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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 21, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*English*]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons was hoping this was an unlimited time slot. I want to share with him that the House can do whatever it wants by unanimous consent, so he can reflect on that opportunity. I want him to know that I am always prepared if he wants to hear more of what I have to say on an important subject. However, as I get into it, I wonder if he may be less interested in hearing what I have to say, quite frankly, but it is still important for him.

We are talking about Bill C-3 that deals with the work, in part, of the Canada Border Services Agency. This is timely because, especially today, many people are talking and thinking about the challenges in import and export and the transportation of goods. This is an area where the opportunity for public complaints and review is very important. Indeed, I hear many public complaints already out there about problems with regard to our ability to transport goods.

We are in the middle of a national crisis, where various protesters, a relatively small number, are openly trying to shut down Canada. They are blocking access to a border point and standing in the middle of train tracks. This is causing massive problems, and those problems are only going to continue. During discussions about this national crisis, members are raising fears about escalation and talking about the need for de-escalation.

All of us would like to ensure the situation does not get any worse, but inaction by the government is creating escalation, with more and more people thinking that they can ignore the law and

protest illegally, and growing fears of Canadians that these blockades will result in long-term economic damage and the inability of people to access essential goods. I have been hearing from colleagues in the Maritimes and other parts of the country concerned about propane shortages and the impact it will have on people's ability to heat their homes and provide for their basic needs.

This bill speaks to accountability of our Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP. It is ironic that the government is putting forward measures aimed at making other agencies more accountable when it is failing to be accountable itself for the real problems in our economy as a result of decisions it has made to not act or show leadership in the midst of this national crisis. It is important to underline why we are facing this national crisis. There is a very small number, a minority, of hereditary chiefs, not the elected representatives, who oppose a particular development project on Wet'suwet'en territory, but all of the affected band councils are in favour of this. Overwhelmingly, the people are in favour of this and a majority of hereditary chiefs are in favour of this.

I draw the attention of members of the House to this issue in this context. If every single time a development project happens for which there is a small amount of opposition with the result of shutting down national infrastructure, then it is going to be very difficult for us to ever move goods in this country in the future because there are always going to be controversial projects. Those of us on this side of the House have been raising the warning that this really is a warm-up act for larger, more controversial projects in the future.

If the government, instead of dialoguing with the elected leadership of communities, feels that it can negotiate with other people who are not connected to those communities in the resolution of these issues, then we are going to have a problem where the government is always negotiating with the wrong people and people not connected to these projects can claim the right to speak on behalf of communities. It is going to be very difficult for us to ever find agreement on moving forward on projects.

That is the context in which we find ourselves. That is the national crisis that our country is facing. I think all of our constituents would want us to speak about these issues, highlight them and call on the government to finally show leadership and allow us to move forward by supporting the rule of law and, at the very least, verbalizing the importance of enforcing the law and respecting the will of the elected representatives of indigenous people.

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Now I will move to the specific provisions in Bill C-3. This is a bill that “amends the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act to, among other things, rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as the Public Complaints and Review Commission.”

We know how seriously the government takes naming things. Sometimes it does not always know what those names mean. Sometimes it likes to rename things as a way of claiming credit for a policy.

Under the Conservatives we had something called the universal child care benefit, and the Liberals renamed it the Canada child benefit. Then they declared it to have been a great social policy innovation, a brand new idea, without remembering that the Liberals actually ran against the Canada child care benefit in 2006. It was a Liberal strategist who said that parents would just use this child benefit money for beer and popcorn. The Liberals evolved, and it was progress. They evolved from opposing support for parents to saying that they were going to rename the benefit and claim it. Maybe when Conservatives come back to government, we will rename it again. It was all our idea after all. We brought in the Canada child care benefit in 2006.

This legislation has some element of renaming, but it is a little more substantive than that. “It also amends the Canada Border Services Agency Act to, among other things, grant to that Commission powers, duties and functions in relation to the Canada Border Services Agency.”

Essentially what this bill does, under what had previously been a review commission just for the RCMP, is bring the CBSA under that civilian review mechanism.

As my colleagues have said, this is a principle that we are supportive of. Conservatives will be supporting the movement of this legislation through to committee where, no doubt, it will be further analyzed and studied by our excellent public safety team.

There is some progress in this legislation. It is not, as we have seen in some other cases, purely a name without meaning. Unlike the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity, we actually know what the words mean to a greater extent, in the case of this piece of legislation.

I will just say, again, the irony here is the government is bringing in greater accountability for our border services agencies and yet we have seen a lack of willingness by the government to account for its own actions. We have seen so many instances of weak leadership.

Another area of a lack of accountability we have seen from the government is that it is already signalling, through things that private members have been putting out, that it is not supportive of the Teck project in Alberta. This is a critical project for the interests of Alberta, for the interests of our national economy. The government needs to approve it, and yet we are already seeing backbench members of the government putting out petitions encouraging people not to support it. That is fuelling further frustration in my province.

• (1010)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from my colleague opposite, because I love standing up to talk about the Canada child benefit.

As everybody in the House knows, the origins go way back to the baby bonus in the 1940s, following the Second World War. Again, the Progressive Conservative government in 1992 modernized that, but it was in 2015, when we got elected, that we changed it, made it non-taxable and made it available for more people. We reduced child poverty in Canada by an unbelievable margin.

Prior to that, the Harper government increased poverty and increased child poverty. Poverty was at an untenable rate in 2014. With this measure, my riding in particular has received over \$97 million, back into the pockets of families to help their kids. That money is not earmarked for any one thing, like sports or the arts. It is for absolutely whatever families need. It is a fantastic program that people in my riding are incredibly appreciative of.

I thank the member for bringing up, because it is a fantastically successful program for everybody in Canada.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, that member has a lot of talent at floating delicately on the water when he is trying to make a point, but I think he is going to sink on this one.

The reality is this is a program, and of course there were other iterations of similar types of program, but the universal child care benefit was brought in by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. It was opposed by Liberals who said, “No, no. We should just give money to provinces and bureaucrats, and it should be a one-size-fits-all approach to child care.” Conservatives said, “No, we should give parents choice in child care. We should give them resources and let them decide.”

Then, it took a conversion on that topic before the Liberals could ever make it back to power. They realized that they would have to sell out to this Conservative principle that they did not really believe in to get back into power. They decided to rename it and take credit for it. They were going to tinker with some details, make it available to fewer people—

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: We have time for a few more questions.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is relevant to the bill that is being discussed here today in the House of Commons.

The CBSA is the only major law enforcement agency in Canada without an independent review mechanism for the bulk of its activity and this is a major gap. It has not been addressed despite our calls dating back to the Harper government. It provides an accountability system that will increase public trust at the border and a review system that can provide CBSA officers with more clarity and confidence over policy questions when they are asked something about what they are supposed to be doing.

We are heartened to see this legislation come forward. We are disappointed that the Liberals tabled it with just weeks to go in the last Parliament. This clearly was not a priority of theirs, so we are happy to see this here today.

Will the Conservatives be supporting this legislation and allow better oversight of our public safety institutions and increased public confidence at our borders?

• (1015)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, yes.

Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my colleague's eight-minute speech, he covered a lot of ground with not too much focus on the actual conversation on the table. He said the Conservative Party is supporting the border crossing and I would like him to expand why he thinks it is important for his party to support this new legislation.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, a larger proportion of my speech was on topic than the previous question from the Liberal member, so we are a little ahead there.

It is important to note the things that Canadians are talking about today with respect to the CBSA. I know the member would want us to reflect the priorities and concerns of Canadians.

I believe in the principle of civilian oversight for our security agencies. It is interesting that, in the context of the blockades, the government seems to be criticizing the principle of civilian oversight and civilian policy direction when it comes to the police. That is an interesting sidebar. In principle, we support this legislation. We want to see it go to committee and we look forward to the study that will happen there.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to rise today, as we face this national crisis. This crisis is the result of the Canadian government's lax approach in two of its most important roles: ensuring the security and integrity of our borders, and ensuring respect for law and order. Unfortunately, as we are seeing right now, the government has failed miserably on both accounts. That is why we are calling for immediate action.

One major role our police forces play is ensuring respect for law and order. The Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, meanwhile, must ensure respect for and the integrity of our borders. It is important to remember that the CBSA is an organization with nearly 14,000 border services officers and other staff working at over 1,200 ports of entry in 39 countries. Over the years, this agency has become an important part of our system for keeping Canadians safe. Obviously, given the volume of claims processed by the CB-

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SA, there may be times when people who use its services or have dealings with the agency are less than satisfied with their interactions. That is why there was a complaints system in place, one that was to some degree overseen by the agency.

The purpose of this bill is to establish a new independent body, the public complaints and review commission, tasked with reviewing public complaints regarding the agency. This will also build on the efforts made since the agency was created in 2003 to make it a law enforcement agency and give dissatisfied people the option to file a complaint.

Were there complaints in the past? Indeed, there were. In 2018, 100 complaints were deemed to be founded by the CBSA's complaints review department. This work will now be done by an independent entity. The number of complaints may seem high, but it is important to remember that 95 million travellers deal with the Canada Border Services Agency, and five million of those interactions involve commercial vehicles. The number of complainants is therefore quite small relative to the huge flow of people who deal with the CBSA. Nevertheless, these complaints must be properly addressed and that is why we are in favour of creating this complaints commission.

That is where we are. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the remarkable work of our border services officers and decry the fact that the current government ended the televised series *Border Security: Canada's Front Line*, which allowed Canadians to learn more about the work of these officers. The series did not cost the government anything and it helped showcase the remarkable work done by border services officers.

As my NDP colleague mentioned, we have to wonder why the government waited until the end of the last session of Parliament to propose creating the public complaints and review commission, even though it made that commitment in 2015. It is about time that the government moved forward, but we have to wonder why the Liberals were so complacent with respect to the implementation of this measure.

Moreover, the national president of the Customs and Immigration Union, Jean-Pierre Fortin, has said that he was not consulted. The Liberals should have consulted him because he stated that he was in favour of this measure. The Liberals missed yet another opportunity to demonstrate that this is a worthwhile project that has the approval of the public and to showcase the excellent work of border services officers.

• (1020)

This raises an important point, and that is the government's responsibility to ensure the integrity of the border and the enforcement of law and order. As I mentioned, the government has failed miserably on both fronts.

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Before this government and the misguided tweets of the Prime Minister, the integrity of our border was assured. The Prime Minister's tweet undermined our border system. I am obviously referring to the situation at Roxham Road, which is a threat to our territorial security, since people are illegally entering the country. We should remember that entering by Roxham Road is illegal. We are tolerating a shortcut that allows individuals to bypass our immigration system.

Unfortunately, in recent weeks, we have been focusing mainly on the blockades, which is quite understandable. However, we have seen an upsurge in illegal entries at Roxham Road. That is due to the government's lack of leadership with respect to its responsibility to ensure the integrity of our borders.

With regard to law and order, a lack of leadership creates situations like the one my colleague mentioned, where the government, to some extent, is interfering in the RCMP's operations by stipulating that it cannot intervene or use force to resolve the conflict. The problem is that this interference undermines the moral authority of our police, just as the Prime Minister's tweet undermined the Canada Border Services Agency's authority in ensuring respect for our borders. The Liberals restricted the police's and the border authorities' ability to intervene, with disastrous results.

Our businesses are currently in a critical situation. I was talking about that earlier with my colleague from Beauce. This morning, I met with a business owner from my riding whose American competitors are quite happy about the fact that his merchandise is stuck in our trains. What are his clients doing? They are turning to American suppliers. He told me that he is losing close to \$65,000 in sales and, on top of that, he is going to have to pay an additional \$7,500 to redirect his containers. That is a loss of \$72,500 for just one business owner. This is one of dozens of examples in my riding and hundreds across the country. Our businesses and our workers are being affected by the government's lack of leadership and moral authority.

We can provide support, but we expect the government to refrain from interfering in the operations of the Canada Border Services Agency and police forces. What we are currently seeing is that, by insisting on a peaceful resolution, the Liberals are violating the moral authority of police forces, to a certain extent. Law enforcement then cannot establish a balance of power and are unable to intervene and enforce law and order.

The consequences here are many. First, this undermines the moral authority of our police forces and the Canada Border Services Agency. This crisis has caused gridlock across the country, and we are seeing financial losses, enormous costs and repercussions. As my colleague mentioned, the long-term damage here is that this situation is normalizing non-compliance, disrupting order and disregarding the integrity of our borders.

For this reason, we are calling on the government to not only advance this bill, but also to restore moral authority for our police forces and border services. It must not interfere with their operations by insisting on using political solutions to address law-and-order problems.

• (1025)

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech.

Given that my colleague once served as public safety minister, I should think he would be better informed than other MPs, myself included.

I wonder if he still believes in what he said on May 13, 2015:

[*English*]

"I have full confidence in the judgment of the RCMP. While respecting the operational independence of the RCMP..."

[*Translation*]

Does he still believe in those words today, as the current Minister of Public Safety does now?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that great question. I will tell him exactly what I said in 2015, which is that I have full and total confidence in the RCMP.

However, I would never, ever do what the Minister of Public Safety and Prime Minister are doing now. They are hindering and restricting the RCMP's operational response capability by directing it to resolve the conflict a certain way. They are undeniably preventing the RCMP from using the tools at its disposal to resolve the conflict. The current Prime Minister is stripping the police of their deterrence capacity by taking away their coercive tool, namely their ability to intervene.

I urge the government to follow the example I set in 2015 and let the RCMP do its job. The government needs to stop tying the RCMP's hands and telling it not to act.

[*English*]

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my riding has five border crossings. It is probably one of the most border crossing rich ridings in the country.

Constituents come to my office occasionally with concerns about how they have been treated at the border, both leaving and coming back. What are the member's thoughts on the fact that the bill retains the provision that ex-RCMP members cannot sit on the commission so there is no conflict of interest, but it does not do the same for CBSA members? Could he comment on that concern?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, my answer is yes. We need a third party to look into the complaints and address the disservice. The application of the law should apply equally to the RCMP and the CBSA.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has said that it will not intervene with police forces or other forces to end the blockade. In the meantime, it is sending signals that are preventing police forces from doing their jobs. It is like winter and summer under the same roof. That is what the government is practising now.

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Does my colleague on this side agree with that statement?

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Alberta for the question. It allows me to remind hon. members that at the heart of this rail crisis is a first nation whose band council supported the project. The majority of hereditary chiefs are in favour of the project. Some of the protesters who are flouting the law tried to get democratically elected and were defeated. That does not work. Their approach does not take.

Eighty-five per cent of the members of the Wet'suwet'en community want the project. How can individuals use democratic means and then turn everything upside down when they do not get their way? That is unacceptable. That is no way to run the country.

It is important to remember that the National Energy Board determined this project to be good and that every indigenous community living along the route of this pipeline supports the project. We have the democratic tools, a Parliament for debate, we were founded on a long British parliamentary tradition of democracy and the rule of law. When all of that is turned on its ear, it undermines the credibility of our institutions. That is why we are calling on the government to stick to its executive role and allow our police forces to do their job.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the government bill, Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act. The bill would rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP to the public complaints and review commission. It would also amend the Canada Border Services Agency Act to:

grant to that Commission powers, duties and functions in relation to the Canada Border Services Agency, including the power to conduct a review of the activities of that Agency and to investigate complaints concerning the conduct of any of that Agency's officers or employees.

The bill is a copy of Bill C-98, which died on the Order Paper at the end of the 42nd Parliament. During the study of Bill C-98, the committee heard from just seven witnesses, including the minister and five officials who reported to him. I hope this time, in our minority Parliament, the parliamentary committee will have the ability to study the bill as thoroughly as it deserves and hear testimony from more witnesses, contrary to the study of Bill C-98, when the Liberals failed to consult customs and immigration in the creation of it.

One would think that when creating legislation regarding the security of Canadians, all stakeholders would be consulted and such legislation would be presented in a substantive and timely way. We now have the chance to ensure that all stakeholders are heard at committee and members are given the time needed to undertake this.

That being said, the bill seems straightforward in its objective that Canada's law enforcement agencies ought to have an oversight body. This is especially helpful at the border, where a civilian re-

view commission would improve oversight and help CBSA be an even more effective agency in its duties and functions.

There is a Liberal crusade against law-abiding firearms owners, highlighted by Bill C-71, passed in the previous Parliament, and the apparent upcoming blanket firearms bans are likely to come before both the RCMP and CBSA oversight bodies. This is problematic because of the extra and quite unnecessary amount of work it would create for both agencies.

The Liberal government likes to paint law-abiding firearms owners with one brush, that they are dangerous and cannot be trusted with the responsibility of firearms ownership or are outdated, backward and likely criminals. On this side of the House, we know that to be false.

We know that law-abiding firearms owners are among the most vetted citizens in the country. It is illegal to possess, store or transport a firearm without first possessing a licence, the PAL or the RPAL, through a program that is run by the RCMP. It includes extremely stringent requirements, including background and reference checks and classroom instruction and testing.

People who are deemed fit to be given the restricted firearms licence must then register all of these restricted firearms with the government and receive authorization to transport them to and from the range. These responsible law-abiding firearms owners are run through police databases regularly, if not daily. The Liberals' portrayal of them is wrong and insulting.

The government is also trying to spin the firearms legislation as the right move, that it would enhance safety for Canadians. However, the legislation does nothing to address the safety of Canadians and seeks to punish law-abiding Canadians instead of criminals.

Given the spirit of Bill C-3, with its oversight bodies that are meant to reduce harm and combat overreach, would it not make sense for all of the government's safety and security legislation to be in the same spirit and have the same goal?

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The Liberals are seeking to ban certain firearms and are moving to reclassify some rifles as prohibited, which means over 10,000 legally purchased and owned rifles would be reclassified for no reason in particular. They have not advanced a logical argument for the banning of these firearms, and I cannot think of one either. These firearms function in a similar method to a technology first introduced in 1885, so it cannot be that they are unsafe when used properly. Also, they adhere to the same regulations regarding capacity as other non-restricted firearms.

● (1035)

How does the government's plan to classify legally bought and owned rifles as prohibited combat gang violence? It does not, not one bit. In fact, it has the potential to criminalize the owners of these rifles if they do not comply with the new ownership requirements of the prohibited firearm.

Retroactively applying this law means that a person could be jailed for up to 10 years for something that was perfectly legal when it was done. Let us imagine this. A government that is giving pardons for actions that were crimes when committed but are now legal is criminalizing something that was perfectly legal when it was done. This totally rejects the premise of Bill C-3, because the changes to firearms laws certainly overreach and mistreat law-abiding Canadians.

The attacks on law-abiding firearms owners by the government neglects to combat crime. It punishes lawful firearms owners in other ways as well, especially those who live in rural areas like the residents of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Because of the Liberal government's disdain for firearms owners and rural Canadians writ large, it is working to revoke authorization to transport firearms except from store to home and between home and target range. Gun shows, gunsmiths, border crossings and airports would require special permission each and every time. If people want to pick up their firearms from the gunsmith on their way to a shooting match, they would need an ATT. If they are dropping off their firearm at the gunsmith after a day at the range, they would need an ATT. If they want to take a firearm from the store where they bought it to the gunsmith, they would need an authorization to transport, or an ATT. Besides disregarding the realities of travel in rural areas, this would create a constant need for bureaucratic paperwork and would increase costs to Canadian taxpayers, with absolutely no benefit or increase to public safety and security.

When it comes to the safety and security of Canadians, the government's short-sighted legislative record on firearms decreases the safety and security of law-abiding firearms owners through its creation of a backdoor firearms registry. It would force firearm retailers to keep detailed transaction records of every firearm buyer and purchase spanning a period of 20 years. When people walk into their favourite retailer and purchase a rifle and ammunition, the retailer would be forced to record their personal information and register it with the registrar. This is not just in stores that specialize in retail firearms. This is also in big box stores, even for simply purchasing ammunition. These lists would become highly prized targets for hackers and thieves, and citizens on the registries would be put at great risk of being robbed, or worse.

Since we are talking about the role of oversight bodies and Canada's law enforcement agencies, I will note that the government's attack on law-abiding firearms owners would create an environment where there is a greater risk of overreach. It would give law enforcement greater leeway to arbitrarily prohibit firearms by removing the government's ability to easily un-prohibit firearms, fuelling concern of more bans and more overreach. We are seeing this now, as the minister has indicated his intention to subvert democracy and undertake a blanket ban on certain firearms. If that does not spell overreach from the highest levels, I do not know what does.

Canadians expect effective oversight of federal law enforcement agencies. The bill looks as if it would be effective in doing so, but the Liberals made a promise to do this in 2015 and they let the bill die on the Order Paper in the last Parliament. It is disappointing that they failed to consult the union representing Canada's border officers and that they have a culture of lazy legislation when it comes to the safety and security of Canadians.

Canadians expect the House to give thorough review to all legislation put before it. They expect that the legislators here will speak to witnesses and the relevant stakeholders. Even though that was not permitted to happen under majority rule in the previous Parliament, in this Parliament we hope to undertake a full study.

● (1040)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I will address the comments made by the member opposite that seemed to focus more on a piece of legislation that is not in front of us yet, rather than on the one that is.

On the issue of border security, in the last term of Parliament the Conservatives introduced a motion that I think was called the "oops motion". It meant that if individuals stuffed a car full of handguns, got to the border and failed to declare them, they could say, "Oops, I forgot" and be let off the hook and allowed to drive on with or without the proper licensing. The goal here was to advise border security agencies that if somebody came across the border with a gun and failed to declare it, it would not be a crime to fail to declare it. A person could simply say, "Oops, I forgot" and be on his or her merry way.

Is that the standard the member opposite wants us to achieve with border security as it relates to the smuggling of guns, the act of bringing weapons into this country? If it is, how is that going to make anybody in this country safer, other than people who smuggle guns?

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Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, my daughter Ama is here with me today. She is spending the day with her dad in Parliament. While she and my other children, Luke, Michaela and James, enjoy a good fairy tale, I am not sure they would understand or appreciate the fairy tale that the parliamentary secretary just presented to the House.

The Conservative Party is the party of law and order. We are the party of common sense. The parliamentary secretary referenced legislation about firearms that is not yet before the House. However, it will not come before the House; it will be done by an order in council. The Liberals are going to subvert democracy in their efforts to criminalize law-abiding firearms owners.

We do not need more fairy tales from the government. We need concrete action that will keep Canadians safe.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a separate matter. If you seek it, I hope you will find unanimous consent of the House to adopt the following motion: That, given the unanimous declaration of the House on February 22, 2007, to condemn all forms of human trafficking and slavery this House: (a) encourage Canadians to raise awareness of the magnitude of modern day slavery in Canada and abroad and to take steps to combat human trafficking; and (b) recognize the 22nd day of February as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to hear that the motion did not pass. However, I am sure we will get to it again soon.

My hon. colleague gave a great speech about border security. If the officials who represent Canada are unable to do their jobs appropriately, the confidence in our law enforcement is diminished. Could the member continue to talk about that?

● (1045)

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, it is really important that Canadians have confidence in anyone who is responsible for discharging duties on behalf of the government. The bill would give an opportunity for that.

It is also important that ministers of the Crown and the House hold individuals accountable when they fail in their duties. As we saw recently in a tragic case, there was a failure of Parole Board members to properly and responsibly execute their responsibilities. Speedy action would reassure Canadians that they can have confidence in those who are responsible for discharging duties on behalf of Canadians.

When an incident occurs, it is incumbent on ministers of the Crown, particularly the minister of public safety, to take the necessary steps to fire a member of the Parole Board, even if he or she was a Liberal appointee who had been dutifully run through Liberal

lists and approved by those in the PMO who make decisions. They still have to do the right thing for Canadians, restore confidence and fire people who fail to execute their duties responsibly.

The bill would give more opportunities for oversight as well.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate on Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act.

The legislation before us would rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP to the public complaints and review commission which, as an oversight committee, would also have responsibility to review civilian complaints against the Canada Border Services Agency.

Canada has a very long, unprotected border with our neighbour to the south. The United States of America is our biggest trading partner, and that means we need to have an effective border services agency. Every year, the agency processes 100 million people into Canada at our border crossings and at airports, rail crossings and sea ports. It processes 20 million commercial shipments every year and 46 million courier shipments. Every day there is about \$2 billion in trade between these two great trading partners. Along with national security and safety, the CBSA is also charged with providing priority to efficiency in trade and commerce.

My constituency of Langley—Aldergrove has one of four B.C. Lower Mainland border crossings. It is a critical tool for our citizens and businesses. The citizens of my riding are looking for efficiency at this and other border crossings to expedite business and relationships. They are also looking for security and safety.

Many people in my riding are gun enthusiasts, and are rightly concerned by proposed further restrictions on already stringent firearms possession and acquisition rules. They are genuinely concerned that these further restrictions will have the effect of only pointing the finger at them, law-abiding citizens who acquired the firearms lawfully and who diligently follow all the rules about safe storage, transport and use.

They ask why the government is not looking at where the real problem is, namely at people who obtain guns illegally, largely by cross-border smuggling. We need border security officers who have both the tools and the resources to do their job effectively.

Government Orders

Our border services officers have extraordinary powers. For example, they may detain people for questioning, search vehicles and packages, and arrest people without a warrant. I would argue that these are necessary powers if we want our CBSA officers to do the work that we expect them to do. However, as a corollary to these exceptional and extraordinary powers, our border services officers must also be subject to oversight.

Currently, there is oversight by courts, commissions and tribunals, but we need stronger arm's-length civilian monitoring, which is what Bill C-3 would do. A civilian review commission would improve oversight and help the CBSA be an even more effective agency in performing its duties and functions. However, to be a truly effective agency for Canada, as Canada strives to uphold the integrity and security of its borders, the CBSA must also be properly resourced in both manpower and equipment, which is our party's position.

Given the need for balancing border security and market efficiency, something I am sure the government also agrees with, we are left bewildered as to why the government is not acting decisively on unwelcome threats to our markets and security.

Why is the government ignoring the needs of Canadians, including the needs of my constituency of Langley—Aldergrove? Our border with the U.S.A. is very important to businesses in Langley. This border crossing, the Aldergrove-Lynden border crossing, is open for business from 8 a.m. until midnight every day, and those limited opening hours slow cross-border traffic down, to the detriment of businesses in my riding. The businesses and people in this riding would benefit greatly from a 24-7 opening of this crucial link with the United States, our prime trading partner.

The president of the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce was quoted recently in one of our local newspapers as saying our “local prosperity depends on our ability to export our goods and services across the country and around the globe.” He also pointed out the obvious: that companies prioritize shipping times based on when and where they are best able to move goods.

● (1050)

The Langley area, because of its proximity to both the United States and metro Vancouver, has two strategically located industrial parks zoned for manufacturing and logistics. These zones are tied to highways and rail crossings with the United States.

The president of the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce said, “We need to be able to move goods, whether out of a port or land border, at reduced times.”

B.C. is an export-driven economy. The president added that its prosperity “hinges on its ability to trade openly in the global and Canadian markets.”

Along with security at our border crossings and effective oversight of the work the CBSA does, the government also needs to invest in better and more accessible international trade at our border crossings, and in the instance of my riding, to finance longer opening hours.

My constituents are looking to the federal government to work co-operatively with its U.S. counterparts and finally make this a re-

ality. I can guarantee that such an initiative would have the support of the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce and its 1, 025 businesses, and I am certain it would also have the support of the chamber of commerce, businesses and citizens of Whatcom County in Washington state.

The businesses in my community are deeply concerned about the significant negative impacts the recent rail blockages are having on trade and commerce, and what they are doing to our reputation among our trading partners.

A letter, written by chambers of commerce across the country and by various business leaders to the Prime Minister three days ago, states:

In addition to disrupting domestic and global supply chains, the blockades undermine Canada's reputation as a dependable partner in international trade. They also threaten public safety by preventing the distribution of essential products like chlorine for water treatment and propane for heating homes, seniors' facilities and farms.

The damage inflicted on the Canadian economy and on the welfare of all our citizens mounts with each hour that these illegal disruptions are allowed to continue. Each additional day that rail lines are disrupted requires three to four days for supply chains to recover. This is why it is imperative that the Government act now to get the Canadian economy moving again.

A letter written last week by the Canadian Global Cities Council, addressed to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, states:

As the Canadian Global Cities Council (CGCC), we represent over 50 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product and population. Given the events of the past few days, [rail blockages,] we are deeply concerned by the ongoing disruptions to Canada's trade and exports. The impact is also being felt beyond Canada's borders and is harming the country's reputation as a stable and viable supply chain partner. While many of Canada's goods destined for the world are currently unable to reach global markets, we are concerned with reports of international shippers diverting traffic away from Canadian ports.

While Bill C-3 is to be applauded for what it would do to support the Canada Border Services Agency, urgent attention needs to be paid to the current crisis that threatens trade and commerce at these border crossings.

● (1055)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the things we have seen time and again in the previous session, and again in this session so far, with the government is that it likes to talk about consultation. It likes to say that it has consulted with Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Does our hon. colleague know if indeed the RCMP and CBSA front-line officers were consulted with respect to Bill C-3?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, while this party supports Bill C-3, we are disappointed that there has been a lack of consultation with key stakeholders and leaders, with the RCMP, the CBSA and the unions representing the people who work for those great organizations. It is a disappointment.

That said, the bill will be effective in enhancing the work these organizations are doing, but the lack of consultation has been, and continues to be, problematic.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest as the member opposite talked about trying to extend border-crossing hours in his riding. It is something I think any riding that has a border-crossing boundary is interested in.

The previous Harper government cut border investments by \$390 million. I was wondering if the member opposite could reflect upon whether a budget cut of \$390 million would extend hours, or not only curtail hours but also curtail security at the border, and whether cutting money from the budget for border crossing is a way to realize his goal or whether his goal would require an investment.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, my advice is that what was said is misleading, and that the public accounts do not support that allegation.

I will take the opportunity to reiterate how important it would be to my riding to have that border open 24-7. It would have the support of not only Langley—Aldergrove, but surrounding regions as well, and it would certainly have the support of businesses in the chamber of commerce in Whatcom County. I think it is time that we moved ahead with that.

There are other border crossings that are 24-7, but recently there was flooding at the Sumas border crossing, so a lot of traffic was then redirected to the Langley—Aldergrove border crossing, which is only open for 20 hours a day. There were long lineups, which I was personally subjected to.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you know, February is Black History Month.

• (1100)

[*English*]

It is time to look back at the monumental role that African Canadian communities have played in Canadian history. No African-Canadian community has had such a long and rich history as the African Nova Scotian community. This community has given birth to some incredible historic figures, such as civil rights activist Viola Desmond, world-renowned singer Portia White and Victoria Cross recipient William Hall.

This community was the first African-Canadian community to touch Canada and is the oldest generational community of African descent in our nation. Many members of the African Nova Scotian community reside in North Preston, East Preston, Loon Lake, Cherry Brook and surrounding areas, and I am very proud to be their member of Parliament.

Statements by Members

I encourage everyone in the House and this country to learn more about the important contributions of African Canadians.

* * *

EDWARD MCCLOSKEY, RCAF

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute navigator Edward McCloskey, native son of Maidstone, missing in action in France during World War II, and I give credit to Essex Free Press reporter Sylene Argent and thanks to Mark McGuire, also of Maidstone, for his account.

While living in France in 1989, Mark learned through a new-found friend that in July 1944, the friend and his mother saw a low-flying plane with RCAF insignia, followed by an exchange of gunfire and a large explosion. Learning that the crew was buried at the Commonwealth cemetery nearby, Mark paid his respects. He paused at one of the tombstones. It read “E.J. McCloskey, Navigator”.

Thirty years later, Navigator McCloskey's niece, Marilyn Scratch, approached Mark to ask if he was the one who had found “Uncle Ed”. He was able to provide photos of the headstone and valuable closure to the family.

* * *

MURRAY DRUDGE

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every morning thousands of kids across Canada jump into swimming pools with dreams of Olympic glory. The drive to make a personal best, to perfect a turn or a start or to ultimately reach the podium is the product of incredible individual will and might, but it is never done alone. Each morning, these athletes dive into the water to train. There are coaches across Canada literally on deck, walking alongside these young athletes as they drive forward. Great coaches do not just create champions; they help create leaders. They build strong futures for these kids and help them grow as they compete.

This week, Swimming Canada lost one of its best coaches, and the families whose kids swim for the North York Aquatic Club lost a friend and a mentor, someone who helped propel a generation of Canadians toward Olympic glory and well beyond. Murray Drudge's sudden passing has broken hearts and shocked the swim community, but the dreams he has given shape to, the dreams of Olympic gold and the scholarship opportunities that live on through the young athletes he trained are his legacy.

These dreams are Murray's legacy. They are his personal best.

*Statements by Members***EMPLOYMENT**

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the number of temporary workers in Canada is increasing. They are becoming a large part of the workforce, with short-term, temporary and contract work, and it is a disturbing trend. They earn 20% less than those with permanent jobs, have fewer or no benefits and little security. No wonder it has been called precarious work. It affects a lot of young people.

Over two million Canadians are in temporary jobs, more than 13% of those employed. In Atlantic Canada, it is worse: It is 21% in P.E.I., and in Newfoundland and Labrador it is 26%.

Workers at Canada Post in St. John's are fed up. One plant has 90 temporary workers out of a workforce of 200, nearly half, and some have been with Canada Post for five to 10 years. The corporation seems determined to rely more and more on temporary workers by replacing retiring or transferred employees with temps.

The Liberal government and the minister should do what it takes to reverse that trend at Canada Post to ensure permanent full-time employment where possible. Canada Post should be setting an example by providing quality jobs along with quality service.

* * *

LEBANON

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the many Lebanese who are out on the streets, protesting inequality and lack of opportunity in the dire economic crisis. Lebanon is the third-highest-indebted country in the world. In 2016, payments consumed 48% of the government's revenues, limiting its ability to make much-needed investments in infrastructure and public services.

The top 1% of Lebanese receive approximately 25% of Lebanon's national income, while the bottom 50% of the population are left with 10%, making Lebanon one of the countries with the worst income inequality in the world.

Protesters are demanding equality and a brighter future for themselves, their families and all Lebanese citizens. Khalil Gibran, a famous Lebanese poet, once wrote, "Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls".

I stand with the strong and bold Lebanese who are protesting for a brighter future for all of Lebanon.

* * *

● (1105)

*[Translation]***COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION**

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the most precious gifts in life is to have a child. Unfortunately, some families face the daily challenge of raising a child with a limitation.

I would like to recognize the contribution of an organization in my riding that provides support and respite to many families who are dealing with that challenge, the Association d'entraide communautaire La Fontaine. Established in 1996, the association's mission is to provide services to the families of people with autism spec-

trum disorder or intellectual or physical limitations in our community. It provides critical support to parents by giving them time to recharge their batteries and devote time to other family members.

I would like to commend the dedicated and committed members of the Association d'entraide communautaire La Fontaine team for continuing to offer support to families, despite the challenges they faced just before the holidays.

I wish this organization continued success so that our children remain the most precious gift in the world.

* * *

*[English]***GREATER SUDBURY POLICE SERVICE**

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Sudburians recently joined more than a dozen police officers for an informal one-on-one Friday afternoon chat at a South End coffee shop. Once things got brewing, no topic was off limits.

Maintaining community trust can be a challenge for police.

[Translation]

Fortunately, in Sudbury, our police are part of our community. They work, live and play here.

[English]

I commend the efforts of Constable Mickey Teed of the Greater Sudbury Police Service. He helped launch Coffee with a Cop in order to give members of the public an opportunity to talk with police, share some stories and ask some questions that they would normally not get a chance to ask.

As the local MP, I am happy to report that more Coffee with a Cop get-togethers are planned for other parts of Sudbury. Together, let us continue building bridges between cops and community.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on February 8, the Africa Festival of Arts and Culture hosted a Black History Month dinner at Mount Saint Vincent University. Everyone there got to experience the magnificent tastes and sounds of Africa.

[*Translation*]

This event commemorated the contributions of African Canadians to war efforts, including the contributions of William Hall, the first Nova Scotian to be awarded the Victoria Cross, of the members of the No. 2 Construction Battalion, who served with distinction during the First World War, and of those who served during the Second World War and other conflicts, often making the ultimate sacrifice.

[*English*]

One of our great shames is that so little credit was given to these heroes for so long, and rarely during their lifetimes. The tremendous contributions made by black Canadians to our country deserve our respect and admiration. We can do better.

* * *

CANADIAN WORKERS

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the working men and women across this great country. They are the individuals who make sure our homes are warm, our transportation moves and our children are fed. Over the past five years, working people of our country have found it more and more difficult and, unfortunately the government is putting prosperity out of the hands of way too many.

Self-inflicted wounds, like the carbon tax and the blockade, are creating conditions for a devastating made-in-Canada recession. The working people of our country see right through the rhetoric and platitudes, and they demand action. They demand a Prime Minister who will stand up for the working people of our country.

* * *

HIGH TECHNOLOGY IN KANATA

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Kanata—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have stood here before and spoken of the amazing technology advancements that are taking place in Kanata, Canada's largest high-technology park. The future of technology in Kanata and Canada has never been brighter. Merge Robotics and the Earl of March Lions are just two of the local robotics clubs made up of young students mentored by dedicated engineers, scientists, business leaders and talented university students.

Two exciting events will be taking place soon.

The first is the 2020 Robot Reveal and Open House to be held February 26 between 6:30 and 8:30 at the Beaverbrook public library in Kanata. The Merge Robotics students will be on hand to show off their new robot.

Also, for the first time, Ottawa will be hosting a robotics competition at Carleton University, from March 13 to March 15. Many local teams are participating. This event is free to the public.

Statements by Members

I encourage everyone to come out and encourage these young people. The future is bright.

* * *

B.C. FILM INDUSTRY

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a very exciting thing is happening next week in my riding, and more precisely in the community of Merritt. What is so exciting? The dinosaurs are coming. More accurately, next week *Jurassic World 3* will be filming in the area.

We should never overlook the importance of the B.C. film industry and the significant contributions that film productions create for local economies. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, Creative BC reported that 384 productions contributed \$3.2 billion to British Columbia's economy alone. This is great news for British Columbia, and in the case of *Jurassic World 3*, it is terrific news for Merritt.

I should also mention that the production also had a casting call for local citizens. According to the casting call, they are looking for people to play dinosaur food.

Please join me in recognizing the community of Merritt for being the perfect place to feed dinosaurs.

* * *

● (1110)

JEANETTE RUNCIMAN

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, retired Senator Bob Runciman had a political career spanning 45 years at the local, provincial and federal levels. He was a senior cabinet minister in Ontario and twice the interim leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

None of it would have been possible without the loving support of his wife Jeannette. Tragically, Jeanette passed away last week. Her sense of humour, sound political instincts and common sense made her the senator's greatest adviser. Jeanette was authentic and humble. She was an environmentalist before it was trendy and a great lover and defender of animals her whole life.

She was a loving mother, wife, grandmother and aunt. Her family meant everything to her. Her daughters, Robin and Sue, have lost not just a mother, but also their best friend.

The Runcimans would have celebrated 56 years of marriage next month. It is a great love story ended by a terrible tragedy. I thank Jeanette for her commitment to our community. She will be dearly missed.

*Oral Questions***RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS**

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last September I was invited by Tseshaht First Nation to witness a solemn ceremony on the site of the former Alberni Indian Residential School. More than 450 people from 88 first nations gathered to reclaim the lost souls of the many indigenous children who died while attending this school over the 92 years it was open.

The ceremony was a first step in creating a cultural way for the spirits of these children to be reclaimed. Many of the participants at the reclaiming lost souls ceremony were returning to the site of the school for the first time since it closed in 1973.

As a witness, I bring this message from those who are doing this important work. There is still much intergenerational healing needed from the trauma experienced by many generations of children attending residential schools. The federal government needs to invest more funding and resources into tearing down these schools and supporting healing initiatives across Canada.

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*[Translation]***SONIA POIRIER**

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sonia Poirier, an extraordinary constituent of mine who embodies the courage, resilience and strength of the people of the North Shore. In 2018, Ms. Poirier saved the lives of her daughter and her daughter's best friend when their boat capsized and her husband and brother-in-law disappeared into the lake's icy waters. She had to swim for hours and make it through a cold night to save the lives of the two girls as they waited and hoped for rescue.

Ms. Poirier is an active member of her community and a worthy member of the great Rotary family, as was her late husband, Bruno. She has written an account of this pivotal moment in her life to show that, no matter what tragedies we may encounter, we can and must choose to live. In my meetings with Ms. Poirier, she proved to be a loving, brilliant, courageous and radiant woman who is focused on chasing her dreams as she cherishes the precious memories of the loved ones she lost.

Sonia, your heroism has inspired me, the people of the North Shore and everyone all across Quebec.

* * *

*[English]***NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's economic future must be in our own hands. The Liberal government cannot listen to a few out-of-touch elites who are intent on shutting down Canada's energy sector.

A group of Noble Prize winners has written to the Prime Minister asking the Liberals to deny the Teck Frontier mine in Alberta. Have they visited northern Alberta and spoken to the 14 first nations that support this project because of the jobs and the prosperity it will create?

Have they met with Canada's own joint advisory panel that reviewed the science and the evidence and deemed this project to be in the best interests of the country? Did they actually read the panel's report which outlines how the Teck Frontier mine will actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions by displacing dirty coal with clean Canadian natural gas?

Have they met with Teck who has actually committed to have zero net emissions by 2050, which is in line with the government's own targets?

This is a \$20-billion project that is good for Alberta and is good for Canada. Albertans support it. First nations support it. Canadians support it. These elites should get out of the way and let Canada do what we do best, which is working to develop sustainable clean energy.

* * *

● (1115)

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the tireless efforts of community organizations in combatting racism and xenophobia stemming from the coronavirus outbreak.

In Scarborough North open forums were recently held at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto and at Woodside Square with the Chinese Canadian National Council. Public health officials were on hand to hear concerns from residents, help clear misconceptions and handle questions with facts.

While there continues to be ignorance and incidents of discrimination towards the Chinese community, we must unite to overcome fear. Fear is what threatens to undermine our core values, destroy businesses and damage community relations.

Let us tackle fear by supporting one another, our neighbours, restaurants, grocery stores and local shops. As Canadians across the country raise funds and send supplies to China, let us stand together with the front-line medical personnel currently working around the clock to save lives. Let us continue to demonstrate our care and compassion as Canadians.

ORAL QUESTIONS*[English]***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Coastal GasLink project has been given consent by the majority of the Wet'suwet'en people, but their voices are being ignored by the Liberals.

Rita George, one of their matriarchs, said, “The world thinks the matriarchs are behind all the protests going on and that's not true. None of the matriarchs were contacted.” She further said, “I want the world to know what's been happening to us. We are being bullied, it's so shameful, so hurtful. We are being humiliated.”

Why are the Liberals ignoring the majority of Wet'suwet'en people and instead empowering bullies and lawbreakers?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is seized with this issue and we believe that dialogue is the best and most preferred way to deal with these matters.

Our minister was in Victoria on Monday. We have had a series of conversations with the hereditary chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en and the minister spoke to several chiefs on Tuesday. The minister reiterated our government's commitment to a joint meeting with the hereditary leadership of the Wet'suwet'en people and the Province of British Columbia. This was also echoed in a joint letter with our counterpart from B.C. We are open and available to meet in person at the earliest opportunity.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thousands of Canadians are being laid off and their families do not know when they are going to see a paycheque again. Billions of dollars of essential goods cannot get to their destination and the economic impact is dire.

In fact, Atlantic Container Line says it will no longer ship goods to Halifax while these blockades continue. There are worries about propane shortages and higher food prices as a result of the Prime Minister's weak leadership.

How much worse does it have to get before the Prime Minister steps up and stops these illegal blockades?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government fully understands and is deeply concerned by the impact the blockades are having on small businesses, farmers who rely on freight rail, rail employees, as well as the towns and communities that need rail service to get essential products such as chlorine to treat their drinking water.

We are working with all levels of government to find a swift resolution to these blockades. The Prime Minister convened a call with his provincial counterparts yesterday. We are encouraged by the progress on the blockade in New Hazelton, British Columbia. We are actively working for a similar resolution on all remaining blockades.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by empowering and emboldening lawbreakers and bullies, the government is setting the stage for more disruption and anarchy in this country.

Our economy is being shut down. Jobs are being lost and the voices of first nations people are being ignored. The best interests of Canadians are being ignored. The Liberal inaction on this is disgraceful.

Oral Questions

When will the Liberal government stand up for law and order, stand up for first nations rights, stand up for jobs and end these illegal blockades?

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that this situation is very troubling for the Canadian economy, for the movement of goods and people, and we want to see it resolved. That is in fact the consensus that emerged from the meeting with the provincial premiers.

We want to keep the discussions going in search of a peaceful solution, as quickly as possible. It is time for the blockades to end.

* * *

• (1120)

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the problem: The blockades are still in place because of the government's appalling inaction for over two weeks now. That is the reality.

Meanwhile, there has been a growing number of victims. Today we learned that the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie must lay off half of its employees. That means 15 breadwinners who no longer have a job today and are not receiving a salary.

What is the government doing? What does the government have to say to those people?

My question is very simple. It is for the Minister of National Revenue, the member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

What does she have to say to those breadwinners in the Gaspé who today have no job, apart from asking them to be patient?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a situation we are taking very seriously. The entire government and all of cabinet are working on this issue. They are hard at work, every hour and every minute of the day, seeking a solution, a peaceful solution, to this conflict.

That means pursuing dialogue. However, we have been very clear that dialogue has its limits.

Now it surprises me to hear the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent offering Canadians such simple, or rather, such simplistic solutions to such a complex problem. He should be more cautious.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the people of Gaspé have just seen that, sadly, their two-term duly elected MP is being muzzled by her government, which will not let her speak when she is asked a direct question that concerns Gaspé residents. The government will have to live with its choices.

Oral Questions

Because of the choices that the government has made over the past two weeks, things are getting worse for farmers with every passing day. Marcel Groleau, the president of the UPA, wrote the Prime Minister a letter telling him that “it does not seem like the government intends to act quickly”.

Could the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, who is an MP from Quebec, tell Mr. Groleau what the government is going to do, instead of telling him to be patient?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to answer my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent in my capacity as chair of the Quebec caucus. We are deeply concerned about this situation. We want this conflict to be resolved quickly yet peacefully. The provincial premiers agree that the path forward is through dialogue. However, dialogue has its limits. That is our position. We are in the process of weighing all our options so we can defuse this crisis as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister must take real action to resolve the rail crisis today. No one wants to see another photo of him sitting in a chair and chatting with his colleagues. We want to see him on the ground, outdoors, talking to indigenous chiefs. We want him to confirm that there are no longer any RCMP officers on the Wet'suwet'en territory and that the pipeline project at the heart of the controversy will be put on hold while discussions take place.

Will the government finally take action?

[*English*]

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has a cabinet that is seized with the situation and is working around the clock on an ongoing basis.

We all want peace. We all want to get rail traffic going across the country. Our Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and our Minister of Indigenous Services have stated that they are ready and willing to meet with the hereditary leadership at the earliest opportunity. With the B.C. RCMP's outreach to the chiefs yesterday, we hope this creates the ability to advance a peaceful resolution.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, thousands of VIA Rail and CN workers have already received lay-off notices because of the rail blockade.

Throughout Quebec, companies of all sizes, including Resolute Forest Products, are telling us that they too will have to lay off employees. The government must take action. Dialogue does not consist of sending letters; it should be carried out face-to-face by the Prime Minister and the chiefs, nation to nation.

What real action will the government take so that on Monday morning the crisis is behind us?

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are fully aware of and deeply concerned about the impacts of the decision CN was forced to take

and its consequent impact on VIA Rail, as well as the people who rely on freight rail and rail employees.

The department has been in constant communication with CN and CP. Furthermore, the Prime Minister has convened the incident response group with members of our team to discuss the situation and assess our path forward. All parties must engage in open and respectful dialogue to ensure the situation is resolved peacefully. We strongly urge the parties to do so.

* * *

• (1125)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, less than three years ago the Prime Minister said, “No relationship is more important to Canada than the relationship with Indigenous Peoples.”

The Prime Minister has fallen a long way since then. Weeks ago, when we asked the Prime Minister to step up to de-escalate the situation in the Wet'suwet'en territories, he said it was not his problem.

It was then. It is now. When will he meet with the hereditary chiefs?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is seized with this matter. The Prime Minister has a cabinet that is working on the situation around the clock. We all want peace and we want to get rail traffic going across the country.

The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and the Minister of Indigenous Services have stated that they are ready and willing to meet with the hereditary leadership at the earliest opportunity. With the B.C. RCMP's outreach to the chiefs yesterday, we hope this creates the ability to advance a peaceful resolution.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, that was a lot of talking points from the member opposite, but not an answer to our question.

We will ask again. When will the Prime Minister meet with the hereditary chiefs?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate that we have a government that is seized with this matter. A number of ministers have been working around the clock to address the situation on an urgent basis. We will continue to do so in a diligent and urgent manner.

What is important is that we move forward at the same time to understand the long-term needs toward reconciliation. What is important is that we focus on ensuring we have a peaceful solution to this matter and at the same time ensuring our long-term relationship is maintained and restored.

Oral Questions

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, supplies of propane in eastern Canada are reaching a critical level and there is no reliable backup for businesses, farms and residences, including many seniors homes that need fuel.

Distributors are now rationing what is in stock as they deal with energy insecurity. Mere days of propane supply are on hand as the Prime Minister makes the precarious calculation that he can wait out the problem.

When will the Prime Minister finally take critical action and end the blockades or will he leave seniors out in the cold?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the important impacts that these blockades are having on many communities across the country. Rail transport is essential to many communities in the Atlantic provinces and in Quebec that rely on propane for their supplies.

We understand that the path forward to a sustainable resolution of the blockades is through dialogue, and this is the approach we are using. We are working tirelessly for a swift resolution to these blockades to ensure that essential goods can be delivered to our communities.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, propane shortages in Quebec are forcing companies to ration propane supplies to hospitals and farms. Capital Propane, in Quebec City, says it is rationing what is left of its seven-day supply. While contingency plans are in place and businesses are turning to trucks, they say that these plans cannot make up for the losses caused by the blockades.

When will the Prime Minister take action to ensure that propane companies in Quebec do not have to choose between agriculture and patients?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that the current blockades are having a significant impact, particularly on propane supplies in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec.

The conclusion reached at yesterday's meeting between the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister is that dialogue must be our preferred option in order to resolve this situation not just over the short term, but also over the long term. It is also clear that dialogue does have its limits, and the blockades must be lifted as soon as possible, but in a peaceful way.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, given that we are talking about solutions, last Monday, 12 days after the start of the crisis, the RCMP commissioner was seen at the emergency meeting of the Prime Minister and the ministers. We can therefore assume that they discussed possible action to take down the blockades.

Did the Prime Minister give the RCMP any instructions at all?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we respect the independence of the RCMP with regard to the management of its operations and its decisions, and I invite my colleagues opposite to familiarize themselves with the act governing relations between the RCMP and government.

I also invite the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles to turn around and speak to his colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, who once was the public safety minister. When he was minister, he shouted far and wide that the independence of the RCMP must be respected. Our government respects the independence of the RCMP.

• (1130)

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his answer. I would like to take this opportunity to tell him that, yes, directives can be given, even though the government has been saying the opposite from the outset.

Are we to believe that the Prime Minister asked the RCMP at the meeting not to do anything?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the RCMP has its own procedures for dealing with this type of situation, as does the Sûreté du Québec and the Ontario Provincial Police.

On May 13, 2015, our hon. colleague, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, said that he had full confidence in the judgment of the RCMP and that he respected the RCMP's operational independence. The position of the Government of Canada has not changed since 2015 when he was the public safety minister.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government seems to think that the only way these blockades will come to an end is by giving the blockaders whatever they want by conceding to all their demands. One gets more of what one rewards.

If the government gives in to all the demands of the law-breakers, it will get more law-breaking. Every project in the country will be held hostage by those willing to stand on highways, at airports and in front of trains.

How are we ever going to restore lawfulness and development in the country if the government makes concessions to reward those who have broken the law?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we fully understand the significant impacts these blockades are having on the economy, small businesses and farmers. We are with the railway employees who are facing uncertainty.

We understand that the path forward to a sustainable resolution of the blockades is through dialogue, and that is the approach we are taking.

Oral Questions

We are hoping for a swift resolution to ensure that Canadians affected by these blockades can return to work and that businesses can get their goods to market.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government says that it understands the impact of these illegal blockades. Who else understands the impact? The law-breakers. They know the damage they are doing and they know the government is working to reward that damage.

Every interest group in the country that wants to stop development or secure other self-serving concessions is watching carefully to find out what incentives the government is building in for that kind of lawless behaviour.

Is the government really going to reward lawlessness and invite more of it?

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over time, we have become accustomed to the Conservative Party offering simple solutions to extremely complex problems, but I think this is taking things to a whole new level.

In this case, we are working with our provincial counterparts. Everyone agrees that dialogue is the way to go to resolve this situation peacefully but that dialogue has its limits. We recognize the effects that these blockades are having on our country's economy, on workers and on the movement of goods and people in Canada.

The solution involves continued dialogue.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that we are out of time.

The Union des producteurs agricoles is sounding the alarm. A crisis is upon us. If the rail blockades are not lifted and if rail service does not resume within the next few hours, we will have a full-on propane shortage. Farmers use propane to heat their buildings in the middle of February. Their livestock herds are in jeopardy. Farmers back home are worried.

What specific action will the government take to resolve this crisis over the weekend?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. I can assure her that all members of Parliament from Quebec on this side of the House are very concerned about the rail blockades in Quebec and Ontario.

However, this is a complex problem and there is no easy solution. Dialogue is key to finding a solution. Dialogue has begun and we are giving it a chance. Yesterday, provincial premiers acknowledged that we need to give dialogue some more time. Dialogue does, however, have its limits. It cannot go on forever because of the serious impacts this situation is having on the Canadian economy, farmers and business owners.

Mrs. Louise Charbonneau (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the rail blockade crisis has already had a serious impact on Mauricie. Our farmers and their animals are facing a propane shortage. Two Resolute Forest Products sawmills are hours away from laying off all their employees. At the port of Trois-Rivières, more than 200 rail cars are delayed.

What concrete action is the government going to take to ensure that the blockades are removed this weekend?

• (1135)

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of the hon. opposition member. I think the situation is worrisome from the point of view of the economy and the transportation of goods and people. This is having very serious repercussions on the lives of thousands of Canadians and on the Canadian economy.

In terms of actions, the Prime Minister is meeting with his ministers and the incident management centre as we speak. Yesterday, there was a positive move when the RCMP in British Columbia decided to withdraw from Wet'suwet'en territory. Now, we are open to dialogue and that is the preferred approach of the provincial premiers. As I was saying in my previous response, in light of the economic consequences of the current situation, dialogue has its limits.

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Gerda, a large steel producer near my riding of Oshawa, is being negatively affected by these illegal blockades and the Prime Minister's inability to end them.

The blockades are affecting the company's ability to transport goods and receive manufacturing supplies and its steel-making operations are now under threat. Hundreds of manufacturing jobs in my community could be at risk, and so are thousands across Ontario.

If the Prime Minister never wants to end the illegal blockades, when can we expect to see his plan to support affected workers?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I represent a manufacturing community, I understand the question, the concerns and the significant impacts manufacturers are facing.

We understand that the path forward to a sustainable resolution of blockades is through dialogue, and that is the approach we are using. We are hoping for a swift resolution to ensure that Canadians impacted by these blockades can return to work and that businesses can get their goods to market.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, 34 Canadian organizations, representing multiple sectors from across the country employing millions of Canadians, wrote the Prime Minister. They expressed how the activist blockades were creating serious problems for interprovincial trade, public service, businesses, workers and families. They said that for every day the rail lines were down, it would take at least four days to just catch up.

Will the Prime Minister create plan for our economy to catch up if these blockades are ever dismantled?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we understand the impact of these blockades. They are potentially devastating for many communities, industries and farmers. However, the path forward to a sustainable and lasting resolution is through dialogue, and that is the approach we are taking.

We are looking forward to a swift resolution to ensure that all Canadians who are impacted by these blockades can return to work and that businesses can get their goods to market.

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RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Transport told the House that VIA Rail service was now operating between Ottawa and Montreal. The minister also said that he was a frequent VIA Rail traveller, which is very convenient for him and fellow Montreal area MPs.

I was surprised to learn that VIA Rail is not operating to Atlantic Canada. In fact, VIA is not running any services between Montreal and Halifax.

These illegal blockades are located in western and central Canada, not down east. Therefore, why is VIA Rail not running in Atlantic Canada?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know how disruptive some of the blockades have been for the travelling public. VIA Rail is a very important service that connects our communities. VIA Rail has removed some service in the corridor.

We understand that the path forward to a sustainable solution is through dialogue, and that is the approach we are using. We are working tirelessly to end the blockades and resume rail passenger service as quickly as we can.

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, given that VIA Rail is a Crown corporation, subsidized to the tune of nearly \$400 million annually by taxpayers, what has the cost been to VIA Rail due to the illegal blockades across the country and when will the Crown be initiating legal action for damages for the millions of dollars in lost revenue against the organizers of these illegal blockades?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the importance of VIA Rail to Canadians across the country and the importance of connecting travellers, families and our communities.

Oral Questions

However, the way to resolve this blockade in an effective manner is through dialogue, and that is the approach we are taking. We want to ensure that these blockades end and resume passenger rail as quickly as possible.

* * *

● (1140)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Mumilaaq Qaqqaq (Nunavut, NDP): Mr. Speaker, meeting with the Wet'suwet'en chiefs would be a step in the right direction for reconciliation, but what we are seeing again is the Prime Minister failing. His broken promises to the people in my riding are seen every day, with a lack of and poor health care, mental health care, housing, education and transportation.

The Liberals supported our motion on suicide prevention, but when it comes to action, we see broken promises.

Why are the Liberals so committed to denying basic human rights for indigenous peoples?

Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. Our government is committed to improving the quality of life for northerners.

In the last few years, we have invested \$40 million over five years to support options for post-secondary education in the north, in the Arctic. Through our national housing strategy, we are helping more than 3,000 northerners find a place to call home. We have signed 10-year agreements with the three territories, which will invest over \$550 million in housing for the north. We have signed a 10-year agreement with ITK, which will invest \$400 million for housing in the north.

We know there is a lot of work to do, and we are committed to getting it done in partnership.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my riding, 11 years after the Supreme Court reaffirmed the rights of five Nuu-chah-nulth nations to catch and sell fish in their territory, the government has still not negotiated an agreement. Instead, it has spent over \$19 million fighting these nations and their rights in court.

We can look across the country today and it is clear the Prime Minister's words of nation-to-nation relationships fall flat. That is why the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs are asking for a face-to-face meeting. When will the Prime Minister answer their call?

Hon. Bernadette Jordan (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is working collaboratively with the five Nuu-chah-nulth first nations to advance reconciliation with regard to their right to fish and sell fish.

Oral Questions

An incremental reconciliation agreement for fisheries resources concluded in September 2019, and subsequently, we moved forward collaboratively with more comprehensive reconciliation negotiations for fisheries resources.

At the same time, our government is working closely in collaboration with B.C. first nations and stakeholders towards a renewed salmon allocation policy that is in line with the court's decision and respects indigenous rights.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, communities across Canada are benefiting from projects under the green municipal fund, a billion dollar program funded by the Government of Canada and delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Cities are terrific partners in pioneering practical climate solutions. By supporting municipalities in their efforts to build more resilient communities, we are helping Canadians across the country mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

Would the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities tell this House how we can work together to create good middle-class jobs, protect the environment and grow the economy?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was great to sit down recently with big city mayors and with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to discuss our common priorities, from public transit to green infrastructure.

We announced 10 new projects under the green municipal fund, such as a pilot project for Saskatoon to test electric buses, funding for Calgary to study fuel alternatives for its waste and recycle services fleet, and a stormwater project for the Fort York region and Lake Simcoe.

Local leaders know what is right for their communities. We are committed to working with them.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, Alberta experienced its first blockade in my riding of Sturgeon River—Parkland. A critical CN Rail line that moves over \$100 million a day in goods was blocked. Many of these goods are hazardous materials.

These blockades pose a threat to public safety. Counter-protesters removed the barricades. Canadians are frustrated and concerned that there will be violence. When will the Liberal government take strong action, restore the rule of law and end these blockades?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the hardships that these blockades have caused for millions of Canadians and the Canadian economy.

It is our undertaking to see an end to this situation and to see the blockades go down. We are working with the RCMP and with our

provincial counterparts who favour the same approach we are taking, which is to give a chance for dialogue. However, dialogue has its limits. The blockades must come down, but I would warn that it is very irresponsible for citizens to take the matter into their own hands. Law enforcement is the proper way to do it. I suggest the member opposite tell Peter MacKay that.

● (1145)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night I received an email from Kevin, a farmer from the Shellbrook area in my riding. Kevin has half a million dollars' worth of undeliverable contracts that he cannot deliver on.

A month from now, road bans are going to hit. Grain elevators are saying they need at least two weeks to clear the backlog.

When can I tell Kevin the barricades will be taken down, and in the meantime, where can Kevin send his bills?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the pain that this blockade is causing farmers and businesses across the country, but a pathway to a lasting resolution of this is through open and respectful dialogue. That is the path we are taking. That is the path that will resolve this situation peacefully, and that is the path we are taking.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, farmers are feeling the damaging effects of the illegal rail blockades. They are not getting paid because the elevators are either full or will not accept any more grains or pulse crops. Eighty-five ships are in the Vancouver harbour waiting to be loaded. If the shipments do not arrive on time, farmers will also have to pay demurrage charges.

One farmer from my riding named Doug shared with me that he even had to start withdrawing his RRSPs just to pay the bills. There is no more time to wait.

When will the Prime Minister support farmers and stand up against the illegal blockades?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the significant impacts across the country on farmers, on small businesses, on manufacturers and on employees who work in these industries, but we understand clearly that the path forward to a sustainable and lasting resolution is through dialogue. We are hoping for a swift resolution to ensure that Canadians affected by these blockades can return to work and businesses can get their goods to market.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 16 days of Liberal government inaction, Canadians are being held hostage. Our businesses and consumers have had to resort to rationing, as if it were wartime. Chemco, a company in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, has run out of aircraft de-icing fluid to supply to the Quebec City, Mirabel and other airports.

What about public safety? Supermarket shelves are going empty. We need action now.

What does the member for Louis-Hébert think is the threshold for taking action and lifting the illegal blockades?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I share my colleague from Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier's concern.

The situation for the Canadian economy is deeply concerning. With goods not getting to market and passengers not getting to where they need to be, the impact on the Canadian economy, on Canadian society, is significant. We want the blockades to be removed as quickly as possible, but as the provincial premiers agreed yesterday, we need to give dialogue a chance, so we can find a peaceful resolution to this situation. However, dialogue has its limits, given the economic impact this problem is having on the Canadian economy. That being said, it would be counterproductive to publicly announce a deadline.

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TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is a serious labour shortage in Quebec. Businesses are turning down contracts because they do not have the staff to increase production. Farmers are sick with worry every year. They do not know if they will have workers in time for the harvest. That is supposedly the purpose of the temporary foreign worker program, but the process is so burdensome, slow and rigid that it does not work.

Will the government let Quebec oversee temporary foreign workers, as it has been calling for over the past 18 months?

[English]

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to working with our provincial partners and our local partners on this issue.

We are aware that there is an increased volume of LMIA applications in Quebec. We understand the urgency of the labour shortage in Quebec and we are taking action to address it.

In 2019-20, we hired 34 new staff in Quebec, reallocated \$1.7 million within ESDC to address the backlog and reviewed and streamlined processes.

I understand the importance of temporary workers in Quebec, and our department continues to work to address this backlog. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the impact assessment required by the government takes forever. It is a lengthy, burdensome and unnecessarily rigid process, and above all, it is very expensive. Spring is around the corner. Then comes summer and our agricultural producers will need workers in the field, as they do every year.

As a gesture of goodwill, the government could start by handing over the entire responsibility for the labour market impact assessment to Quebec. It could do so tomorrow. Is it open to that suggestion?

• (1150)

[English]

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, we are aware of the increased volume of LMIA applications. We have invested \$8.1 million to reduce the volume of applications, because we understand how important this program is to employers. This investment in itself has decreased the backlog by 1,400 applications.

We will continue to work to ensure that this program works for employers, for workers and for the Canadian economy. We are committed to working with our provincial partners to improve this program.

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RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's weakness is costing Canada's economy once again. People in Alberta and across the country have lost all faith in the government's willingness to end the illegal blockades.

The pressures facing families and communities are leaving some Canadians so frustrated they removed one of the blockades themselves. The Prime Minister's weak leadership is creating circumstances for dangerous vigilantism.

On what day will I be able to tell the businesses in my riding that they can finally resume the transportation of their products?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the hardships these blockades have placed on many Canadians across the country and on the economy. However, there is no simple solution to such a complex problem.

Oral Questions

The premiers of the provinces and the Prime Minister had discussions yesterday. They agreed that we need to have dialogue, but that dialogue has its limits and that is why the blockades must come down. However, I would advise the member opposite to discourage any and all citizens who might be tempted to use vigilante justice. This is not the path forward. We have to trust law enforcement in this country to apply the law.

Mrs. Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, I visited Bimbo Canada's bakery in my riding. It produces an impressive 9,000 loaves of bread an hour at its plant. It is very proud of the fact that it uses only the highest quality Canadian prairie wheat flour for its products.

As Phil showed us around, he spoke about the rail blockades impeding shipments of that key ingredient to the bakeries across Canada. Without flour, production stops.

What does the Prime Minister plan to say to Canadians when the bread runs out: Let them eat cake?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we do appreciate the concerns and hardships faced by small business owners, farmers and manufacturers across the country, but the path ahead is through dialogue. It is unfortunate—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The shouts in unison are not helping the situation. I know that hon. members will want to hear the responses by parliamentary secretaries and ministers, so let us try and have some quiet and we will hear what they have to say.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing that members of the Conservative Party would laugh at a resolution to this through peaceful dialogue. The calls from the other side to make illegal orders to the RCMP or send in the army, or calls on future leaders of their party for vigilantism are unfortunate.

We want a lasting solution and that path is through peace and through dialogue.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know the government is seized and needs WD-40, but radical activists who may have no connection to the Wet'suwet'en people are holding our country's economy hostage.

We have a right to freedom of speech and freedom to protest, which I strongly defend, but we do not have the right to shut down railways, ports, impede freedom of movement and block producers from getting their goods to market.

The situation has gone on far too long. Canadians are fed up with the inaction. Why will the Minister of Public Safety not direct action to enforce the law?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to answer directly the question from the member opposite, it is because we respect the independence of law enforcement in this country, a principle that has been recognized not only by the Supreme Court, but also by former prime minister Stephen Harper

and by the former minister of public safety who sits right across the aisle.

To hear members laugh at such a serious matter is unbecoming of the Conservative Party. The path forward for a peaceful resolution of this conflict is through dialogue, but dialogue has its limits. We had discussions with the premiers of the provinces yesterday and we are working around the clock to put an end to this situation.

* * *

• (1155)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last June, the House of Commons adopted a motion to declare a climate emergency. We all have a role to play in the fight against climate change.

Can the Minister of Canadian Heritage inform the House of how he intends to advance this fight in his portfolio?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell for his question and for his commitment in this file.

As members know, environmental protection always has been and always will be a priority for me. I am pleased to be in this place among many people who care about the environment like I do.

As members also know, increased public awareness is essential for us to meet our targets. I am working with my colleagues on this issue.

I intend to advance the mandate that the Prime Minister gave me to work with national museums to help educate Canadians about climate change. I had the opportunity to see the work that the Canadian Museum of Nature and the Canada Science and Technology Museum have already begun doing to make the public more aware of climate change.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 24,000 people in New Brunswick rely on the forestry sector for their livelihoods. The Prime Minister has already hurt the industry through poorly negotiated trade deals and his inaction on blockades is hurting them again. I am hearing from Forest NB that thousands of jobs and contracts are in jeopardy if this current disruption of rail and port services continues even one more week.

When will the Prime Minister move beyond the politics of endless dialogue, dither and delay, and take action so that I can tell the forestry workers of New Brunswick that the blockades are coming down?

Oral Questions

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the impacts on the economy not only for the forestry sector but for sectors across the country. It is unfortunate, again, that the Conservatives will laugh when the topic of dialogue is mentioned, but a path forward for a lasting solution is through peaceful dialogue. It has its limits, but that is the path that we are taking. We place our trust in law enforcement to do their job, but we will do ours, and that is through negotiations.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have almost 100 ships waiting to be loaded, a backup of 20,000 grain cars costing farmers more than \$300 million. Where is the agriculture minister? She is away in Washington at a forum on agriculture outlook. I can already tell the ag minister what that outlook for Canadian agriculture producers is. It is bleak.

Why is the minister dining with diplomats in Washington instead of being here, working with the incident response team, standing up for farmers and trying to resolve the crisis of the illegal blockades?

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we understand the impacts that have been felt across the country, including in our agriculture sector with our farmers who want to get their goods to market. We want a lasting solution to these blockades and that is through dialogue. That is our place. We trust law enforcement to do their job, but we will do ours, and that is through discussion.

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has grounded to a halt because of a weak Prime Minister. The Liberals are kowtowing to a few radical protesters. They are paralyzed. They are legitimizing these illegal blockades that are costing us hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of jobs. In Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, commuters worry that the West Coast Express will be shut down again, stranding them.

When will the Liberals wake up, stop sleeping at the wheel and take the barricades down?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Obviously, this is a very worrisome situation from the standpoint of the Canadian economy, and our government is working on it.

It is worth noting that there have been positive and encouraging new developments. Take, for example, the decision that the RCMP in British Columbia made yesterday to withdraw from Wet'suwet'en territory. We can also see that the provinces and the federal government are working together. The first ministers have agreed on an approach, and that is to give dialogue a chance, with the understanding that this cannot go on indefinitely because of the impact it is having on the Canadian economy, as the member so rightly pointed out.

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Red Deer, Saint John,

Lethbridge, St. Albert, Fort McMurray and Vancouver are all planning to ban, or have banned, the harmful practice of conversion therapy. In 2019, our government committed to amending the Criminal Code to ban the practice of conversion therapy.

Can the Minister of Justice share with the House what action our government is taking to put an end to this harmful practice?

• (1200)

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, conversion therapy is a cruel exercise that leads to lifelong trauma for victims. It is a harmful and degrading practice that has no place in Canada. I commend the municipalities that he mentioned, in particular those in Alberta, for showing leadership on this file. I hope the members opposite who represent those communities in this House will be with us as we move forward to ban this shameful practice.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government bought the Trans Mountain pipeline, it told Canadians it would cost \$7.4 billion. A recent report that explains why the cost has risen to \$13 billion is being hidden from Canadians.

Economist Robyn Allan has shown that this new cost means that there will be no added benefits for the Canadian treasury from this pipeline and the \$500 million that the government claims will be available annually for climate action is pure fiction.

From the start, the government has been loose with the facts about this project. When will it release the report and come clean with Canadians?

Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at a time when most of our energy exports go to the United States and the economies of Alberta and Saskatchewan are struggling, Canadians know that we need to open up new international markets. Getting our resources to global markets in a way that is efficient and safe is in Canada's best interest.

The TMX project will create thousands of good, middle-class jobs, accelerate Canada's clean-energy transition and open up new avenues for indigenous economic prosperity. We are confident that the project remains a responsible investment and that it will generate a positive return for Canadians.

*Routine Proceedings***POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, post-secondary students in Canada graduate burdened with debt from high tuition fees and the high cost of living. The interest rate they pay on their student loans is almost double the rate paid on the average home mortgage. By comparison, in northern European countries, university is tuition-free and students receive financial support. These economies have seen the benefits. Students in Canada need debt relief now.

Will the government, at the very least eliminate, the interest on federal student loans and give our students a break?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that education is vital to succeeding in our modern workforce and that is why we are investing in Canadians and their futures.

To help Canadians reach their full potential, we will increase the Canada student grant by \$1,200, extend Canada's student loan repayment grace period from six months to two years after graduation, give parents with their own student loans a repayment grace period until their child turns five and increase the threshold of the repayment assistance program, so students do not need to start repaying their loans until they are making over \$35,000.

That is how we are helping the middle class and those working hard to join it.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1205)

[English]

PETITIONS**HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING**

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to table a petition in support of Bill S-204 in the Senate, which is similar to Bill S-240 from the last Parliament. This bill seeks to address the horrific practice of forced organ harvesting and trafficking. It would make it a criminal offence for a Canadian to go abroad and receive an organ for which there has not been consent. It would also create a mechanism by which people could be deemed inadmissible to Canada because of their involvement in organ harvesting and trafficking.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from 120 young people in my riding who point out that the impacts of climate change are accelerating in Canada and around the world, leading to Canada declaring a climate emergency. Canadian youth are anxious about being left with an uncertain future. They point out that Canada has endorsed the Paris Agreement to limit a global temperature rise to well below 2°C, yet greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise in Canada. They also point out that subsidizing fossil fuel production is not compatible with the stated goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon the House of Commons to take meaningful steps to support the future of young Canadians and fulfill Canada's obligation under the Paris Agreement by adopting a detailed climate action strategy that includes legislated, science-based targets for a greenhouse gas reduction and implementing a comprehensive and steadily rising national carbon price beyond 2022 that rises to at least \$150 per tonne by 2030.

[Translation]

ATLANTIC HALIBUT FISHERY

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition calling for permission for the responsible fishing of Atlantic halibut in the Saguenay Fjord. The fact that 888 signatures were gathered in less than two weeks is an indication of the enthusiasm for this fish.

Atlantic halibut is fished commercially, and recreational fishers are aware of the importance of fishing responsibly for a sustainable fishery.

In less than two months, ice fishing generates economic spinoffs to the tune of \$6 million a year in my riding. The possibility of fishing Atlantic halibut there would have a significant impact on that activity. Everyone in my riding is hoping for a favourable ruling.

[English]

OPIOIDS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and privilege to table this petition on behalf of constituents from Courtenay, Parksville, Qualicum and Port Alberni. They are concerned about the over 12,500 Canadians who have died as a result of an opioid overdose or fentanyl-poisoned sources. The number of preventable deaths has surpassed the total number of deaths of all public health emergencies in the last 20 years, including SARS, H1N1 and Ebola. The current war on drugs has been costly and grossly ineffective. The petitioners cite that it has resulted in a widespread stigma toward addiction and those who use illicit drugs.

First, they are calling on the government to declare the current opioid overdose and fentanyl-poisoning crisis a national public health emergency under the Emergencies Act in order to manage and resource it, with the aim to reduce and eliminate preventable deaths.

Second, they would like to reform current drug policy to decriminalize personal possession.

Third, they would like to create, with urgency and immediacy, a system to provide safe, unadulterated access to substances so people who use substances experimentally, recreationally or chronically are not at imminent risk of overdose due to a contaminated source.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if a revised response to Question No. 50, originally tabled on January 27, 2020, could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 50—**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since January 1, 2017, to the Pembina Institute: (a) who authorized the contract; (b) what are the contracts' references and file numbers; (c) what are the dates of the contracts; (d) what are the descriptions of the services provided; (e) what are the delivery dates; (f) what are the original contracts' values; and (g) what are the final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

• (1210)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on that particular question, I too would like to extend my personal apology to the member for Red Deer—Mountain View

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

RESPONSE BY NATURAL RESOURCES MINISTER TO ORDER PAPER QUESTION

The Deputy Speaker: Before we get to the next item of business, the Chair would like to come back to the question of privilege raised on February 19, 2020, by the member for Red Deer—Mountain View, concerning the government's response to a written question, Question No. 50.

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[Translation]

In light of the Minister of Natural Resources's apology to the House yesterday and the tabling of a revised response to the written question, I consider the matter closed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: When the House last had this question before it for consideration, the hon. member for Langley—Aldergrove had two minutes remaining in the time for questions and comments, so we will return to that and I will invite questions and comments.

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our hon. colleague from Langley—Aldergrove is a new member of Parliament. I want to ask him his opinion.

I listened intently to his intervention on Bill C-3. What has his experience been with the Liberal government in the last three months, since his election? When the Liberals say they are going to consult, can we trust them to really do that? Can we actually trust the government to do what it says it is going to do?

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government said that relations with indigenous peoples is its number one priority, yet in four years it has not even been able to determine who speaks for indigenous peoples.

The Wet'suwet'en nations have agreed to the Coastal GasLink pipeline and now we have hereditary chiefs protesting that. However, we think that we have a contract with the Wet'suwet'en people and that they are in full agreement.

No, I do not think that the Liberal government can be trusted for proper consultation. It certainly would have solved that problem by now.

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-3, in the last Parliament being Bill C-98, which was introduced in its last days.

I will say at the outset that I will be supporting this legislation. I believe the majority, an overwhelming number of members in the House, will be doing that.

To start off my comments in the House today, as I have listened to the debate not only today but over the course of the last few weeks in this legislation, I think members of the opposition have rightfully questioned some of the processes for this.

Government Orders

Again, as I mentioned, this is something that I believe many communities have been asking for. I will get into the specifics of my riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, but it was very frustrating to see the legislation tabled at the last minute, only a few weeks before the end of the last Parliament, but of course I am happy to see it now back in this Parliament.

We have heard some concerns from the customs and immigration national union about those who are on the front lines not being consulted, yet wanting to make sure that they are consulted in this process. Of course, it is an oversight body of their work. I think that, as a part of the consultation, it would be a natural body for the government to bring in and include when talking about a piece of legislation such as this.

From a technocratic perspective, over the last few weeks as this was being debated I have done some interventions and made comments related to making sure that this oversight body works. I mean that in the sense of being timely and responsive to the resolution of the complaints or challenges that come forward.

Very frankly we have seen this before with different government departments or oversight bodies. If individuals who file complaints are not getting their issues resolved in a timely manner, their confidence in the oversight body will not exist. They may not complain when valid complaints should come forward. We have to question the effectiveness of this.

I think that a lot of members who have raised that issue want to ensure that this legislation goes through. When it does, for lack of a better word, we will be the oversight of the oversight, to make sure that it achieves what we want to do.

I want to focus on my riding specifically of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and the importance of this legislation. I will make the bold statement that this legislation may impact my riding the most of any riding in the country. I acknowledge that this involves oversight for both the RCMP and CBSA, but I will focus on the CBSA aspect.

As members may be aware, my riding is home to a port of entry in the city of Cornwall that travels through a first nations community: the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

We have a bit of a unique geographic set-up with our port of entry. Cornwall Island for many years hosted the port of entry. In 2009, there was some back and forth with some challenges there, and the border was shut down for several months while a new location was worked out.

What happened was that the port of entry moved from Cornwall Island to the city of Cornwall. The challenge that it presents now is that first nations community members, people who are visiting Akwesasne or coming from Akwesasne to the city of Cornwall or the counties and out past there, have to go through a port of entry to enter into Canada.

This is the number one issue when I speak with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne in my riding, the grand chief and council members. We are working on myriad different issues together, and I have appreciated their co-operation as I have reached out. We are working on some issues with Canada Post, land claims and eco-

nomie development, but the port of entry is the number one concern.

I had a conversation recently with Grand Chief Abram Benedict about this piece of legislation. The council provided a letter almost four years ago to the previous minister of public safety, Ralph Goodale, that spoke about the need for this type of legislation. In the letter is a statistic that says 70% of the daily traffic that goes through the port of entry in my riding, and that deals with CBSA officials on the front lines, are members of Akwesasne who are actually Canadian citizens and may be going to the city of Cornwall for groceries, gas, dinner or other services.

As my colleagues can imagine, it is a very frustrating situation for residents. I have echoed what the grand chief and council have said, that it is a physical barrier between Cornwall Island, the city of Cornwall and the rest of Canada. If one is accessing the 401 it is a physical barrier, but it is also a social, cultural and economic barrier in terms of ease of traffic.

● (1215)

I bring that back to talk about the importance of this bill because the members of Akwesasne and CBSA have thousands of interactions on a weekly basis. Unfortunately, over the course of the last 10 or 11 years, there have been some incidents and complaints, and there has not really been that oversight process to have those concerns addressed and resolved in a timely manner.

I will note the continued progress of the advocacy that the council has done on this. There was news in my riding at the beginning of the year that the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the CBSA have partnered for a better border experience. It was covered in the Cornwall Seaway News and the Cornwall Standard Freeholder in my riding. While that is a step in the right direction, in terms of that dialogue and process, this oversight agency is something that has been asked for by my community.

I should clarify it is not just the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the residents of Cornwall Island who are asking for this. Leaders in the city of Cornwall are asking as well.

People who are business owners want to see a proper, smooth flow for economic and social reasons. While this is a step in the right direction, I am going to be making sure in my riding and my community that, as complaints arise about experiences and exchanges that happen on the front lines of CBSA, those issues are addressed through this channel in a timely manner.

If resolutions come out of these recommendations to do better and to change processes at the port of entry, in Cornwall for example, those are done and followed through in a timely manner.

The relationship the CBSA workers have with the community in the Cornwall area is strong. I want to finish by thanking the CBSA workers on the front lines, not just in the city of Cornwall and the port of entry there, but across the country.

They have a very challenging job to do, very often in trying circumstances. We debate issues of a national portfolio here in Ottawa. For example, we talk about guns smuggled in from the United States, and about drugs and human trafficking. There are so many issues that our CBSA officials have to deal with to protect our country on a daily basis.

My message, as I wrap up my comments here today, is to thank those front-line workers. This oversight would be a win-win for them in terms of some of the protections they would have as well. I want to thank Grand Chief Abram Benedict for reaching out and chatting with me recently about this legislation. I want to thank him for putting this on the radar and sharing the local experience of what we have in my riding and our port of entry and how this legislation can go about.

I am looking forward to this. I think, by the sounds of the debate over the course of the last few weeks, this will go through. I am looking forward to it going to committee. After my conversations with the grand chief, I am hoping that he may be a witness. He can make sure that members of the committee who review the legislation understand the support for it from my riding, but also understand some of the challenges we specifically have.

We will find ways to make sure that the intention is always there, through legislation, to do better and to make sure this is actually working, that the complaints process responses are timely, that there are resolutions and that there are outcomes.

We will make sure that this is not just a forum to say we have complaint resolution without resolving some of the challenges we face. We certainly think it is in the best interests of all Canadians, including the people in the city of Cornwall and the first nations community of Akwesasne. For the flow of the relationship, when we talk about reconciliation, this is a very tangible item that could help move us another step forward.

I am pleased to speak to this today, and look forward to the questions and comments from my colleagues.

● (1220)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He talked about guns at the border.

Does he realize that the rules could be tightened to prevent gun trafficking on the black market?

[*English*]

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my comments, there is a wide array of things that CBSA workers have to confront. They are really at the front lines of that. I am looking forward, in my many briefings and introductory meetings I am having as a new member, to meeting with the national CBSA president, and also with our local port of entry on that topic. When we talk about illegal guns coming into the market from the United States, Cornwall and that port of entry is certainly challenged by that.

I do not mean to divert from that, but there is a circumstance in my riding and the port of entry there that I have learned about in my new role over the last couple of years because Akwesasne has

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raised awareness of it. One of the big challenges we have in my riding is human trafficking. It is unbelievable to think that it is hidden from the public light. It was not until I came into this role that I saw some of the true challenges that are there.

I look forward to working with CBSA and seeing some of the measures we can take through protections and avoidance of smuggled guns coming in. However, in my riding, human trafficking is a big issue as well. I look forward to working with my colleagues in addressing those issues.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleague in thanking the front-line workers at CBSA for the important work they do.

The NDP has been calling for these changes with respect to the cuts to CBSA for a long time, certainly under the previous Harper government. We wanted to see more resources brought to the CBSA and have this gap filled.

I am quite appreciative and quite delighted to hear the member speak in favour of the legislation. I want to commend him for the work he has done with the local indigenous community and for bringing that insight to the House of Commons.

My colleague represents a border community, which includes an indigenous community that does not have borders. That same nation is located on both sides of the border.

Maybe he could talk about some improvements that could be made to the legislation that would help ensure those rights would be protected.

● (1225)

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I am new to this place, so I will start with the Public Accounts.

The Public Accounts will clarify that spending was not cut when it came to the CBSA. We have seen that from the government on a technical point, but I will not go there today in my comments.

My riding is a unique situation. It has a port of entry and is a border riding. The border goes through a first nations community. I mentioned some statistics, including that 70% of the daily traffic coming and going through the port of entry in Cornwall was from the first nations community.

I am interested in working with the CBSA. It is a unique situation where people have to check in with CBSA before going into Cornwall. That will create a lot more challenges with respect to some of the complaints that may come up. I want to ensure that any complaints are addressed in a unique format that identifies the port of entry.

I will make further comments in the House in this upcoming term about the location of the port of entry, which is a sensitive subject. This is a real opportunity to help the people of Akwesasne and the city of Cornwall. Frankly, it is part of our reconciliation process to ensure first nations communities are included in our country.

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[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is one part of my colleague's speech that I am very much interested in. He alluded to human trafficking a few times.

Could he elaborate on that a bit?

[English]

Mr. Eric Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to get two questions from the Bloc. I also appreciate the opportunity to talk about the serious subject of human trafficking.

Akwesasne is part of my riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry. There is a geographic challenge there in the sense that Akwesasne is divided between Ontario and Quebec. Also portions of Akwesasne are in the United States. This presents a challenge when it comes to jurisdiction, and it is very technical.

When it comes to resources to combat human smuggling, we are dealing with multiple governments, provincial and federal, and different police jurisdictions. We have the 401. We have a lot of commercial and residential traffic going through. We need to get all the players together to share those resources and not have silos, a microcosm of my community. However, we need to address and combat this.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand today to speak to Bill C-3.

The bill before us was introduced in the dying days of the last Parliament as Bill C-98, and the Conservatives supported it through all steps.

Bill C-3, while it is an important bill, undoubtedly will be seen as another Liberal failure with respect to consultation. We saw this time and again in the last Parliament. Promise after promise was broken or unfulfilled. I think we will see the exact same thing with Bill C-3.

I want to bring to the floor again, and I do not think we can say it enough, the voices of the Wet'suwet'en. I would never say that we are speaking on behalf of or for the Wet'suwet'en, but it is important we bring their voices to the floor.

I would remind the House and my colleagues that the House is not ours. It does not belong to us or the Prime Minister. The House belongs to the electors who voted in the 338 members of Parliament. Those are the voices that really matter here.

Today we are debating Bill C-3 when our country is seized with a crisis. What we have seen over the last three weeks is no leadership whatsoever from the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, we had a motion before the House, on which we will vote on Monday. Speaker after speaker, at least on the Conservative side, brought the voices of the Wet'suwet'en to the floor of the House. A lot of people have stood in the House, with their firsts in the air, saying they are standing with the Wet'suwet'en. The reality is that they are not standing for the real voices of the Wet'suwet'en.

Yesterday I heard from two chiefs from my riding. One was the former chief of the Haisla Nation. He thought I should ask the Prime Minister about aboriginal titles and rights and to whom he

thought they belonged. They belong to the first nations communities.

The Wet'suwet'en and 21 nations voted in favour of the Coastal GasLink. They voted for bands, chiefs and councils to represent them. Those chiefs and leaders within their communities voted in favour of lifting their communities out of poverty. They chose economic prosperity, not economic despair.

Ellis Ross wanted me to ask the Prime Minister why so many leaders outside of first nations were standing against lifting their first nations up? They voted in favour of something that could bring so much hope to and opportunities for these communities. In northern B.C., these types of game-changing opportunities are few and far between.

Yesterday, the Liberals said that they would not support our motion, because we used the term "radical activists". They believed that we were talking about our first nations, that they were radical activists.

The other chief asked me why it was okay to have the Rockefellers and the Tides Foundations limit opportunity for first nations. This is the truth. He said that if the Prime Minister was standing in front of him, he would give him a piece of his mind. I am paraphrasing, because it would be unparliamentary to say the exact words.

● (1230)

It is disappointing that the voices of the Wet'suwet'en, who voted in favour of lifting their communities out of economic despair and who chose hope, are being silenced. They are not being heard; they are being discounted. We are here today because of that.

While Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, is important, we should be continuing to bring the voices of the Wet'suwet'en to this floor, ensuring they are heard. That is what is important.

Therefore, I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1310)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 15*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Arnold
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Bragdon
Carrie	Chiu
Cumming	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Deltell	d'Entremont
Doherty	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Fast	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Genuis	Godin
Gray	Hoback
Jansen	Kitchen
Kusie	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Liepert	Lloyd
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Morantz	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Poillievre
Rempel Garner	Ruff
Scheer	Shields
Shin	Soroka
Tochor	Uppal
Van Popta	Viersen
Waugh	Webber
Williamson	Yurdiga— 56

NAYS

Members

Alghabra	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Beech
Bennett	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chen
Desilets	Drouin
Duclos	Duguid
El-Khoury	Ellis
Fergus	Fisher
Fortier	Freeland
Garneau	Gill
Guilbeault	Hardie
Harris	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Johns
Kusmierczyk	Lametti
Lamoureux	Larouche
Lauzon	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lightbound
Long	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Manly
Martinez Ferrada	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)

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McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Miller
Murray	Ng
Normandin	Oliphant
Powlowski	Qaqqaq
Regan	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Samson	Scarpaleggia
Sheehan	Sorbara
Tabbara	Trudeau
van Koevenden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Yip
Zann	Zuberi— 76

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

[*English*]

We will now go to questions and comments with the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are here to work, unlike the official opposition. It is really important to recognize that.

We are debating Bill C-3, a bill the Conservatives previously supported. I am a bit surprised that when they debate, they talk about anything but Bill C-3 and at the first opportunity, they want to adjourn the House and take the afternoon off. My Conservative friends can feel free to take the afternoon off. There are other opposition members here who will ensure there is a presence in the opposition benches.

Given that the member opposite was addressing Bill C-3, would he agree with the government in recognizing the valuable contributions of our border control officers and how important it is for us to have the level of accountability that the legislation would provide?

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague across the way started with the statement that his party is here to work. Well, that is new. It did not work for him before. Honestly, that is the best he has?

We always stand with our front-line workers, those who are tasked with protecting our borders and our communities. They do whatever they can to uphold peace and the rule of law, so we will always stand with them.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want thank my hon. colleague for his message. He knows that the NDP is always here to work.

The member talked a bit about Bill C-3. He focused his speech primarily on what is happening in the north, and I felt it was one-sided.

I have a question for the member from Dr. Judith Sayers, the president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council. She asks, "Why is it you think that those that say yes to the project have the right to say yes, but those that say no have not the same respect?"

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This is really important because it reflects back to the member's speech and what he focused his discussion on.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, in my speech today, my speech yesterday and the comments I have made, I said the voices that matter are the voices of the Wet'suwet'en. That is really the crux of my motion. The only voice that matters is that of the Wet'suwet'en. This is a Wet'suwet'en issue.

I said it yesterday and I will say it again: The Wet'suwet'en need to have dialogue among themselves, whether among the hereditary chiefs or the elected band chiefs and councils. The communities elected the chiefs and council to represent them, and it is the communities and the chiefs, including hereditary chiefs, who voted in favour of prosperity.

I am not saying that the "no" side is not important, but there has to be dialogue with the Wet'suwet'en, not with the radical activists like Tides and Rockefeller, those influencing the protests.

• (1315)

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his efforts today in working on behalf of Canadians.

We want action taken. Like Canadians, we want to see a government that is going to address the matters of the day. We have heard that the Liberals are seized with the issues. There are a number of crises the government should be dealing with, but we think the government has in fact seized up.

Instead of dealing with Bill C-3, legislation that the Liberals let die last session when they controlled the agenda as the majority power, what does my colleague think the government should be seized with and doing today?

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, the government should be seized with our economy, which has been seized for the last 14 days. It is not going to take days and weeks; it is going to take months to recover.

We already are seeing job losses that impact Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Our producers are being impacted. Our economy is predicated not only on the ability to produce great food or products, but also on getting those products to market. Our economy has been seized because of the weak and zero leadership we have seen from the Prime Minister over the last 14 days.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting day to be discussing Bill C-3 when we see what is going on in Canada and what we could be talking about.

There are so many things that are happening that this House should be discussing and debating today other than Bill C-3. I have nothing against Bill C-3. However, if we look at what is going on in Canada and happening across our great country, we see our country being ripped apart and torn to shreds.

I will give members a couple of examples of some of the things we could be talking about that have a day-to-day impact on Canadians.

We could have spent some time this week talking about the coronavirus. We have Canadians who are still trying to get out of China.

We have situations around the world where passengers cannot leave cruise ships. We could have been debating that and what we should be doing about it. We could have been making sure that we have the proper safety protocols in place and that we are immensely prepared for this type of virus. However, we did not.

We have started NAFTA hearings at committee. This would have been a great week to show all the problems with NAFTA. This party is here to support and pass it, because we are being told to and we would never play silly buggers with it. We have expressed that right from day one, but there are things in NAFTA that need to be talked about.

This week at committee we heard from witnesses who will be negatively impacted by this agreement. They are not saying we should not sign it or that we should not move it forward. They understand how important it is to the Canadian economy and that it has to happen. However, they are asking the Liberal government for a plan to help them mitigate the downside of the agreement.

Aluminum producers in Chicoutimi are asking for some support in taking their product to the next level to add value to their aluminum products. That would be a plan, but there is no plan from the government. We could have had great debates on that and what we could do to help the different sectors.

The dairy sector is being kneecapped in this agreement. Not only is it facing importations of 3.5%, it is also facing restrictions. It is being told what it can sell, when it can sell it and who it can sell it to. That has never happened in a trade agreement. That would have been a good debate here to look at ways to mitigate that type of scenario.

We could have been talking about the China-Senegal situation, which is the PM's cost for a UN Security Council seat. He has his Mastercard out, paying \$50 million here and \$50 million there. We should have had a debate this week in the House on just how expensive this seat is going to be and if he will actually have success in getting it. However, we did not talk about it.

The Lima Group was here in Ottawa talking about Venezuela. I do not think anybody realized that. That is ironic, because that is where our country is heading to right now. If we do not have trains running, there will be no toilet paper in the stores in a couple of weeks. That is the reality.

The Liberals can deny it all they want, but their inaction on this file has been so terrible it is unreal. Canadians are going to pay.

The other thing we should have been talking about in light of all these things is the impact it is having on the economy, jobs and growth. There is going to be a huge cost. Nobody is even talking about that cost.

Hon. Ed Fast: It's billions.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Billions is right.

The Liberals can say they are doing what they can and are seized with it at the moment, but the reality is they have done nothing. They have let it go on and now we have the result. Somebody is probably going to get hurt. It is really disappointing.

Canadians can expect more than a debate on a piece of administrative legislation when thousands are facing job losses because of radical activists who are exploiting divisions within the Wet'suwet'en community and holding the Canadian economy hostage.

Therefore, I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

• (1320)

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1355)

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

(Division No. 16)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Arnold	Barlow
Barrett	Benzen
Bergen	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Bragdon	Carrie
Chiu	Cumming
Dancho	d'Entremont
Doherty	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Fast	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Genius	Gray
Hoback	Jansen
Kitchen	Kram
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Morantz	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Poillievre
Rempel Garner	Ruff
Scheer	Shields
Soroka	Tochor

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Yurdiga— 45	

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Members

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Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Beech
Bennett	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chen
Desilets	Drouin
Duclos	Duguid
El-Khoury	Ellis
Fergus	Fisher
Fortier	Freeland
Garneau	Gill
Guilbeault	Hardie
Harris	Holland
Hussen	Hutchings
Johns	Kusmierczyk
Lametti	Lamoureux
Larouche	Lauzon
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lightbound	Long
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Manly	Martinez Ferrada
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Miller	Murray
Ng	Normandin
Oliphant	O'Regan
Powlowski	Qaqqaq
Regan	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Samson	Scarpaleggia
Sheehan	Sorbara
Tabbara	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Yip	Zuberi— 74

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

We will now go back to questions and comments.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today because I am confused and dismayed at the earlier comments made by the member for Prince Albert. I am confused because the member spoke for five minutes on the value of debate, discourse and dialogue, and then subsequently moved to adjourn all discussions for the day.

I am dismayed because prior to that he advocated for force, for action and for a lack of discourse. He is contradicting himself and I would like him to elaborate on whether he does indeed value debate and discourse, or would like us all to go home without talking any more or what action he submits.

Government Orders

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised the Liberal member is confused. That is quite common in this House.

The point I was trying to make is there are so many good things we could have been debating this week and the Liberals chose not to because they are so weak in dealing with an issue that is facing the country with the blockades. That is the point I was making.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to bring it back to Bill C-3 for a moment.

Bill C-3 is a new approach that would combine a current panel that gives oversight to the RCMP and extend that to the CBSA. I am not convinced that this will be a successful effort, but does the member believe it is worthy of being given a shot?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I always look forward to members on this side providing advice and suggestions. Those are things that should be considered. I think we should consider what the member is proposing.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party is sending a confusing message. On the one hand, it does not really want to work on Fridays, and we know that. On the other hand, the Conservatives moved another motion saying that we should adjourn the debate on a piece of legislation that everyone inside this chamber appears to be supporting.

We have had days of debate thus far and the Conservatives have chosen, for whatever reason, to continue to filibuster. The members talk about having different types of debate. If we are all in agreement on this issue, why would the Conservatives at the very least not allow the debate to continue or allow it to come to a vote? Why play games on important pieces of legislation?

• (1400)

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I can hear the frustration in the member's voice and see it on his face. Maybe the member has an idea of how Canadians feel today. Maybe he has a sense of how the farmers are feeling today, when they are looking at their bins that are full of grain, and they look at their bills and are asking what they are to do. They know that a month from now they will not be able to haul their grain because of road bans. They know it would take at least two and a half to three weeks for the grain to actually get moving again, if we were to stop blockades today.

If the member feels frustration, it is one-tenth of what those farmers are feeling right now.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate the importance of the farmers and the plight they face right now and the frustrations they have trying to get their products to market.

There are many different small businesses other than farmers that are suffering. I wonder if the member could also include some other groups that he also is aware of. I know in my great province of British Columbia right now outside the different ports, whether it be the Vancouver port or other important ports like Ridley Terminals, there are vessels waiting right now that literally cannot move on and bring Canadian goods to market.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, there are so many examples.

There are examples of forestry workers who are going to be laid off because the sawmills have no more room to store that lumber.

Last week I was at Rio Tinto in Chicoutimi with the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. They were talking about how they are trying to bring in trucks to keep that mill going. An aluminum mill does not just get turned on and off. It is not just a switch in the wall. It is a big deal.

The Liberals do not understand how big of a deal this is to Canadians. By doing what we are doing today, if that makes Liberals frustrated, maybe they will get a sense of how big of a deal it is. Do Liberals not understand that we are fighting for Canadians here this afternoon? That is what we are doing. If they do not understand that, then they really do not understand what their constituents' needs and wants are.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this important legislation. It is also important that we highlight some of the issues that go along with this piece of legislation.

It is about empowering the RCMP and empowering the CBSA, which has been kind of an interesting topic over the last several weeks as we talk about empowering the RCMP.

I am glad to see that the Liberals are becoming frustrated with what is going on in the House today. It is very difficult when people are trying to do their business and just a couple of people can throw up blockades to prevent people from trying to be successful and getting work done. Whether it is the farmers, people in the lumber business, mill operators, manufacturers, business owners and the entire economy, that is what Canadian industry has been trying to navigate over the last two weeks.

Fortunately, in this House we will eventually get that work done. However, what is going on in the Canadian economy right now that the Liberals need to understand is these blockades have brought Canada's economy to its knees. There are close to 100 ships off the port of Vancouver and the port of Prince Rupert, and a backlog of 20,000 railcars. That is what is at stake. We cannot allow this to go on one more week.

These are the issues that should be discussed in this House, legislation that would actually make a difference to the Canadian economy. Therefore, in saying that, I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Government Orders

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

And the bells having rung:

● (1425)

The Deputy Speaker: At this time, and in accordance with past precedents as stated at page 579 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, I must interrupt the clock, and the motion that the House do now adjourn has now expired.

It being 2:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

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