conservatives had tried to move unanimous consent on Bill C-57. My information was incorrect. It was Bill C-350 I was thinking of when I made that comment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I appreciate the clarification.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

### NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR A SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM ACT

**Mr. Serge Cormier (Acadie—Bathurst, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-322, An Act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before I give my speech, I would like to acknowledge the following people. First, I want to thank my constituents in Acadie—Bathurst, who gave me the honour and privilege of representing them over the past eight years. I thank them from the bottom of my heart for putting their trust in me.

Second, I want to recognize my father, André; my mother, Rolande; my mother-in-law, Bernadette; my father-in-law, Hébert; my brother, Jeff; my brothers- and sisters-in-law; my Cormier-Thériault family; and my friends who are watching right now. I recognize them and thank them for their help. They know that it is not always easy to be a federal MP, and so I thank them for all of the help that they give me.

Third, I want to thank my extraordinary employees: Janice, Jocelyne, Sylvie, Gilles and Léopold, as well as Vanessa, a former employee. I thank them for all they do for me.

Fourth, I want to thank my good friend Greg Burn for his help with the research for my speech.

Finally, I want to recognize the four most important people in my life: my daughters, Arianne and Chloé, and my stepson, Léo, who I consider to be my son. I love them and look forward to seeing them again. I want to thank my partner Isabelle, who is an MLA in New Brunswick. I love her dearly, and I sincerely thank her for all of the help she gives me every day. I miss her and look forward to seeing her again.

I am honoured to rise in the House today to speak to my bill, Bill C-322, an act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program. The purpose of this bill is outlined clearly in its title: to develop a national framework for the establishment of a school food program to ensure that all children in Canada have access to healthy food.

*Private Members' Business**[English]*

I truly believe this is one of the most important pieces of social legislation the House will debate this session.

*[Translation]*

There are far too many children in Canada going to bed hungry or starting off the school day without a nutritious breakfast. Can my colleagues imagine trying to pay attention to the lesson or trying to do schoolwork while they have pangs of hunger that are gnawing at them and distracting them from concentrating on anything else?

Our own studies, including the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey have shown that up to one in five young people report going to school or bed hungry, often because there is not enough food in the home. In addition, the 2021 First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study found that approximately 50% of first nation households have difficulty putting food on the table. Think of that number: 50%.

*[English]*

These numbers are heartbreaking, but we have the opportunity to do something about it. My hope is that this sad reality will serve as a catalyst for action.

*[Translation]*

Canada is one of the few member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development that does not have a national school food program in place. We have the power to change that, the power to ensure that fewer children in this country go hungry and that children have access to healthy food and a greater opportunity for success.

In 2018, Canada introduced “Opportunity for All - Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy”. As outlined in the report, food insecurity is an indicator of poverty. Food insecurity is defined as “the number of Canadian households that do not have enough money to purchase or access a sufficient amount and variety of food to live a healthy lifestyle”.

*[English]*

While this problem persists across the country, it is especially high in the north and among indigenous populations, black populations, lone-parent households, rural and remote communities, households that must rely on social assistance or employment insurance as their primary source of income, and renters. The number of children without access to nutritious food in some communities is very disturbing.

● (1800)

*[Translation]*

In my home province of New Brunswick, food insecurity for many families, is very real, including within my riding of Acadie—Bathurst. In New Brunswick, there is great regional disparity in the number of school breakfast programs, which creates an unacceptable social inequity. The provincial government funds certain schools but not others. Why should some schools have a breakfast, lunch and snack program and not others?

We know that schoolchildren without access to nutritious food are significantly disadvantaged. School meal programs can help to improve school attendance, foster better academic performance, improve health outcomes, and support students to achieve their life goals.

I want to commend all the dedicated volunteers, private sector donors and community organizations that are stepping up and trying to make a difference. Many are sponsoring or supporting school breakfast programs in communities in New Brunswick and throughout the country, but the demand far exceeds the supply, and they cannot do it alone.

Here are two good examples. To start, I would like to acknowledge the Fondation des petits déjeuners de la Péninsule acadienne and its president, Wanita McGraw. Over the past five years, the foundation has raised over \$1.2 million and has helped provide breakfast five days a week to 5,000 students at more than 20 schools on the Acadian Peninsula. I would also like to recognize Alexis Légère, a local market gardener who runs a community greenhouse at Marguerite-Bourgeoys school in Caraquet. The school gave him a plot of land where he grows and harvests vegetables with children from the school. These vegetables are then handed over to the cafeteria to use in meals. My thanks and congratulations go out to these extraordinary individuals and groups.

*[English]*

A comprehensive national framework geared at a school food program would make a real difference. This framework can be a road map for co-operation, bringing many stakeholders together in pursuit of this common objective.

*[Translation]*

Our government also provides support for school food programs, but despite the efforts being put in at all levels, school meal programs only reach 21% of school-age children. We can do better. We cannot have a program that does not serve every school. All children who require nutritious food should be able to access in their own school.

Bill C-322 also supports the development of a framework. It provides the basis for the discussions that will take place across the country with provinces, territories, municipalities, first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, parents, volunteers, charitable organizations, teachers, students, school administrators and subject matter experts.

The agriculture and agri-food sectors will also be engaged in this framework development. We can have a program that not only achieves its goal of making sure every child has access to healthy food, but one that will provide a creative blueprint for supporting farmers and agricultural producers in pursuit of that goal.

*[English]*

Canadian-made foods are responsible for one in eight jobs in Canada. The objective of Canada's food policy is to “help guide public, private, and non-profit sectors on food-related decisions and actions that can improve people's lives, their health, and the health of the environment and the economy.”

[Translation]

A national school food policy will support local food production, create jobs, grow the economy and help us achieve food security and sustainability. When it is rolled out, a national school food program will also provide much-needed relief for struggling families who are often faced with difficult decisions when providing for the needs of their children. These decisions might see a family cut back on its grocery order or look at less nutritious food options, because they cannot afford what they want and need.

[English]

I am proud that our government has introduced many programs to support families, such as the Canada-wide early learning and child care program, which reduces the cost of child care to \$10 a day; the Canada child benefit; the Canada housing benefit top-up; and the dental care plan. These are just a few of the support programs this government has put in place.

• (1805)

[Translation]

There has also been support for Food Banks Canada, community food centres, and local-level organizations serving people experiencing food insecurity, but we can do even more to help children and families, and this is the reason we need to develop a national framework for a school food program.

Some children may be hesitant to participate in a school breakfast program because they are worried that other children may see them as coming from a poorer background. If school nutrition programs are widely available, there is less chance that a child who needs a nutritious breakfast, lunch or snack will feel stigmatized. This is just one of the issues that can be addressed in developing the framework.

There will be many things to discuss following the passage of this bill, and considerable input will be required in the effort to design the best framework possible, but it is not an insurmountable challenge. There has already been a lot of work done to date. The consultation undertaken by Employment and Social Development Canada on building a pan-Canadian food policy has provided valuable insight and advice.

[English]

It is important to have a national framework if we want to meet the goals of a high-quality school food program that is focused on health and nutrition. As we all know, school food programs that currently exist vary from school to school and across the country. This does not mean that all meal programs will look the same, but that choice decisions can be made that will ensure the objectives and goals of the plan will be met.

[Translation]

We must also take into account our diverse cultural needs in the design of a national school food policy. All children should be able to enjoy nutritious and culturally relevant food in their schools. While the goal is to ensure that all programs focus on nutrition and health, it stands to reason that the meals will need to be appealing to students. It would not make much sense to design a meal pro-

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gram with food that students do not like. Again, this is something that can be addressed in the framework.

[English]

This bill is very straightforward. It would empower the minister of employment and social development to consult with the Minister of Health, representatives of provincial and territorial governments responsible for health and education, other relevant stakeholders in those fields and representatives of indigenous governing bodies to develop a national framework to establish a school food program to ensure that all children in Canada have access to healthy food.

[Translation]

As outlined in the bill, the framework will:

- (a) set out the criteria for determining whether a food is healthy, taking into account Canada's Food Guide;
- (b) indicate which meals and snacks, at a minimum, must be offered in schools under the program;
- (c) take into account the different circumstances in which children live, including cultural diversity, and the resulting dietary requirements;
- (d) take into account the rights and priorities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis;
- (e) provide for measures to avoid stigmatizing pupils who use the program;
- (f) provide for measures to foster the use of local and sustainable food systems;
- (g) take into account existing local initiatives and infrastructure, build on existing school food programs across Canada and use best practices from other jurisdictions; and
- (h) promote evidence-based healthy food education in schools across Canada.

The bill establishes a timeline for the consultations and the preparation of a report by the minister setting out a national framework. The report must be completed within one year and tabled before each House of Parliament within the first 15 days on which that House is sitting.

I believe this is a reasonable time frame to carry out the consultations and develop the framework. There is also provision in the bill for reviewing the effectiveness of the framework within five years after the tabling of the report.

[English]

We will not achieve the goal of a national school food program overnight, but we will have set a path forward to do so.

I feel passionate about this bill and what it can achieve. I know that all members of both houses recognize what this bill can do for children and families, and how transformative it can be.

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[Translation]

Politicians often come under fire and there can be public skepticism about politics and politicians in general, but I have always believed that people run for public office because they want to improve others' living conditions and help their community prosper. It was my motivation to offer as a candidate for Acadie—Bathurst. I am working to improve the lives of my constituents and fellow citizens, but more importantly, in this case, I am working for our successors and the next generation, the children.

We all have the opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives by passing this bill and ensuring that every child in Canada will have access to healthy food in every region of the country.

In closing, I am calling on my colleagues to think about all the children and families who will benefit from a national school food program and support a bill that will serve as a shining example of what makes Canada such a great country in which to live and raise a family.

• (1810)

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am tabling the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1,694 to 1,696, 1,698, 1,699, 1,702 to 1,707 and 1,709.

[English]

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am wondering if my colleague tell me if he has done consultations with the provinces, as the education system is within the jurisdiction of the provinces and not in the purview of the federal government.

What consultations have been done and what is the feedback he has had from provinces regarding this?

**Mr. Serge Cormier:** Madam Speaker, the bill is saying to actually have a framework. We all know those things are the provinces' responsibility, so we need to consult with the provinces and territories to make sure that we have their input when creating this framework. Of course, we will do so. Of course, we know that provinces and territories need to be part of that. We know that school food programs already exist in some provinces and territories, but maybe we can do more to help them achieve better frameworks and better programs in the future. That is why we want to make sure that all stakeholders, included provinces and territories, will be part of developing this framework.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, this is indeed a very important question. In a country as wealthy as Canada, who would find it acceptable that there are still children going to school without food?

However, there was no mention of the fact that one of the most important indicators of poverty is clearly housing. We are in the middle of a housing crisis in Canada right now. The government has been in power for eight years, and the crisis is getting worse every year. We need to build 3.5 million housing units in Canada by 2030, including 1.1 million in Quebec. Prompt action to build housing that people can afford, such as social housing and affordable

housing, would have an impact on families and, therefore, on children.

Does my colleague agree that we should act swiftly and embark on a major affordable and social housing project in Canada, effective immediately?

**Mr. Serge Cormier:** Madam Speaker, I think my colleagues know that we are currently doing everything we can on the housing file through the various programs that are in place and that our government recently unveiled.

However, I want to talk more about my bill. This is something very important. We are talking here about children who go to school on an empty stomach. I think my colleague will agree that we cannot allow this to continue.

I know that the Government of Quebec and the province of Quebec have very progressive social programs like these. I am sure that we will be able to benefit from their input and support as we develop this framework.

Once again, we are helping families get through these difficult times, whether with housing or the Canada child benefit. I think that one of our needs is to ensure that our children no longer go to school hungry.

These children need help and support. After all, they are the future generation that we need so very much.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind members that any questions that are asked have to pertain to the bill under consideration.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the speaker on his private member's bill. I would like to add that the Liberals promised this four years ago. It was part of their platform and they still have not delivered on it. I am glad he is taking the initiative.

The member for Vancouver Kingsway also put forward a private member's bill earlier this year. It was Bill C-212, the school food program for children act, which I seconded. We tried to push the government to put in a school food program for children. There is no reason kids should be going to school hungry. As a former educator, I know what damage it does for kids' learning when they are going to school hungry.

Does my hon. colleague believe the Liberals will actually keep their promise and put this bill in place?

• (1815)

**Mr. Serge Cormier:** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, we helped families so much in 2015 through many programs. I still think this is a bill that would, again, help children not go to school on an empty stomach. Can we do it faster? Yes, I hope that we will do it faster. There is a provision in the bill that would give us a year to have this done. However, I hope that it will take less time than that because children cannot wait any more. Children cannot go to school on an empty stomach. We need to help them, and I hope that my colleague will support this bill when the time comes.

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the purpose of this bill, as set out by the member for Acadie—Bathurst is “to establish a school food program”. While I see in his preamble that the member has recognized that education is in the exclusive jurisdiction of each province, it nonetheless bears pointing out that the member might have been well advised to have sought a seat in the provincial legislature where he could bring the bill forward. After all, section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867, is clear. “In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education”.

Furthermore, sections 92.7 and 92.8 of the Constitution Act put charitable activities and municipal institutions squarely in the exclusive responsibilities of each province. It is possible that the member for Acadie—Bathurst is laying the groundwork for running in a provincial election because he sees the writing on the wall as to his party's prospects in the next federal election. I cannot blame him.

However, if the member for Acadie—Bathurst is truly serious about helping parents to afford nourishing meals for their kids and themselves, this is something he could push for: Axe the carbon tax. I urge the member for Acadie—Bathurst to persuade his leader, the Prime Minister, that it would be better for Canadian families and better for him, electorally, to axe the carbon tax.

I want to share some talking points that the member can use to persuade his leader. According to the 13th edition of Canada's Food Price Report, 2023, by September last year, families across Canada were paying in excess of 10% more for their groceries. This year, Canadians' grocery bills have increased by another 8% to 9% or more. Vegetables are seeing the biggest price increases and, as a result, Canadian families are cutting back on their purchases of vegetables and other healthy food choices for their children. About 20% of Canadians report skipping a meal a day. Food banks across the country are seeing a record number of visits by Canadian families.

The cowardly costly coalition of the Liberal Party and NDP has been sleeping at the wheel as Canadian families pay more and more for their basic necessities of life. Canadians cannot afford a costly coalition. Canadians cannot afford more of what they have suffered under eight years of irresponsible government.

The reason for food inflation is not just because of too little competition in the grocery industry. Beginning in 2018, the Prime Minister has been gouging Canadian families with a regressive, unfair carbon tax, carbon tax 1, and inflating it year over year. As of April Fool's Day 2023, the Prime Minister inflated carbon tax 1 to \$65 a tonne and by April Fool's Day 2030, the Prime Minister wants to

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inflate carbon tax 1 to \$170 a tonne. The Prime Minister has not stopped there. As of Canada Day, the Prime Minister added another carbon tax, so now the Prime Minister is asking Canadians to pay two carbon taxes.

Even worse is that when the carbon tax is added at the pumps or on their home heating bills, Canadians are charged sales tax, or HST, on the carbon tax. There is no other way to put it: The Prime Minister and his costly coalition are charging Canadian families tax on tax and between two carbon taxes, on April Fool's Day 2030, the Prime Minister wants to charge truckers 61¢ or more for a litre of diesel fuel. It is not rocket science. It is just basic math that the NDP-Liberals do not seem to get.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, earlier I was criticized for talking about housing when we were debating this bill, which calls on us to do everything in our power to ensure that children do not go to school on an empty stomach. My colleague is supposed to be talking to us about this bill, but she is talking about the carbon tax. Her comments are completely off topic and I would ask you to call her to order.

• (1820)

[English]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have to remind members that when they are debating or asking questions about a particular bill, it should be related to the bill. I am sure that the hon. member is going to bring it around and back to the bill.

The hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, if it costs the farmer more to grow food and costs the trucker more to ship food, it is going to cost families more to buy food to feed their children.

When the Bank of Canada governor, Tiff Macklem, appeared on Monday before the finance committee, my colleague, the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South asked the governor how the carbon tax affects inflation. Governor Macklem said that it is really two separate questions.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. You just instructed the member to stay on track per the discussion at hand, which is about ensuring that children do not go hungry in school. As soon as you gave that instruction, the member continued on with her speech as though it was not heard. I seek your advice for the member to have clear instructions on how to follow the rules in this House.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind members there is some flexibility when it comes to debate. The hon. member just brought it back to how it pertains to the debate, and so I will allow the hon. member to continue her speech.

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The hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex has the floor.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, Governor Macklem said there are two separate questions. The governor said, "...how much are the increases in the carbon tax adding to inflation each year? That number is about .15 percentage points of inflation. That's the direct impact on those three components."

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I am just trying to seek clarity from you on what the topic at hand is that we are supposed to be discussing and whether the member is actually following those rules.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Again, I want to indicate there is some flexibility as to what a member speaks about during her speech or his speech when they are showing the relevance to the bill. I am sure the hon. member will be mentioning the bill and will be adding to how this actually impacts the bill before the House.

The hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex has the floor, and I am sure she will be bringing it back around.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, the three components the governor referred were those raised by my colleague, which were gasoline, diesel fuel and natural gas. Governor Macklem continued—

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. With the kind of behaviour I have seen from the Conservative Party, first the leader of the Conservative Party refusing to sit down, there seems to be a total disregard for rules and for Speaker of the House. I am starting to get frustrated. This is an important matter: Kids are starving when they are going to school. For some respect for families and kids who are struggling, can we actually talk about children being hungry in schools and stay on topic?

Standing Order 11(2) is constantly being disregarded.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member is bringing up a point of debate as opposed to a point of order. There is some flexibility as to relevancy, so we just need to allow the hon. member to continue with her speech for a bit to make sure it does show relevancy.

**Mr. Larry Maguire:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Of course I would be surprised if the NDP was not embarrassed by its coalition with the Liberal Party because of the inflation that has been caused—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have already ruled on the point of order. This is now becoming more of a point of debate.

I will allow the hon. member to continue with her speech, and I know there is going to be some relevancy.

The hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex can continue.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, I will try again. At this rate, eliminating the carbon tax by the Bank of Canada—

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

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Pardon me, Madam Speaker, can I please revert back to the page before and start my time, because I have been interrupted about five—

• (1825)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The time was stopped for the points of order, and so it has not impacted on the hon. member's time.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, Governor Macklem continued by responding to the second question, which was what the effect on inflation would be if the carbon tax were to be eliminated. He said that it would create a one-time drop in inflation of 0.6%.

If the carbon tax were eliminated, it would result in a drop in inflation of 0.6%. The overall inflation rate is currently at about 3.2%. At that rate, eliminating the carbon tax, by the Governor of the Bank of Canada's estimate, would reduce inflation by more than 18%.

The lead author of Canada's Food Price Report 2023, Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, has pointed out that the carbon tax has made business expenses go up. Dr. Charlebois points to "the compounding effect" up and down the food chain, as the supply chain is exposed to increased costs from the carbon tax. Let us take a look at that supply chain and why food is costing more.

The carbon tax increases costs for heating greenhouses, as well as dairy, poultry and hog barns. It increases costs for running the machinery necessary for production operations, especially the cost of electricity. In fact, in 2020, according to Statistics Canada, production costs for greenhouses were up 31.8% above the 10-year average. In 2021, the latest year for which facts are available from Statistics Canada, greenhouse costs were up 9.3% over those of 2020. Electricity costs for greenhouses were up in 2021 by 8.2% over 2020. Other fuel costs were up 7.7% over those of 2020.

In case anybody does not see that this is a problem, Statistics Canada reports that, as of 2021—

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Rivière-du-Nord is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Madam Speaker, you are incredibly patient. We first rose on a point of order about five minutes ago to ask members to be respectful enough to talk about our colleague's bill, which is an important bill that has nothing to do with the carbon tax. I think that, out of respect for this institution, we should have the member stop her speech. The Conservative party was mocking the Speaker this afternoon by remaining standing for several minutes without speaking, and we are getting pulled back into that same unacceptable thing. Out of respect for the Speaker, the member should be asked to stop.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It seems to me that all of these points of order are more a matter of debate. As I already mentioned, members have some latitude.



[English]

I would remind the hon. member that, throughout her speech, she should be mentioning how this is in reference to the bill itself. There is, again, some flexibility, as I have indicated, in the relevancy of how this impacts the bill, which is an act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program.

I just want to make sure that the hon. member is aware of that, and that hon. members recognize that there is some flexibility in how we get to the specific bill.

**Mr. Chris Warkentin:** Madam Speaker, I rise on another point of order. I do appreciate your ruling in that way.

I believe there is an additional point of order on the number of times that my colleague has been interrupted during her speech, which clearly has to do with the price of food in Canada today, one of the underlying reasons.

I would like the Speaker to rule on when it becomes harassment in the House to have constant points of orders interrupting a speech that is clearly on the subject at hand.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Hon. members who are rising on points of order are trying to see where the hon. member is going with her speech. As I indicated, there is some leniency on relevancy. If members remember correctly, it would be good to reference the bill every once in a while. I would ask the hon. member to maybe consider that.

Again, everybody has a right to rise on a point of order. I would just ask the member to bring it back to the bill.

● (1830)

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Madam Speaker, it impacts the bill because, every step along the way, families would not need a government program if they could afford to buy food. If it costs more to put inputs into food for farmers, it is going to cost more for families to buy food for their kids. Why are two million people going to a food bank in a month? They should not need to, and it is because of the policies of the government.

We would not need this kind of program if food inflation were not so high and if the carbon tax were not on everything. It is to the point where people cannot afford to live. Canadians cannot afford to buy food. If it costs overhead to heat greenhouses, and it costs farmers overhead to heat their barns, of course the price of food is going to go up. It is going to be hard for families to afford nutritious food because farmers need to make money too when they are trying to sell their crops. They have to pass that on to consumers.

If anybody does not see that the carbon tax increases the production cost of food, they are choosing not to see it. Again, if it costs the farmer more to grow food, and it costs truckers more to ship the food, then it costs families more to buy food. They should be able to buy food with the money in their pockets that they take home with their wages, but the government is making it unaffordable for families. We would not need this government program if families could afford to buy their food.

Families are seeing unaffordable price increases on the food they buy for their loved ones year over year. Almost daily I am hearing in my office from folks, young and old, who are having difficulty

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getting by. Many do not have enough to buy their groceries or pay their heating bill, their rent or their mortgages, and more families are visiting food banks. Food bank usage hit another record high in 2023 with two million people using a food bank in a single month. Two million people cannot eat and satisfy their hunger with fluff reports or studies.

Canadian consumers face inflation on food at 8% to 9% year over year. Again, 20% of Canadians report skipping a meal each day. What they need is lower grocery prices so they can afford to feed their families. Meanwhile, the government just wants to tax to the max with two carbon taxes plus HST. It is enough. Canadians deserve better than a Prime Minister and a government that just seems to be going through the motions.

The Prime Minister can deny all he wants, but Canadians know that inflation is real. The Governor of the Bank of Canada also said something last Monday at the finance committee about how government spending affects the ability of the Bank of Canada to bring inflation down. The Governor indicated that government spending makes it more difficult for the Bank of Canada to hold the line and bring the inflation rate down. As a result, monthly mortgage payments for Canadian families are rising when they renew their mortgages. Their mortgage interest rates are almost double or more to what the interest rate was to their previous renewal.

High taxes, increased red tape and bureaucracy have driven investment out of Canada, causing our economy to slide each year with a continued low Canadian dollar, making everything bought from our largest trading partner, the U.S., more expensive. Canada is on track to be one of the most unproductive and least prosperous countries in the OECD.

The International Monetary Fund listed Canada as having the sixth-worst misery index out of 35 industrialized countries. Simply put, the higher the score, the worst the economic situation. Canada scores the sixth highest, but the NDP and the Liberal Party do not want to talk about any of this. They want to make it appear as though they are helping, even though the NDP and the Liberals are the cause of unaffordable prices and people's misery.

That is why the Leader of the Opposition, along with those on this side of the House, have been holding the Prime Minister and his government to account for spending and inflation. Can there be any doubt? It is time for a real change from the inflationary, all-too-costly coalition of the NDP-Liberal government.

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To sum up, Bill C-322 is better suited to be put forward in a provincial legislature than in the national Parliament. However, if the member for Acadie—Bathurst is truly serious about helping Canadian families afford nutritious food for their tables, he should persuade his colleagues to reduce food costs by axing the carbon tax.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ):** Madam Speaker, children are a national treasure; they are our greatest asset. They are the adults of tomorrow, and it is our duty to help them reach their full potential so that society is better off in the future than it is now. Every generation since the dawn of time has set itself the goal of ensuring that the next generation lives a better life. We must not fail in our duty.

This will come as a surprise to no one, but eating is an essential need. Once again, I am going to talk a bit about Maslow's pyramid. This pyramid explains many of the choices we make in life. It must also be an intrinsic element of our thinking when we have to make decisions like the one concerning this bill. It brings our focus back to what needs to be considered, what must be important. At the base of this pyramid are the basic needs of housing, clothing and food.

If any of these needs is not adequately met, a person cannot move on to the next level, which is safety. The other levels, belonging, esteem and self-actualization, will not be met either. A child who goes hungry in the morning cannot concentrate. A child who goes hungry in the morning is often sad, sometimes aggressive and sometimes apathetic. The effects of these emotions can make it hard for these children to make friends or socialize at school. Such difficulties directly undermine a child's self-esteem, as well as the goodwill of the people around them. Such feelings and difficulties can undermine a child's trust in the people around them, especially those whose job it is to protect them, like parents and teachers.

If a child feels unsafe at school, they cannot achieve their potential. It is very difficult. Becoming fully engaged in what we have to do is harder if we are hungry because that is all we can think of.

I was a teacher for 18 years. During those 18 years, I also coordinated the "Stratégie d'intervention agir autrement", or new solutions intervention strategy.

Disadvantaged communities are communities that are economically or culturally disadvantaged. A culturally disadvantaged environment means that there are people in the family who have not reached the fifth year of high school. Studies show that when there are people in the family who have not reached the fifth year of high school, it is difficult for them to promote and value education. These people also often struggle financially, as the two often go hand in hand.

My colleague from Acadie—Bathurst asked why some schools did not have food support. As part of the "Stratégie d'intervention agir autrement", or new solutions intervention strategy, we wanted to set up a kitchen in a small school so that young people could not only eat, but also learn to eat well. It cost tens of thousands of dollars to set up the kitchen, and there was no guarantee that anyone would be there to help the children.

The school was in a disadvantaged community, and its socio-economic index was 10 on a scale of one to 10. This gives an idea of the situation. A community is considered disadvantaged when it has a rating of eight, nine or 10. That one had a score of 10, and we could not even set up something as essential as a kitchen, because it would cost tens of thousands of dollars.

I have seen the consequences in the short, medium and long terms of children in our society going without food. In a society as wealthy as ours, a lack of food does not necessarily have the same consequences as it does in Yemen, but there are consequences nonetheless. We can talk about fatigue. It is simple, when we do not have enough fuel, we get tired. We can talk about irritability, impatience, troubles concentrating, dizziness and headaches. This can escalate to aggression or cardiac arrhythmia. In girls, it can lead to amenorrhea, or the absence of menstruation.

● (1835)

Some might say that some people do not need to go without food to feel these symptoms. That is true. However, all these symptoms combined are a big indicator. We see these symptoms often so we forget this exists. We dissociate, saying it is a fact that this causes fatigue, it is a fact that young people are aggressive.

It will provide an example. This is a true story. I am not going to name names, but I am certain everyone will understand why. In my 18 years of teaching, I saw it all. How did I find out about what I am about to share? There came a point when I started to notice things and ask questions. Then, I listened. This person's family situation changed quite suddenly. Finances were getting very tight, and this person realized that there was not much food in the cupboard. She would skip meals to make sure the rest of the family she lived with could eat for the rest of the week. She either did not eat breakfast or had a piece of fruit. Lunches were non-existent, except for a piece of bread from the cafeteria, which I call "plastic bread" because it is packaged and not particularly fresh. She would eat small portions at supper so that other family members could use the leftovers the next day for their lunches.

At the same time, this person, a girl, was experiencing major physical changes. When she stopped eating nearly altogether, she was tired and emotionally fragile, on top of what she was going through with her family. When she was a teenager, certain individuals began insulting her. I am talking about kids with behavioural problems, who do not think before they speak. These people started calling her fat and "fatso" because she had a large frame. That is the kind of thing she was dealing with. Because of this problem, on top of thinking that she had to skip meals so her family could eat, she started to hate her own body.

If she had been able to eat, she probably would have had the strength to tell the others to mind their own business. She could have told them that she was growing up and had a woman's shape, while others were still little girls. She would have had that temperament. She did not have it, however, because she was not eating. In the end, this led to an anxiety disorder and even hospitalization. As an adult, her issues with body image worsened and would not go away. A problem as trivial as skipping a meal because there is not enough food at home to feed everyone can turn into a much more serious psychological problem in adulthood.

I want to reassure my colleagues that I still see this person and she is doing well. She has turned her life around. She has a family and a good job. Sometimes her demons rear their ugly head again and she does not like what she sees in the mirror, but she is proud of the progress that she has made and of the fact that she now has a family who does not have to go through what she did. However, there is always that part of her that fears that something will go wrong and her family will have to experience what she did.

My colleague's bill is a very good thing for young people across Canada who need food aid and support at school. School is a great place to get that help. In fact, healthy eating is part of education, socialization and even the school's mandate. However, there is the matter of the Constitution, and health and education fall under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces. The bill is very worthwhile, but it is missing a sentence, a provision.

● (1840)

The bill's preamble recognizes that the bill affects areas under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces. I am aware of that. It is written in the preamble. However, a provision is needed that gives Quebec and the provinces the right to opt out with full compensation if they want to run their own school food program.

● (1845)

[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on C-322, an act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program. My colleague for Vancouver Kingsway and I put forward a similar bill in this Parliament, to push forward a school food program for children.

This is something that has been called for by experts and advocates for a long time, for many years, to develop a national school meal program. Canada continues to be one of the few industrial countries to not have such a program or national standards. We actually ranked 37th out of 41 wealthy countries, in terms of providing schoolchildren with nutritious food, according to a 2017 UNICEF study.

In fact, if we add first nations communities, which are often left out of these statistics, Canada falls even further behind. That is shameful in a country as rich as Canada.

Prior to teaching at university, in the faculty of education, where I taught for many years, I actually taught in schools. I taught in an inner-city school. As a new teacher, I noticed that the kids in the classroom where I was teaching had sometimes significant behavioural issues.

### *Private Members' Business*

I then realized what the root of the problem was. It was that the kids going to school in my class were hungry. They could not learn. Their learning was impaired. Because of their hunger, they became disruptive in the classroom. Therefore, one of my first lessons as a new teacher, to control behaviour in my classroom, was to ensure that kids were not hungry.

I put in a toaster with bread, granola bars and apples. I did not make the kids ask for food. I respected their dignity. I respected the dignity of their families, who were doing the best they could at the time but could not afford food.

This is not a new problem. Besides what Conservatives try to pull, indicating that this is a new problem, it was under a Conservative government, in fact, that my kids in the classroom were going to school hungry.

It is about a dilapidated, archaic social safety net that is keeping families further behind. One reason I put forward a bill for a guaranteed livable basic income is that, in a country as rich as Canada, nobody should go to school hungry. That was Bill C-223, the same bill that Senator Kim Pate put forward on her side.

This basic human right to food security should not be denied to anybody, especially children, whose learning is impacted in schools when they are literally starving. Having put a toaster in my classroom and having bread and fruit, I noticed that, instead of being disruptive, the kids were attentive. Instead of feeling demoralized by having to share that there was not enough food in their home, they could, with dignity, just eat.

I said to them, if they were hungry, they could just take food. I need snacks all the time. We get hungry. They could just help themselves. I made sure to have this in my classroom.

Boy, what a difference I saw in these bright, dynamic, inspiring, courageous young people. They had so many barriers, it was amazing they made it to class, let alone having food security, a basic human right, being a barrier to the learning that they were trying to do in my classroom.

As I said, no child should attend school on an empty stomach.

● (1850)

The Liberals first promised this national school program in 2019. Four years later, thanks to their colleague, they put forward a private member's bill, but they still have not delivered. Kids still go to school hungry.

*Routine Proceedings*

The Conservatives are completely silent on the issue. In fact, in this debate today, instead of fighting to ensure that kids do not go to school hungry, they make everything about oil and gas. I stood on a point of order about that earlier, because it is unacceptable that, on the backs of kids' human rights, we take this time to politicize kids' hunger. It infuriates me today that even when we are talking about kids' hunger, we are talking about oil and gas.

The New Democrats have been on this page long before the Liberal promise and this bill, and we are going to keep advocating for the creation of a national school food program that ensures that every child and every family will have access to nutritious, healthy food. This can be done by addressing gaps in our social safety net, gaps that have not kept up with inflation and leave families behind. We very often politicize issues in this place, to my disappointment and certainly to the disappointment of families in Winnipeg Centre, which competes for the highest child poverty rates in an urban centre in the country. We need to make time for them. That is our job in this House: to fight for those who have elected us.

We know that EIA rates have not kept up. Now families, more than ever, are choosing between food and rent. They are experiencing, for the first time, being unsheltered and, as a result, having to literally depend on food banks to get fed. This is unacceptable. We should never need food banks, because people should always be given enough to have their basic human rights met. We have a Constitution in this country, which says that everybody should live with security and in dignity. This is a principle, a fundamental law in our Constitution, which we fail to uphold. We need food programs in schools right now; the NDP will support the bill, but the Liberals need to put it in place.

So many children in this country are going hungry. There are certain kids in this country who, depending on immigration status, do not even get the Canada child benefit and are even more hungry. There is a human rights case on this. We need to address the issue of poverty. We cannot constantly politicize human rights in this place. Not everything is a political sound bite. Not everything needs to get in the media. Sometimes, we need to be in touch with our basic humanity, especially when we are talking about the hunger of children in this country. This is the reason I felt a need to rise on a point of order in the House. This is an issue that we should not even be debating right now.

We should not delay. I want to congratulate the member on putting forward this bill. I want him to know that my party will be supporting it. I hope the Conservatives, if they are so worried about families, support this bill, make sure that we update the social safety net, stop with the sound bites and make sure no child in this country ever goes to school hungry.

• (1855)

[Translation]

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

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[Translation]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE****INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

The House resumed from October 18 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am continuing a speech I was able to start a few days ago. I would like to start from the beginning, but quickly, and present a chronology of the whole ArriveCAN affair.

On April 29, 2020, the government launched the ArriveCAN app nationwide. It then took several months for it to make the app mandatory, which happened on November 21, 2020. This meant that anyone re-entering Canada from that point on had to register and use the ArriveCAN application. Everyone who left the country and returned to Canada realized that the ArriveCAN app was not very sophisticated.

On October 24, 2022, the Canada Border Services Agency announced the costs of the application on its website. We are talking \$55 million over three years. Costs totalled more than \$55 million over the three-year period from 2020 to 2023, including \$80,000 for the first mobile version of the app and \$8.6 million for more than 70 updates to the app and the related website. It is worth nothing that 70 updates is a lot, especially for an app that, on the whole, is pretty straightforward. Another \$7.9 million was spent on data management and \$6.4 million on data storage and cloud services. That is a lot of money. That is the first observation.

Second, on October 31, 2022, pursuant to a motion adopted by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, the Canada Border Services Agency provided an updated table of non-salary expenditures related to ArriveCAN, along with the names of the companies contracted to develop the app.

On November 2, 2022, one year ago tomorrow, the House voted in this very chamber to adopt the motion calling on the Auditor General to investigate and audit the ArriveCAN app. I point out that this motion was adopted by a majority in the House of Commons, but not unanimously.

On January 23, so about two months later, when the Prime Minister was asked about it, he replied that the contracting process for ArriveCAN had been illogical and inefficient.

On October 4, 2023, so just under a month ago, two articles in The Globe and Mail reported allegations of misconduct in the Canada Border Services Agency's IT contracting process.

On Thursday, October 12, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, on which I have the pleasure of sitting, convened an emergency meeting to ensure that the information gathered by The Globe and Mail would be taken into consideration by the Auditor General, who, I would remind the House, is to conduct an audit on the matter. The chair of our committee explained that he convened that meeting following the announcement of an RCMP investigation into allegations of misconduct in the contracting process.

Madam Speaker, there is a lot of background noise. I would like to be able to deliver my speech in a more conducive environment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sure that it was unintentional and that the member in question is sorry.

The hon. member for Terrebonne.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, the look I gave was enough.

As I was saying, the audit report of the Auditor General of Canada was expected to be presented this month. However, because of new allegations made in the newspapers, the Auditor General of Canada told us during the special committee meeting that she would be extending the deadline for her audit into the winter.

I will briefly summarize the main points of the article, which is very interesting. I have to point out that a healthy democracy needs this kind of real investigative journalism. Two IT experts from the Botler company say they witnessed dubious or at least questionable practices in the procedure used to allocate public funds for software development contracts. Specifically, they received money from a contract that they had not even signed and that had been signed without their knowledge. That is serious.

There were also ties to CBSA staff, and the GC Strategies firm is being particularly hard hit by the potential scandal.

GC Strategies, the consulting firm, has been singled out. It has not yet been charged, but is potentially being charged with transferring data to third-party, unknown companies that are potentially dubious once again. We are talking about personal data. People who travel and put personal information on a government platform expect their data to be respected. We know that potentially dangerous data transfers have occurred.

This controversy is in addition to the \$54-million price tag for the ArriveCAN app last year. As I said, the first thing is that there was a very high price tag for a rather simple app. On top of that, the contracts that were awarded to companies for developing this app are especially dubious. We are very much looking forward to seeing the report of the Auditor General of Canada.

I would like to mention one last thing about the special meeting that we had. The Globe and Mail reported that the Canada Border Services Agency received warnings about the questionable ties between the IT consultants and some federal public servants, so people at the CBSA had the information. What happened is that they decided to launch an investigation themselves on their end. We know that the RCMP and the CBSA launched investigations at the same time as the Auditor General of Canada's audit.

#### *Routine Proceedings*

What comes next is very important. During the special meeting that was held about the ArriveCAN app, during which we spoke to the Auditor General of Canada, I asked her the question and she answered that she was not even aware that those investigations were taking place. The Auditor General herself was not informed of the fact that government agencies and departments were conducting an investigation on their end, when that is her job and she had been mandated by the House to conduct an audit. There was no communication there.

It is rather typical of the government not to consult interested parties, but it is rather inappropriate that it did not inform the Auditor General of Canada that it was conducting its own investigation into a potential scandal.

From day one, ArriveCAN has been a clear example of government incompetence. Before even knowing that the RCMP was investigating allegations of criminal misconduct in the awarding of contracts, we already knew that the app cost a lot of money.

Nearly a year later, we find out other things from the article in The Globe and Mail. The Auditor General of Canada confirmed that she is not aware of an investigation being conducted by the Canada Border Services Agency and by the RCMP. When the articles came out, we were able to hold a special meeting. However, the report of the Auditor General of Canada still not having been published, we wonder why the focus on wanting to talk about this app.

It goes without saying, but we think that the Auditor General should carry out her work with the collaboration of all the departments. Given that she is mandated by Parliament, we expect the Auditor General of Canada to present her report so that we can get to the bottom of things and find out what happened with ArriveCAN. We know that there were some questionable actions, but we do not know exactly what happened. A professional person and third party needs to conduct the investigation and settle the matter.

● (1900)

We are dealing with a government that voted against the motion calling on the Auditor General to conduct an audit. On the face of it, that does not look good for our current democracy. Meanwhile, motion after motion is moved, and we are currently debating a third-party committee report about an app when the Auditor General is already investigating the matter.

We cannot help but wonder what the Conservatives are up to. Are they trying to block the work of Parliament? That is what I am wondering, and that is what the folks in my party are wondering. We would like to move on to serious matters and get to work.

The Conservatives' actions today are not worthy of a party that wants to be in power. At the end of the day, we are the only ones acting responsibly in this Parliament.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1905)

[English]

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I take issue with my colleague's comments on our role as the opposition.

In fact, I called for, at the international trade committee, the study of ArriveCAN in the winter of 2022. That is why we are here today. It is because of the negative impacts that application had on the tourism community. We lost two years because of COVID. We lost a third year of tourism because of the ArriveCAN app and its implications for the tourism sector.

What were the impacts on the tourism community in your riding? Why is it that you are criticizing us for wanting to continue to raise and alleviate the concerns we are trying to look at with the tourism sector?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I do want to remind the member that he is to address questions and comments through the Chair, and not directly to the member.

The hon. member for Terrebonne.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, we know, and it is our party's position, that there may have been problems with the tourism industry and that it potentially paid the price for the application.

However, we are supposed to be debating a number of other topics. At the moment, we are debating committee reports when we should be moving bills forward.

Why is it that every day in committee a constant stream of motions prevent us from really doing our job?

[English]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise this evening to speak to a report produced by the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade, of which I am a proud member. This is a Conservative motion to concur in the sixth report of the committee on international trade, entitled “The ArriveCAN Digital Tool: Impacts on Certain Canadian Sectors”. I will say off the top that I became a member of the committee while the study was under way about a year ago. I was not present during some of the testimony, but I did take part in the meetings that drafted the report early this spring.

This report, as its name implies, is focused on the trade implications of the ArriveCAN app, the travel implications and the effect the application had on travel back and forth across the Canadian border during the COVID pandemic. As we all know, the COVID pandemic hit North America in March 2020, which closed this place in the House of Commons on March 13. A week later, on March 20, the governments of Canada and the United States agreed to temporarily restrict all non-essential travel across the Canada-U.S. border. The pandemic had huge impacts on the Canadian economy, many of which arose from the restrictions that were placed on crossing the Canada-U.S. border.

The report we are debating today summarizes testimony about the ArriveCAN app received by the committee during its study. It was divided into three sections. The first provides information about the impacts of ArriveCAN on Canada's border crossings. The second is about the impacts of the use of ArriveCAN on certain sectors, particularly tourism. The third section presents the views of witnesses about proposed government actions that could support the recovery of specific sectors affected by the mandatory use of ArriveCAN.

The ArriveCAN app was launched in April 2020. It allowed travellers entering Canada to input their quarantine plans and later their vaccination information, thus digitizing the information collected through the paper forms that travellers had to complete before that time. On November 21, 2020, the use of the ArriveCAN app became mandatory for travellers entering Canada, so they could not use the paper forms that they could use before.

I have to point out here that it was not so much the use of the ArriveCAN app that affected travellers, but the fact that for almost two years, from November 21, 2020, to September 30, 2022, the app was mandatory, they had to use it to cross the border. They could not fill out their information on the paper forms that had been used initially in the pandemic. I also want to point out again that this study was restricted to the impacts of the mandatory use of this app.

Many other pandemic measures had negative impacts on economic sectors and industries in Canada. Vaccine mandates and COVID testing all impacted the ability and speed with which people could cross the border. Also, the study did not cover the development of the ArriveCAN app that we have heard so much about in this debate. That aspect was studied and is being studied by other committees in the House of Commons. I will talk more about that later.

The international trade committee study we are debating here tonight was concerned with the impacts that ArriveCAN had on certain sectors, and I would say particularly tourism. What were some of those impacts?

The most obvious one is when an application is created that can only be used on smart phones or tablets and is then made mandatory, it has an immediate impact on anyone who does not own a smart phone or tablet, or even those who find using smart phones a challenge beyond the simple act of answering the phone or looking at an email and that kind of thing. Therefore, I am a bit surprised that when the government was deciding to make the ArriveCAN app mandatory no one seemed to ask the obvious question: What about those people who do not own smart phones? Seniors are clearly a group of people who broadly fit that category.

● (1910)

This problem caused a lot of delays at border crossings, especially land border crossings. I want to reiterate that the app was created to save time, but on the whole, in many ways, it caused delays, certainly from the travellers' point of view.

I have heard a lot about it from my constituents. I have six land border crossings in my riding, probably the most in the country of any riding. My constituents are used to travelling back and forth across the border for business, shopping and tourism. My riding is very reliant on the tourism industry. Many of my constituents were affected by the requirement to use the ArriveCAN app.

One of the additional problems in my riding is that several of the border crossings are found in areas without cell coverage, so people could not use the app at the border. They could not load their data at the border, because they did not have any way to use their phones. There was no cell coverage. In some places there is cell coverage, but it is from cell towers in Washington state, so they are paying extra roaming charges.

All this resulted in extra work for travellers and border agents alike. Mark Weber, President of the Customs and Immigration Union, representing the people working at the border said in testimony:

What I can tell you is that the numbers provided to you earlier by the CBSA—

That is the group that was organizing the use of the app.

—which said that 99% of air travellers and 94% of land travellers have the app completed, are absolutely false. Those numbers are the percentages completed after we helped them complete with the app. In the Eastern Townships branches, the numbers were closer to 60%, for example.

The percentage of travellers who could do all this on their own was much lower than the 95% that CBSA reported. He goes on to say:

Overall, we're looking at closer to 75% to 80% having it completed.

Essentially, our officers now largely work as IT consultants. You have land borders that have essentially become parking lots, with us helping people complete the app.

Mr. Weber's point was that it would have been quicker and more efficient for those who could not use the app to simply continue providing the paper form information about quarantine plans and showing their proofs of vaccination to CBSA officers rather than getting help to enter the information on phones they did not have or did not know how to use. Workers in duty-free stores also had to help travellers with the app.

I want to remind people that it was not entirely, completely straightforward to use the app. I use two smart phones every day, and I think of myself as pretty tech-savvy. I remember when I first had to use ArriveCAN, it was not all that straightforward. I had to figure out how to save my vaccine certificates as images, find those images on my phone and upload them to the app. I can see how someone not familiar with those processes would have trouble.

Seniors and others who were not used to using their phones were adversely impacted, both Canadian seniors returning from the U.S. and American seniors trying to visit Canada.

### *Routine Proceedings*

As border crossing restrictions were lifted, and more and more people were trying to cross the border on day trips, the difficulties were exacerbated. For one thing, the app asked for an address in Canada where the traveller would quarantine if needed. This requirement forced day-trippers from the U.S. to lie because they had no real Canadian address to put into the app.

We heard one story of a bus full of American seniors planning to spend the day on the more scenic Canadian side of Niagara Falls turning around at the border because of the ArriveCAN requirements.

The mandatory use of the ArriveCAN app impacted travel across the border, and in particular impacted tourism. There is data I could cite that clearly show the immense impact on tourism of the COVID pandemic in general, but it is hard to parse out the exact economic impact of the ArriveCAN app itself.

● (1915)

I am not only the NDP critic for international trade, but also the critic for small business and tourism. This report has some important recommendations about the app in general and also about how the government could respond, to support the tourism industry that is still recovering from the COVID pandemic.

I am just going to read some of the recommendations in full so members can get a sense of them. Recommendation 1 is:

That the Government of Canada ensure the safety and security of Canadians by continuing with its ongoing efforts designed to modernize Canada's borders, including through the use of appropriate digital and non-digital tools, and through the provision of adequate human and other resources. These efforts should be informed by consultations with relevant stakeholders, during which particular attention should be paid to concerns about the potential for significant disruptions, confusion or delays at Canadian ports of entry. The focus should be airports and land crossings, including international bridges.

To this recommendation, I would comment that we should encourage travellers to use digital tools when crossing the border by making these tools easy to use and ensure that their use will make the travellers' entry into Canada easier for them, quicker and more efficient. That would result in more people using the tools. The lesson from ArriveCAN is that making digital tools mandatory would almost always result in unintended negative consequences.

Recommendation 2 states:

That the Government of Canada enhance its efforts designed to increase domestic and international awareness that Canada has removed COVID-19-related public health measures, including the mandatory use of ArriveCAN. These efforts should occur in collaboration with other governments and relevant stakeholders in Canada, and should also be focused on the U.S. market.

*Routine Proceedings*

As a comment to that, I would say that we are well past the era of COVID restrictions now, and for long enough that this recommendation is more or less moved by now, but it was important at the time, a year ago, when we were writing these recommendations.

**Recommendation 3 states:**

That the Government of Canada ensure that international bridge authorities and commissions, as well as duty-free stores in Canada, are eligible for federal financial support if the Government decides to close—for any length of time—the borders that Canada shares with the United States.

To this recommendation, I would like to comment on the incredible impact that the COVID pandemic had on one sector within the tourism sector, and that is land-based duty-free stores. My constituent Cam Bissonnette has two duty-free stores and found his business in an essentially impossible position when the borders were closed because of COVID. It is the biggest impact, I would say, on any sector in Canada. For months on end, his business suffered a decline of over 95% in revenue. He and others in his sector were stuck with perishable inventory that they could not legally sell to anyone. While things have improved slowly since the borders were opened, the devastating impact of those times when the borders were closed have made it almost impossible for him and others in that sector to survive.

I will simply add that the duty-free sector is generally misunderstood by the federal government in several ways, and would ask that the government listen to those business owners' concerns very carefully.

**Recommendation 4 is:**

That the Government of Canada enhance safety and security, reduce delays and backlogs, and improve processing times at Canadian ports of entry through considering the recruitment of additional Canada Border Services Agency officers to serve at international bridges, maritime ports, airports and other ports of entry.

This is something for which the NDP has been calling for years.

**Recommendation 5 states:**

That the Government of Canada fill positions that are currently vacant on Destination Canada's board of directors. Recognizing that the summer 2023 tourism season will be the first season since summer 2019 without COVID-19-related public health measures, these vacancies should be filled as soon as possible.

That takes us through the report that we are being asked to concur in or to agree with this evening.

● (1920)

I have to mention the amendment that the Conservatives made to their own motion. This amendment would send the report back to the international trade committee to add in a study of the scandal surrounding the creation of ArriveCAN, how it was made and the contracts that were put out, as mentioned in the previous speech by my Bloc colleague from Terrebonne.

This scandal is a very serious issue. It deserves to be studied thoroughly here in the House of Commons. It is being studied in the government operations committee and, as we heard, also in public accounts. In fact, it was studied there a year ago, and that study has been reopened to cover the latest allegations. That is where it should be studied, or at the ethics committee, since the scandal is an incredible mess of seemingly blatant corruption.

However, suffice it to say that the NDP is very much in favour of the House of Commons' getting to the bottom of the scandal, and I have faith in the members of the government operations, public accounts or the ethics committee to do just that. What I really think we do not need is to study it again in the international trade committee as well, calling the same witnesses and coming to the same conclusions as the other committees will likely do. The international trade committee has some important business on its plate now, including study of the new Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Adding in the business before us, something that is not at all related to international trade and is already being studied at government operations and public accounts, would literally be a waste of time.

I will finish here simply by saying that I am very much in favour of the main motion to concur in this report, but that I am not in favour of the amendment.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and fellow member of the Standing Committee on International Trade. We did that study together, in fact.

I think we can both attest to the fact that we were able to do what had to get done, although any new important facts could well deserve further study.

Can my colleague tell us more about why the Standing Committee on International Trade is perhaps not the best venue for that, despite how important and fundamental this scandal may be?

[English]

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, the international trade committee exists to study issues about international trade, and when we studied the ArriveCAN app, thanks to the member for Niagara Falls, who put forward this motion to study this topic, it fit within the mandate of that committee because the motion was talking about the travel back and forth across the Canadian border and how that had been restricted in many ways by the mandatory imposition of the app.



*Routine Proceedings*

What the amendment to the motion asks of us is to dive into a deep mess of scandal surrounding the creation of the app, and that is much more something that government operations, public accounts or ethics should study. That is where this should occur, and it is occurring. If it were not occurring there, we would be asking that those committees study it, but we do not have to, because they are already studying it. I asked one member of the government operations committee how long he would be studying it, and he said there is a lot there and it would probably be until the next election. We think it is important that it be studied. It is being studied, so we do not need to study it at international trade. That would be outside the mandate of that committee.

● (1925)

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Calgary Midnapore.

A lot happened during the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada, which stretched over three years, from 2020 to 2022. It was a time when the Liberal government tried to give itself full spending authority without any opposition scrutiny. This was in the spring of 2020. Then, the Liberal government thought it was a good idea to prorogue Parliament in the middle of a raging global pandemic later that summer. After more than a year of social distancing, public health restrictions, masking and vaccines, the hypocritical Liberal government plunged the country into a pandemic election.

It is truly unthinkable, if one goes back to look at it. However, for the Liberals, it has never been about good and sound policy. It always was and always has been about politics. That is why we are here this evening, unfortunately, to discuss another disastrous Liberal policy objective, which did little to protect Canadians during the pandemic and almost single-handedly ruined any chance of a tourism recovery in 2022.

It is an honour for me to sit as a member at the Standing Committee on International Trade. I was assigned to the committee on February 28, 2022. We have since covered a wide range of topics and issues impacting Canadian trade. While some people might not realize this, tourism has important elements of trade, as an export industry. When COVID-19 hit our country, tourism was hit first and hardest. We all knew early on that it would take the longest to recover.

When we fast-forward more than three years, since the federal government agreed to close our international borders, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being felt in many parts of Canada's tourism economy. Recovery is not equal. Some areas are recovering more quickly than others, particularly those in rural, remote and northern communities.

Further, thousands of tourism operators across the country continue to struggle with high levels of debt after taking out pandemic loans, through no fault of their own, and with a tourism visitation base that simply has not returned to be as strong as it was before COVID.

Domestically, Canadians are now scaling back their spending and travel plans, impacted by stubborn inflation, increasing carbon taxes and higher interest rates, which make everything more expen-

sive and life more unaffordable. Internationally, visitors are simply not coming as they did before COVID.

After eight years under the Liberal Prime Minister, Canada's tourism reputation has been damaged, and our country's overall tourism economy has lost its competitive edge to other countries. For reasons, many related to the Liberal mismanagement of our tourism economy, visitors are simply not making Canada their destination of choice as they once did.

The reputational impacts on Canada's tourism industry that were caused by the mandatory use of the ArriveCAN app should not be downplayed or ignored. When this dysfunctional \$54-million app was made mandatory for anyone entering Canada, the issues faced by travellers were countless. Moreover, the issues were being faced by just about every person trying to arrive here, at every point of entry, ranging from major airports to land borders and international bridge crossings.

My riding of Niagara Falls is the number one leisure tourism destination in Canada, employing over 40,000 tourism workers. Before the pandemic, it was generating over \$2.1 billion in tourism receipts. My riding includes the city of Niagara Falls, the town of Fort Erie and the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. As a border riding, we also have four international bridge crossings, with at least one bridge in each municipality.

From day one, simply put, the ArriveCAN app was an utter failure. Its impacts were so severe that I felt compelled to bring forward a motion to study this issue at committee. Upon agreement, we undertook this study, which eventually produced the sixth report, along with the motion and the amendment that we are debating here today. While I sincerely appreciate our committee's work on producing this report, the fact is that new and very troubling information about ArriveCAN has surfaced, beyond its astronomical price tag, which now stands at approximately \$54 million. These issues should be of great concern to all parliamentarians, partisan politics aside, no matter one's political stripe. New allegations of misconduct, including identity theft, forged resumés, contractual theft, fraudulent billing, price-fixing and collusion involving contractors, ghost contractors and senior bureaucrats have emerged. Canadian taxpayers deserve answers.

● (1930)

I look forward to hearing from my colleague, the member for Calgary Midnapore, as she expands on some of these shocking revelations.

*Routine Proceedings*

There is a reason we now call the app and its implications “arrive scam”. Given that new information about ArriveCAN that we simply cannot ignore has come to light, it is only reasonable to support this amendment to the motion to extend the ArriveCAN study to get to the bottom of these issues. As badly as the Liberal-NDP coalition wants to move on and forget about its mistakes, bad decision-making and reckless spending, there is still a lot of unfinished business to take care of from the pandemic years, and the ArriveCAN app absolutely must be included in this.

I see a trend growing here, whether it is the refusal to review \$15.5 billion in potentially ineligible pandemic wage benefit payments because it is not worth the effort, wasting more than \$600 million on a risky pandemic election or not caring that \$54 million was required to develop the dysfunctional ArriveCAN app. The reckless and wasteful NDP-Liberal coalition has become far too complacent with the tax dollars of hard-working Canadians. It must realize it has a spending addiction that is costing Canadians and the country dearly. It is our job as the opposition to hold the government to account. That is why I support my colleague's amendment to the motion, to amend the sixth report to include reference to the \$54 million of hard-earned Canadian tax dollars wasted on the application, the inaccurate evidence government officials provided during the committee's investigation, the serious allegations of fraudulent contract practices and the statement made by the RCMP that it is investigating criminality in the contracts that were awarded. Now the Auditor General of Canada wants to update Canadians on where all the money went.

Canadians deserve answers. The people of Niagara deserve answers. This government's obstinance in removing the application until the fall of 2022 denied tourism recovery to those in my community and throughout Canada who were looking for it so badly. To add insult to injury, it is a government that feigned interest in responding to the concerns of our tourism community and simply did not care to ensure that hard-working Canadian taxpayers' dollars would be protected. Instead, we are now continually bombarded by scandalous revelations on how an application that could have been developed over a weekend wound up costing Canadians \$54 million.

After eight years in office, the tired and inept government and Prime Minister are not worth the cost. Let us get Canadians the answers they deserve. It is simply the common-sense thing to do.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I had the distinct honour during the pandemic of being the shadow minister for transport, and I worked hand in hand with the member who just gave his address.

I wonder whether the member could comment, given his close proximity to the tourism sector, on the comments he heard relative to airlines, what they went through at that time and the impacts of the transport sector on tourism during the pandemic.

• (1935)

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Madam Speaker, being in a border community, I can relay some of the examples we have from the four bridge crossings into my community and about our visitor base in terms of tourism in Niagara, which would be about 30% American. Those American visitors represented 50% of the spend.

On the ArriveCAN app and the terrible image it portrayed because of wait times and the glitches it caused, there were, for example, 10,000 Canadians who were told they had to quarantine, because of a glitch. It was incorrect. Those types of things halted any attempt at tourism recovery in 2022.

Why did it take the government until October to end the ArriveCAN app? People knew it was not working; it had never worked, from day one. On top of that, the government then spent, from January to August, \$400 million on rapid testing capabilities when we knew infectious disease experts were saying that it was not needed. Again, the government was wasting money and denying us and the people in the tourism community the ability to recover, which they so badly wanted to do.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague. We work well together on the Standing Committee on International Trade.

As the member knows, we have our work cut out for us. We are currently studying a Health Canada regulation that hurts Canadian and Quebec products and gives a leg up to our American competitors. After that, we will be studying the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. We will then study the Conservatives' proposals regarding the Port of Vancouver. We have a lot of topics to study. We also have motions from the government party on various trade issues from around the world.

Is it really necessary to delay all this, only to repeat a study that we have already done whose link with trade remains, despite everything, far-fetched?

[English]

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Madam Speaker, I enjoy working with my hon. colleague on the international trade committee as well.

If we go back to the study we undertook, we were the first committee to undertake a study on this. The first recommendation asked, “That the Government of Canada ensure the safety and security of Canadians by continuing with its ongoing efforts designed to modernize Canada's borders, including through the use of appropriate digital and non-digital tools”. If we are going to do that, we need to ensure that we get it right. ArriveCAN was a disaster. We need to get to the bottom of ArriveCAN before we can proceed forward to improve the borders and the digital tools we need moving forward.

Why was it allowed to take place? Why did it cost \$54 million when people were saying they could have created it over a weekend for a couple of a hundred thousand dollars?

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Madam Speaker, another phenomenon we saw during the pandemic was Canadians flying out of U.S. border towns as a result of the halt of the airline sector by the government. I am sure that had a significant impact on tourism as well. Canadians were basically sent to three neighbouring airports: Buffalo, Bellevue and Bellingham.

I would like to hear how the shutdown of the airline sector and the driving of Canadians to these border towns affected tourism for Canadians.

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Madam Speaker, it was an absolute shame to see what was happening at Canadian borders. We were essentially driving people to airports such as Buffalo. I questioned the previous minister and jokingly said the Buffalo chamber of commerce was going to hold a parade for him because of the additional business he was creating in Buffalo, instead of getting our act in order so we could get people back to Pearson and flying out of Toronto.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the House to speak on behalf of the fine constituents of Calgary Midnapore, especially on such an important issue that truly affects their tax dollars.

I want members to take a moment and imagine a Lifetime movie that includes the elements of identity theft, forged resumes, contractual theft, fraudulent contracting and collusion. Members do not have to imagine this Lifetime movie, because it actually exists. It is the ordeal behind ArriveCAN.

ArriveCAN was created for \$54 million. Experts have said that the app could have been created with simply \$200,000 over a weekend. Instead, \$54 million was spent on the app. Of that \$54 million, \$11.2 million went to a company called GCStrategies, and \$4.3 million went to two companies called Coradix and DALIAN. I will add that these companies have actually received \$80.3 million from the federal government over a significant period of time. It is very concerning that these companies would receive these large amounts of funding for the \$54-million app.

Originally, this was an issue brought to the government operations committee last spring. I will say that the government tried to dismiss it. It tried to write it off as “nothing to see here”, and our objective at that time was just to try to get value for money for Canadians. As we have found out, it has become so much more than that. It has become a search for the truth. This was broken by The Globe and Mail's Bill Curry, when he broke the story of the RCMP's investigating this CBSA contract. The fact that GCStrategies, the group central to the creation of ArriveCAN, is the central player in the scandal leads to a lot of concerns.

The company at the centre of this is a small company called Botler. It originally did some work for the Justice Department. It was eventually reached out to by GCStrategies, the company at the centre of the ArriveCAN scandal, to do a pilot for Bill C-65, relative to sexual misconduct.

According to Curry's article:

### *Routine Proceedings*

The developers said they were first approached by GCStrategies's managing partner, Kristian Firth, via LinkedIn in late 2019. Mr. Firth said he was reaching out on behalf of his ‘client,’ who he later said was the CBSA's then-director, Cameron MacDonald.

[They said] they were shocked to discover that after interacting with GCStrategies and Mr. MacDonald for months, the funding for their software was approved through an agency contract with another company—Dalian—without their knowledge. They said they had never heard of Dalian at that time and never worked with any Dalian employees.

They said they later discovered that Coradix had submitted forms to the agency about their work experience without their knowledge or permission. For instance, [one of the employees] said a two-month summer internship at Deloitte on her résumé was inflated in an invoicing points form to say she had 51 months of experience working for [an] accounting firm. Years of experience is used in federal contracting to determine whether a contractor qualifies for [those positions]. It is also used to calculate per diem rates.

The story starts there, but it does not end there. GCStrategies' Mr. Firth also told these two employees of this company that:

...he could act as a broker to secure a contract with the agency. He also promised he could open doors for them to land contracts with other departments or have [their] software approved to use across the entire public service, which would be a substantial contract. He explained that he would do this for a fee that is contingent on successfully landing government contracts.

This company went on to record conversations with Mr. Firth. Those recorded conversations show Mr. MacDonald directed Botler in February 2020 to “‘please work with [Mr. Firth]’ and ‘let [Mr. Firth] work his magic.’”

● (1940)

“The conversations also reveal that Mr. Firth described Mr. MacDonald, in November, 2019, as a friend and said, ‘I’ve been with him his whole career in government.’ Mr. Firth referred to various senior public servants as friends.”

“They said they were asked by Mr. Firth to start working on the project even though they had yet to...sign a contract.” We get into the fraudulent contracting piece here. “For months, [the two employees] said they were repeatedly denied answers when they asked Mr. Firth for a contract so their legal team could review it.”

When called to appear last year before [the government operations committee] to answer questions related to ArriveCan, [the topic of discussion today], Mr. Firth said his company had invoiced \$44-million in federal contract work with more than 20 different departments over the past two years. He said his company has no stand-alone office and just two employees—himself and Darren Anthony. Neither of them perform IT work themselves. Instead, they hire subcontractors to do the work in exchange for a fee of between 15 per cent and 30 per cent of the contract values.

*Routine Proceedings*

Mr. MacDonald wrote, “You asked me for advice on the key question of ‘why GC Strategies’”, as the government was struggling to determine why GC Strategies was chosen. Mr. MacDonald himself said that they were still “grappling with ‘who selected GC Strategies’”.

The article says, “Mr. MacDonald’s e-mail comments...suggested answers for the executives. The draft answers appeared aimed at convincing MPs that no one person was responsible for selecting [GS Strategies].” However, we know someone selected GC Strategies.

Mr. MacDonald “set up meetings for Botler with the Canada Revenue Agency, Correctional Service Canada, Global Affairs, Shared Services Canada, Transport Canada, Treasury Board and others in an effort to have the software approved as a government-wide project to all public servants.”

This is the crux of the concern for myself and my Conservative colleagues. When we are talking about ArriveCAN, it is a \$54-million app, which, experts say, they could have done for \$200,000. Here we have the company that received \$11 million trying to arrange contracts across all of these other government departments.

“During this outreach, Mr. Firth introduced them to another consultant named Vaughn Brennan, who Mr. Firth said had extensive government connections in Ottawa. Mr. Brennan recommended that they send an e-mail to [the Deputy Prime Minister] from Mr. Dutt’s e-mail account.”

In addition to the breadth of this fraud, we are concerned about the level at which individuals were complicit and informed.

“The contract for Botler to provide its services was not a direct contract between Botler and the border services agency. In fact, Botler’s company name was not mentioned at all, nor was GC Strategies. Instead, the agency relied on a contract with Dalian and Coradix.”

“In a separate subcontracting document between Dalian and GC Strategies, which is not a direct contract with the government, GC Strategies is listed as a subcontractor to Dalian...along with an independent contractor named Patrick van Abbema—are listed as consultants.”

Unannounced to you as Coradix/Dalian were brought in as a pass through and they demanded 15% for doing so, CBSA were pissed at the overall pricing and threatened to pull the contract,” Mr. Firth wrote in an e-mail. “Your cost, plus 15% for me and 20% for Coradix etc, it rose to close to \$500k. I was not prepared to slow the process down and stop our first client from purchasing so I removed myself from the equation completely and gave them a 15% discount.

“By September, 2021, Ms. Dutt and Mr. Morv [of Botler] had had enough and filed a formal misconduct complaint via the Sept. 27, 2021, e-mail to Mr. Utano and another agency official they had been dealing with.”

I will add this initial complaint was ignored, so they had to go on and do an additional complaint as well.

“They learned that the original contract through which their services were obtained was through an existing contract for IT services.”

“Like with ArriveCan, the border agency had turned to a general standing offer contract for IT services and added a specific request...”

“Through their research, [they] found that Dalian was submitting invoices and receiving payments...”

● (1945)

To summarize, in the words of Ms. Dutt:

This is about something that affects every single Canadian, every single taxpayer dollar that is taken from ... hardworking Canadians who are already struggling financially, that is given and spent through contractors through improper means. And I think that Canadians have a right to know what’s going on with their hard-earned money.

That—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, just because we disagree with the amendment does not mean we disagree with the report and do not think this issue warrants further investigation. More broadly, what does my colleague think of the fact that Canada has one of the worst records when it comes to protecting travellers?

ArriveCAN is a scandal for travellers whose trips were cancelled and who had no rights. Air Canada has repeatedly said it will do nothing about it. When it comes to traveller protection and traveller rights, Canada is a backward country.

What does my colleague think?

● (1950)

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, there have been many scandals under this government. That includes Canadian travellers. I am talking about ArriveCAN. It is truly the big scandal here today.

In addition to the ArriveCAN scandal, we heard from witnesses at the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates that many more scandals exist. Of course there is the one in connection with Canadian travellers, but also with finances and government spending.

[English]

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for their thorough analysis of the events that took place in the scam and the unveiling of where this \$54 million went. I just wonder if my colleague has anything else that she would like to add to the detail that was there. I do not know if she could; what she just gave us was pretty detailed. However, this was an exceptional scandal, and I agree with her that it is probably the biggest one that we have seen in a while. Could the member just elaborate on that?

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, my colleague is right, and I said this the first day of witnesses. This is potentially the largest scandal that we have had in the history of recent Canadian government, for certain.

I was very encouraged to hear the NDP member who spoke to this moments ago, about when he questioned his colleague as to the extent of this scandal. We believe, within the Conservative caucus, that it is certainly very important to have the discussion around what happened until the Auditor General report, but I am very encouraged to hear my NDP colleague say that his colleague believes that the matter will seize us until the next election. It tells me that members of the House, and the government as well, should recognize the depth and breadth of this scandal and the extent to which Canadians are affected.

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Madam Speaker, despite the faults with the ArriveCAN app in its application and the \$54 million and the scandals that we now find, why is it that the government, in your mind—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the members to address questions and comments through the Chair.

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Madam Speaker, why is it that the members of the government believe that there is still some value in retaining the ArriveCAN app?

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, that is a very good question. I am actually shocked when I walk through airports and see the arrive scam signage still there. Given the information we have received, which is a result of good investigation by the Conservative caucus, as well as Bill Curry at The Globe and Mail, one would think that the government would be in a pretty big hurry to conceal this, to wrap this up and to not put it in the faces of Canadian voyagers, to the point of my colleague from the Bloc.

That is a very good question. ArriveCAN now serves as the flagship of monetary and fiscal scandal within the current government. It will go down in history as more than just a failed application, but as the tip of the iceberg and as the canary in the coal mine of scandal and corruption within the current government.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Since there are no other members who wish to speak, pursuant to order made Tuesday, October 31, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion to concur in the sixth report of the Standing Committee on International Trade are deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Wednesday, November 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1955)

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to pose a follow-up question to a question I had asked in question period: What does the Prime Minister have to hide?

## Adjournment Proceedings

What does the Prime Minister have to hide now that it has been revealed that the Prime Minister obstructed an RCMP criminal investigation into his wrongdoing during the SNC-Lavalin scandal? The Prime Minister's obstruction of a criminal investigation into himself is another chapter in the Prime Minister's sordid and corrupt conduct surrounding SNC-Lavalin.

This is a Prime Minister who obstructed justice by politically interfering in the criminal prosecution of SNC-Lavalin, which was facing a raft of bribery and corruption charges, by putting pressure on his then attorney general to resolve the charges by way of a deferred prosecution agreement. In other words, the Prime Minister attacked the independence of his attorney general, and when his then attorney general, Jody Wilson-Raybould, stood up to him, spoke truth to power and refused to acquiesce to the Prime Minister's corrupt demands, what did the Prime Minister do? He fired her and then threw her out of the Liberal caucus. That is what happens to people with integrity who stand up to the corrupt Prime Minister. They get thrown out, thrown under the bus.

The Ethics Commissioner launched an investigation into the Prime Minister's scandalous conduct and found that the Prime Minister had breached ethics laws in relation to his political interference. This marked the second time that the Prime Minister had been found guilty of breaching ethics laws. He is the first Prime Minister in Canadian history to have been found guilty of breaking ethics laws. That is the record of the Prime Minister.

The RCMP launched its own criminal investigation into the Prime Minister, which did not make progress. We now know why it did not make progress, and that is because the Prime Minister obstructed the investigation by refusing to turn over documents requested by the RCMP, hiding behind cabinet confidence.

Last Monday, the RCMP commissioner was set to appear before the ethics committee to testify about the Prime Minister's obstruction, but before the RCMP commissioner could utter a word, the Prime Minister ordered Liberal and NDP MPs to shut down the committee to silence the RCMP commissioner. The Prime Minister's brazen effort to silence the RCMP commissioner demonstrates that the Prime Minister has something to hide, and it must be bad. It must be really bad.

What incriminating evidence is contained in those cabinet documents that the Prime Minister refused to turn over to the RCMP? What is the Prime Minister afraid the RCMP commissioner would say about his obstruction, which he wants to keep the lid on?

Again, it is a simple question: What does the Prime Minister have to hide?

• (2000)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise to answer this question once again. It is interesting to me that the Conservatives are so desperate to cover up and filibuster their spending scandal that they are trying to reinvent the past.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

With respect to calls for a criminal investigation by the RCMP, I note the RCMP has made very clear in this matter that there is no criminal investigation, there are no criminal charges and there are no reports of obstruction because the matter is closed. The RCMP made that independent decision. The commissioner has even recently been equally clear that due process has been followed, and he is satisfied with the result.

It begs the question: Why would the Conservatives bring up an issue that has been resolved, with the RCMP commissioner saying himself that the matter is closed and there is no investigation? I think it is because at committee, the members opposite are refusing to tell Canadians that the Conservative members could have moved a motion 26 times to bring the RCMP commissioner to committee.

Instead, they waited to filibuster when the committee was interested in looking at the spending scandal of five Conservative members who went on a trip to the U.K., where they dined on porterhouse steaks, chateaubriand, Scottish smoked salmon and 1,800 dollars' worth of champagne in one sitting. At the Savoy restaurant, they spent \$1,000 on a three-course lunch and \$1,200 at an oyster bar for dinner. They had 10 bottles of wine in one of these sittings, with three of the bottles at \$600 a piece.

What I find really interesting for Canadians to see is that the Conservatives are desperate to cover up the fact that they had lobbyists spending thousands of dollars to fly them to the U.K. to dine on chateaubriand and sip champagne. They do not want Canadians to look at this. They do not want the committee to ask questions about why lobbyists took them to the U.K. to spend tens of thousands of dollars on them and their champagne tastes.

What we have here is Conservatives who do not accept the independent advice of the RCMP, which has determined with regard to the SNC matter that the matter is closed and there are no criminal charges, no investigations and no obstruction. What we see is the true root cause of the Conservatives' filibuster. It is because they want to cover up their champagne-sipping tastes.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, that is quite rich given that this is a Prime Minister who racked up a hotel bill of \$6,000 a night in London at taxpayers' expense.

Talk about an insulting answer to a serious question. The reason there is no RCMP investigation and that no criminal charges have been laid is very simple: The Prime Minister obstructed the investigation by hiding behind cabinet confidence, blocking the RCMP from obtaining documents that they requested about his potential criminal wrongdoing.

Again, if the Prime Minister has nothing to hide, why did he refuse to turn over pertinent documents to the RCMP that in turn resulted in their not being able to make progress on their investigation?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Madam Speaker, I trust the words of the RCMP commissioner. He has determined independently and said that due process has been followed, and he is satisfied with the result. There is no investigation. There are no criminal charges. There is no obstruction.

However, the obstruction we should talk about here today relates to the fact that the member for Cumberland—Colchester received over \$7,000 for a trip to the U.K. For the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South it was \$8,300. For the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster it was \$7,900. For the member for Lakeland it was \$7,700. For the member for New Brunswick Southwest it was \$13,548. It was paid for by lobbyists.

Why will the Conservatives not let us talk about this at committee?

• (2005)

[Translation]

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

(The House adjourned at 8:05 p.m.)







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