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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 5, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage entitled “Tech giants' intimidation and subversion tactics to evade regulation in Canada and globally”.

[*English*]

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

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand in the House today on behalf of the Conservative members on the Standing Committee of Canadian Heritage. We submit this dissenting report on the tech giants' use of intimidation tactics to evade regulation in Canada and across the world. The main report failed to adequately explore the state of censorship in Canada, as well as the roles played by tech giants and the current federal government. This dissenting report is required.

I should say that the committee got to hear from 18 witnesses over the course of the study. Many of those testimonies expressed the censorship of Canadians by the government and tech giants in terms of what they can see, hear and say online, with specific nods to the hindrances being caused by both Bill C-11 and Bill C-18.

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, entitled “Rebuilding Trust: Transparency and Accountability in the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces”.

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

### ASSISTANCE ANIMALS FRAMEWORK FOR VETERANS ACT

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-417, An Act to establish a framework on animal-assisted services for veterans.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Elmwood—Transcona for seconding this important piece of legislation, called the assistance animals framework for veterans act.

For over 15 years, veterans groups and experts have wanted to see service animals, especially dogs, as part of VAC's mental health rehabilitation program. I have met with many veterans who have bought dogs that were not properly trained. I have met veterans who have become unhoused because tenancy laws do not have rules around making sure that service dogs can live in the home. It is a terrible thing when a veteran chooses to live on the streets to be with their service animal.

The bill would create a framework to provide certainty to the amazing animal training organizations, with clear guidelines to meet so they have a standard they can proudly showcase. It would also protect veterans, who are often taken advantage of; they pay enormous amounts of money for a service dog, but neither the dog nor the group is legitimate. It would also harmonize standards across the country, allowing veterans to have service dogs in rental homes, on trains and on planes. Finally, it would open the door to more Veterans Affairs funding to support those veterans with the service animals they desperately need. Dogs and equine therapy are perfect examples.

Canada asks so much of the people who serve our country. This is an important bill that would help many veterans and would make sure the standards of service and training of the dogs and other animals are on a level playing field for all.

I want to thank all the veterans, service providers and members of organizations who have talked to me about this issue. I also want to thank Christine Ackermann, from my office, who works so hard on this.

I look forward to seeing this come into practice in law.

*Routine Proceedings*

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT**

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-418, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (accessibility and other measures).

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is with the support of my very dear colleague, the member for Manicouagan, that I am immensely proud to introduce a bill that proposes robust measures to strengthen the Employment Insurance Act. It would reform eligibility criteria, the duration of benefits and the amounts provided. I am the Bloc Québécois employment and labour critic and I have been championing and supporting this cause to reform the EI system since my first day in 2019, along with workers and the unemployed.

The Bloc Québécois is taking action where the Liberal government has failed. Its failure is appalling, because it chose to do nothing despite its 2015 commitment to reform the system and its many promises since then. In the wake of the pandemic, the government itself recognized that it had taken too long to act. This policy choice has left thousands of unemployed workers out in the cold, victims of an outdated law that protects them poorly or not at all. The system has failed to adapt to the realities of today's workplace and the resulting injustices and inequities continue, yet the problems and solutions were identified long ago.

Today we are introducing a Bloc Québécois bill, a solid bill that is aligned to current realities and would better protect a greater number of workers. I am thinking of the workers in the seasonal industry. I am thinking of young people and women who have non-standard jobs and do not have access to employment insurance. I am thinking of pregnant women who lose their job and do not benefit from the protections of employment insurance. I am thinking of the people who are left out in the cold by the system. Thousands of workers who contribute to employment insurance are not protected by the legislation. Employment insurance coverage needs to be expanded to more people. It is about fairness.

Our bill corrects several major flaws with employment insurance and we invite the Liberal government and its Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages to also side with the workers, keep their promises and implement the proposals we are making today.

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

\* \* \*

● (1010)

[*English*]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I move that the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, presented on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, be concurred in.

It is my absolute joy to rise in the House today and speak to this important report. I will say at the outset that I am splitting my time with the amazingly talented member for Bay of Quinte, who is single-handedly going to bring trade back to Canada. I am excited to split my time with him.

The order of business today is to talk about the report entitled “Lessons Learned from Canada's Record on Climate Change”, delivered by the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development.

The report was delivered pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g) with respect to the public accounts committee. I was pleased to be on the committee when we studied this important report. I will just read a couple of highlights into the record before we get going in earnest with my speech here. It states, “The report further clarifies that although ‘Canada’s population and economy have grown faster than emissions have,’ its GHG emissions ‘have increased since the Paris Agreement was signed, making it the worst performing of all G7 nations since the 2015 Conference.’”

An update to the report sees that the trajectory has not changed in recent months or years. In 2023, the commissioner wrote in a new report, “While some progress has been made, we are still extremely concerned about the federal government’s ability to achieve meaningful progress”.

What we could really entitle both the committee report and the environment commissioner's report is “all pain and no gain”. We have experienced tremendous economic challenges because of the current government's environmental policies, without any real achievements on the environment side. In fact, I had the privilege of asking the environment commissioner some questions, and I will read from the testimony.

This was a couple of years ago, and the question was, “In the last seven years, has this government achieved any of the international carbon reduction targets?” Mr. DeMarco responded, “Not that I'm aware of”. The pain this has caused without any gain is incredible. We are sitting here among the lowest ranking when it comes to achieving reductions in GHGs, yet we are dealing with the economic pain. A large portion of that can be explained by the government's ideological, reckless, dangerous obsession with the carbon tax.

We recently received a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, which once again amplifies that it is all pain and no gain when it comes to the government's environment policy. Among other things, the report states that the carbon tax has actually had very little, if any, material impact on our total GHG emissions. This means that the carbon tax's impact on climate change is negligible. In reality, then, one side of the equation is that, clearly, we are not achieving anything.

*Routine Proceedings*

However, let us look at the financial impact of the carbon tax. We hear over and over again about its fiscal impact. I will just start off by saying that there is an artificial division between fiscal impact, which is the direct impact, and economic impact, which is indirect. The reality is that a Canadian does not get up in the morning and decide that they are going to go with fiscal impact today and economic impact tomorrow. We are all dealt it, so the artificial division between fiscal and economic impact should not even exist, in my opinion. When we look at just the fiscal impact, depending on where we are in the economic spectrum, there are situations where we could be ahead by getting the rebate. That is absolutely true, and I like to be an advocate for the truth. However, the reality is that we cannot live in Canada without the Canadian economy affecting us. When we look at the economic impact, which is the total impact of the carbon tax, nearly all Canadians will be behind.

● (1015)

I just want to read this into the record because there has been a great deal of discussion and debate about the impact of the carbon tax. Let us pick Newfoundland and Labrador. What is the net negative impact in, let us say, 2026? It is \$876, so once again people in Newfoundland are behind because of the carbon tax, even including the Liberals' phony rebate. Let us flip over and pick another province: Saskatchewan. Let us go to 2028-29. The average Saskatchewanian household is out \$434. Let us flip over to Alberta. The average Albertan in 2027-28 will be out \$436.

It is beyond frustrating to sit here day after day, hour after hour and month after month and hear the government not telling the full story, if I am being kind. "Willfully changing the information" would be perhaps another way of casting it. The fact is that when we look at the global economic impact, which is really the only sensible way of looking at the carbon tax, we see that Canadians are behind when it comes to the per household figure. We see the impact.

Actually, that does not even fully capture the challenge of the carbon tax, because of course we live in a dynamic economy. The more money we give to the private sector, the more money grows in the private sector in the economy. It is perhaps not surprising that in 2015, when the current government was elected, there was immediately a diminution in our productivity, which has then led to a lower GDP per capita.

GDP per capita is a stat we are probably going to hear about a fair bit, because in Canada it has not risen a bit since 2015. We are facing one of the worst economies in the OECD. GDP per capita really just means per individual. Our economy has not grown, which means that while Canada, because of the growth in its population, may have technically avoided a recession, the reality is that Canadians, individuals, have been in a recession for a very long time, as per capita growth has not risen since 2015.

The challenge is that, while the Governor of the Bank of Canada is saying that we are in a break-glass emergency, the government just wants to put more and more barriers in front of our economy.

One of the bright lights in the Canadian economy is actually the energy sector, which, despite all of the impediments and all of the barriers the government has put in place, continues to work and to thrive. For example, petroleum and petroleum-related products ac-

count for 40% of our total exports. What do we do with the golden goose? We tax it and tax it some more, and we try to regulate it.

There are many members who, if they could press the switch tomorrow, would cut off Canadian energy. They are radicals and extremists. The reality is that we need clean Canadian energy to power our economy, because right now, as I said, Canadians are in an extended recession that has gone on for years. It has decreased our standard of living and made it tougher for all Canadians to do the things that they want to do, including feeding themselves. That is why two million Canadians are going to the food bank.

That does not even tell the whole story, because there are students living in cars. There are tent encampments across our country that are the direct responsibility of the government's irresponsible and radical plans for our economy. Its economic malfeasance has led to the lowering of Canadians' standard of living, making every Canadian poorer.

In addition to that, the government has not achieved any of its goals with respect to climate change. It has not lowered GHG emissions. Canada continues to be an outlier and a poor performer when it comes to reducing carbon and other emissions. The government is a failure on every account.

● (1020)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely all over the map on the issue. I am trying to understand what the report itself is actually about; I am listening very closely.

Let me pick up on one of the biggest flip-flops in Ottawa, probably in the last generation or so, which has to do with what the member is talking about: the price on pollution, the carbon tax, versus the carbon rebate. The reality is that every member of the Conservative caucus who participated in the last federal election said, "Yes, we support a price on pollution." Then they got a new, shiny, far-right leader with MAGA principles, and he came out and said that they were going to do a flip-flop on the issue. As a result, the Conservatives are now all opposed to the price on pollution.

My question to the member opposite is this: Does he not believe that the MAGA far right has been a bad influence on the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Madam Speaker, in first-year psychology, one learns about something called "shadow projection", which is projecting onto other people one's own insecurities and failings. When I hear about confusion and radical policies, it is no surprising that it is coming from the member who just spoke.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this is an important topic, and I listened intently to my friend's speech. I am wondering whether he has heard of other flip-flops on the carbon tax. One that comes to mind is the NDP in B.C. Its members were against it before they were for it. Another one that comes to mind is the flip-flop of the current Liberals when it came to being an open and transparent government. I remember that in 2015 the Liberal government said it would be the most open and transparent government in the history of Canada. Could we maybe walk through a few of the missteps?

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Madam Speaker, the member is experiencing something that we see with all progressive candidates, whether from the Liberal Party, the NDP or otherwise. Right after an election, they become strong, progressive legislators. Right before an election, they suddenly start understanding the importance of things like fiscal responsibility and the economy, but that will quickly fade away after the next election and they will become the radicals they are.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are talking about the lessons to be learned from climate change. I think the main lesson is that oil is very cost-effective and profitable for oil companies. At some point, should the government stop subsidizing these oil companies and giving them tax credits? Tens of billions of dollars are being pumped into this industry.

I think that is the most important lesson to learn. I would be curious to hear what my colleague has to say on the matter.

[English]

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Madam Speaker, the reality is that Canadian energy accounts for half, if not more, of Canadian exports. Without Canadian energy we would be insolvent as a country.

• (1025)

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the report that the member brings to the attention of the House is so important.

The member talks about how the Liberal Party has been all pain and no gain. The member for Whitby actually is on the record saying that the Liberals know that their net zero policies are going to cause pain intentionally. What kind of government intentionally causes pain for its population?

We do know that the Liberal leader admires the basic dictatorship of China. The Liberals talk about radicalism, but it seems to be moving further and further towards wokeness. I am wondering whether the member could talk about Canada's competitiveness, because right now we know that we have to compete with the world. What difference are carbon taxes and crazy radical policies going to make for Canadian manufacturers?

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Madam Speaker, I actually appreciated the comments from the member for Whitby because at least he was being honest about the debate.

The reality is that there are no Pollyanna solutions; there are only trade-offs when it comes to politics, so we need to have smart policies that enable us to fight climate change while growing our econ-

omy. Clearly what has happened over the last nine years is that we have not reduced carbon emissions. At the same time, we have put Canada into an absolute economic malaise. Our economy has not grown, for the average Canadian, in the last 10 years, which is making it harder for Canadians to eat. It is making it harder for Canadians to get by every month.

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to serve in this place with the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

A Liberal walks into a bar and says, "Drinks are on me. Who's paying?" Who is paying are the Canadian people right now with higher taxes, fewer jobs and a struggling economy.

We just have to look at the facts to see what has happened over the last nine years. With respect to the Canadian per person GDP, the average U.S. worker is now making \$22,000 more than the average Canadian worker. We have a struggling economy with high unemployment; the unemployment rate for the U.S. is almost 1.5% lower than it is for Canada. The U.S. has an actual problem as it has seven million jobs it cannot fill. In Canada two years ago, there were a million high-skill jobs we could not fill. That number is now plummeting; there are fewer than 400,000 right now.

The average personal household debt per person in Canada is at 180%, whereas in the U.S. it is just under 100%. There are Canadians who nine years ago felt that they could pay their mortgage, pay their rent and afford groceries.

Of course, Canada and Canadians have been really focused on the environment. When the government came in nine years ago, it promised that it would be able to better the middle class and better the environment for Canadians. After nine years of the government's mismanagement of the climate and the environment, as well as a bad environmental plan, Canadians have found out now that it has cost them. That is the thing we hear when we hear talk about an environmental plan.

The Prime Minister said that the government will reward those who do the right thing and will punish those who do not do the right thing. However, all Canadians want to do the right thing for their family. They want to be able to get a job. They want to be able to get to work. They want to be able to ensure that their family can go to school and get a good education. They want to ensure that they grow up and are able to afford a home in a safe neighbourhood free from crime and free from corruption.

What Canadians are finding now is that all those things have disappeared, and the government still cries climate and environment over everything else. What that means is that we have only a carbon tax that punishes its citizens and punishes its workforce.

*Routine Proceedings*

Yesterday there was an announcement to reduce emissions by 30% in the oil and gas sector, a sector which is already seeing disparity at a time when Canada is going the wrong way. If we want things to go the right way, we should not take out the environmental question but change the way we deal with it. There are good companies in Canada doing great things, but they are growing. The government's environmental policies are like saying they are going into a hot tub and will not pee in the hot tub, but everyone else is. We might think that we are doing a great thing, but we do not exactly have crystal clear water. This is what is happening across the world.

We have implemented punishing regulations for all of our sectors across Canada. We have a carbon tax that is punishing our citizens, but if we look to the south of us, the Americans are not doing that to their citizens. They are not punishing their workforce. The Americans have an economy that is performing five times as well as Canada's is.

When the U.S. implemented the IRA, the Inflation Reduction Act, it was supposed to entice clean competition and investment into America. We have seen what has happened: The U.S. gets the supply chains and is getting the results from that. It has clean companies that have decided to put their production in Canada.

We were doing a smidgen of that from electric car battery manufacturing or assembly stations in Canada. We were not including our supply chains and we were not including vehicle production. Even when we thought that the only thing we were getting out of it was workers, what ended up happening was that the workers were not even Canadian. For 2,500 jobs at Stellantis in Windsor, 1,600 workers came from South Korea.

We have not been doing the right thing to help Canada and to ensure that we are working within a worldwide phenomenon to help the world when it comes to the climate and environmental policies. That is exactly what we are seeing. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, a favourite book of the finance minister, talks about how some countries prosper and others fail.

● (1030)

Countries that focused on ensuring that their citizens have savings and can innovate and invest, while at the same time ensuring that they are free, in a capitalist society, to develop their businesses, innovate, invest their IP and find ways to expand their businesses to provide good-paying jobs are the nations that were wealthy and well off, with good democratic systems. Nations that restricted and coerced their industries, and set targets or decided what industries those nations should be in, and I am thinking of the old Soviet empire, failed miserably, with their citizens finding it hard to pay for rent, have good-paying jobs and ensure they had good wealth that they were able to transfer not only to their own generation but also to the next generation. That is exactly what we are seeing now.

The finance minister says that she admired this book, but I think she forgot to read it or needs to read it again. The carbon tax punishes our citizens and, more importantly, our workforce. Emissions targets and reductions are being placed on what Conservatives already consider the cleanest energy in the world. People are going to move away from that energy and go to the dirty energy that is not

only from dictators but also from nations that do not have any environmental standards.

We take 15 years to develop mines in Canada for the critical minerals we need for the future of batteries, no matter where they are, yet other nations are doing it in less time. China has 86% of all the mined material needed for batteries across the world. Let us not even talk about the failed trade policies.

There is an important election today, and the news is going to be dominated by the election down south. Politico said this is the day for the government to release all the bad news because there is going to be no more room for other bad news. There is so much bad news when we look at what is happening across the world and what Canada's workers and citizens could benefit from.

We are at third base, and we act like we hit a triple. We have the oil and gas that the world needs. We have critical minerals that the world needs. We have great farms and food production, yet we punish our farmers. We have great IP institutions and universities that create great ideas, and if we just learned how to commercialize those ideas, we could get those ideas out and become a leader in the world in technology.

We have some of the greatest people in the world who come up with the greatest ideas, so entrepreneurs and small businesses that need a leg up can grow and create jobs. Small businesses make up 98% of businesses in Canada, and they are creating jobs in this country. We need to do more for them. Nations fail because they do not invest in their citizens and they punish them for decisions they are unable to provide alternatives for.

If Canadians had the ability to create a different fuel source for their car, they would. If Canadians had the ability to go to a different place of work and get paid a higher wage, they would, but right now they are struggling to keep the jobs they have. If Canadians could figure out a way to afford their mortgages or their rents and make sure they were cheaper, they would want to do that, but because of the housing crisis in Canada, they cannot.

This is all because of the government and its government-knows-best approach, which says that it knows better than the Canadian people and that it can control the environment and the economy. The result, we know, is an economy that is running away much faster from the Americans and other countries than any other nation on earth. We have trade deals that are not helping Canadians or putting Canadians first. We have workers who are struggling to find a decent wage and keep that decent wage.

*Routine Proceedings*

The Liberals may be saying that the drinks are on them, but the reality is that Canadians are being left to foot the bill. It is time for a real plan, one that empowers Canadians, bring jobs home and positions Canada as a leader in both economic prosperity and environmental stewardship. We need a government that would axe the tax, fix the budget, build the homes and stop the crime.

• (1035)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the degree to which Conservative members will mislead is truly amazing. The member said that we have a failed trade policy. We should reflect on that statement. That is what he tells his constituents.

No government in the history of our Confederation has signed off on more trade agreements than this government. In the first three-quarters of 2023, we had the highest foreign investment in the world. In real dollars, it is the third best—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan that, if he wishes to participate in the debate, he wait for the appropriate time to do so, as opposed to heckling.

I would also remind members that, if they continue to heckle after I have told them to not do so, they will not be recognized should they rise for questions and comments.

I will ask the hon. parliamentary secretary to wrap it up, please.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the GDP for Canada is absolutely incredible. It is third in the world and first in the G7, and the Conservatives have no problem spreading misinformation. That is something that comes out of the leader of the Conservative Party's office.

Why do you want to consistently mislead Canadians?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. parliamentary secretary knows he is to address questions and comments through the Chair and not directly to members.

The hon. member for Bay of Quinte has the floor.

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, the member did not mention Stephen Harper, so I will do it for him. Stephen Harper signed the CETA agreement. Stephen Harper was the main one who signed TPP and set that up for the Liberals to tee off of. We can talk about who led trade development and what industries led it, and it was oil and gas. Oil and gas, which the government has declared war on, led trade export growth for Canada.

We can look at what happened for CUSMA in the last round. The member talks about their success, but it was complete incompetence. Three months before CUSMA was signed, Canada was kicked out of those agreements. Mexico went back into the negotiations, and I will ask members to guess which country is now the U.S.A.'s number one trading partner. It is Mexico. China is number two and Canada is number three. That is the record of the Liberal government: failed trade policies. We would fix that.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Before I begin, I want to recognize the career of retired MLA Todd Stone. He served the Kamloops area diligently for 12 years, and I thank him for his service as a former minister. He is somebody who gave a lot to the area.

With that being said, my colleague from Winnipeg is talking about hypocrisy. Let us talk about Liberal hypocrisy. Let us talk about a Prime Minister who has been found guilty of two ethics violations, who promised a government that would be open by default and who fired the first indigenous attorney general. He tried to get her to break the law. I think we should be taking no lessons from the Liberals when it comes to this sanctimony. What does the member think about that hypocrisy?

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, we are doing a concurrence debate in reports, but the House is actually paralyzed because of the Liberal government. The government's refusal to hand over unredacted documents to the police despite Parliament telling it to do so is the whole essence of what the government stands for. It does not stand for the people. We are put here by and elected for the people, and this place has the power of the people. If the government refuses to hand these documents over, the precedent that will be set is that the people of Canada will have no more power. The government would love to have that.

• (1040)

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for bringing forward this important debate. This is my first time having a chance to review this important document, and we can see there is a list of lessons. Lesson 2 states, "Canada's economy is still dependent on emission-intensive sectors", which is something that the member is talking about. In consideration for parliamentarians, it goes on, "How much financial support does Canada provide to the oil and gas industry? Could this support be reallocated to workers?" This is an important consideration for us because we have seen the Conservatives continuing to prop up oil and gas CEOs instead of looking at a true transition for workers to a clean economy and for those jobs.

Can the member share why the Conservatives are doing all they can to ensure workers are disadvantaged as we move forward with a clean economy?



*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, we are doing the opposite. Oil and gas in Canada employs 500,000 people with good wages and good jobs. We want to see a diversified economy, which means that we would have IP commercialization and a tangible economy, and that we would ensure we are growing good small businesses, such as farming. Until we do that, we have to make sure the businesses and industries here in Canada are getting the support they need to keep bringing in the revenue that the government wants us to pay for, all the other programs. We are going to continue to support workers.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I get into my real speech, I want to make reference to what we just witnessed on the floor. When I posed a question about misleading Canadians, what did the member do? He doubled down. He said that it was Stephen Harper who signed the trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, which is made up of a number of countries.

That is just not true. I do not know how much clearer I can be. It is history. Members can take a look at the documents and when the trade agreement was signed. It is just not true. Still, his Conservative colleagues gave him a virtual ovation because, once again, he was spreading misinformation with his comments.

This is the issue we see with the Conservative Party of Canada today. They will go outside the chamber and say all sorts of bizarre things, whether it is about what members have said in the House or the leader of the Conservative Party going around Canada saying how Canada is broken, when, in fact, it is not broken. Canada is the best country in the world to call home.

Only a Conservative, only a MAGA right Conservative—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There are members who continue to heckle. I addressed this not too long ago. I would ask members to please wait. They will have 10 minutes of questions and comments after the hon. parliamentary secretary's speech, so there is lots of time to put their thoughts down and wait for the appropriate time.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, only a MAGA right Conservative, a far-right person like the current leader of the Conservative Party, would take that sort of tactic. It is a tactic coming up from the United States and being funnelled through the leader of the opposition's office, quite frankly, or at least greatly encouraged. That is why I was very serious when I posed the question to the member opposite about the degree in which that far-right element was infiltrating and playing such a strong role in policy development in the Conservative Party today.

I do not say that lightly, because all we need to do is look at what will be a very important issue in the next election, the price on pollution; the carbon rebate versus the carbon tax. I would like to highlight a couple of points on that. First is the fact that Erin O'Toole, former leader of the Conservative Party, had 337 candidates and an election platform, which indicated that they were campaigning on a

price on pollution, a carbon tax. It is nothing new. In fact, I believe 17 to 19 Conservatives campaigned on it a second time.

A good number of them, including their former leader, the current House leader, campaigned on it not once, but twice. The new shiny leader comes in, that far-right MAGA guy, and what does he do? He takes this huge flip-flop on this, like a fish on a dry dock. He changed the direction and said that they would cut the tax, or axe the tax. I do not want to misquote the Conservative slogan on this issue.

Behind that slogan is a pile of misinformation. The Conservatives are spending millions of dollars promoting misinformation. They try to give people, like the residents of Winnipeg North, the impression that they have a net loss of disposable income as a direct result of the carbon rebate versus carbon tax. That is just not true, and they know that. We would think that would stop them from saying it, but absolutely not. They continue to spread misinformation. Literally dozens of economic and university professors have said that what we have said is true, and the Parliamentary Budget Officer has reinforced that. However, the Conservatives have no qualms in spreading that misinformation.

That is not what I want to share today. I want to address many of the issues brought up by members opposite. Some of this stuff may be completely irrelevant when they start with the character assassination of the Prime Minister. When they talk about the Prime Minister, they do not tell us about Stephen Harper, the person they glorify, and I can understand why. Their current leader is tied so closely to him. Not only was he in his cabinet, but before being in his cabinet, he was his parliamentary secretary.

I have this booklet and it is entitled "Stephen Harper, Serial Abuser of Power." People would not believe the number of scandals. The leader of the Conservative Party today is even referenced on a couple of occasions. They are talking about the filibuster in their comments. Stephen Harper and the current leader were found in contempt of Parliament. They are the only prime minister and parliamentary secretary who have been found in contempt of Parliament.

● (1045)

Let us fast-forward to the comments we hear from the Conservatives today. They are talking about how we have this privilege issue, and they are right. There is a privilege issue before us today. The reason it is still with us today is because the current leader of the Conservative Party has learned nothing from the past.

He is engaged in a multi-million dollar political game on the floor of the House of Commons that is in his personal best interest and in the interest of the Conservative Party. That is what we are witnessing. The leader of the Conservative Party is not putting Canadian interests ahead of his party's political interests, and that is unfortunate. This is why I call it a multi-million dollar game.

They make reference to the Prime Minister and a few of the issues to try to generate public interest. I can talk about public interest on a number of issues, in particular, with respect to the leader of the Conservative Party, who continues to refuse to get a security clearance.

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One of my colleagues has suggested that the rumours are true. The rumours are that the leader of the Conservative Party is hiding something from Canadians. Something is going to prevent him from getting the security clearance and that is the real reason why he refuses to get it. After all, every other leader in the House of Commons has that security clearance. Every other leader is taking the issue of foreign interference seriously and getting that clearance.

Only the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada has chosen not to get security clearance. Why? When the Conservatives start focusing on the Prime Minister, as they have already done this morning, I suggest that they need to start focusing on their leader, because when he is too scared to get a security clearance, something in his past is going to come back and possibly haunt them. That is the real reason.

Then we had the Conservatives talk about the economy. They talk about ideas and how they want to contribute to the economy. Our inflation rate is below 2% today, which is good news. Interest rates are on a downward trajectory. I think they have gone down now maybe three or even four times. We are leading the G7 on the issue. Canada's economy is getting healthier and stronger, yet the Conservatives continue to downplay Canada's economy. It is unfortunate.

The other day the Conservatives, who have been very critical of the government's approach in regard to housing, had this big rollout of the shiny, brand-new housing policy of the Conservative Party of Canada, going into the next election. Earlier in my comments, I talked about a flip-flop. The Conservatives seriously need to do another flip-flop on this issue. Their housing announcement is a dud. It is a laughable policy. When we have affordable housing being a serious issue, the Conservative Party of Canada says that it will get rid of the programs that will address the issue. It makes no sense at all. Even within the Conservative Party members are already sending mixed messages.

• (1050)

Conservative members have actually written the Minister of Housing asking for more support from the housing accelerator fund. They are encouraging local governments—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I know the hon. member's speech is very engaging, but I would ask members to please wait until the appropriate time and to not try to engage other members back and forth. I do not think it is one side more than the other; it is both sides. I want to remind members to please wait and be respectful to the individual who happens to have the floor.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting because one of the hecklers is the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. He is one of the many members who has appealed to the Minister of Housing and he wants to ultimately get support from the—

• (1055)

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member has an obligation to speak accurately. If he reads my letter, I lambasted the minister for this.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member is rising on a point of debate and not a point of order.

The hon. government deputy House leader is also rising on a point of order, I hope.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to table the letter from the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Do we have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Back to the engaging speech of the hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo is saved by the Conservative member who yelled “No” to having that impressive letter released.

I was talking about how the Conservative policy they just announced would actually be to the detriment of Canadians. It is a dud of a policy. The Conservatives would cancel the accelerator fund, among many other things. That is true. It is just one program they would cancel.

In doing that, the Conservatives would make it more difficult for Canadians to find an affordable home. They would make it more difficult for municipalities and many other stakeholders to increase the housing stock. How many people who are living in homeless shelters, are homeless or are making \$30,000 or \$40,000 a year would be helped by the policy the Conservatives just announced?

At the end of the day, we have mayors, other local officials and Conservative members of Parliament who all recognize the true value of the accelerator fund. Earlier this year, we had the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Manitoba, the mayor of Winnipeg and, I believe, David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation, talking about how working together, through programs like the accelerator fund, would improve the housing situation for Canadians.

The Conservatives' idea is to get rid of it. I have a sense of who is generating their ideas. We see it in the flip-flop on the price on pollution. It goes back to that far-right element within the Conservative Party today. It is that same grouping, that MAGA right, who is ultimately saying, “We want to cut.” It does not matter which program. We can articulate the true value of the housing accelerator program, but the Conservatives do not care. They would just cut it.

We can think about the dental program. One million-plus Canadians have now benefited from the first-ever nationwide Canadian dental program. The Conservative Party says, “Who cares? We are going to cut that program too.”

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The Conservatives talk a great deal about the economy. As a government, we are focused on Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it. We want an economy that works for all Canadians. Nothing has changed on that since 2015, when we brought in tax breaks for the middle class, brought in dramatic increases for individuals receiving the guaranteed income supplement and reformed the Canada child benefit program so millionaires would not be receiving the benefits; we enhanced the overall benefit for the average Canadian.

The Liberal government has created over two million jobs, which is double the number Stephen Harper did in the same amount of time. No government in the last 50 years has invested more real dollars in infrastructure than the Liberal government. The Conservative Party has made it very clear it would cut the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Members can take a look, do a Google search, and see the billions of dollars of additional funding that has complemented the millions that the Government of Canada has invested.

● (1100)

We are building a stronger, healthier infrastructure, something we never saw under Stephen Harper. This is a government that understands the importance of infrastructure, whether it is coming up with supportive programs for housing or building the streets and communities where we live. All of that is being supported by the type of question I posed earlier today on the issue of international trade. Contrary to the misleading information the Conservatives talk about, no government has signed off on more trade agreements than the current government in the history of Canada. Canada is a trading nation, which is something that elevates all of us and something the government continues to invest in. We see the true value in reaching out, working with Canadians and dealing with the provinces in the best way we can on how to build a healthier economy and support Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Those are the types of policy decisions, whether on budgetary or legislative measures, that the government has been taking since day one.

I talk about this silly multi-million dollar game the Conservative leader is playing because we could still be doing a lot more if the Conservatives would stop thinking about their personal interests and the interests of their party and refocusing on what is right for Canadians. There is substantial legislation not being debated because of the multi-million dollar filibuster game they are playing. The sooner they get over it, the sooner we will be able to get down to business here in the House and do a whole lot more for Canadians.

I appeal to my Conservative friends on the other side of the aisle to start looking and behaving in that way. A good starting point would be the leader of the Conservative Party getting the security clearance and stopping the filibuster.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Where should I start? My colleague spoke about one of the Conservative members in a speech that was all over the place. It is almost as though the Liberals have become that which they state they abhor, the people who appeal to conspiracy theorists. What could possibly be there, wink, wink?

There was a story about this in the national newspaper. The moment anybody brings up anything about the Prime Minister's past the Liberals do not want to talk about it. They do not want to talk about the reporter in the Kootenays or how people experienced it differently. It is complete and utter hypocrisy.

The member said we should get over this filibuster. What will get us over the filibuster is the Liberals handing over the documents. Why will they not do it?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member is a lawyer. Surely to goodness he can appreciate why, as a government, we are going to listen to the RCMP. We are going to listen—

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

● (1105)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There are discussions being had on both sides of the House. I would ask individuals to please wait until the appropriate time so I can actually hear what the parliamentary secretary's answer is.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada has chosen to listen to the RCMP, the Auditor General, the former deputy law clerk and many other stakeholders. In the Hill Times story on this silly game the Conservatives are playing, the conclusion is that the Conservatives are abusing power. We have the leader of the Conservative Party abusing his authority on the floor of the House of Commons while he is in opposition. It reminds me of when he was the parliamentary secretary to the former prime minister when that prime minister was held in contempt of Parliament, which was the first time ever in the British Commonwealth. Seriously, the Conservatives should stop the game and let us start dealing with the interests of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, let us return to the topic at hand, namely Canada's record in the fight against climate change. Oil companies are swimming in surpluses after enjoying record profits in recent years. What is more, they are being subsidized to the tune of billions of dollars. On one side we have the Conservatives wanting to make cuts everywhere, except in this area. On the other, we have the Liberals unwilling to make cuts anywhere. They say they want to make cuts here, but they are not.

This is the real coalition. It is the Liberal-Conservative coalition, the Canadian coalition, the Ottawa coalition, the oil coalition. That is what it boils down to, despite the fact that at the G8 in 2008, 2009 or 2010, I think, Ottawa pledged to end fossil fuel subsidies.

Why did they break this promise? Are Quebeckers being told that it will be easier in our future country of Quebec?

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**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting. For the first time ever, for 2026, we are on target to hit our climate goals. I see that as a very strong, positive thing. One of the differences between the Bloc and the government is that we recognize that in order to grow the economy, we have to be sensitive and respond to the environment also. We can do well on both. Sustainable development can be done in a very successful fashion, and we have demonstrated that as a government.

I do not think we want to shut down industries. This is not the end goal. The end goal is to have a healthier, stronger and cleaner environment that is acceptable by Canadian norms and standards, and I think we have made major strides, whether the price on pollution, the ban on single-use plastics or the cap on emissions we just put in.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour and privilege to rise on behalf of the good people of the riding of Waterloo, who actually support making sure that pollution is not free in Canada. They are concerned about the misinformation coming through different channels, especially the Conservative Party of Canada, and they believe, as constituents and as a riding for the most part, that everyone should pay their fair share.

We recognize a transition is happening. More people are using electric vehicles and so forth, and that transition is the result of meaningful measures that the government has been taking.

What I find fascinating is that the Conservatives today are choosing to do this, asking to have transparency reign and get the information. A Canadian was killed on Canadian soil by a foreign government, and the leader of the Conservative Party refuses to get his clearance. I would like to ask the member why the Conservatives do not want real information and why they promote disinformation and misinformation.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there is a very serious issue before us, the issue of foreign interference. Whether it is about extortion, an assassination that has taken place or foreign interference in the leadership of the Conservative Party, there are Conservative parliamentarians who the Conservative leader needs to be aware of.

What is the leader of the Conservative Party actually doing? He has chosen to be silenced. He does not want the security clearance. It is disgraceful. As leader of the official opposition, there is an obligation for him to do the right thing, and doing the right thing means getting the security clearance. This is a Conservative scandal in the making, in a serious way.

• (1110)

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we all get to hear the great words of wisdom from the member for Winnipeg North very often. However, it is important, I think, in this debate today, to hear from the commissioner of the environment, whom I will quote in direct reference to the member's statement that the government is on track.

The commissioner says:

...despite various policies and commitments from government after government to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the past 30 years,

"Canada has failed to translate these commitments into real reductions in net emissions. Instead, Canada's emissions have continued to rise. Meanwhile, the global climate crisis has gotten worse."

What would the member say to the independent environment commissioner, who is raising a warning about the fact that what the member is saying is not true?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I have confidence that, as a government, we will be able to achieve our goal in 2026. I also believe that we are on track for zero emissions by 2050.

At the same time, there has been concern in regard to the NDP softening on the price on pollution. I am hoping we will see the NDP recognize that there is value in it. We should continue to work together and fight for a price on pollution. That is a good thing, especially when we factor in the carbon rebate providing that incentive for people to do things like, as the member for Waterloo made reference to, encouraging the consumption of less fossil fuel. That is good for the environment and it helps support a greener economy.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a short question about the environment. About three or four years ago, the government signed an agreement with the City of Montreal to continue to dump raw sewage into the St. Lawrence Seaway.

If the government cares about the environment and is so focused on emissions, what about having clean waters and clean waterways down in the St. Lawrence? How can they continue to allow the City of Montreal to dump raw sewage? How does that help our environment? That agreement is signed for another 20 years.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, imagine if we had a Stephen Harper government that had invested in infrastructure in the same fashion that we have invested in infrastructure. Montreal might not have to do that dumping and the property taxpayers of Montreal may not have seen the same increase in taxes they have seen.

At the end of the day, as we continue to invest in infrastructure, including building better water treatment facilities across the country, the Conservatives' track record on infrastructure has been dismal. Ultimately, they also have to take some of the responsibility for a lot of the things that we are experiencing today, because they refused to take action back then, when action was necessary. Infrastructure was not just created when we came into government. We have invested in infrastructure like no other government before us, in terms of real dollars, but I can say that the biggest disappointment on infrastructure was likely Stephen Harper. By the way, the member's current party leader was in that cabinet and was parliamentary secretary to the prime minister at the time.

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are gathered today to talk about a report that I found very interesting when it was tabled more than two and a half years ago, in 2022. It was studied at the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Unfortunately, I would have preferred that we discuss a more recent report by the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, because things have changed, and not always for the better.

Let us take a look at what the report said.

The report states, “Canada has failed to translate these commitments into real reductions in net emissions. Instead, Canada's emissions have continued to rise. Meanwhile, the global climate crisis has gotten worse.” That has not changed. Everyone agrees that that was the case in 2022 and it still is today. The report adds that the country's greenhouse gas, or GHG, emissions “have increased since the Paris Agreement was signed, making it the worst performing of all G7 nations since the 2015 Conference.” That is the overall picture painted by the report tabled by the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development.

Now let us look more specifically at the various lessons contained in this report.

First, it talks about the need for “stronger leadership and coordination” to end polarization on environmental issues and ensure a degree of consistency. Clearly, this has not been done.

Second, the Canadian economy remains dependent on sectors that emit a great deal of greenhouse gases, such as the oil sector. I do not want Alberta members to jump all over me—we already hear enough from their premier. Canada is an oil country, and thus a polluting country on a global scale. The commissioner stated in his report that “Canada's economy is still dependent on emission-intensive sectors”.

In its strategy to combat climate change, the Liberal government provided a green support during the pandemic to help oil and gas companies make their operations more environmentally friendly. However, according to Environmental Defence Canada, the federal government awarded over \$20 billion in subsidies to the oil and gas industry in 2020 alone. After the pandemic, despite the assistance for the transition, the oil and gas sector continued to collect subsidies. The result is that the sector's emissions continued to rise. I will return to this.

The third lesson we learned is that “adaptation must be prioritized”. If we eventually realize that the fight against climate change and mitigation measures are not working because of a failure to impose a carbon tax or to ensure that the highest-emitting industries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, we must resign ourselves to this fact and turn toward climate change adaptation policies. This is indeed a must.

To that end, Ottawa will have to stop collecting all the money without redistributing it intelligently and will have to give the money to the municipalities, because in many respects it is they who will incur the costs of climate change in dealing with new floods, water and resource treatment or management, increasingly severe storms that will destroy municipal infrastructures, and so on. They will need help. In fact, the Union des municipalités du Québec released a report indicating that the climate change expenses municipalities incur will go up by 12%.

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The fourth lesson is that “Canada risks falling behind other countries on investing in a climate-resilient future”. I think we can drop the word “risks” here. Perhaps that was the case in 2022, but today Canada does not risk falling behind other countries. It already has. It is perfectly clear. Canada is a G7 laggard and everyone knows it.

The fifth lesson is about “increasing public awareness”. The public must be made more aware of the fight, but also of the adaptations needed to deal with climate change. Not much was done. Among the few measures taken, there is one that is so absurd that I feel the need to point it out to the House. A provincial minister paid a gas-powered truck to drive 24-7 to protest the cap proposed by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Members will soon find out which province I am referring to, because instead of funding her province's education system and rebuilding Jasper, the premier paid a truck to come here to Ottawa to burn gas just to say we should stop putting caps on things, that we should continue to emit GHGs, that it is important and that polluting the planet is a constitutional right.

● (1115)

It is absolutely ridiculous, I must say. How can Albertans allow their premier to do things like that instead of looking after her people?

The sixth lesson is that “climate targets have not been backed by strong plans or actions”. That has not changed, either. As far back as 2009, G20 countries, including Canada, agreed to phase out and rationalize over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. However, we are still waiting for information about how this commitment will be put into practice. We got amazing commitments in 2009, and then it was radio silence until yesterday, when the minister finally made a somewhat controversial announcement. I will get back to that later.

The seventh lesson is that “enhanced collaboration among all actors is needed”. This is nothing new, and I cannot say that there has been any improvement there either. If the federal government is to finally understand that there are provincial and municipal jurisdictions, it must begin by acknowledging that it should not collect all the money and redistribute it in the provinces' jurisdictions with strings attached. That is not how that works. The government needs to start working with the provinces and Quebec and with the municipalities to give them back the money owed them. Municipalities must be able to do what they need to do without strings attached.

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The eighth lesson learned from the report refers to an “intergenerational crisis”. We have heard that term a lot lately. People talk about intergenerational equity. As a young mother, I really wonder what kind of a planet we will be leaving to our children. There is a question of responsibility here. Our responsibility is to care for our seniors and think about the future. One does not preclude the other. We can help seniors by increasing OAS and stop subsidizing the oil industry at the same time. It is a win-win situation. We are helping future generations as well as seniors: a miracle solution, apparently.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change announced that he wanted to put a cap on emissions in the oil and gas sector. I applaud the initiative. I think it was a long time coming. It was addressed by the G20 countries in 2009. However, we are basically continuing to subsidize an industry, hoping that it will change, hoping that it will adopt greener technologies. We have finally come to realize that emissions do not decrease by themselves and that we need to stop giving the oil and gas industry subsidies. They make enormous profits. Finally, they themselves need to change to ensure a green and equitable transition.

Equiterre was at the committee meetings where we discussed the report. We invited the organization, which was consulted by the commissioner for sustainable development. Its representative, Mr. Viau, told me at the time that we had to wean ourselves from our economic dependence on the oil and gas sector and make a fair and equitable transition. In particular, he mentioned that he was afraid that Canada would put all its eggs in one basket and invest in carbon storage. I think he can predict the future. In 2022, he knew very well that Canada would opt for this bogus solution to give the oil and gas industry a reason to keep polluting.

The answer we recently got from some of the provinces is frankly shameful. How can anyone look in the mirror and say that they want to continue polluting the planet? Seriously, how can a person like that sleep at night? Are they thinking at all about other people?

Let us talk about the Constitution. Those who say that this type of thing is anti-constitutional are wearing blinders. We are talking about climate change. Climate change has no borders. Here is a tip for those people who do not understand how things work. A tonne emitted here will have the same impact here as in China, France and everywhere else. The same applies to a tonne emitted in China. It is everyone's business.

• (1120)

The responsibility for climate change is an individual one. Just because a country has an oil industry and is sitting on reserves of black gold does not mean that it is relieved of that responsibility. We really need to look at what we are doing not only as citizens, but as legislators as well. We have a responsibility to future generations.

Let us talk a bit about what was said. Let us talk about the reactions to the cap on emissions in the oil and gas industry and the fantastic slogan. Frankly, there is not much difference between “axe the tax” and “scrap the cap”. It is a different version of the same thing. It is really shameful. Anyone who uses facile slogans thinks people are stupid. Anyone who uses facile, three-word slogans is

saying that people do not understand the subtleties of climate change. It is shameful.

We know that the costs associated with climate change are enormous, so this is a matter of responsibility and intergenerational fairness. The studies and the economists are unanimous. Yes, we still need oil, but that is because we still have not come up with a real plan to wean ourselves off the oil and gas industry.

Quebec is leading the pack at this. I could go on and on about how well the cap-and-trade system has worked. We have reduced our per capita emissions. Our reductions are far and away the best in Canada. It would be a big problem if a country were to institute an entry tariff to offset its emissions. There is no risk that such a thing would happen in the United States, but the European Union is considering this option very seriously as a way to avoid importing goods from heavily polluting countries. If that type of policy is put in place, Canada will really be a problem, and Quebec will have one more reason to leave Canada once and for all, not that we need another.

According to a study commissioned by the Union des municipalités du Québec and carried out by WSP and Ouranos, it will cost Quebec municipalities at least \$2 billion more per year. That is what I was talking about earlier. Their total spending for adapting their infrastructure to climate change will increase by 12%.

Let us just talk costs. Since 2010, the costs of weather-related disasters have amounted to 5% to 6% of Canada's annual GDP growth, up from an average of 1% in previous decades. A report by the Canadian Climate Institute titled “Damage Control: Reducing the Costs of Climate Impacts in Canada” estimates that by 2030, Canada could experience annual losses of \$35 billion in real GDP. Speaking of GDP, the real GDP losses due to climate change are in the tens of billions of dollars.

I myself worked on an Ouranos study commissioned by the Quebec government. The Quebec government had asked us to calculate the cost of climate change. That was just before the Paris accord. This was in a past life, about 10 years ago, but we are still in the same dynamic because not much has changed. The costs and sectors that were analyzed were things that we may not think about every day.

Of the two major sectors, health and infrastructure, let us look at health. Heat waves are becoming increasingly common because of climate change, and they mostly affect seniors. Every year, people die as a result of heat waves. Long-term care homes still have not been adapted to address this issue. There are still major issues with air conditioning in some places. No adaptations have been offered for seniors aging at home. They are paying the price.

Then there are zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted by vectors that are spreading because of climate change. One example is the West Nile virus, which is transmitted by mosquitoes. Because of climate change, mosquitoes now arrive earlier in the year and leave later. They are also moving northward. Since they carry the West Nile virus, in some cases, the disease is spreading more widely. Another example is Lyme disease, which is increasingly occurring in Quebec. That is because of climate change.

● (1125)

Lyme disease is spreading because temperatures are rising and carriers are moving northward more and more. We were not really prepared to recognize the symptoms of Lyme disease, because it is a new disease for people living further north in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Lastly, there are allergies, which are also costing the public more and more. When people suffer from severe allergies, they are less productive.

Now let us turn to infrastructure. I do not think there are many people in the House who can say that they have not seen more flooding. Extreme weather events have increased and are very costly. Look at what is happening in Valencia, Spain. It is a disaster. Officials are still searching for bodies after the city was hit by torrential rains. Closer to home, Quebec also experienced torrential rains the night of August 9 that caused a lot of costly damage. We do not know what the insurance companies are going to do about the tens of thousands of vehicles that were lost and the houses that flooded. This is costly. It costs money, and it is something we can see with our own eyes. These events are going to get even more frequent.

Then there is shoreline erosion due to rising water levels. We are going to see more erosion and have more roads, houses and people to relocate. That costs money.

Lastly, there is the permafrost. For the first nations living in places where the ground is normally frozen, climate change is causing the ground to thaw, and their houses have to be completely rebuilt because they are falling down. We know how big a problem housing already is on some reserves and in some places where first nations people live. Climate change is only making the problem worse. We still hear people saying that it is unconstitutional to think about the future of Quebecers and Canadians. I cannot understand that.

We have come to realize that, despite its grand promises and the good intentions of some of its ministers, who I believe are sincere, the Liberal government still has not managed to do much. The carbon tax will unfortunately be an election issue, not so much in Quebec, but in the rest of Canada. It is a shame, because it should be obvious when we look at Quebec, which has a cap-and-trade system that is working. Has Quebec performed less well economically? The answer is no. On the contrary, before the pandemic, Quebec had the highest growth rate in Canada, even with a cap-and-trade system.

Greenhouse gas emissions can be delinked from the economy. Carbon emissions and economic growth can be decoupled. That is what is known as absolute decoupling. Quebec and France have both shown that it is possible, but Canada is very far off. The Liberals promise the sun and moon but never keep their promises, while some Conservatives do not even believe in climate change and

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think we should continue to pollute. They look in the mirror and tell themselves they have the right to pollute. Things are looking pretty grim.

All I can hope for, especially when it comes to the environment, is that Quebec gains its independence once and for all.

● (1130)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when I think of the energy needs of Canada going into the future, I cannot help but reflect on how we can use greener policies. With Bill C-49, the Atlantic accord, we can think of the power generation potential from using our coastlines, the billions of dollars of investment that would be attracted to that and the thousands of jobs, which would be of great benefit to Atlantic Canada. However, I do not quite understand why the Bloc voted against the Atlantic accord. We talk about reducing emissions, and I would suggest that this is one of the ways we can achieve net zero by 2050.

Can the member explain why the Bloc opposed Bill C-49, the Atlantic accord?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, when I hear the word “Atlantic”, I think of Bay du Nord. I think about the fact that the government sometimes alters the boundaries of marine reserves to allow oil exploration and drilling to take place there. When I hear the word “Atlantic”, I think about the financial assistance that Ottawa is providing for further oil exploration. When I hear the word “Atlantic”, unfortunately, I do not think “making progress in fighting climate change”. I think “backsliding”.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, oil company heads continue to receive massive subsidies to the tune of billions of dollars. That was the case when the previous Conservative government was in power and it remains the case today with the Liberals in power. It makes no sense when we consider all the things we could be investing in to really change things up. For example, investing in green energy would create far more jobs.

I would like to know whether my colleague agrees with the NDP that it is ridiculous to keep providing oil companies with billions of dollars in subsidies.

*Routine Proceedings*

• (1135)

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in my remarks, I am as outraged as he is, perhaps more, about the subsidies being given to Canada's oil and gas industry. As I mentioned, these subsidies came to about \$20 billion in 2022 alone. It is absolutely ludicrous that this government cannot scrape up \$5 billion a year to help seniors but continues to hand over \$20 billion to the oil and gas industry, which is making exorbitant profits at the expense of future generations. I think that is an utter disgrace.

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating my colleague on her excellent speech, which was very clear and included some very insightful points. A few times, she brought up a very important issue, namely local infrastructure. We see billions of dollars being handed to oil companies, which will use these subsidies to continue polluting. We also see what is going on in the municipalities. The member referenced the floods in August. Berthier—Maskinongé was hit very hard. The vast majority of our municipalities suffered severe damage. This calls for investments, so the government needs to free up the money and decentralize it.

Does my colleague think this is a good idea? How can we ensure that it is truly decentralized and paid out with no strings attached? The people who know what needs to be done are the mayors, not the paternalistic Canadian government.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question, which actually gives me the opportunity to point out that, although the federal government touted its recent budget measures aimed at helping municipalities, that funding comes with strings attached. For example, it said that it wanted certain funds to be used for water treatment, but municipalities may have other needs, unfortunately.

The federal government's obsession with centralizing everything and thinking that, ensconced in its ivory tower, it knows better than mayors what their municipalities need is completely crazy. Basically, what the federal government needs to do is stop centralizing everything. Unfortunately, it collects way too much money, and it needs to give that money back to Quebec and the municipalities so they can really fight climate change.

[English]

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I often agree with my hon. colleague, and I recall what we witnessed when the environment commissioner presented to our committee, of which I am a former member, sadly.

This report in particular was highlighted because there was an attempt to break the consensus on the science around climate change and the impacts of climate change. That is why the commissioner came out with it. There are no recommendations according to the report, but there are some “lessons learned”. Here are three that I would like the member to comment on: “Climate change is an intergenerational crisis with a rapidly closing window for action”, “Climate targets have not been backed by strong plans or actions” and “Canada risks falling behind other countries on investing in a climate-resilient future”.

What is the member's message to young people who are right now feeling despair and apathy from the lack of action by the government on this serious issue?

[Translation]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. I really miss seeing him on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. His successor is fantastic, but I think the member for Edmonton Griesbach and I did great teamwork together.

Concerning his question about the three lessons learned that he mentioned, I touched on them a little in my speech, but I am going to focus primarily on the lesson learned about the intergenerational crisis that climate change is causing. I mentioned it in my speech, but, as I see it, it is essential that we, as legislators, take responsibility and reflect on the future and on young people, who feel concerned and anxious over climate change.

I want them to know that I am deeply sorry. I would really like their votes to count, maybe even more than other votes. At the very least, they should go and vote. Voting is really important because we desperately need a government that will make the environment a priority once and for all. If that is not possible, I encourage young Quebecers to keep on rallying around the Quebec sovereignty movement.

• (1140)

**Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ):** Madam Speaker, silence sometimes speaks louder than words. So far in this debate, we have not heard any official opposition members comment on my colleague's speech. However, they always have a lot to say when we are talking about oil.

Why does my hon. colleague from Terrebonne think they are staying silent?

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I think it is a sign of either a total lack of interest in climate change, at best, or utter contempt for the issue, at worst. Perhaps the official opposition's general sentiment is a reflection of the fact that they are in denial. It is really unfortunate, because I would have liked to continue educating them on the subject.

The course I teach at the Paris School of Economics, which deals with integrating environmental and social issues into economic analysis, could be very useful to them.

[English]

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my question is a simple one. The government has a terrible record. Of course, it is one of the worst in the OECD when it comes to reducing GHG emissions. It has not hit an international target yet.

Why does the Bloc Québécois vote with this party over and over again and keep these members in government, destroying our economy along with them?



*Routine Proceedings*

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I think that my esteemed colleague, whom I appreciate, may not have been following the news.

The Bloc Québécois is prepared to bring down the government and to trigger an election. In our opinion, however, and this needs to be said, a Conservative government would be no improvement, especially when it comes to environmental matters. We think it would be a disaster.

[*English*]

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleagues for what is a very important debate on the climate crisis that everyone across the globe is facing. We share this planet. We share a future. Our children, of course, will have to share the consequences of decisions made in this place, but also decisions made in all of our lives. In this report, the environment commissioner has made it very clear that we are approaching a detrimental future. I would like to quote from the report. It states:

Despite commitments from government after government to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the past 3 decades, Canada has failed to translate these commitments into real reductions in net emissions. Instead, Canada's emissions have continued to rise. Meanwhile, the global climate crisis has gotten worse.

This is a serious warning from the independent commissioner of the environment for our country. Canada is one of the largest countries in the world. If the climate crisis is one that impacts land, we are to be greatly impacted. In the north Arctic regions, we see issues of melting ice that are dramatically impacting the ecosystems there, making it so that generations of Canadians may no longer ever get to see a polar bear. Right now, indigenous hunters are in the season of trying to find moose in my part of the country and they are finding it more difficult to because of the rapidly changing environment. People in urban centres have been choked by smoke at increasing rates, something that generations before had not experienced.

I hope this question unites all of us as colleagues: What do we do about this rising concern? What I have heard from the Liberals is that things are fine. Meanwhile, a planet is on fire. They are giving billions of dollars to oil resource companies and most of them are foreign owned. That is in addition to a Conservative Party that wants to wield power, and is using the climate crisis and the rejection of the science as a way to get there.

New Democrats are often found in this tough position of being brokers of a better morality in this place and I hope a better future for all of us. We pose that question in the hopes of an optimistic reality or future and I think, given the circumstances of all of us being in the same place, if we could put aside our partisan differences, this would be one of the issues we would do it for. That is my greatest hope in this debate. I think Canadians will continue to judge us on the remarks we make in this place for many generations to come.

There will be a moment in our history when our children look back at the transcripts of when we debated these things, including today. Everything that we say will be quoted by generations in the future. That could be generations who are suffering from the reality

of an impacted climate in which they cannot breathe, cannot find clean water or are having difficulty paying for food because the cost of living would increase so greatly. This is because of the mysterious but very present reality of the impacts of climate change that continue to unfold in front of our eyes. We still have not even faced the greatest consequences of this immense challenge.

On top of all this is the question of affordability. There seems to be a conflation in our country, brought on largely by partisan politics that are trying to achieve an environment and a future with low emissions, simultaneous to a healthy environment, clean water and honouring the treaties we have made with indigenous people to protect this place. There are also the very real and tough discussions around how we can create and protect good jobs, and how we make certain that Canadians continue to put food on the table.

People, particularly in Alberta, and particularly Conservative politicians, are attempting to put people at odds with one another on this question. They attempt to put at odds a worker's future to bring in a paycheque, with the fact that if they do agree with climate change, they are going to impact their own industry. This kind of false dichotomy hurts workers, and it hurts our children most.

I am a former oil and gas worker, and I know this sector very well. I grew up in the northeast part of Alberta working in the Cold Lake oil sands. I know exactly what it is like try to get a paycheque to feed a family. I know how difficult it is for thousands of northern Alberta workers, thousands of indigenous people, and, of course, our children who are asking questions of when or if we will stop, and whether or not their future is truly worth it. This is an area where workers have to take a central role. Workers' jobs and their livelihoods need to be protected. It is very clear. This is the most important priority in this work.

● (1145)

If we are to truly address the climate crisis, we have to address a few major topics related to this crisis. My number one point today will be on the financialization of natural resources, publicly owned resources, of megacorporations that are depriving Canadians the opportunity for a better future and, of course, better jobs. The question I want answered is: Who is benefiting from the extreme fossil fuel development in Canada?

In Alberta, at one point, we had a very noble premier, I think one of the most popular ever, and his name was Peter Lougheed. Peter Lougheed created Crown corporations. When Texaco came to Alberta and threatened Albertans by saying it would pull out all of its assets if Albertans did not let it absolutely destroy everything it wanted without having to clean it up, he said no, Albertans would do it themselves. He created some of the lasting Crown corporations we still have today.

*Routine Proceedings*

Unfortunately, consecutive Conservative governments would sell off those oil companies. Even worse, at the federal level, we saw Stephen Harper green-light the largest purchasing of a foreign state-owned entity of a Canadian asset, which is the Canadian natural resources takeover by Chinese-owned Nexen, green-lit by Stephen Harper's Conservatives.

The question is: Who is actually benefiting from our oil production? It is certainly not the rural communities that have much of the development in their backyard. I know that from experience. My dad, a worker in the oil sector, died. He got killed on a lease site because of the lack of safety or concern by some of these oil companies. We see municipalities in Alberta still today being deprived of basic taxation. I am a Canadian taxpayer and, as my colleagues in the chamber would know, if I do not pay my taxes, I get a phone call from the CRA and it makes sure I pay. Those penalties are swift, brutal and severe. However, an oil company in Canada, not even owned by Canadians, gets a pass in Alberta. It gets a pass on surface taxes that are owed and the dues paid to rural municipalities.

If I had the opportunity to canvass my colleagues, I would ask whether anyone knows the amount of unpaid taxes and tax liability owed to Canadian municipalities. Whether it is the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement; St. Paul, Alberta; Two Hills; High River; Paddle Prairie; or even larger municipal centres like Grande Prairie, we are seeing huge debts building up because the oil companies do not want to pay their fair share. They owe a quarter of a billion dollars in unpaid municipal property taxes to date.

Guess what a quarter of a billion dollars could have gotten those rural municipalities? It probably could have gotten them better roads and better municipal services. They could have maybe held a festival or a fair. They could have even tried to challenge the very real reality that is facing municipalities when it comes to homelessness. However, instead of those resources being paid by oil companies going to municipalities that desperately need them in our small rural communities in Canada, that money is being pocketed by oil barons and CEOs who have made record profits.

I want to back up a second. In Canada, we often talk about the oil sector as if it is in great need of Canadian support and more financialized public dollars when they are making the largest profits they have ever made in their entire history, in an oil boom that is unseen and unmatched. The fact that these companies, in addition to making record profits, are unwilling to invest that money back into communities is a shame. Worse yet, they are taking first nations to court and, on top of that, not even helping workers.

I will give an example. In Alberta, the Labour Relations Board held a hearing alleging unfair labour practices by a company enjoying the fruits of massively profitable oil and gas products. The president of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 401 said, "They're asking for concessions when [the oil and gas sector] is making record profits—we're not going to take a \$7 rollback when inflation is at six per cent." That is a shocking reality. If people talked to workers, they would find that some of these companies are attempting to reduce wages. People who make less than \$20 an hour were asked to take a \$7 rollback. When those workers said no, that they deserved a fair share from the labour that they were doing on behalf of this country, the company fired them. Can colleagues

imagine? It is shameful that the company would fire every single person at that camp because they would not accept a \$7 cut in their wages on top of the fact that inflation is at 6%.

• (1150)

Are first nations being served by these massively foreign-owned oil companies that were sold off by Stephen Harper? No, they are not either. We are seeing some of the worst environmental catastrophes in Canada's history taking place right now. For example, in Fort McMurray, the 2016 wildfire cost us \$9 billion in direct and indirect financial, physical health and environmental impacts, including being a regional hub for first nations. Many families are still reeling from this. The first nations then lacked the important goods and services that they relied on. Moreover, 80% of majority indigenous communities in Canada are located in fire-prone regions. This is something we have to consider as we plan our future.

We know that, between 1980 and 2021, 16 communities in Canada were evacuated five or more times. All but two of those were first nation reserves. This is a serious situation that is being faced annually, predictably, by community members, whether we are in a rural municipality or a first nation, including workers. They are just not working for regular working Canadians.

We have the largest profits in this sector that we have ever seen, but we are seeing the worst outcomes on our streets. In the last three years, we have had the highest price of oil that we have seen in many decades. We would think that if we saw high oil prices, we would see huge investments in new jobs, hospitals, roads and social services. However, we are not seeing that. What we are seeing is that the companies, rather than investing in production in Canada, are at a time when they must pay out their shareholders. They have admitted this; the six major oil companies have all said that. All of their profits are being paid out to the shareholders, many of whom are foreign shareholders, no longer Canadian. It is a shame.

The Liberals have made this even worse. On top of the fact that we have this major profitable oil sector that is not giving good jobs, increasing wages for our workers, cleaning up the mess it is making in first nations communities or paying its taxes, the Liberals are giving it billions of public dollars. The billions of dollars given to a profitable sector could otherwise go to health care, housing or an enhanced employment insurance program. It could otherwise be invested in helping support a diversified economy. We need jobs in our country, but we also need jobs with companies that pay well; that are not going to give us a \$7 rollback when they do not need us anymore; that are not going to say "too bad, so sad", but they will not pay municipal taxes to our little community so that we can have a seniors bus; and that will not say no to cleaning up the mess when they pollute huge water reserves.

*Routine Proceedings*

What do we say to companies that say this to Canadians, that are bullying Canadians out of \$7 an hour or out of taxation amounts that would be used for supports in their municipality, in their little village or hamlet? What do we say when they tell first nations they will go to court rather than discuss their rights? These are all facts related to this very problematic industry.

It is true that workers have to be put first in this process, which is why the Alberta Federation of Labour, for example, has proposed an industrial strategy. As a country, during the post-World War II era, Canada had to learn how to retool our economy following war. When we had to fight fascism overseas in Europe, we retooled our economy. By the way, we still have to fight fascism today; its evils persist across our country and across the globe, and we must continue to fight. However, we planned our economy. How did we do it? We raised the largest merchant navy on the globe. Canadians did that.

● (1155)

Remembrance Day will be here soon. It is time for us to remember that. As Canadians, a small little country, we raised the largest merchant navy on the globe.

Right here at home, the governments of our country worked together. They built hundreds of Crown corporations and put every single man and woman to work in our country. We produced stuff. We built factories. We invented stuff the world had never seen before. Canadians did this because we had planned properly for the kinds of needs that our economy had to meet. Right now, our economy does not need to make more profits for billionaires.

Our economy needs to return value to every working person in this country. In doing so, we must fight the climate crisis and unfair labour practices. We must protect the rights of first nations communities to see their lands and their resources developed in a way they see fit, which includes the right to say no.

It is important that, as we think about the climate crisis, we speak to young people right across this country who are demanding justice. They are right behind us. If we do not speak to young people today, right now, we will suffer their anger. We will rightly suffer their accusation of inaction. We will greatly betray a generation that is yet to come because we did not act sooner and, as honourable members of the House, could not put aside our partisan differences to see what is a national challenge ahead of us. This challenge will take every single one of our children's breath if we do not act. It will take their future from them.

I would argue and suggest that we must endeavour to look at all solutions at this time. Solutions proposed by all hon. members in the face of this crisis are needed; they are worth debate in this place and, even better, implementation. We have to have hope.

I have hope that we, as colleagues, can come to a position where we bring together labour, management and those most affected by the climate crisis. I hope that we bring them together in a great coalition towards ending this unjust future and that, together, we build a process that protects jobs and brings in the workers most affected. I was laid off when I was in the oil sector and things got tough. Rather than letting the many workers we have in the resource sector get laid off, we ought to work with them to make cer-

tain that workers' skills, which are the best skills on earth, are put to good use. They should not just be getting and fighting for a good paycheck but also fighting for our future, for their kids and for all of us.

That is what workers want. Workers want to be part of the solution. They do not want to be part of the problem. Right now, we have companies that are controlling, exclusively, the labour that is greatly needed to transition to a diversified economy that would create future jobs for everyone. What I mean by this is that we need these companies to see the workers they employ just as I see them, as the key and solution to having better paycheques, to having a better economy and to combatting the climate crisis.

We need to do the work of making certain that we have the best skills; I believe my province has them, and a lot of hon. members in the chamber may say the same thing. I deeply believe that Alberta has the best labour force around the globe. We have the skills, the technology and the training. Precision drillers, for example, drilled many of the wells right across the province to make certain that homes are heated.

However, times are changing. It is time for such groups as precision drillers to expand their work, to use the skills they have gained over the course of history and the production of oil toward the production of new, innovative technologies. These will bring wealth, prosperity and good, stable jobs to Canada.

That is the power of our labour in Canada. We can build that future. We can build that reality. We owe it to our children, to workers and to each other in this place to treat each other with more dignity when it comes to a very serious challenge that every single one of us is facing.

● (1200)

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for that very impressive speech. I share his views.

We are sitting here and debating this because the opposition is feigning concern for the climate crisis and for what is happening. I am very curious as to why the NDP is continuing to allow this filibuster to continue, and I wonder why it continues to support the Conservative Party and what that party is doing to actually prevent us from moving forward and taking real action on issues such as Bill C-73. I am sure the member would agree with me that this is an incredibly important bill to fight climate change and to protect our environment. Could the hon. member comment on that?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, I want to consider that fact very seriously. The reality Canadians are facing right now is that our House of Commons is deadlocked, meaning that solutions such as those for the climate crisis cannot come to the floor. That is a shame, but what is a greater shame is the fact that we have a very serious motion relating to the breach of the privilege of parliamentarians.

The majority of the House of Commons has come together and said that we must release documents pertaining to the very severe and extreme instance reported by the Auditor General of the breach of trust by SDTC, Sustainable Development Technology Canada. When a breach of trust takes place by one of our colleagues, particularly in the House, we must seriously consider what will relieve that breach of trust. The Conservatives brought forward a motion seeking to remedy that serious breach of privilege, with which I agree. I was the member who studied SDTC on behalf of New Democrats, and both the issue and the condemnation of it have been severe.

I agree with my fellow party members and the House of Commons, including the Bloc Québécois, that we should unite towards the release of these documents, which will give light and transparency to the reality of what happened. However, I take full note of the member's concern about the delay in the House.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed working with the member on public accounts. I too am an alumnus of the public accounts committee. My question, though, is really designed to educate the electorate as we get nearer to an election.

We have seen that those on the other side of the aisle are quite strongly for the carbon tax. In fact, they want to quadruple it, despite its limited impact on GHG gases and the negative impact on the economy. We are clearly against the tax. We want to axe the tax. The NDP has been less clear.

Could the member be unequivocal and say whether the federal New Democratic Party supports a consumer carbon tax, yes or no?

• (1205)

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, my unequivocal answer is that, yes, of course we support a consumer price on pollution. How the Liberals have done it, though, has been to divide the country. For example, we just recently saw a carbon exemption for the eastern provinces. What does that mean for the western provinces and other provinces? It means that they have citizens who are concerned about the unfair application of what was supposed to be a unifying process for the country.

I agree that we need to have a different process for carbon pricing. I believe that is a serious solution to a serious problem. However, we have to make more certain that those who pay should be those who pollute. The Liberals got that wrong.

Let us assume the better nature of the Liberals here and that they wanted to do the right thing in this case. What they did was to flip-flop on their own policy, which is something they accuse everybody else of. The Liberals have broken the consumer pricing mechanism in Canada on carbon prices.

As my hon. colleague knows, Erin O'Toole ran on a carbon price as well. Therefore, I would ask the same question, but I am confused about whether he agrees with his own platform or if he agrees with the statements he has been making in the House.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave an amazing speech, as always. Everybody is talking about the workers in the oil and gas sector. I really appreciated what you shared, both from your personal experience working in the sector and the impacts it had on your life with your father. You spoke a lot about how both Conservatives and Liberals are letting the big polluters off the hook around not paying taxes. Everybody talks about the taxpayers, yet we know that both the Liberals and Conservatives are letting their corporate buddies off the hook.

What impact does this have on the communities most affected by oil development?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I want to remind the hon. member to refrain from using “you” or speaking directly to the members, rather than through the Chair.

The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Winnipeg Centre is a stalwart for residential school survivors; she is championing a very important bill to deal with denialism. She also champions the very real impacts faced by indigenous communities in resource development areas, particularly the direct connection with women. The impacts of resource development on women are often very harmful.

In relation to the impacts that are made by the lack of payment by these oil corporations to rural municipalities, we cannot actually finance or address serious issues such as the violence faced by women who are living around a resource development sector. We can imagine solutions in little communities. Even in Fort McMurray, there is a women's centre that has proposals to support women in that community to recover from what are higher rates of domestic violence and sexual assault than found in almost any other region. That member sat at the committee for women, which studied that very important finding. Such organizations could be supported if these oil companies paid their fair share and paid their taxes like everybody else.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague delivered an excellent speech.

To begin, I would like to read him a passage from the report stating that the country's greenhouse gas emissions “have increased since the Paris Agreement was signed, making it the worst performing of all G7 nations since the 2015 Conference”.

I think that there is an interesting precedent that a standing committee of the House of Commons can expressly state this in its report.

*Routine Proceedings*

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about this. Does he think it is a good idea? Is he proud? Is he ashamed? How can we remedy the situation for the future of our next generations?

• (1210)

[*English*]

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, we failed a whole generation. We signed the Paris accord a long time ago and the Kyoto accord. So many accords have been signed, giving hope to a generation that maybe the biodiversity that so many generations have experienced, with the beautiful air, the clean water, the immaculate forests and the right to live, would continue into the future.

What we are seeing now is a catastrophic reality. We are seeing the highest rate of extinction of species, which is simultaneous to the loss of clean water on top of global economies feeling the pressure of a climate crisis that is not being taken seriously. From floods to wildfires, we are seeing the direct impacts today. In Fort McMurray, \$9 billion in assets were lost.

I am ashamed that the government has failed to respond appropriately, both to the commitments made by the international community, our international partners, and to Canadians here at home. COP is coming up soon. It is time for Canada to get serious about the reality facing our planet and our species, and have the courage to know that as one of the largest countries on earth, we face and will face the largest impact.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was absolutely floored when listening to the response the member gave when he tried to justify that the NDP stepped away from the current price on pollution with the rebate mechanism we have. The member voted in favour of it 24 times. On June 4 of this year, the member justified the policy by saying in the House, “On April 1 of last year, the Prime Minister increased the carbon tax by three cents. Conservatives say this is bad, but Danielle Smith increased it by four cents and that is not even with a rebate.”

Can the member please just come clean and say the New Democrats stepped away from this because they were feeling the political pressure and could not stand up to the Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, the member would do right by having more serious concern for this issue. Young people are watching. I have given a very clear example of where the Liberals have failed on this. I will not bring up the personal record of the member, but to be serious, the Liberals cannot tell one region that it is exempt for political reasons to save their party and then tell the rest of the country to pay.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, could the member tell us what region that was?

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is getting into debate. We will move on to the next speaker.

I am happy to recognize the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands.

I am proud to rise to speak in this place on behalf of the constituents of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill. However, I am not proud of the behaviour of the members of the official opposition, who are wasting taxpayer money on filibusters, feigning concern for issues they otherwise dismiss, such as environmental progress, and preventing real progress on issues that matter to Canadians. I will try to address some of the disinformation that has been put forward by them as they use up the time available in this place to avoid doing the real work that needs to be done for Canadians.

Let me start with one fundamental flaw in the Conservatives' arguments, and they do it repeatedly. It has been done since I have been in this place. They have an inability to understand the difference between correlation and causality. This is from a first-year statistics course that perhaps they missed. They continue to say that because something happened during the same period of time as something else, it was caused by that. We know that is not the case. Many things happen during the same period of time but are not caused by that thing.

Today, we heard a member opposite state that Canada's economic challenges are caused by the price on pollution program. The Conservatives constantly state that food prices are higher because of the carbon levy. It is simply not true. The misinformation they continue to spread has turned many Canadians against fighting the great fight against climate change, an existential threat.

Young people are discouraged. They hear us talk in this place in a way that does not address the concerns that are giving them great anxiety. Trevor Toombs, an economist, the Bank of Canada and many independent studies have indicated that this program is not responsible for the high inflation we have experienced. At most, it accounts for 1%, and much less by most studies.

Economists know and I believe the Conservative Party knows that the COVID pandemic, the post-COVID economy, supply chain issues and the conflicts around the world have caused global inflation. The inflation we saw was not just in Canada, but around the world. Although I wish that every country around the world had a price on pollution program, that is not the case.

• (1215)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have a point of order from the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, we know the member opposite is from the “have a yacht” club. I am wondering if she could talk more about people who have not—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would remind everyone to stay relevant to the topic at hand.

The hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, that was a personal attack. It had nothing to do with what I was talking about. I would like to see some rulings about the Conservatives attacking people personally as opposed to talking about politics—

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I fully understand that during proceedings of the House, from time to time, somebody will stand up on a point of order and use what is potentially not a point of order as an opportunity to make a political statement. I realize that I do that sometimes and that others do that, and you let people get away with it. However, what we just saw there was an intentional personal attack on a member who is speaking, and I think—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is why I cut it off.

The hon. deputy House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** My point of order, Mr. Speaker, is that you should be asking the member to apologize for that.

**An hon. member:** Debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We get into a lot of crazy debates in the House, and I want to make sure that we move on to the topic at hand. That was a little off topic. I would suggest that everyone stay on the topic at hand. If there is a real point of order to be brought up, I am more than happy to hear it.

The hon. Member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** I would like a ruling on this, Mr. Speaker, because this is not the first time this has happened to me in the House. The Conservatives are making a point of attacking me personally about things that have nothing to do with the business of the House. Personal attacks are not permitted in this place.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Kingston and the Islands rose on a point of order to note that we should utilize points of order for valid points of order. Less than five minutes ago, he interrupted you and the proceedings of this place, so if you are going to apply a ruling to this, I hope it is applied equally and fairly to all members, including the Liberals.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, on that point of order, in my most recent intervention, when I rose on a point of order about this very serious matter, I did acknowledge that this happens and that I do it from time to time. However, let us not distract from the fact that the member is being personally attacked by the Conservatives right now on a personal level.

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** You do that to us every day.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** There is tons of policy—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Let us not talk across. Personal attacks are not allowed in the House—

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I am sorry if you take that personally.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mark, we are not allowed personal attacks in the House.

I am going to ask the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands to retract that and apologize.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I did not hear the retraction. I am sorry, but it is important. I just heard an apology.

**The Deputy Speaker:** A retraction and an apology are the same thing. He apologized; that means he retracted it.

The hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill has the floor.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, I will continue.

I was talking about things that matter to all of my constituents and that matter to Canadians, and right now, the behaviour of the Conservatives is something that most Canadians should be very concerned about. It is not just about what they are doing in the House and the personal attacks, but about the fact that the Leader of the Opposition will not get a security clearance. I believe “ignorance is bliss” is their basic motto right now. They try to put their heads in the sand and just ignore what is happening—

• (1220)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, we just had a conversation about personal attacks. The member across the way has a problem with personal attacks, as she should, and she proceeded to make a personal attack on our leader. I am not sure of the inconsistency with personal attacks. We either have them or we do not. I wish the member would be consistent in what she is doing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Again, I will give the warning that when we fall into these discussions, if we are talking about one another, we are not talking about the things that are important to Canadians. I just want to make sure that as we make rulings as chair occupants, we are consistent across the aisles. Hopefully everyone will take that for what it is worth.

The hon. member for Waterloo is rising on a point of order.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to make two comments, and I would seek clarification from you.

First, I would like clarification on retractions versus apologies. I have seen them in this House within my short time. I know other members have been here a long time, but I do not believe they are the same. I would like clarification on that.

Second, I thought it was a bit concerning when the member for Kingston and the Islands was referred to by his first name. In this chamber, we do not do that. I can see that a bit of control is being lost in the House. The Chair has no problem calling me out on a regular basis, and I am just asking for equality and equity in this place so that we can all do our jobs and represent our constituents.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I apologize for my slip of the tongue. I normally try to represent the hon. members' ridings.

When it comes to retractions and apologies, the Chair accepts whichever one comes first so we can move on to the debate of the day. We will accept either-or in every case.

*Routine Proceedings*

The hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill has the floor.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. I just want to reiterate that I was not making a personal attack; I was stating a fact that should be of concern to Canadians, which is that the member, the Leader of the Opposition, has failed to get security clearance. This means that they are not apprised of what is happening within their own party. If it sounded like a personal attack, perhaps the member should be talking to their leader about what he is doing.

I will go on to what I was talking about, which is that the Conservative Party does understand and I hope they believe, otherwise ignorance is bliss, that global inflation was not caused by the price on pollution program. It was caused by the COVID pandemic, supply chain problems, conflicts and the post-COVID economy. It was global.

As I said earlier, before I was interrupted, although I would hope all countries around the world would have some kind of price on pollution program to join us, only 40 countries around the world do. Therefore the global inflation experienced in other countries, which was many times greater than the inflation we experienced, could not have been caused by a price on pollution program. Nevertheless, the Conservatives sit here and use as proof that it was caused by us the fact that Canada had high inflation at the same time as it had a price on pollution program.

I would really appreciate some more attention being paid to facts. I know that slogans are easy and catchy, but they are not reality. We have to look at something even worse that is happening. The Conservatives have put forward the misinformation that not only was inflation caused by a price on pollution but also that all of the issues will be automatically solved, including inflation and high interest rates.

Inflation and interest rates are coming down only because of the concerted efforts our government has made. It has nothing to do with the price on pollution, which continues. In fact the price on pollution increased at the same time as interest rates and inflation fell. If high interest rates and inflation are caused by the price on pollution, I would like the Conservatives to explain how it works in the inverse.

There is no science, math, or proof behind what the Conservatives are saying. When they say that everything will be solved by their simple slogan of axing the tax, they are misleading and deceiving Canadians. In fact, we know that eight out of 10 households in Canada on a current basis, cash in, cash out per month, get more back than they pay. The only households that do not are those of the wealthier, who can pay more and are actually consuming more fossil fuels because they have bigger homes, more cars and perhaps a cottage or a boat. Those people can pay more and should be paying more because they are doing more damage to our environment.

The other argument is that the price on pollution has done no good. That is not true. Emissions are down 8% from the 2015 level. When our government took over in 2015, the projection for what the emissions would be in 2030 was twice as high as they are now.

What if there had been a government like the current Conservative Party in office, continuing inaction on climate change, muzzling scientists, not letting people talk to the press about what was happening and clearly preferring to let the oil and gas industry run rampant? That is just what the Conservative Party is doing, with its leader meeting with oil and gas executives behind closed doors to take maximum contributions for its fundraising efforts. This kind of behaviour shows that Conservatives are not really concerned with what concerns most Canadians, which is pollution and the future of our planet. Our young people need us to stand up for them.

The oil and gas industry contributes more than 30% of emissions in this country, pollution, and less than 6% to our GDP. It is also mostly foreign-owned. Why is the Conservative Party continuing to support it and put it ahead of Canadians?

The other thing going on right now is the filibuster. I understand to some extent why the Conservatives are doing it: They want to have an election right now. They know that the further they go and the longer they speak, the less popular their leader becomes. People see what he is really about, what he is saying and doing and what the party is doing; therefore they want to have an election and do not want it to go any longer.

• (1225)

Ignorance is bliss, but if people begin to wake up and start to understand that what the Conservatives are saying is not true, they may actually realize that the best bet for the future of this country is a continuation of our government, which is what we all need. What really confuses me is the NDP and the shadow minister for the environment, the member for Victoria. Why is she supporting this?

We agree that there is an important piece of legislation, Bill C-73, the nature accountability act, which needs to move forward. It is the proposed sister act to our Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act. We need it to move forward as well, yet NDP members are persisting in supporting the opposition in the filibuster, which is keeping us from doing the real work that Canadians need us to do.

I would just say that we need to move on. The filibuster needs to stop. There is real work to do, and continuously repeating empty slogans and blocking the work of this place will not get us there. We on this side continue to work for Canadians, ensuring that we are ready to move forward with important legislation when the filibuster ends. We are always going to put Canadians first.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do agree with my hon. colleague that we have a lot of work to do.

Recently, the member and I attended an event in the riding at Yellow Brick House, which is a safe home for women and children who are victims of violence. One of the things that was loud and clear after speaking to the victims and listening to their stories was that the Liberals' catch-and-release policy is not working. Why will they not listen to women and children so we can ensure their protection?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, it was great to see my hon. colleague at the event. However, it is interesting, because I do not believe that victims actually spoke about that at all. I spoke to many victims and to the executive director, Lorris Herenda, who does an amazing job.

It is true that people are getting released, but when I spoke to York Regional Police members who were there, they told me that the problem is actually that there are not enough Crown attorneys, that there are not enough detention spaces for people and that criminals are being released not because of any legislation that is in place. In fact they supported the bail reform we put in place.

What the Conservatives are trying to do is blame our government, say that it is our fault, when we are supporting women with the first national action plan to combat gender-based violence, which the current government put in place, and with stronger bail reform laws that not only the police but also women's organizations support. Stop the misinformation, please.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague well because she and I serve together on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. I know that she cares a lot about the issue of climate change and the impact that climate change is having on people.

My colleague from Terrebonne carefully analyzed the report that is before us today. It said, that rather than subsidizing polluting oil companies, the government could use that money to help our communities adapt to climate change. It talked about how municipalities need to upgrade their infrastructure. My colleague from Terrebonne also mentioned shoreline erosion. My colleague knows that this is an issue that I am working hard on. I think it is a great injustice. The St. Lawrence Seaway brings in billions of dollars a year, and yet there is no money to help the people living along the river.

My question for my colleague is as follows. Does she agree that we should stop giving money to oil companies and give it to real people instead, so that they can adapt to climate change, which, unfortunately, is not going to go away overnight?

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, I very much enjoy working with my colleague across the way on committee, and I know that he is a great advocate for the environment.

I would say that we need to do both, and we are doing both. The reality is that the need for oil and gas is not going to disappear overnight, and the need to fight climate change and to fight pollution is urgent. Therefore we have to do everything we can. Helping oil and gas companies reduce emissions and methane; putting a cap on pollution, which we are doing; and continuing to make sure that we are doing everything we can in Canada to bring emissions down are incredibly important. At the same time, we are investing in infrastructure. We have a green infrastructure fund. We have put a lot of money into trying to help communities.

Could we do more of both? We would love to, but we know that there are fiscal realities and we are trying to stay within the guidelines to keep our economy on track.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague seems to be focused on the NDP and the filibuster. I do agree it is a little bizarre that the Conservatives are blocking their own motion, but the Liberals just have to hand over the documents. She is so concerned about ending the filibuster, so I am wondering when her government will be handing over the documents it is required to hand over.

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the member that it is rather odd that Conservatives are actually fighting against their own motion at this point. We are in agreement with the recommendation that was put forward by the Speaker. We are ready to send the documents, the issue, to PROC to be considered. There are a lot of considerations with what has been asked, and the RCMP and the Auditor General have expressed their concern about handing the documents over to them.

We are ready. We do not understand why the NDP will not align with us and let the issue go to PROC, where it should be considered, as has been recommended by the Speaker of the House, and move on to the really important issues we need to be considering here.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to talk about this important issue, a concurrence motion tabled by the Conservatives. I suspect that the only reason they have tabled another concurrence motion is because they are starting to run out of speakers to filibuster the other item they have in the House, which was talked about just moments ago.

When it comes to the environment and our climate policy, it is working. The evidence and the data is now coming out to show exactly how it is working. This is the first time since the Industrial Revolution that Canada has seen a decline in carbon emissions while at the same time experiencing economic growth, an increase in economic output. That is because of a number of policies that we brought forward. The one that has been talked about a lot today is the price on pollution, and I will touch on this.

It is not surprising to me that the Conservatives maintain their same position, at least the position they have had since the last election. During the last election, they ran on pricing pollution, in a very similar but very complicated way of earning aero points, so to speak, to get purchases from a catalogue, but they have flip-flopped completely since then. Therefore, I am not surprised.

However, I am most surprised about my NDP colleagues. The NDP members of Parliament, who we have been able to work with over the last number of years, have always been in favour of pricing pollution. They voted in favour of it 24 times, as the Conservatives point out. I have endless quotes on my laptop of NDP members in the House getting up and supporting pricing pollution time and time again.



*Routine Proceedings*

I was absolutely floored today when I heard the member for Edmonton Griesbach say that the New Democrats thought that the way it was done was not the best way, that it should have been done a different way and that the Prime Minister failed Canadians because he did not do it differently. Meanwhile, the member offered no solutions of what that other way might be. He never once mentioned this before today, or at least since the leader of the NDP made this big reveal toward the end of August.

The New Democrats were always squarely in focus, knowing that eight out of 10 Canadians got back more than they paid, in particular 94% of the households that earn less than \$50,000 a year definitely got back more.

Therefore, let us be absolutely clear. When the NDP abandoned its position on pricing pollution, it did not just abandon the idea of collecting money and understanding and agreeing with 300 Canadian economists, and countless professionals and economists throughout the entire world. It did not just abandon that principle as the right way to decrease emissions. It also abandoned the principle of knowing that more of the money collected through pricing pollution would be going back to those who needed it the most. That is the choice the New Democrats made, and they made it for a very good reason. They understood the politics of this to be worse than the potential benefit from a policy perspective.

I will be the first one to admit that we did not have a good communication plan. We did not inform Canadians, and we let the Conservatives take the narrative on the carbon tax. However, when I am older and look back on my time in Parliament, I would much rather be on the side of good policy than great slogans. I will be very proud to have stood up for good policy, even when Conservatives know that it is good policy because they have run on it several times in the past.

• (1235)

I also know that unlike the NDP, I did not cave to the Leader of the Opposition. I did not look for my own political opportunity over the slogans and the way that the Leader of the Opposition took great policy and weaponized it, regardless of what comes from that program in the future.

This whole idea of hypocrisy and flip-flopping is completely in line with what we see from Conservatives lately. The parliamentary secretary to the House leader brought this up and I will do it again.

We have Conservatives who, on a daily basis, have been jumping up in the House time and again demanding that more be done for their constituencies with respect to housing. The Leader of the Opposition has been putting forward proposals and slashing the programs that we have put in place. We then end up with Conservatives getting up and reciting his talking points. They talk about how the Liberals have done nothing good, that we cannot bring about any change for housing and that we need to help communities.

Then we find out what has happened behind the Leader of the Opposition's back, most likely without him knowing. I read what the member for St. Albert—Edmonton wrote to the Minister of Housing. Rest assured that there is no way the Leader of the Opposition would have allowed the member to send this letter to the Minister of Housing had he known what he wrote in it. However,

the member for St. Albert—Edmonton did, because, at the end of the day, he knew his community was more important than his party. He may go along with all the slogans and the three-word phrases the Conservatives come up with, but when push comes to shove and he really needs to get things done, he will ensure the minister knows how he really feels about the Liberal programs.

This is what the member for St. Albert—Edmonton said in his letter, “The requested federal funding is critical to making this needed development a reality — a development that will help address the significant shortage of affordable housing options in the community.” That is exactly what the member for St. Albert—Edmonton had to say about the housing accelerator fund, after many times getting up in the House and lambasting the government for doing nothing.

The member for Fundy Royal said that the housing accelerator fund “will provide much needed housing in this area.”

However, they are not the only two members. A number of other Conservative MPs have sent letters to the minister as well, encouraging the same thing: the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, the member for Simcoe North and the member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

Today we just learned of another member, who always likes to get up in the House. He is very good at this and I applaud him for it. At the beginning of him speaking, he always says, “It is an honour to rise on behalf of the constituents of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.” I want his constituents to know that not only does he take that pride when he gets up in the House, but he also takes that pride on their behalf when he sends a letter to the minister asking for housing accelerator funding for his community. He extends that outside of the House, but we would never, ever know that he was actually supportive of it by the way the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo engages in the House.

We have a great—

**An hon. member:** More, more.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives want more.

I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to give me an extra 10 minutes.

• (1240)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member have consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, it is beholden upon the Conservatives to start doing the right thing for Canadians, and that is not parroting the lines of their leader. That is standing up to the leader and telling him that before he goes talking about slashing the housing accelerator fund, maybe they should consider keeping the fund because it has really helped their communities. That is how members would be properly serving their leader, their caucus and their constituents.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, that was an entertaining speech from my colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands, although he did not talk much about the environment.

I asked the member for Winnipeg North a question, and I will ask the same question of the member for Kingston and the Islands. What is the environmental impact of allowing Montreal to dump raw sewage into St. Lawrence? About two or three years ago, in an ominous budget bill, the ability to dump raw sewage in the St. Lawrence River was extended for another 15 or 20 years.

What is the environmental impact of that? Also, could the member give us an update on the two billion trees that the government was supposed to plant?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the environmental impact is not good. I am not going to stand here and try to justify it.

However, I can also inform the member, if he does not understand how a sewage holding tank works, that the tank has a limit and when it gets to the limit, something is going to happen. It overflows. That happens in many cases in older municipalities because they are still relying on infrastructure where their storm water and sewers are not separated yet.

In municipalities like Kingston, a 300-year-old municipality, we have done extensive work to ensure that we can separate the sewer from the storm water. As a result, when 30 to 40 years ago we used to overflow into Lake Ontario 50 to 55 days a year, now the city of Kingston maybe has to do it one or two days a year now.

The idea is that we move forward and that we help build the infrastructure the communities need to deal with these problems.

● (1245)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have not been in the House for the past few weeks, but I did watch the debates remotely. I could not help but notice a conspicuous absence, not of a person I am not allowed to name, but of the public interest. There seemed to be no place for the public interest in the debates.

I have tremendous respect for my colleague opposite, but here is what I want to know. Is he not ashamed of his paradoxical attitude of saying one thing and doing another? On the surface, he is promoting environmental causes, but, at the same time, he is financing pipelines. In the name of the public interest, which is it? It has to be one or the other.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I must admit, I do not fully understand the question.

I am talking about the environmental impacts of the programs that we have brought in. I spoke to those very clearly for the first five to six minutes of my speech. We can do a lot more when it comes to protecting our environment. I know that pricing pollution is a very good model. I know that Quebec prices pollution through cap-and-trade and through the Western Alliance initiative with California and other states, and it used to be Ontario.

There is so much more we could do. I do not understand the member. I must have missed the question when he was asking about a paradox between what I am saying and what we are doing. We are on the right course to do what we need to do. As I indicated when I opened my speech, this is the first time since the Industrial Revolution that we are seeing a decline in emissions while at the same time seeing economic growth. This means that at least some the policies are working.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for what is oftentimes a very partisan speech. I do appreciate it, though, because we get insight into the many logical fallacies that exist within the Liberal Party's framework when it comes to preventing some of the worst disasters in our country.

In particular, I think about last summer when we had a severe wildfire season. First nations, the Auditor General and the Environmental Commissioner published this report and were very confident in their assumption, statement and recommendation that more needed to be done to support first nations in the prevention of some of these major disasters. Worst of all is the fact that the government knew there was flooding of a particular set of communities, which continues annually.

What is the member's message to first nations leaders who are going to be witnessing this debate, and the obvious absence of commentary from the member and the fact that there is a historic underfunding for emergency services for these communities that has been decades in the making?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, yes, it was a partisan speech. This is a political chamber. Show me a house of commons in the world that does not engage in partisan speeches. That is the whole point of being here.

To answer the member's question, he kind of answered the question in his question. He talked about more that needs to be done. Yes, more needs to be done, not rolling back and not trying to cancel programs that we already have, which is what the NDP is talking about when it comes to pricing pollution and the carbon rebate.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the people's House and speak on behalf of the good people of Tobique—Mactaquac and New Brunswickers. It is absolutely an honour.

*Routine Proceedings*

Today, I rise to speak to the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts regarding climate change, the environment and sustainable development. What is abundantly clear in this report is that the government has not accomplished its objectives or its stated goals, and it has not met its targets in any way, means or fashion. It is not even close. In fact, Canada is ranked last of the G7 nations in accomplishing these targets. It is an indictment on the current government for having wonderful rhetoric as it relates to the environment but absolutely atrocious results.

If I could summarize right off the top, the basis of my remarks is that there is a clear choice before us. Canadians will have a clear choice before them, and that is whether they want the approach of rhetoric or the approach of results. That choice can be clear.

I should say that I will be splitting my time with the member from Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

For so long, we have heard speech after speech in the House, presentation after presentation and announcement after announcement, some with lofty ideals and tremendous goals, and they sound excellent.

Who would not want two billion trees to be planted? It is a wonderful announcement. It was fantastic in 2019. The government said it was going to plant two billion trees, which is a great goal and objective.

I will update members on the results of that rhetoric. The rhetoric was to plant two billion trees. What percentage of that number has been accomplished in the five years since the Liberals made it? They accomplished 0.4% of their grandiose announcement of planting two billion trees. Canadians say it was tremendous rhetoric that made them feel warm and fuzzy.

Canadians were promised that the planet would heal, the weather would change and the tides would recede if only they implemented the Liberals' policy ideas, such as carbon tax, which, as a result of its implementation, we can clearly see has not accomplished the results, other than diminishing the amount of money left over in Canadians' pocketbooks at the end of the day. It has been a tax with no results.

The Liberals promised big plantations of trees, and there are very few trees to show for it. They promised that our environment and our ranking in dealing with the challenges in the environment would improve as a result of their approach, but, I am sad to say, we rank last of the G7 countries. Canadians are tired of soaring rhetoric. They are tired of lofty promises. They want tangible, achievable, real results.

Everyone in the House wants to be good stewards of the planet. I believe that. We want to hand off to future generations a better and cleaner planet than the way we found it. That is a great goal. We on this side of the House fully agree with that, but the question is how we approach attaining that goal. How does the House best implement policies that would make a real difference without punishing our own citizens and taxing our own people into absolute dependence upon an ever-growing, ever-expanding government? How do we do that? It is going to take practical and common-sense approaches. It is all of the above.

There is an ancient writing that put it this way: We should cast our bread upon many waters to see what comes back and what will prosper because we do not know exactly which way or which approach may work best. Conservatives believe in all the above when it comes to resource development and energy. We believe in being responsible, good stewards, but we also believe that we need to have the backs of Canadian energy producers and natural resource workers.

We need to take a back seat to no one when it comes to our environmental practices as it relates to resource development. We have the best environmental practices in the world. We have the best extraction practices, and we have some of the lowest emissions related to production of energy and natural resource supplies.

● (1250)

Why would we take a back seat, shut down those industries, put our boots on the backs of those producers and then outsource our energy needs to nations that do not have near the environmental regulations nor the ethical approaches to paying people good wages for producing those resources? I would say that we should stick up for Canadian producers, stand on the side of Canadian natural resources, tell the good story of natural resource development and say that it will do the planet a whole lot of good to have Canadian energy on the market.

People are tired of us talking down what we do here in Canada. We do a great job, and we do not need to take a back seat to anyone. Our environmental record is stellar, and it has not been done through taxation. It has been done through innovation and expansion of better technologies. We believe in that on this side of the House. We need more of that approach.

We need practical approaches that make a real, tangible difference. Yes, let us plant those trees, but let us do it comprehensively and let us do it with a real plan and a focus. One of the biggest gaping holes in the Liberals' approach to the environment, which, again, goes back to their rhetoric over results approach, is that there is a massive gaping hole. It is the lack of meaningful consultation with those whose lives and livelihoods are most impacted and affected by their policies and decisions.

For example, I sit on the fisheries and oceans committee, and do members know what we hear there? Some of these policies are going to have devastating consequences for the industry and for livelihoods. I ask the House, and I ask the government, who would want a better, healthier future for the fisheries in Canada than those whose livelihoods depend upon the fisheries and the health of our waters? It is our harvesters and those living in coastal communities, but they have been overlooked in the policy development of the government. They are frustrated because they are saying that they want clean oceans, that this is their livelihood, that this is their future. They want healthy fish stocks because that is where they derive their livelihoods from, but we ignore them.

*Routine Proceedings*

I go to the farmers. Who wants better, healthier and cleaner lands than our farmers, who produce the best food in the world and work from morning until night to make sure goods and food are delivered to Canadians? Who does that more than our farmers? We have a gaping hole in the government's approach. Liberals do not consult properly with our farmers when coming up with their policies around the ways and means of agriculture. They pass these rules and bring in these taxes, and they devastate those industries. As a result, they are frustrated and left out of the circle. It is the gaping hole that leads to the vast expanse between their rhetoric and their results.

There is one other sector I want to talk to members about and that is in regard to forest management. We all know that the greatest cleaner of the Earth's atmosphere is our trees. Canada is blessed with an abundance of trees with some of the best forest coverage in the world. We do not get nearly the adequate credit for that, yet what do they do? They made a grandiose announcement that two billion trees were going to be planted. They then deliver 0.4% of that target in five years.

I ask the Liberals if they have consulted with those who are experts in the field of forest management. Have they consulted with some of the largest tree producers as well as tree planters in the world? I know for a fact that they have not talked with many of them. As a result, they wonder why we cannot get trees in the ground. Perhaps it is because of the gaping hole between the rhetoric and their results.

They have not consulted with those who are most connected to the very industries they are talking about. It is time we changed approach. It is time we got back to meaningful consultation with those who are most affected by the policies. I believe that, if we get on the right side of this, we could win this debate, but more than win the debate, we could get the results that Canadians are demanding in being responsible stewards for our country's environment. We can improve our results and our outcomes by having a common-sense approach.

What better way to get that than to have a carbon tax election so Canadians can weigh in on this?

• (1255)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking a lot about climate action. It is interesting, with the Conservative Party and the leader of the Conservative Party in particular, and here is where it is really important for members across the way to understand this, that we have the far-right, MAGA Conservative leader who is actually causing all sorts of reactions, such as the flip-flop on the price on pollution.

There is an issue in there that is really important—

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, you made a comment to the last Liberal speaker that they should not cause disruption. There is name-calling going on, and that is adding to the disruption in the House. I would like you to rule on that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his intervention. We just need to make sure we are all honourable members in this chamber.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, if I can get away with the hon. far-right, MAGA Conservative leader, as I think it is a fair description of—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is one step too far.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I will start from the top, and I withdraw the comment.

The leader of the Conservative Party has done a flip-flop with regard to the price on pollution. That is being heavily influenced by the far-right, in particular the MAGA Conservatives in the United States. It has crept in and is ultimately being endorsed by the leader of the Conservative Party today. I am talking about fake news, fake facts and how Conservatives say whatever they want that they can easily justify.

This is just like how the leader of the Conservative Party has made the determination that he is not going to get the security clearance, and one needs to ask the question why. Can the member opposite give a clear indication of why the leader of the Conservative Party made the decision to not get his security clearance? Does he not believe Canadians have a right to know what he is hiding? What in his background is he scared to share with Canadians because, ultimately, I do not think he would be able to get the security clearance.

• (1300)

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague's question is totally irrelevant.

The issue at hand is that the commissioner of the environment for Canada was brought before committee, and my hon. colleague from Northumberland—Peterborough South asked a straightforward question. He asked, “In the last seven years, has this government achieved any of the international carbon reduction targets?”, to which the commissioner of the environment for Canada responded, “Not that I'm aware of....”

Therefore, I would say, once again, that we have tremendous examples of soaring rhetoric and no results. We need to get back to results.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member says that the rhetoric needs to be toned down and then gives us nothing but rhetoric. The reality is that the Harper regime was terrible on climate change. We saw housing prices double in the Harper regime. We saw food bank lineups double during the Harper regime. The Harper regime and the Conservative government were absolutely terrible, and he knows this.

New Brunswickers took a look at the Conservatives, said, “Hell, no” and threw them out of office just a few weeks ago.

*Routine Proceedings*

The reality is that climate change has an impact. In my riding and in the Lower Mainland, we lost 600 people due to the heat dome. The atmospheric rivers that cut British Columbia off from the rest of the country and the forest fires have had profound impacts, yet the Conservatives have not produced a climate plan. They have no environmental policy.

I appreciate my colleague's rhetoric, but the reality is he needs to have substance. Why do the Conservatives have no environmental plan?

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Mr. Speaker, we certainly do have one. We have a practical environment plan that is much better than the alternative, which is a huge tax plan.

Here is the issue: The hon. colleague represents the wonderful province of British Columbia, which has had in place now for over 15 years carbon pricing, or a carbon tax. On the carbon tax, I asked the commissioner of the environment at the natural resources committee if we had yet in this country a metric that could tell Canadians how much carbon had been reduced from Canada's atmosphere as a result of the implementation of the carbon tax. His response to that was that there is no such metric.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will keep my question short. Economists are virtually unanimous on the fact that cap-and-trade systems and policies that put a price on climate change work. They reduce emissions without reducing economic growth rates.

What are my colleague's thoughts on that?

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Mr. Speaker, what I find interesting is that we had a comparison not that long ago with a neighbouring jurisdiction that basically, as a result of its approach, which was expanding in regard to natural gas development and energy development, became much more energy secure while its carbon footprint diminished. At the same time, we were signing accords and giving wonderful speeches with soaring rhetoric about what we were going to do with the implementation of the carbon tax, and our carbon emissions went up while the other jurisdiction's went down. We need a more practical approach that gets better results and less rhetoric.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change was listening to the speech and would like to ask the member a question. I would ask for unanimous consent to allow the Minister of the Environment—

**Some hon. members:** No.

• (1305)

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that, as the member for Kingston and the Islands pointed out, my remarks have drawn the attention of the minister. I look forward to his having the opportunity to hear a little about the effect of his record on Canadians.

After nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, its members claim time and time again that they are looking out for people, but I will tell who they are looking out for. It is always Liberal insiders. It is never about what the Liberals put up in the window. There is always a sleight of hand with these Liberals.

Of course, in the context of what has been happening in Parliament, which has been paralyzed by Liberal corruption for more than a month, the \$400-million scandal at the green slush fund is a testament to what these Liberals prioritize. It is not the environment. It is not what the environment minister says it is. It is helping well-connected insiders.

The Liberals appointed one of their friends to chair the board, and she did what Liberals do. She stuck her hand in taxpayers' pockets and she took out their wallets, cleaned them out, and put them back in—

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is the member talking about the lady who donated thousands of dollars to the Conservative Party?

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is not a point of order.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes has the floor.

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, the truth hurts for these Liberals, who are so corrupt. The member might be one of the dozens of Liberal MPs who do not support their own Prime Minister. The Prime Minister broke the law twice. Multiple ministers also broke the law. When the Liberals appointed their friends to the green slush fund board, they also got caught breaking the law, putting themselves before Canadians and robbing them blind while Canadians line up at food banks in record numbers.

We have seen the record after nine years. Costs are up to such a point that food bank use has never been what it is after nine years of these economic vandals. Millions of Canadians are using food banks in a single month. That is the Liberal government's legacy: doubling food bank usage in communities right across this country, including in the member's riding. His legacy is doubling food bank use in Winnipeg. It is shameful.

What do Canadians get? A third of those food bank users are children. For the first time in my lifetime, 25% of Canadians do not know how they are going to feed their families. Unemployment is not at 25%. Double digits of Canadians are suffering from food insecurity after nine years of the NDP-Liberals' economic vandalism. How do we have that in this country? That is one in four Canadians.

*Routine Proceedings*

I will tell members who is not lined up at food banks: well-connected Liberal insiders. It is like the \$60-million arrive scam, when the government paid tens of millions of dollars to a company that did no actual IT work on an app that should have cost many orders of magnitude less. It put Liberal insiders first. What did Canadians get in return? Were they safer? No, but their rent doubled, their mortgages doubled. People used to be able to pay off a mortgage in 25 years. Now that is how long it takes to save up for a down payment.

It is a broken promise to Canadians. The list is too long. There is the \$9-million condo, the luxury suite the Liberals put the Prime Minister's media buddy Tom Clark in. He is on Billionaires' Row while Canadians are living under bridges in tents in record numbers. That is the legacy of the NDP-Liberals and it is shameful.

I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

"the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, presented on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, be not now concurred in, but that it be recommitted to the Committee for further consideration, including with respect to the implementation of requirements for financial institutions to disclose climate-related financial information, an initiative which the Committee traced back to a 2015 decision of G20 central bank governors, provided that, for the purpose of this study, Mark Carney be ordered to appear as a witness, for at least two hours, at a date and time to be fixed by the Chair of the Committee but within 21 days of the adoption of this order."

This is incredibly important. We can look at the record of economic vandalism by these Liberals, and that is why I have moved this amendment today.

• (1310)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The amendment is in order.

It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

The question is on the amendment.

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

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded vote, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until later this day at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

\* \* \*

• (1315)

**PETITIONS**

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions.

The first petition is signed by folks concerned with the proposed 60-kilometre route for Highway 413. They note that it would cut through 2,000 acres of farmland, 85 waterways, 220 wetlands and the habitats of 29 federally listed threatened and endangered

species, which must be protected as per the Fisheries Act and the Species at Risk Act.

The petitioners note a complete absence of meaningful consultation with indigenous communities along the proposed route. They note that a comprehensive federal environmental assessment could mitigate potential environmental harm and ensure sustainable development, and that the federal government has a responsibility to oversee a responsible, predictable and constitutionally robust environmental review.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to take several actions. The first is to ensure that the federal government uses every tool available to assess and protect indigenous rights as well as the area impacted by the proposed Highway 413, and to protect the Greenbelt, farmland and natural ecosystems, including identified species at risk.

OPIOIDS

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of folks who are devastated by the poisoned drug crisis. They note that since 2016, over 34,000 people across the country have died, each one a preventable death, as the result of a poisoned drug supply.

The petitioners note that the Canadian Public Health Association and other experts have recommended a number of measures that, comprehensively, could address this crisis. As a result, they call on the government to declare a public health emergency as a result of poisoned drugs; treat this crisis as a health issue rather than a criminal one; provide a regulated safer supply of drugs for people who need them, to reduce overdose deaths; ensure that folks have access to get to treatment, as one has to be alive to get to treatment; and last, make significant, long-term investments in supports for those who use drugs or those who are in recovery.

PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to table a petition submitted by the hard-working firefighters of IAFF Local 181 in Regina, Saskatchewan, addressing an urgent issue impacting the health and safety of firefighters across Canada. This petition, signed by 139 residents of Regina and Saskatchewan, calls for immediate action to ban PFAS in firefighter gear and firefighter foam.

PFAS chemicals, as we know, are man-made and resistant to heat, water and oil, but their durability comes at a significant cost. Scientific evidence links these substances to severe health risks, including cancer, putting firefighters, who already face hazardous conditions, at greater risk. Research shows that PFAS can accumulate in the body, leading to serious health issues. Alarmingly, firefighters face a higher cancer risk than the general population, and we must mitigate these risks by regulating what we can control in their working conditions.

Several countries have restricted PFAS use. Canada must follow suit. Our firefighters deserve gear free from toxic chemicals. Let us protect those who risk their lives for us.

## FIREARMS

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to present a petition today in the House. The government has attempted to ban and seize the hunting rifles and shotguns of millions of Canadians. The targeting of farmers and hunters does not fight crime, and the government has failed those who participate in the Canadian tradition of sport shooting. The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to stop any and all current and future bans on hunting and sport shooting firearms.

Sadly, I am presenting this petition because the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley refused to do so.

## NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments the member just made, because members of Parliament present them on behalf of their constituents regardless of what a member's position is.

The constituents from across the country who have signed this petition note that Canada was a founding member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, in 1949 and has participated in every NATO intervention. They note that NATO has failed to uphold article 1 of its charter “to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security...are not endangered”.

The petitioners note that according to a NATO defence expenditures report, Canada's military spending increased from \$20 billion in 2014 to \$39 billion in 2023. They also note that throughout the year, NATO engages in exercises and operations that involve thousands of soldiers and vehicles that adversely impact the climate and environment, among other things.

The petitioners are calling on the government, as well as the House of Commons, to withdraw from NATO, remove Canadian troops from Latvia, reduce military spending and conduct public consultations on new foreign policy based on peace and international co-operation.

Some 628 Canadians have signed petition e-4979. The person advancing this petition lives in the riding of Waterloo. My job is to represent the diversity of views and perspectives within that constituency and it is an honour and privilege to do so.

\* \* \*

● (1320)

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## Privilege

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

[English]

## PRIVILEGE

## REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed from November 4 consideration of the motion, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years under the Prime Minister, Canadians face a buffet of corruption scandals, with each new revelation showing just how entrenched corruption has become under the Liberal government. The latest is the green slush fund, a \$400-million scandal that the Liberals are scrambling to keep hidden from Canadians. Unfortunately, that is why we are here today.

The Auditor General uncovered that Liberal appointees funnelled hundreds of millions of hard-earned taxpayer money to companies that the appointees themselves owned, setting off no fewer than 186 glaring conflict of interest violations. What did Canadians get from the government? Instead of transparency, Canadians got a government openly refusing a House order to turn over key documents for an investigation. This refusal to co-operate led the Speaker of the House to rule that the Liberals have violated a direct order of Parliament. Canadians want to know why the government is refusing to turn over these documents. They have a right to know. What is so damning in those documents that the government is refusing a House order to hand them over?

At a time when Canadians continue to shoulder soaring costs for food, housing and basic necessities, the government's cover-up has not only wasted hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer money, but also paralyzed Parliament, not allowing members of the House to continue crucial work on urgent issues, such as the rising cost of food, the cost of housing and the cost of the Prime Minister. Perhaps stopping these discussions at a crucial time when Canadians want a carbon tax election is exactly what the Prime Minister and his elitist friends had in mind.

As Canadians continue to live through this unprecedented crisis of government waste and Canadian suffering, today, instead of addressing critical issues that Canadians are struggling with, we find ourselves talking about the government's ongoing negligence, incompetence and continued corruption. Imagine being a taxpayer who is struggling to pay for food, lining up at the food bank with children and then hearing that billions of hard-earned tax dollars are not only being wasted by the government, but being given to Liberal friends.

*Privilege*

I have heard from many of my constituents in Edmonton who are struggling to afford to heat their homes, to fill up their car with gas and to feed their families. People in Canada are dumpster diving to feed themselves. We never thought that could happen here in this great country. This is what life in Canada looks like for many who work and are still unable to pay their bills.

These hard-working Canadians are shocked that the taxes they pay simply disappear in a web of Liberal corruption scandals, bogus apps, useless infrastructure banks and endless corruption, supported by the NDP. Despite all of this, the NDP's support continues to prop up the Liberal Prime Minister, allowing the disgusting misuse of taxpayer funds to persist.

The 2024 HungerCount report shows that food banks saw a record of over two million visits in March 2024 alone. That is up 6% from last year and a staggering 90% since 2019. Many of these people used to donate to the food bank and now are lining up at the food bank to help support their families. Over a quarter of these visits were by children. Because of this high demand, nearly 30% of food banks have reported running out of food over the past year.

Unemployment and economic misery continue to rise while paycheques are shrinking. It is the Prime Minister's inflationary spending that has driven up the price of groceries, gas and heating. To make matters worse, his endless tax hikes drive businesses, jobs and investments out of our country. Billions of dollars of investment have left Canada and, along with it, all of the jobs that it would have created.

Those in the middle class, once secure, are now struggling to keep a roof over their heads, and life has become an uphill battle for Canadian families. This is not just a temporary hardship. It is a fundamental shift in what it means to live and work in Canada.

• (1325)

Today, life costs more under the Prime Minister, and hard work no longer provides the security it once did. Canadian families with two working parents cannot afford to buy a home anymore in Canada. Nine years ago, this would have been shocking to hear.

Since 2015, the cost of housing has skyrocketed. Rent has doubled, mortgage payments have doubled and the down payment needed to buy a home has doubled. In fact, housing costs have risen more in these nine years than all of the previous decades combined. Canada, a country with vast, open land, now has the highest housing costs and one of the fewest homes per capita among all G7 countries. At the same time, life has never been better for Liberal insiders and elites, who are filling their pockets with hard-earned Canadian taxpayer dollars. One government project and one government scandal at a time, they are lining their pockets.

Despite a House order to provide documents for the green slush fund, the government has chosen self-interest over the best interests of Canadians. Rather than doing what is right, the Liberals have failed to show leadership, transparency and accountability, showing the House and all Canadians that they will do anything to cover up their multitude of scandals, including this \$400-million corruption scandal.

How did we get here? Let us review what the green slush fund is and why the Liberal government is hiding key documents that would aid the RCMP in this investigation.

Sustainable Development Technology Canada was created as a billion-dollar fund with support across party lines to help green technology start-ups tackle climate and environmental issues. This program ran smoothly until about 2017, under the Prime Minister's newly appointed Liberal board chair.

After a Conservative motion led to an audit by the Auditor General, it was revealed that \$400 million of taxpayer funds were misused, with 80% of reviewed cases showing conflicts of interest. The Auditor General's findings only scratched the surface. She reviewed a sample of cases, finding that 80% contained legal violations. Those central to the scandal, who were Liberal-appointed board members, had even managed to secure other government positions. One SDTC board member, Andrée-Lise Méthot, acknowledged multiple conflicts of interest involving funds directed to companies that she was financially invested in. The current environment minister, before his cabinet role, was an adviser at Cycle Capital, the venture firm Méthot founded, which received SDTC funding during her board tenure.

As these revelations surfaced, Méthot was appointed to the board of the \$35-billion Canada Infrastructure Bank, where McKinsey consultants with Liberal ties were heavily involved. Despite the conflicts of interest in funding companies tied to her financial interests, she transitioned to this new role. Ms. Méthot has been directly implicated in mismanaging \$42 million of taxpayer money to benefit companies she was financially linked to. Despite clear violations to benefit her own company, the government saw fit to appoint her to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, which is another example of its waste and negligence. This is what the blatant misuse of Canadians' trust looks like: when individuals who repeatedly violate conflict of interest rules are rewarded with prime government positions due to their Liberal connections.



Speaking of the Canada Infrastructure Bank, this is another glaring misuse of taxpayer dollars and another project riddled with similar issues of mismanagement and conflicts of interest. Just as with the green slush fund, the Canada Infrastructure Bank has become a haven for Liberal insiders and politically connected firms that are more interested in securing lucrative contracts than delivering real value to Canadians.

• (1330)

The Canada Infrastructure Bank, presented as the Liberal government's flagship initiative, has proven to be a costly disappointment. Instead of delivering the infrastructure that Canadians desperately needed, the Canada Infrastructure Bank has squandered taxpayer monies on excessive overhead, high-priced consultants and generous CEO payouts, spending far more on salaries and bonuses than actual projects. Nearly \$1 million was wasted on consulting and legal fees for an electricity project that never even came to fruition. With a budget of \$35 billion allocated seven years ago, Canadians were promised a return on investment of up to four times from private sector company contributions, as well as an ambitious multiplier effect of 11:1. Yet, seven years later, those promises remain unfulfilled.

The Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities has concluded that the CIB is beyond repair and recommended its abolition, citing expert testimony from stakeholders who highlighted its inefficiency, lack of transparency and inability to attract private sector investment.

At a time when Canadians are grappling with record high inflation and rising costs of living, they cannot afford these expensive government initiatives that fail to deliver anything that they promised to Canadians. Once again, the Liberal government's mismanagement of the CIB exemplifies a broader pattern of waste under the Prime Minister.

Since June, the government has demonstrated complete disregard for Parliament's authority and its duty to uphold Canadian democratic principles. Conservatives had introduced a motion demanding transparency. We called on the government to release all the files, communications and financial records on their green slush fund to Parliament, which would then turn the documents over to the RCMP for a much-needed investigation.

However, after the motion passed, the 30-day deadline for compliance was ignored by the Prime Minister. The government has openly disrespected Canadians and this House's authority when some of their departments provided heavily redacted documents and others outright refused to provide any documents at all.

The Speaker of this place ruled that this refusal showed contempt, quoting that only partial disclosures were made, owing either to redactions or the withholding of documents. Some met the order with complete refusal. The Department of Justice alone withheld 10,000 pages, violating Parliament's demand for evidence so that the RCMP could proceed with its investigation.

This is not a political debate. The RCMP is not investigating this matter at the direction of the Conservatives. The RCMP found credible grounds for a Criminal Code investigation. It will review

### *Privilege*

the documents, and it will determine if charges are warranted. The RCMP will proceed as it sees fit.

The House of Commons represents the people of Canada with absolute powers under our Constitution to oversee the actions of the government and the actions of the Prime Minister.

In Canada, no one is above the law and everyone must abide by our Constitution, even the Prime Minister and his wealthy buddies. By consistently dismissing Parliament's authority, the Liberal government demonstrates open contempt for this balance of power, undermining the very institution that checks executive actions. Our democratic strength rests on the House's authority to hold the government accountable, investigate breaches and protect Canadians' interests.

We cannot let the actions of the Liberal government dilute the power of Parliament and the integrity of our democracy. What exactly is the Liberal government trying to hide in this case? Why is it so determined to keep these documents from Canadians? Just how far does this corruption reach?

• (1335)

The government's embarrassment over the mismanagement of the green slush fund has driven it to shut Parliament down, yet this does nothing to excuse the actions of those involved in the slush fund to relieve the government of its duty to Canadians. It owes Canadians, Parliament and the RCMP a full explanation of what happened, when and just how deep this scandal goes.

This House could get back to business today if the Liberals showed the integrity to hand over those documents, yet we know that they will not. These documents would expose the extent of the Liberal corruption and exactly how high this goes. It is clear the NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost, the crime or the corruption. Canadians deserve better than a government that prioritizes its own pockets over the well-being of the people.

It is time for the NDP-Liberals to stop hiding the evidence, hand over the documents and let Parliament get back to work for Canadians.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than a multi-million dollar game that the Conservative Party continues to play at great expense to Canadians.

As opposed to the government listening to the Conservatives, we are listening to the RCMP, the Auditor General of Canada, the former law clerk and other stakeholders who say the tactic the Conservatives are using is wrong. One expert even indicated that it is virtually abusive. If anything, the leader of the Conservative Party, the leader of an opposition party, is virtually in contempt with what is taking place in the House. That should not surprise any of us because he was the parliamentary secretary to Stephen Harper, the only prime minister to ever be held in contempt of Parliament in the Commonwealth.

*Privilege*

Does the member opposite not agree that the Conservative leader needs to start putting Canadian interests ahead of his own personal interests and the interests of the Conservative Party? Let us allow the Conservative motion to be voted on.

• (1340)

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, one thing I will agree with the member on is that this is a very expensive scandal. Canadians know that over \$400 million of hard-earned Canadian taxpayer money was funnelled through a Liberal-appointed chair to Liberal-connected companies that they lined their own pockets with. Canadians deserve answers. Canadians deserve justice in this case.

This Parliament and the Speaker decided that those documents should be presented to the RCMP. We in the opposition are here to make sure that happens.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the current situation is so serious that listening to the cacophony of the debate makes it almost impossible to do anything but laugh. Ha, ha! Done. It is absurd, ludicrous, Kafkaesque even. Public interest in this debate is being completely snuffed out. There are documents that must be produced. There is sufficient evidence to support the seriousness of the matter. The documents must be handed over, but the party opposite has set a condition that it knows cannot be met, namely, that the documents be turned over to the RCMP. In fact, the RCMP freely admits that, to avoid compromising its investigation, it does not want the documents. This leaves us with a paradox, namely a debate based on the weakness of the human spirit.

Will my colleague finally see reason? Will he quit repeating empty slogans and phrases and let the debate move on?

[*English*]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives will not back down from protecting Canadians and Canadians' best interests. Some \$400 million was funnelled to Liberal insiders. They stole that money. Canadians deserve to get it back and know what happened and the RCMP should get all of those documents so it can bring criminal charges on all the people involved in this case.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we support the motion. We want to get to the bottom of things, and NDP MPs were key in getting to the bottom of the SNC-Lavalin scandal and the WE Charity.

However, my colleague said that we need to get answers for Canadians and he also talked about what is a considerable amount of money, \$400 million, tied up with the SDTC scandal. What he did not mention was that the Conservative scandals under the Harper regime were even bigger. I am talking about the \$400 million for the ETS scandal and the \$1 billion for the G8 scandal.

We remember the misspending that took place at that time. The Phoenix pay scandal was \$2.2 billion. With the anti-terrorism funding, the Conservatives simply lost the paper trail. It was \$3.1 billion. The Conservatives were much worse, in terms of the massive amounts of corruption and misspending under the Harper regime. The Conservatives misspent a lot more, and we have never had an apology from a single Conservative member. No one has acknowl-

edged the fact that they shut down all the parliamentary inquiries into these spending scandals.

My question is simply this to my colleague: If \$400 million is bad, why is the \$5.2 billion that Conservatives misspent not so much worse?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, right on cue, there is a New Democrat standing up to protect his Liberal buddies, and this is what we have seen all along right here. In Parliament they will continue to stand up for this Prime Minister. The NDP-Liberal government is doing nothing but protecting itself.

We are here for accountability and for transparency. The House of Commons has voted for these documents to be turned over to the RCMP, and we will make sure that happens.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will leave the NDP comments where they stand.

The NDP members talk about some of the scandals, but one thing I find fascinating is the fact that this Prime Minister is the first prime minister who has ever been in a conflict of interest, not once and not twice. How many cabinet ministers have also been found in conflict of interests?

I would like my friend to answer the question of whether we know how many times Liberal cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister have violated the Conflict of Interest Act?

• (1345)

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is part of the Liberals' strategy, that they continue to have so many scandals and so many conflict of interest violations that they are just hoping Canadians forget about them, but we will not forget. We are on the side of Canadians. We are going to make sure that the Liberals are held accountable for their actions and held accountable for every single scandal that they have had, especially this one. This is \$400 million of Canadians' hard-earned taxpayer money. We are going to get it back for them.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that member is number 98 in terms of the number of Conservatives who have spoken on the Conservative filibuster, and there are still a lot more to come. There is no doubt about that.

I want to take the member to an issue that is very serious here in Canada today and get his comment. The issue of foreign interference is very real. It is something that Canadians are concerned about, and there is only one leader in the House of Commons who has made the decision not to get the security clearance. That begs the question as to why it is that the leader of the Conservative Party continues to not get the security clearance.

Many, including myself, believe that he actually has something to hide and that there is something that he should be telling Canadians, but he is choosing not to do that, and that is the reason he has made the decision not to get the security clearance, unlike every other leader in the House of Commons.

Does the member not agree that the leader of the Conservative Party should put his personal interest to the side, come clean and share with Canadians why he does not feel he should have to get the security clearance?

What is he hiding?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, this is the debate today: What are the Liberals hiding? That really is the question, because they will go to any lengths to talk about anything except what we are debating today, which is 400 million hard-earned taxpayer dollars being funnelled to Liberal insiders. The RCMP needs to look into the situation. The RCMP needs those documents. This House of Commons voted for those documents to be turned over to the RCMP.

We will continue to push for justice.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my hon. colleague. I have not really gotten an answer to this question so far.

Does the Conservative Party promise to keep funding green technology and sustainable development companies, and effectively this time? That was not the case with SDTC, but we know that funding is necessary for a just green transition.

[English]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, what we are committed to is ensuring that in this place there is accountability and transparency from the government. It now has a whole range of scandals; it is hard to keep track of how many there are and of all the conflict of interest breaches, of which there are over 186 in just the one case. That is in addition to what the Prime Minister and other ministers have gone through.

We will continue to hold the government to account; that is why we need a carbon tax election to change this.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the subamendment.

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

• (1350)

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded vote, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until later this day at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

### Privilege

REQUEST FOR WITNESS TO ATTEND AT THE BAR OF THE HOUSE

The House resumed from October 1 consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, who is Randy? That is the central question before the House as a result of the Speaker's ruling that found a prima facie question of privilege after the Minister of Employment's business partner Stephen Anderson refused to disclose to the ethics committee who Randy is.

The ethics committee's probe into Randy began when Global News reported that the Minister of Employment was involved in a shady PPE company called Global Health Imports with Stephen Anderson. According to Global News, the minister had been a partner at Global Health Imports along with Stephen Anderson up until the time he had been elected in 2021, and that he continued to maintain a 50% ownership stake with Anderson.

Global News reported that the company was mired in allegations of fraud and ripping off clients. Indeed, multiple judgments have been issued against the minister's company by Alberta courts, which have ordered the minister's company to pay back clients \$7.8 million for ripping them off.

Global Health Imports faces a litany of other lawsuits, including a lawsuit commenced by California-based company the Ghaoui Group. The Ghaoui Group, like other clients of the minister's company, purchased PPE. The PPE was never delivered, but the Ghaoui Group was on the hook for half a million dollars, having transferred a half-a-million-dollar deposit to the minister's company.

One of the excuses provided by Stephen Anderson for the failure to deliver PPE was that the Global Health Imports warehouse burned down; amazingly, it was two weeks after Global Health Imports received the half a million dollars. Anderson was then reported to have told the Ghaoui Group that once it collected the insurance money, maybe then he would be in a position to repay the half-a-million-dollar deposit. The Edmonton police, in their investigation of the fire, concluded that in all likelihood it was arson, just by coincidence.

A minister is involved in a shady company mired in allegations of fraud and ordered by Alberta courts to pay back clients \$7.8 million. There are allegations or evidence of potential arson and insurance fraud. I would submit that this alone ought to have been enough for the Prime Minister to tell the Minister of Employment that he is fired, that he is out of cabinet.

However, there is more. Global News reported that someone named Randy connected with Global Health Imports was involved in shaking down the Ghaoui Group for the half-a-million-dollar deposit. That was evidenced in text messages. Among the text messages that Global News uncovered was a message from Stephen Anderson to the Ghaoui Group, leading up to the shakedown, in which he says, "What is going on? I just received this from Randy!"

*Statements by Members*

He then copied and pasted the message he had received from Randy, which states, “Anderson, it's 13:14 MST and 15:14 EST it literally takes 10 seconds to complete a transfer, I am telling you we are not allocating like this...it's midday and nothing is completed, I am calling Felix to discuss. Be available in 15 for a partner call.”

Why are the text messages so significant? Very simply, if the minister is the Randy in those text messages, then the minister broke the law. The Conflict of Interest Act is clear: A minister of the Crown shall not be involved in the operations of a business. If the minister is the Randy in question, then the minister was involved in the operations of the business working to secure a half-a-million-dollar deposit for Global Health Imports, not to mention participating in a partners meeting.

• (1355)

That is why the ethics committee launched its investigation. We brought the minister to committee at the beginning of June, and the minister was adamant he was not the Randy in question. How convenient that is, except for a few inconvenient facts for the minister.

First of all, the Ghaoui Group believed at all times that the Minister of Employment was the Randy in the text messages. When Global News reached out to Anderson to inquire who the Randy in the text messages was, he said that it was not the minister but the VP of logistics. When Global News inquired as to who the VP of logistics was, it found out it was not a Randy but one Edward Anderson, the father of Stephen Anderson. Stephen Anderson later admitted before the ethics committee that he had lied to Global News.

Global News undertook a further investigation. It could not find a trace of another Randy at Global Health Imports. I would further add that the Randy referenced in the text messages was a partner. The minister had been a partner, along with Anderson, up until his election. He had a 50% stake in the company at the time of the text messages. According to his own evidence at committee, the minister admitted that it was a small operation and that there were a handful of people in the company: him, Anderson and a few others.

In the face of that, without a trace of another Randy and without any explanation for who the other Randy could be, there is only one reasonable inference that can be drawn, which is that the Minister of Employment is the Randy in the text messages. He is the Randy who was involved in the shakedown of the Ghaoui Group and who is involved in allegations of wire fraud, and he is the Randy who, as minister, contravened the Conflict of Interest Act.

The minister's story does not add up. Everyone knows that he is the Randy in question, and that is why Conservatives have been consistent in calling for the disgraced minister to resign from cabinet. For months he has refused to do so, so we have called on the Prime Minister to fire the disgraced minister. However, of course the scandal-plagued, conflict-ridden Prime Minister, who has been found guilty not once but twice of violating the Conflict of Interest Act, is standing behind his corrupt minister.

It is an absolute disgrace. It underscores why the government cannot be replaced soon enough and why this country needs a carbon tax election now.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

• (1400)

[English]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I represent a strong and vibrant Lebanese community in Scarborough Centre. They are business owners, professionals and families who are an integral part of Scarborough's social and economic fabric. The Lebanese Canadian community nationwide numbers between 200,000 and 400,000 people. They are deeply concerned for their loved ones overseas, anxiously following every news report and waiting on each call or text to confirm their loved ones' safety. This ongoing crisis has a deep impact on their mental health and daily lives. This is no way to live.

While the community and I appreciate the government's recent measures to support those already here in Canada, we believe more is necessary. We call on the government to enact special measures allowing the extended family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents to seek temporary refuge here in Canada. No Canadian should be forced to leave their parents, spouse, children, grandparents or siblings behind in danger. We urge the government to heed this call for compassion and assistance.

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**WAR HEROES FROM CUMBERLAND—COLCHESTER**

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is important that Canadians pay tribute to the countless men and women who left behind homes and families to serve the cause of freedom in the face of unimaginable odds. Cumberland—Colchester has been home to many Canadians who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Ivan Lee Crowe was born near Stewiacke and landed on Juno Beach during D-Day with the North Nova Scotia Highlanders. On June 7, 1944, he was murdered along with 10 other Canadian prisoners by Hitler's 12th SS division at the Ardenne Abbey; it was a despicable war crime that still resonates today. He was 21 years old.

Daniel McMasters grew up on Young Street in Truro. He served in the legendary First Special Service Force during the liberation of Italy and was only 20 years old when he gave his life on May 28, 1944, near Anzio.

I also want to pay a very special tribute to Lloyd Coady, a cherished member of our community and a proud veteran of the Second World War, who will celebrate his 100th birthday and is still going strong. God bless Lloyd for all he has done.

Lest we forget.

*Statements by Members***CANADIAN PEACEKEEPERS**

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during Veterans Week, I am honoured to speak about Cyprus 2024, commemorating Canada's contribution to Cyprus since 1964. This year marks the 60th anniversary of Operation Snowgoose, Canada's longest peacekeeping mission, and the 50th anniversary of a forgotten war.

I acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Major-General Walter Holmes and Colonel James Holsworth, both retired, who are residents of Kingston and the Islands and who co-chair the Cyprus 2024 committee. Their leadership ensures that our veterans' sacrifices are remembered and celebrated.

This week, veterans and their families will participate in guided tours, cultural excursions, historical walks and remembrance services in Cyprus. They will meet Canadian UN soldiers who are currently serving, as well as Cypriots who lived through the conflict. This pilgrimage and the historical exhibits across Canada commemorate the past and strengthen our veteran community, fostering unity and remembrance.

Let us honour their legacy and support our veterans and their families.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**SOCIAL ECONOMY MONTH**

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, throughout Quebec, people are at the heart of the social economy, and that heart beats strong: There are more than 220,000 engaged workers who are happy to work at 11,200 group ventures, generating more than \$47.8 billion annually. Social economy is the idea that the future belongs to us and we can all contribute to building a more just and more united world.

November is the time to remember that, as citizens, we can choose the social economy. By becoming a member of a co-op, by buying goods and services from a non-profit organization, by contributing to a project in one's community or even becoming a member of a board, it is possible to do business differently. What could be better than taking action and being part of the solution? That is what we see from these thriving entrepreneurs who are the pride of our communities. That is the type of business that does good.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I wish everyone a happy social economy month.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[English]

**WILLIAM COSGROVE**

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has lost a pioneer in global water management.

William Cosgrove was a visionary who recognized long ago the crucial importance of water, not only for developing countries struggling with water scarcity for drinking and sanitation but also for a world increasingly in the grips of climate change.

Bill's passion for water, the environment and humanitarian development guided a 50-year career that included 17 years at the World Bank. He also served as chair of the international steering committee of the dialogue on water and climate and member of the task force on water millennium development goals, and he directed the third UN world water report.

However, Bill's attention was not limited to global water issues. Over 55 years ago, and well ahead of his time, he advocated for creating a catchment basin for excess rainwater in the city of Dollard-des-Ormeaux. Today, William Cosgrove Centennial Park serves a vital practical purpose while offering local citizens a peaceful and refreshing oasis on a hot summer's day.

To Bill's wife, Frances, and children, Anne-Marie, Carolee, Christopher-John, Sean, Ginny and Catherine, we offer our deepest condolences.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last month, over 10 million Cubans spent nearly a week without light after their communist regime plunged them into darkness. Cubans took to the streets to protest the repressive government responsible for the hardships they continue to endure, but it is clear that they need the international community to speak up in support. Canada used to be a voice that Cuban dissidents could rely on as they fought for freedom from Castro's dictatorship. However, under the Liberal government, this is no longer the case.

Earlier this year, I spoke with Cuban dissidents and political prisoners from across the region. My message was clear: In the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition, Canada will have a prime minister who will advocate for freedom and democracy and who will stand against dictators. We see the people of Cuba, and we support their fight. Someday soon, Canada will once again be an ally they can count on.

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**DIABETES**

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my grandparents had diabetes, my mom has diabetes and so do nearly four million Canadians. That is one in 10 of us. It may be our family, our friends or our neighbours. Insulin and other diabetes medications are expensive, and if one does not have private insurance, that is a huge monthly expense. However, all that is going to change because our government is making diabetes medication free for everyone.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]*

I am lucky enough to represent many citizens, including several members of my own family, for whom sugar in tea is not only an integral part of everyday life, but also truly part of a very rich culture.

However, we have to face the truth. Diabetes affects nearly one million Quebecers and four million Canadians. The medication that helps diabetic patients can be very expensive. Our government has just passed legislation to make diabetes medications free. Yes, these drugs will be free for everyone.

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*[English]***CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION**

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association is here on the Hill in Ottawa today with workers, advocates and professionals in the parks and recreational sectors right across the country. They are here advocating for public spaces, for access to recreational facilities, for active transportation and for operating costs. They want to make sure that parks and recreation and physical activity are top of mind to people up here in Ottawa, and right across the country, in influential positions such as ours.

I am very proud of the fact that the CPRA is one of the top recipients of the community sport for all initiative, the government's effort to invest in community sport right across this country. From that \$60 million investment in Canadians, the result is higher participation rates. In fact, one million Canadians said they got more active thanks to the community sport for all initiative, and that was due in part to the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association.

Let us continue to invest in the sector so that every Canadian can benefit from the enriching experiences we get from our parks and our outdoor spaces. I am thankful to every worker in the recreational space.

\* \* \*

**FOOD SECURITY**

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are struggling to keep their head above water and to keep food on their table. Over two million Canadians were forced to use food banks in March, a number that has almost doubled in the past five years. In my home province of Saskatchewan, food banks have seen a 42% increase in visits. Throughout my constituency, there are daily calls for donations to the many food banks and the Salvation Army.

While children make up 30% of people using food banks across the country, in Saskatchewan, that number is almost 40%, a sad and alarming figure. Parents are going without meals so that their children have food, and those who once donated to the food bank are now the ones needing its help. Instead of fixing the situation, the NDP-Liberals have continued to increase the cost of groceries by increasing the carbon tax by 23%; they are on their way to quadrupling the tax in the future. It is time for Canadians to see a govern-

ment that works to make their lives better, not worse. It is time for a carbon tax election.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

*[Translation]***HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND**

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last year we signed an historic agreement with the province of Quebec to make a joint \$1.8-billion investment in affordable housing through the housing accelerator fund. These investments will enable us to carry out construction projects over the coming years. This means that 8,000 affordable and social housing units will be built from one end of the province to the other, including in my riding.

Last week, the Conservative leader announced his intention to abolish this fund and tear up our agreement with Quebec, and that is on top of his bickering with the mayors. That makes no sense. This party is far too risky for Quebecers.

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*[English]***LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, here is the truth: There is only one person left keeping the Prime Minister in power, and that is the leader of the NDP. Canadians see it clearly. All we need to do is think back to the big stunt the leader of the NDP pulled when he told Canadians that he had ripped up his coalition deal with the Liberals. Since then, the New Democrats have had ample opportunity to prove it, but they have refused to do so. In fact, the leader of the fourth party said, "The fact is, the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people". Those are his own words. Words do not equal action. The NDP continues to be beholden to the Prime Minister.

The fact is that the New Democrats love the Liberals. Furthermore, they love the carbon tax, something they have voted for more than 24 times, even when it is sending more than two million Canadians a month to food banks. Every day the Prime Minister remains in power is because of the sellout leader of the NDP. It is time for him to buck up and call a carbon tax election.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I am going to ask for a couple of things. First, I am going to ask members not to speak out of turn. The members know who they are. Second, the Chair has already ruled on being careful about what adjectives members use in front of hon. members in the House.

*[Translation]*

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

## HOUSING

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, less taxes, more homes; the Conservative leader is proposing to eliminate the GST on new homes sold. What this means is that buyers in Quebec will save \$25,000, or \$1,300 a year, on a \$500,000 home. This will also add 30,000 new housing units a year in Canada. The Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec, the Quebec landlords' association, has described this initiative as a step in the right direction.

Unfortunately, we know that housing prices have doubled over the past nine years because of this Liberal government's inflationary policies, enthusiastically supported by the Bloc Québécois and its leader. He voted twice just recently confirming his confidence in the Liberal Prime Minister. The Bloc Québécois leader spent a month trying to convince people that he was going to get more for Quebec. He got nothing, zero. Here is the Bloc Québécois leader's actual record: zero gains for Quebec, but two votes for Justin. An election to vote in a good government cannot come soon enough. I look forward to a Conservative government.

**The Speaker:** It is rare for the Chair to have to intervene twice, but the hon. member knows perfectly well that members must not refer to their colleagues by their first or last name. This is a reminder to all members.

The hon. member for Don Valley West.

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[English]

## FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, foreign interference is a danger to our country, and we all have to do everything in our power to call it out and to address it. Our government has made it a top priority. Canadians are nervous. The RCMP has evidence that agents of the Government of India are involved in serious criminal activities that undermine our democracy. There are reports of a number of other countries intimidating citizens, interfering in elections and leadership campaigns.

The leader of the official opposition needs to do his part. He needs to show that we are united in this fight. Every member of the House took an oath. Some of us have leadership responsibilities and take other measures, including getting the appropriate security clearances so that we can do our part in keeping Canada and Canadians safe.

The leader of the official opposition cannot delay any longer. He has to apply for the top security clearance so that he can do his part and let Canadians stop wondering about what he may be hiding.

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• (1415)

## VETERANS WEEK

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as we practise remembrance during Veterans Week, recognizing both Indigenous Veterans Day and Remembrance Day, I want to thank every person who has served or is serving our coun-

## Statements by Members

try. I thank their loved ones as well, who serve alongside them, as we all know.

Every year, I am grateful to the many legions in my riding that prepare sacred events around remembering the service of Canadian soldiers. I have 11 legions across my riding, and I want to name them all. They are Port Hardy Royal Canadian Legion Branch 237, Port McNeill 281, Port Alice 180, Gold River 270, Sayward 147, Campbell River 137, Quadra Island 154, Alert Bay 198, Comox 160, Powell River 164 and Texada Island 232.

With significant engagement from their communities, the legions hold space for veterans, and it is so important that we remember them. Lest we forget.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## ELISAPIE

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Sunday evening, the ADISQ Gala got off to a strong start with the sultry voice of Elisapie, which enthralled the audience and held them spellbound. This Inuk singer, who proudly carried the torch of Quebec song by opening our musical event, sang a Leonard Cohen cover in her own language.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to congratulate Elisapie on the outstanding success of her album *Inuktitut*. She won the Felix award for indigenous artist of the year, as well as four other awards at the first two galas with her collaborators Joe Grass and the Bonsound team. In a way that only an artist like her can, Elisapie uses art to build bridges between different worlds: the North, which she refuses to call the Far North; English, the language towards which history has driven her people; and the Quebec nation, whose people showed her how much they love her on Sunday.

Congratulations and thank you to Elisapie.

\* \* \*

[English]

## HOUSING

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of NDP-Liberals, the Canadian dream of home ownership has become a pipe dream, unless, of course, someone is a friend of the Prime Minister.

Today, it was revealed that he purchased a \$9-million condo on Billionaires' Row in New York City for his good friend, Tom Clark, after Clark complained that his old residence was not up to his standards. It is difficult to do the work of a consul general without Italian marble floors, a \$5,000 coffee machine and a golf simulator at our disposal.

This revelation confirms that Tom Clark lied to committee about his involvement in the purchase. It also confirms evidence obtained by committee showing that Clark was instrumental when it came to purchasing the property.

### Oral Questions

Canadians are fed up with the government. It is time for change. It is time for accountability. It is time for a Conservative government that will bring transparency and respect back to the Canadian taxpayer.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

#### ONLINE HARM

**Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-63, the online harms act, is seeking to create a safer online space for all Canadians in this increasingly digital age. Online harms have real-world impacts with tragic, even fatal consequences, and the delays in our Parliament are putting more Canadians at risk every day.

I think of the important work of Carol Todd, the mother of Amanda Todd, the 15-year-old girl who so tragically took her life 12 years ago after being victimized online. Carol stated in an interview, “The filibuster that is happening right now and holding everything up, it's so frustrating. It's just wasting time...I've waited 12 years for this.”

Unfortunately, the important work the House undertakes has been held up due to Conservative delay tactics, with support from opposition parties. We are working every day to pass important legislation for Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and the Conservatives are working every day to make sure this is not the case.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a mere 80 days after Stephen Harper became prime minister, he reached a deal to end softwood lumber tariffs, but this Liberal Prime Minister capitulated. He allowed Donald Trump to reimpose those tariffs and Biden to double them.

Stephen Harper reached an agreement with Obama to exempt Canada from the discriminatory buy America policies, but this Liberal Prime Minister capitulated and allowed the Americans to reimpose them on our workers.

Can we have an election so Canadians can get a Prime Minister who will stand up for Canadians?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, what we are seeing is yet more nonsense from the Conservative leader. The fact is, while we were standing up to Donald Trump when he wanted to renegotiate NAFTA, the Conservatives, including Stephen Harper, were encouraging us to capitulate. They told us it was important not to offend the Americans.

On the contrary, we took a stand, we protected supply management, we protected steel and aluminum workers, and we protected Canadian jobs across the country.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this Liberal Prime Minister not only capitulated to Obama,

Trump, and Biden, but he also gave away half a billion dollars in investments that left our country and impoverished our citizens.

Ten years ago, the New York Times published an article entitled “Life in Canada, Home of the World's Most Affluent Middle Class”. The article said that Canadians' average income seemed to have surpassed the average income of Americans. Today, the opposite is true. Canadians are poorer than Americans.

Why is he creating jobs for Americans?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition keeps claiming that Canada is broken. At the same time, he wants to scrap investments that are going to help Canadians solve the housing crisis, for example. He is proposing to cut the \$900 million that we send to the Government of Quebec to build thousands of new affordable homes.

All that he has to offer are budget cuts and austerity. That is not what Quebecers or Canadians as a whole want. We need to invest in solving the housing crisis, which is exactly what this government is doing. What the Leader of the Opposition supports is austerity.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it took then-Prime Minister Harper only 80 days to get a softwood lumber deal that put an end to the tariffs and we were reimbursed what was already collected.

Then the Liberal Prime Minister capitulated, allowed Trump to reimpose the tariffs and Biden to double them. Harper got us an exemption to buy America. The Prime Minister then capitulated and allowed Trump and Biden to reimpose them, hurting our construction workers and our providers of steel.

Why can we not have a carbon tax election so that we can have a prime minister who no longer capitulates to the Americans but instead will stand up for Canada?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since I just answered that question in French, allow me, instead, to take a moment to condemn, unequivocally, the violence we have seen in South Asian communities across the country over the past few nights.

Let me be very clear that the individuals who are inciting violence, division and hatred in no way represent either the Sikh community or the Hindu community in Canada. At a time of Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas, we are seeing communities come together to celebrate their diversity and their strength.

We will continue to stand for the unity of Canadians.



*Oral Questions*

• (1425)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the New York times 10 years ago, “Life in Canada, Home of the World’s Most Affluent Middle Class...median income in Canada appears to have surpassed median income in the United States.” What a decade can do.

Now, American workers make almost \$20,000 more than their Canadian counterparts. They get twice as much investment every single year. The gap between our per capita GDP and that of the United States is now the worst in a century after the Prime Minister's rising taxes, bureaucracy and blocking of energy projects.

I know why Harris and Trump want to create jobs for Americans, but why does the Prime Minister want to help them?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the silence of the Conservative leader is deafening when it comes to what is happening in the South Asian communities right now, and it is a real shame. Not only is he not stepping forward to talk about how all Canadians must stand together and all South Asian Canadians, Sikh, Hindu, Jain and Buddhist, are celebrating together this weekend, but he even refuses to take the issue seriously enough to get the security clearance necessary to be briefed on threats to Canada and to Canadians. That is not leadership.

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now we know the Prime Minister's real agenda. He wants to distract from all the economic misery he has caused at home, and so he uses divisions here at home. These divisions are as a result of him. Under his leadership, we have seen a 251% increase in hate crimes, firebombings of synagogues, bullets shot at Jewish children's schools, a hundred churches burned and vandalized, and now we see sectarian riots on the streets of Brampton. This never happened before the Prime Minister.

Does the Prime Minister take ownership for the divisions he has caused and the violence that has resulted?

**The Speaker:** Order. I am going to ask members, especially members from the far end of the House, to please not take the floor unless they are recognized by the Speaker.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, people watching that last answer will know and note the assuredness with which the Leader of the Opposition declared all the causes and the sources of the terrible violence we are seeing. The reality is that he refuses to take the necessary briefings that our security agencies are offering him to understand the threats to Canada. Why will he not get the security clearance necessary to protect Canadians?

**The Speaker:** Order. When one side of the House is asked to keep quiet, the other side of the House should do the same. All members should do the same.

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

[Translation]

**OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government has tabled draft regulations to cap greenhouse gas emissions. It is a pretty weak plan, because the timelines are too long and the costs involved are essentially going to be covered by Quebeckers and Canadians. The Quebec and Canadian economies will pay for the break that oil companies are getting from having to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and production. These regulations may well be insufficient because of the oil lobby in the House.

Has the government considered passing legislation to protect maximum greenhouse gas emissions?

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a government, we have always made every effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to protect Canada's prosperity and to safeguard the future of Canadians.

That is why we are capping greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector. This sector is making record profits. This sector already has technological solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. With this emissions cap, we expect the sector to invest in ways to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to ensure that everyone is doing their part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the planet.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, instead of considering the proposals for green equalization, a green banking system or funding for clean energy, as the Bloc Québécois has been proposing for a long time now, the Prime Minister is making us pay for an industry whose profits have increased tenfold since the pandemic, as he himself has said.

Instead of imposing standards that are not strict enough, why does he not impose tougher standards and why not in the form of legislation? Why not? Then he could finally go to the voters with a courageous stand on the environment.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know full well that the Bloc Québécois shares the same perspective on this as we do. No sector should be able to pollute as much as it wants. That is why we put a cap on greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas sector. We know that this sector contributes nearly a third of Canada's annual emissions and therefore has the greatest capacity to be able to reduce our emissions. These companies are making record profits. We expect them to reinvest in the technologies that are going to help lower their emissions and help them do their share of the effort.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, who here does not have a family doctor? Five million Canadians do not.

Loblaws owns Maple, and a family doctor working at Maple will charge \$80 a month per person. Things have gotten so bad. This is predatory. The Prime Minister lets us down and then Galen Weston swoops in to profit off of it.

Why is the Prime Minister letting Galen Weston profit off of people's pain?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recognize that it is the provincial area of jurisdiction to deliver health care in this country, but it is the federal responsibility to make sure that health care remains public, universal and single-payer. That is exactly what we are doing by investing a record \$200 billion in health care over the coming years that will oblige the provinces to invest in public health care; to hire more doctors, particularly family doctors; to reduce wait times; and to improve mental health services.

These are things that Canadians expect, including the federal government expecting it of the provinces.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, did Galen write that answer?

[Translation]

Private health care is a jungle. It can cost up to \$250 for a minor emergency. It is so profitable that real estate investors are opening private clinics. The Prime Minister calls all that innovation.

Will the Prime Minister finally show some backbone and put an end to all of that?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the NDP, we understand and we respect the fact that the delivery of health care falls under provincial jurisdiction. However, the federal government is responsible for ensuring that our health care systems remain public and for providing investments. That is why we are making \$200 billion in investments over the next 10 years, so that the provinces can hire more family doctors, reduce wait lists and provide more support for mental health and for health care workers.

That is what all Canadians expect.

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[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal-NDP Prime Minister presides over the worst GDP per person growth since the Great Depression, and it is no surprise. His high taxes and woke policies like carbon tax scams, a job-killing capital gains tax hike and the oil and gas cap have made Canadians poorer. In fact, the U.S. GDP grew 2.8% as the Canadian GDP per person declined for two years, driving out business, investment and jobs.

Will the Prime Minister axe the tax hikes that make Canadians poorer?

• (1435)

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what the Conservatives will not talk about is the record level of investment we have seen in the country. More importantly for Canadians watching at home, people are really wondering why the leader of the Conservatives is not getting his security clearance. What does he have to hide? People on the streets of Canada are asking.

The leader should get the clearance, get the briefing, get on and do his job.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the Canadians who are starving, and Liberals want to make personal attacks on the Conservative leader. These economic arsonists will do anything to deflect from their failed record.

Canadian workers are \$22,000 poorer than U.S. workers. If Canada had just kept pace with the U.S. over the last two years, Canadian workers would have \$6,200 more every year. Now Canada is poorer than Alabama.

Why do these economic arsonists not call a carbon tax election so Canadian workers can finally fire them?

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will not take any lessons from the Conservatives on how to deliver for Canadians. While they keep their hidden agenda, we know exactly what they would do. They would cut dental care for nine million Canadians. They would end \$10-a-day child care. They would cancel the national school food program.

Conservatives will not tell us their plan because they do not want Canadians to know, just like their leader will not get the security clearance that he needs to protect Canadians. Shame on them. What are they hiding?

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has been more bad news from experts. Last week, economists at National Bank released an analysis that said, "GDP per capita has fallen by around 4.0% cumulatively since 2022, which is unprecedented outside a recession". This is a made-in-Canada, per person, per capita GDP recession caused by a government that has hiked taxes on everything: energy, housing, banks and investment. It is driving out investment and making Canadians poorer.

When will the government admit its mistake and reverse course on tax hikes that are driving out investment, like it has reversed course on so many other issues?

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives would like to make comparisons with the United States, I have one for them. Canada ran a deficit of just 1.1% of GDP in 2023. That is compared to a 6.3% of GDP deficit in the United States of America.

We have made sure to be responsible with our balance sheet and we are doing it while supporting vulnerable Canadians. The Conservatives' hidden agenda is to cut programs that Canadians rely on.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will quote another expert, relative to Canada's position with the United States. Last week the Governor of the Bank of Canada said, “foreign capital, even some Canadian capital, is going to the United States because they can get faster regulatory approvals.”

Two years ago in Washington, the finance minister in her speech said, “Canada must – and will – show similar generosity in fast-tracking, for example, the energy and mining projects our allies need to heat their homes and to manufacture electric vehicles.”

Can the government tell us which mining and energy projects it has fast-tracked since the speech in Washington?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member to be an honourable—

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets to please not take the floor unless recognized by the Chair.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, from the top.

• (1440)

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Mr. Speaker, I know the member to be someone who cares about Canada's standing in the world and who I thought cared about Canada's national security as well. What I find perplexing, and what I think must be difficult for him to understand, is why the leader of the official opposition is refusing to get a security clearance.

Why is it that he would rather ignore the threats to Canada's national security? What is it that he is trying to hide or that he does not want to know? The NSICOP reported that a Conservative leadership campaign was under threat by foreign actors. Is that something he does not want to know about?

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's GDP has shrunk over the last nine quarters. This means that Canadians are getting poorer and that their quality of life is declining dramatically.

The story is exactly the opposite in the United States, which is enjoying a GDP growth rate of 2.8%. Canadians are facing financial pressure caused by the Prime Minister's carbon tax and capital gains tax increases. I know it is hard for him to understand how miserable Canadians are, but can he show some compassion by eliminating these taxes?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what the Conservatives will never admit is that Canada has attracted record levels of investment.

Take Honda, for example, which is investing \$19 billion in our country. This is the biggest investment in Honda's 75-year history. We were talking about mining companies. BHP is investing \$22 billion in Saskatchewan. That is the biggest investment in its history. Since we are talking about record investments, I should mention Dow Chemical's investment in Fort Saskatchewan. That is the biggest investment in Dow Chemical's history.

Canada is winning in the 21st century economy, and we are going to keep working for Canadians.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not see what Canadians have won at this point. The fact that the carbon tax is four times higher directly impacts people and the business community, which has spoken out against it. Also, the capital gains tax means that businesses will not be able to invest more. How does that get anyone ahead?

According to Statistics Canada, Canadian household debt is at 180%, while our American neighbours are at 100%.

How does foreign investment help when Canadians have to pay and have a noose around their necks?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, let us talk about investment. In my colleague's riding, investments were made for affordable housing units that are currently under construction. The Conservative leader raised doubts about funding for more than 200 such units last week because he wants to cancel the agreement with the Government of Quebec.

Second, let us talk about important things, too. Will my colleague ask his Conservative leader, who is right next to him, to get his security clearance so he can protect himself and all other Conservative MPs from foreign interference?

\* \* \*

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in tonight's U.S. presidential election, Americans are going to choose the person who will be able to reopen CUSMA, the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement, as early as 2026. Our most important free trade agreement could come up for renegotiation. Donald Trump has promised to do as much, and Kamala Harris voted against CUSMA.

That is why it is dangerous to let senators Peter Boehm and Peter Harder block Bill C-282. They want to override a vote held by elected members and put supply management back on the negotiating table for 2026. The Prime Minister is the one who appointed these public menaces.

*Oral Questions*

Is he going to ask them to pass Bill C-282 before any renegotiation takes place?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, we would remind our Bloc Québécois colleagues that senators are independent. However, what my colleague has just told us is that he has no power to protect supply management.

The only group, the only party, the only government that has proven it has the will to protect the supply management system and is going to do it is a Liberal government.

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister knows that if Bill C-282 is not passed, the Americans could put supply management back on the table as early as 2026.

He also knows that he is not going to be the one at the negotiating table. It will be the Conservative leader. If the Prime Minister does not get Bill C-282 passed before any future negotiations take place, he is leaving our agricultural industry in the hands of the Conservatives, the same Conservatives who made concessions on supply management in the agreements with Europe and Asia.

Will the Prime Minister intervene or has he already “quiet quit”?

• (1445)

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure my colleagues that the Prime Minister, the Minister of International Trade, the Minister of Agriculture, many colleagues and I are speaking with the senators. We are asking them to act swiftly and to quickly send this bill back to the House.

However, we know that legislation can be tabled to change bills. The best way to protect farmers in Quebec and across Canada and protect supply management is to make sure that we have a Liberal government for a long time to come.

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the answer to my last question was yes. No one in the House should be okay with letting two senators override our democratic choice to protect supply management.

I have a message for Mr. Boehm and Mr. Harder. If they want to sacrifice supply management, they should run for office and face the voters once and for all, instead of simply cashing their Senate paycheques. They should come and share their ideas with the farmers in Berthier—Maskinongé and face me to see what happens. I hear the Liberals are looking for candidates.

Will the Prime Minister tell them to put their names on lawn signs, or else mind their own business?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the worst way to defend supply management is to join forces with the Conservative Party and form an alliance with it. It is the Conservatives who continue to oppose supply management and always will. They could not support us when we defended supply management when dealing with the Americans.

Unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois is currently forming an alliance with them.

[English]

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years and three U.S. presidents, the NDP-Liberal Prime Minister has failed to get a deal with the Americans on softwood lumber, while our previous Conservative government got it done within 80 days.

Two more mills in B.C. are closing because of the Prime Minister's incompetence. Wayne and Marie Harder have seen their logging businesses in Fort St. John destroyed by the NDP-Liberals. I asked Wayne yesterday who he would fire in the NDP-Liberal government. His answer was, “All of them.”

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing for forestry families and call an election today?

**Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to forestry industry workers and those in the sector how important they are to Canada, how important they are to Canada's economy and indeed how important they are to building affordable homes in this country.

We continue to work very hard and have said that getting a deal is the best way to go. However, I think what Canadians want to know is this. On this side of the House, we renegotiated NAFTA, stood up to defend tariffs for steel and aluminum workers and are always standing up for workers. What are the Conservatives doing on the other side of the House?

**Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost to Canada's economy. While the Prime Minister dismissed his failure on softwood lumber as a small issue, the U.S. slapped a 14.5% tariff on Canada. This negatively impacts the 24,000 New Brunswick forestry workers.

The Prime Minister has failed with three straight U.S. presidents, while former prime minister Harper got a deal in just 80 days. When will the Prime Minister finally stand up for New Brunswick forestry workers?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have been working very hard in the interests of forestry workers and forestry companies here in Canada. We are working very hard to progress negotiations with the Americans. We are working very hard on value-added forestry. It is something we are committed to continuing to do, including by working with Irving's forest products in New Brunswick.

On this side of the House, we are working very hard in the best interests of Canadians. We would expect elected officials across the board to be doing that. Canadians are asking why the Leader of the Opposition will not get a security clearance.

*Oral Questions*

• (1450)

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost. Just weeks after the U.S. hit Canada with a 14.5% tariff on softwood lumber, the Prime Minister dismissed his failures and their impacts on Canadian workers and our forestry sector as “small issues”. Since the PM's comments in New York City, two sawmills in B.C. have closed, putting over 500 workers out of work.

Canadian producers have paid \$9 billion in tariffs to the U.S. From softwood lumber to buy America, why has the Prime Minister repeatedly backed down to the U.S.?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government always stands up for Canadian workers and always stands up for Canadian industry.

When it came to renegotiating NAFTA, we stood strong and protected Canada's economy while the Conservative Party of Canada said to capitulate. When it came to supporting our steel and aluminum workers, we stood against tariffs; we hit back hard. What did the other side say? The Conservative Party of Canada said to capitulate.

When it comes to standing up for Canada's national security, we will always do that. What about the Conservative Party of Canada? Its leader will not even get a security clearance to know what is really going on. What is he trying to hide?

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years under this government and three U.S. presidents, we still do not have a softwood lumber agreement with the United States. The previous Conservative prime minister resolved this issue within 80 days of being elected. This shows incompetence and a lack of leadership on the Prime Minister's part. Three sawmills in Quebec have closed in the past few months, including the one in Saint-Ludger-de-Milot in my region, where 100 workers were laid off.

Why do the Liberals keep abandoning forestry workers?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague, but he knows that we have always stood up for the forestry industry and for workers.

The real question that Canadians are asking today is why the Conservative leader does not want to get his security clearance. What does he have to hide from Canadians? That is the real question of the day. It is the elephant in the room. We keep asking the Conservative leader to get his security clearance so he can get the briefing.

I would say to him that he needs to do his job because Canadians expect a leader to have his security clearance.

*[English]***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, women veterans will be attending Remembrance Day services this week. Despite their courage and dedication, many of them will be asked if the medals they are wearing belong to their husbands or sons. Women veterans and their loved ones have sacrificed so much for our country. They cannot be made invisible.

Will the minister make sure the organizers at the national Remembrance Day ceremony include women veterans, giving them the respect they deserve?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today being the first day of Veterans' Week, I first of all want to take a moment to thank all the men and women who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces and continue to serve with bravery. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

As we attend Remembrance Day services throughout Canada, we certainly want to make sure that Canadians have a moment to thank the veterans who have served. I encourage them to attend legions and the many commemorative services that will take place all over Canada to thank both men and women who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for 17 years, the Office of the Veterans Ombud has been shining a light on the neglect of veterans. We have a sacred obligation to care for those who have served, but successive Liberal and Conservative governments have ignored its reports and recommendations. Veterans need action, and we need to empower ombuds by giving them the power to compel documents and issue binding recommendations.

When will the Liberals make the necessary changes to create a truly independent ombud so she can be the champion veterans deserve?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the services we have provided to veterans across this country, since 2016 our government has invested more than \$11.5 billion in additional services and supports to help our veterans and their families. Unlike the previous Conservative government, we have acted. The previous Conservative government closed veterans affairs offices across this country, and the first thing we did was reopen all nine offices. Plus, we opened an additional one. The Conservatives also slashed the public service by 1,000 people, a public service that provided direct supports to veterans.

We will absolutely always be there for veterans and their families.

*Oral Questions*

• (1455)

[Translation]

**HOUSING**

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has an ambitious housing plan that involves combatting homelessness, providing access to home ownership through the FHSA or smaller mortgages, making federal public lands available and investing in co-op housing.

Can the Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec tell us how these measures will improve access to housing and increase the housing supply across the country?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the housing accelerator fund will help build thousands of affordable and social housing units. Even the Conservative members know this is true. They wrote to the Minister of Housing to ask for this program in their own ridings. The Conservative leader's irresponsible proposal to reduce investments will jeopardize 8,000 social and affordable housing units in Quebec.

We cannot trust a leader who offers cuts and slogans, especially when he will not get his security clearance so that he can protect Canadians from the threats they are facing.

[English]

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberals, the majority of young Canadians have now abandoned the dream of home ownership. While housing starts fail to keep up with Canada's population growth, the Americans are building four times more housing per new resident.

The Conservatives have announced a plan to axe the federal sales tax on new homes, and we have called on the provinces to do the same. Our plan means more housing and savings for young Canadians who are desperately trying to enter the housing market.

Will the NDP-Liberals reignite the dream of home ownership and axe the federal GST on housing?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the list is growing. Yesterday, we learned in the Toronto Star that the MP for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, on the Conservative side, has joined many other Conservative colleagues to advocate for programs their leader wants to cut, programs like the housing accelerator fund, which are going to lead to more homebuilding in his community and communities across the country.

The Conservatives want to make cuts. They have no vision on housing. Therefore, they have no vision on the future for Canada. It is not serious.

**The Speaker:** I will ask the hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo and the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame to please not take the floor unless they are recognized by the Speaker. I thank the hon. members.

The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster has the floor.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the wannabe minister is desperately clinging to the \$8-billion failed Liberal housing photo op program that has built zero houses.

The Conservatives have proposed “the most significant housing policy commitment made in the past two decades.” Those are not my words. That is what the West End Home Builders Association has said. The Canadian Real Estate Association called it a positive step toward making home ownership more attainable for Canadians.

Will the NDP-Liberals listen to the experts and axe the federal sales tax on housing?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a difficult subject for the Conservatives, obviously. The MP for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, the MP for Simcoe North, the MP for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola and the best friend of the Conservative leader, the MP for St. Albert—Edmonton, went behind the back of the Conservative leader to advocate for the accelerator fund, which is going to lead to more homebuilding. In the House of Commons and on social media, they parrot their leader's talking points, but they do not believe in those talking points, evidently, because they are advocating for good government programs that are going to get more homes built for Canadians.

• (1500)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the two leaders of the “Liberal Bloc” are not worth the cost of housing. Common-sense Conservatives will eliminate the federal sales tax on new homes sold.

On an \$800,000 home, which cost \$400,000 back when our leader was the minister responsible for housing, this tax cut will save buyers \$40,000, or \$2,200 a year in mortgage payments.

When will the two leaders of the “Liberal Bloc” abolish the federal tax on housing? Will they instead continue to fund their photo op programs?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to share a mathematical concept with my colleague. I have already given this answer in the House.

In mathematics, six housing units is less than 8,000 housing units. That is exactly what the Conservative leader's irresponsible proposal is jeopardizing: 8,000 social and affordable housing units in Quebec. It is up to him to tell Quebecers why he wants to do this.

**The Speaker:** I would ask all members who wish to talk amongst themselves, including ministers and party leaders, to do so outside the House.

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have failed spectacularly on housing. The two leaders of the “Liberal Bloc” have doubled the cost of housing, mortgages and down payments.

Because the Liberals have done such a poor job, the common-sense Conservatives will cut \$8 billion from the Liberals' failed and ineffective housing program. When our Conservative leader was the minister responsible for housing, he built 195,000 new homes, and we have proof.

Why are the two “Liberal Bloc” leaders so incompetent when it comes to housing?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like my esteemed colleague to tell his constituents about his plans to cut the 80 housing units announced for his riding through the housing accelerator fund.

Furthermore, his constituents want to know why the Conservative leader does not want to get his security clearance and protect the democratic integrity of his own party.

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#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised comprehensive EI reform in 2015, in 2019, and in 2021. Then they promised that it would happen by the summer of 2022 at the latest, and after that, they swore it would be done by Christmas 2022. Nine years and four ministers later, the Liberals have done nothing. EI is still leaving six out of 10 workers to fend for themselves.

That is why the Bloc Québécois introduced an EI reform bill that will correct these inequities. Will the Liberals support it?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have tremendous respect for my Bloc Québécois colleague.

Modernizing the EI system is a priority for our government. We have made very significant changes. We extended sick benefits to 26 weeks. We provided an additional five weeks to seasonal workers. We also added important benefits for adoptive parents.

We will continue to modernize the EI system for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with Bill C-418, the Bloc Québécois is taking action where the Liberals have failed since 2015.

We are proposing a single eligibility criterion of 420 hours or 12 weeks of 14 hours, enhancing benefits from 50% to 60%, increasing the minimum entitlement period to 35 weeks, increasing the special EI sickness benefits to 50 weeks, and the list goes on. In short, we are proposing real reform.

Will the Liberals support it?

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

#### Oral Questions

bunch of people want to support our efforts to continue modernizing the employment insurance system. We heard that loud and clear during our summit on workforce development in the 21st century.

I understand that the Bloc Québécois wants to advance things here in the House, but will it distance itself from its Conservative friends and support us, so that we can resume the very important work of the House of Commons? That is the question of the day.

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● (1505)

[English]

#### HOUSING

**Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberals, they are not worth the cost of housing, and the majority of young Canadians are pointing to the government's failure to manage the economy as the reason their dreams of home ownership have been dashed.

The Conservatives have a plan. Scrapping the GST on new home sales would save young Canadians tens of thousands of dollars on new homes. The Conservative leader has already written the premiers asking them to match his pledge provincially.

Will the NDP-Liberals axe the federal GST on housing so more young Canadians can afford a home?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have answered the matter already. On the issue of housing, the member ought to look one seat ahead of her to the MP for Peterborough—Kawartha.

Earlier today, there was a two-hour filibuster in the House of Commons committee responsible for housing, where we could have actually talked about housing, but we had to listen to the Conservatives filibuster for two hours because they were trying to defend their colleague, who only a few days ago said that homelessness, homeless people and poverty inevitably lead to crime. They made a natural connection between the two, blaming the poor for crime in Canada.

That is unacceptable. We have got to deal with stigma.

**Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me be clear and call out the facts on the failures of the Liberals.

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The Liberals' own housing adviser said it was hard to deny that the housing accelerator fund is turning out to be nothing more than a heist of tax dollars flowing from the feds to the municipalities. In contrast, the Conservative plan would apply to every single new home build, regardless if it were in downtown Toronto or Bancroft. The Conservative plan would take power from the pens of bureaucrats and give it to the hammers of builders.

Will the government endorse the Conservative plan to scrap the GST on housing? Yes or no.

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have more empty slogans from the Conservative side. What is not empty and what is real is the example of the Conservative leader, who only months ago went down to encampments and filmed people in their most vulnerable states, who before that visited a home of a working-class person, a server, and called it a shack.

Is it any surprise the MP for Peterborough looks at poverty as something that is caused by those on the street, that points to the poor and makes them responsible for issues of criminality? We have to deal with stigma if we are going to deal with the homelessness crisis. They are not serious.

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### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there was chaos, yelling, screaming, running for cover, and no, I am not talking about the last Liberal caucus meeting. I am talking about a police chase that happened in downtown Toronto. It looked like the scene from a movie. Police were chasing two people who were reportedly on bail. Rather than take accountability, the minister's response is to blame other people, blame the provinces.

When will the Prime Minister and the justice minister stand in their place and take accountability for their failed catch-and-release policy?

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about accountability. There are currently 700 fewer police officers working in the city of Toronto today than when I was the police chief only nine years ago. There has been a 23% reduction in police per population in Toronto over those nine years.

How did that happen? Two consecutive Conservative mayors, under the unwatchful eye of a Conservative premier, allowed a hiring freeze and those cuts to take place. If they want to look for accountability, they need to look in the mirror.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### VETERANS

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the course of the First and Second World Wars, more than 300,000 Canadians in uniform left Halifax bound for Europe. Canada has hundreds of thousands of veterans, each with their own story. Every year, Veterans' Week is an opportunity for us, as Canadians, to reaf-

firm that we have the right and the duty to reflect on the sacrifices of all those who served and continue to serve.

Would the Minister of Veterans Affairs please tell the House what the Veterans' Week theme is this year?

• (1510)

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Ottawa—Vanier for her important question and her hard work with veterans and their families.

This year, the Veterans' Week theme is “Canadian Armed Forces Around the World”. The theme reflects Canada's long-standing role in promoting defence and peace and in security around the world.

[English]

I encourage all Canadians across the country to attend a Legion this week to thank a veteran and also to make sure they take part in a commemorative service in their community.

\* \* \*

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' \$9-million cover-up of their luxury condo purchase in New York City is now unravelling. Newly uncovered government documents show the Prime Minister's media pal Tom Clark lied before a parliamentary committee. He had previously said he did not weigh in on the purchase, but we now know that he in fact said it required urgent replacement.

After nine years of these NDP-Liberals, they are not worth the cost, the corruption or the lies from their insiders. Will the Prime Minister fire his buddy, Tom Clark, for lying to Canadians?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I just went to the OGGO committee, and I answered all the members' questions for an hour. We have been talking about this issue.

First and foremost, we have had good value for money in this transaction as \$7 million will be refunded. Second, all the processes were, of course, followed. Finally, we will not fall into the character assassination he is doing about an important consul. Not only that, but at the time of the U.S. election today, when all Canadians are looking south to see what is going to happen, we need to invest in the American-Canadian relationship, and that is exactly what we are doing.



*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, these economic vandals bought a \$9-million condo in Manhattan for the Prime Minister's buddy, and they are subsidizing his rent to the tune of \$40,000 per month after doubling rents for Canadians, doubling mortgages, and presiding over a country for nine years that has homeless encampments springing up under bridges in communities from coast to coast. If that is not bad enough, Canadians are lined up at food banks in record numbers as 25% of Canadians do not know where their next meal is coming from.

If they will not fire Clark for lying, will they fire him for blowing \$9 million?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, apparently Mr. Clark was good enough for the Conservatives when he was moderating their leadership race, but that is another issue.

What I want to say today is, as Canadians are looking down south to see what is going on and to take note of the will of the American people, we will be investing in the relationship between Canada and the U.S., contrary to what the Conservatives want to do. Of course, we will not take their recommendation of having an official residence outside of Manhattan. Why is that? It is because only two countries in the world do so: Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. That includes the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore has the floor.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Tom Clark lied to committee, saying that he did not know about the purchase of a \$9-million condo. The Minister of Foreign Affairs also said that she did not know about the purchase of a \$9-million condo. She also said that she did not know that a Canadian warship was next to Russian warships in the port of Havana and that she did not know that a senior global affairs official attended a Russian embassy party.

Is it not the role of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to know?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of time for the member opposite because she used to be the consul in Dallas, and she knows how important it is to be investing in her diplomatic network in the U.S. Of course, we will continue to invest across our continents and across the U.S. because, if there is one country in the world that knows about the Americans and the U.S., it is Canada.

\* \* \*

• (1515)

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the previous Conservative government brought in cuts and challenges that left many veterans struggling, particularly in British Columbia, and we do not want to see this happen again. Our Liberal government has worked diligently to address these issues. As we reflect on these changes, let us remember that our commitment to veterans must be unwavering.

Can the Minister of Citizens' Services share how our government has expanded our reach to better support veterans from coast to coast to coast?

**Hon. Terry Beech (Minister of Citizens' Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, do members remember when the Conservatives campaigned on shutting down veterans' offices, or when they promised to increase the retirement age to 67? Of course, they do not because Conservatives never say what they are actually going to do. It is why they speak in slogans. They hope no one would notice that they shut down veterans' offices in Corner Brook, Sydney, Charlottetown, Thunder Bay, Windsor, Saskatoon, Brandon, Kelowna and Prince George.

Our government reopened all those offices and opened a new office in Surrey. When we say that we support veterans, unlike Conservatives, we actually mean it.

\* \* \*

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Windsor is being abused and taken for granted by the Liberals yet again. It is a sad state that the city must sue the federal government to recoup the cost of the Ambassador Bridge blockade. While the Conservatives supported this illegal activity, which hurt the economy and public safety, the Liberals are making Windsor taxpayers foot the bill. This means less money for roads, parks, housing and emergency services. There are fewer services in Windsor because of Liberal failures.

Instead of forcing Windsor to fight in court, will this government repay the city and finally take responsibility for federal border costs, as they should?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Windsor is right. At a time when the Conservatives were supporting the illegal acts of the convoy, the City of Windsor and the Province of Ontario were partners with the Government of Canada in trying to bring this horrible crisis to a peaceful conclusion. I was happy some months ago to have an opportunity to talk to the mayor of Windsor. My colleagues on this side of the House have also been talking to me about what we can do to support the City of Windsor, and we are always open to working with the City of Windsor. It has been a valuable partner to our government.

*Routine Proceedings***EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, INEO Employment Services in Port Alberni provides vital support to help people trying to find jobs. It offers necessary training and capacity building for employment readiness. It can do this because of B.C.'s community and employer partnerships program. However, it recently lost support due to federal funding cuts.

The funding cuts are happening because the Liberals slashed B.C.'s funding by \$74 million. The Liberals are leaving people out to dry, but do everything they can to continue to prop up rich CEOs.

Will the Liberals immediately restore B.C.'s federal funding to make sure that these critical programs keep running?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report to this House that the Government of Canada transfers \$2.8 billion every year to train almost one million workers in partnerships that we have with British Columbia, as well as other provinces and territories across the country.

If the member and other members in this House want to make sure that we have a fully functioning workforce, let us get the provinces to do their part when it comes to recognizing foreign credentials. We have thousands of people in this country who need their credentials recognized here. We need the provinces to do their part and make sure that people do not have survival jobs in this country, but they have dignified jobs from coast to coast to coast.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*Translation*]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The House resumed from November 4 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:19 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

Call in the members.

• (1545)

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

(*Division No. 875*)

**YEAS**

## Members

Aboultarif  
Albas  
Ali  
Anand  
Angus  
Arseneault  
Ashton  
Bachrach

Aitchison  
Alghabra  
Allison  
Anandasangaree  
Arnold  
Arya  
Atwin  
Badawey

Bains  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Barsalou-Duval  
Beaulieu  
Bendayan  
Berthold  
Bezan  
Bittle  
Blanchet  
Blaney  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Bragdon  
Brière  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Caputo  
Carrie  
Chabot  
Chahal  
Champagne  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cooper  
Coteau  
Dalton  
Dance  
Davidson  
DeBellefeuille  
d'Entremont  
Desilets  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Dong  
Dreeshen  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Epp  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Fonseca  
Fortin  
Fraser  
Fry  
Gainey  
Garon  
Gazan  
Genuis  
Gill  
Godin  
Gould  
Gray  
Guilbeault  
Hallan  
Hardie  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Jivani  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Kelly  
Khanna  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kurek

Baker  
Barlow  
Barron  
Battiste  
Beech  
Bergeron  
Bérubé  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Block  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Brassard  
Brock  
Calkins  
Carr  
Casey  
Chagger  
Chambers  
Champoux  
Chen  
Chong  
Collins (Victoria)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Damoff  
Dancho  
Davies  
Deltell  
Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Doherty  
Dowdall  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Erskine-Smith  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferreri  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fragiskatos  
Freeland  
Gaheer  
Gallant  
Garrison  
Généreux  
Gerretsen  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gourde  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Holland  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Jeneroux  
Johns  
Jones  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khalid  
Khera  
Koutrakis  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie

Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lantsman  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Leslie  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Maloney  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrisey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Ng  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Savard-Tremblay  
Scheer  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh  
Sorbara  
Sousa  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)  
Strahl  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal  
Vignola

Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Lemire  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Majumdar  
Martel  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
Melillo  
Miao  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Petitpas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Qualtrough  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Sauvé  
Scarpaleggia  
Schieffe  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shiple  
Shiple  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Soroka  
Steinley  
Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)  
St-Onge  
Stubbs  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thompson  
Tolmie  
Trudel  
Uppal  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Villemure

Virani  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilkinson  
Williamson  
Zahid  
Zimmer

Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Williams  
Yip  
Zarrillo  
Zuberi— 324

### Routine Proceedings

#### NAYS

Nil

#### PAIRED

##### Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North) Gaudreau  
Kitchen Mendès— 4

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

#### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment of the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes to the motion to concur in the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

● (1600)

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

(*Division No. 876*)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Berthold  
Block  
Brassard  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Chong  
Dalton  
Davidson  
d'Entremont  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferrerri  
Gallant  
Genius  
Godin  
Gourde  
Hallan  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kmieciak  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Lantsman  
Lehoux

Aitchison  
Allison  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Bezan  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Caputo  
Chambers  
Cooper  
Dancho  
Deltell  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Généreux  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Hoback  
Jivani  
Khanna  
Kram  
Kurek  
Lake  
Lawrence  
Leslie

*Routine Proceedings*

Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Gerretsen	Gill
Liepert	Lloyd	Gould	Green
Lobb	Maguire	Guilbeault	Hajdu
Majumdar	Martel	Hanley	Hardie
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Hepfner	Holland
McLean	Melillo	Housefather	Hussen
Moore	Morantz	Hutchings	Iacono
Morrison	Motz	Idlout	Ien
Muys	Nater	Jaczek	Johns
Patzer	Paul-Hus	Joly	Jones
Perkins	Poilievre	Jowhari	Julian
Redekopp	Reid	Kayabaga	Kelloway
Rempel Garner	Richards	Khalid	Khera
Roberts	Rood	Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Ruff	Scheer	Kwan	Lalonde
Schmale	Seeback	Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Shields	Shipley	Lapointe	Larouche
Small	Soroka	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Steinley	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)	Strahl	Lemire	Lightbound
Stubbs	Tochor	Long	Longfield
Tolmie	Uppal	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Van Popta	Vecchio	MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
Vidal	Vien	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Viersen	Vis	Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Vuong	Wagantall	Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Warkentin	Waugh	May (Saamich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
Webber	Williams	McGuinty	McKay
Williamson	Zimmer — 118	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod

**NAYS**

## Members

Alghabra	Ali	Ng	Noormohamed
Anand	Anandasangaree	Normandin	O'Connell
Angus	Arseneault	Oliphant	O'Regan
Arya	Ashton	Pauzé	Perron
Atwin	Bachrach	Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Badawey	Bains	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Baker	Barron	Rayes	Robillard
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste	Rodriguez	Rogers
Beaulieu	Beech	Romanado	Sahota
Bendayan	Bergeron	Sajjan	Saks
Bérubé	Bibeau	Samson	Sari
Bittle	Blair	Sauvé	Savard-Tremblay
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas	Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Blaney	Blois	Serré	Sgro
Boissonnault	Boulerice	Shanahan	Sheehan
Bradford	Brière	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Brunelle-Duceppe	Carr	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Casey	Chabot	Singh	Sorbara
Chagger	Chahal	Sousa	Ste-Marie
Champagne	Champoux	St-Onge	Sudds
Chatel	Chen	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Thériault	Therrien
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier	Thompson	Trudeau
Coteau	Dabrusin	Trudel	Turnbull
Damoff	Dance	Valdez	Van Bynen
Davies	DeBellefeuille	van Koeverden	Vandal
Desbiens	Desilets	Vandenbeld	Vignola
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal	Villemure	Virani
Dhillon	Diab	Weiler	Wilkinson
Dong	Drouin	Yip	Zahid
Dubourg	Duclos	Zarrillo	Zuberi — 208
Duguid	Dzerowicz		
Ehsassi	El-Khoury		
Erskine-Smith	Fisher		
Fonseca	Fortier		
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Gaudreau
Fraser	Freeland	Kitchen	Mendès — 4
Fry	Gaheer		
Gainey	Garon		
Garrison	Gazan		

**PAIRED**

## Members

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

**Hon. Ruby Sahota:** Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 877*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arnold
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dance
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Epp	Erskine-Smith

*Routine Proceedings*

Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Hoback
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Jivani
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khanna
Khera	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lantsman
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lawrence	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lehoux
Lemire	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maguire	Majumdar
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
McLeod	Melillo
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Moore	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Murray	Muys
Naqvi	Nater
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Poilievre
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Reipel Garner
Richards	Roberts

*Privilege*

Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rood	Ruff
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Sauvé
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schiefke
Schmale	Seeback
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Shields	Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Singh	Small
Sorbara	Soroka
Sousa	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudis	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi — 322

## NAYS

Nil

## PAIRED

## Members

Fraser	Gaudreau
Kitchen	Mendès — 4

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the motion carried.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY***[English]***PRIVILEGE**

## REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the subamendment of the member for Flamborough—Glanbrook in relation to the privilege motion.

● (1625)

*[Translation]*

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

*(Division No. 878)*

## YEAS

## Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Braddon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Dalton	Dance
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Idlout	Jeneroux
Jivani	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Khanna	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacGregor	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Masse	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre

Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Sauvé  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Shipley  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Steinley  
Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)  
Strahl  
Thériault  
Tochor  
Trudel  
Van Popta  
Vidal  
Vignola  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Wagh  
Williams  
Zarrillo

Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schmale  
Shields  
Simard  
Singh  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)  
Stubbs  
Therrien  
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Bains  
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Champagne  
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Hussen  
Iacono  
Jaczek  
Jones  
Kayabaga  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)

Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Arya  
Badawey  
Baker  
Beech  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Boissonnault  
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Casey  
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Chatel  
Chiang  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
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Diab  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Freeland  
Gaheer  
Gerretsen  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Ien  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)

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MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLeod  
Miao  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
Petipas Taylor  
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Wilkinson  
Zahid

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McGuinty  
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**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the amendment to the amendment carried.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I had a problem with the app, but you did not notice when I stood up to say that my vote was not counted.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry, I did not see you.

Does the House agree that the member's vote should be recognized?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Can the hon. member tell us how she will vote?

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** I am voting against the amendment to the amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** That will be added to the result of the vote.

[English]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 50 minutes.

*Privilege*

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON AMENDMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this is a debate that I was not keen on participating in because it exposes the underbelly of the current government and its corrupt ways. I do not enjoy talking about the failures of our national government, but the reality is that there is so much to say on this. Today, we are discussing the green slush fund and the Prime Minister and his government's efforts to hide the corruption that undergirds this particular scandal.

At issue is, as I said, the green slush fund, and as its name implies, it involves money. It involves a purported green innovation fund that was brought forward by Sustainable Development Technology Canada.

I am having difficulty hearing myself because of discussions happening across the floor.

• (1630)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I gave members notice to keep it down.

The hon. member for Abbotsford may continue, and hopefully we will have order in the House now.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, this green slush fund is about slush, which is effectively a term that describes insiders within government taking taxpayers' dollars and funnelling them to insiders, corporate interests and friends of the government. It is a Liberal green slush fund. It is a program that was put forward by the Liberal government that effectively allowed taxpayers' money, millions and millions of dollars, to be funnelled to private interests without any significant oversight.

Just to refresh everyone's memory, this fund was supposed to promote green energy technology by incentivizing the private sector to step into the environmental arena and come up with innovative solutions to environmental challenges facing not only Canada but the world. On its surface, this program seemed to be suited to our times, and there was a lot of money, hundreds of millions of dollars. In fact, let us call it a billion-dollar fund intended to promote green energy.

What happened? Instead of this money going to worthy organizations, it went to Liberal insiders and corporations connected to the government in one way or another. Let me explain how that happened. When we establish a fund like this, typically the government will establish a board of directors and draw from the private sector individuals who have expertise in a particular space, in this case the green, environmental space. These directors have a responsibility to review every application for funding on its merits and make sure that no private interests and no conflicts of interest arise that would allow corruption to set in.

Instead of doing this, what did the board do? The directors of the board made decisions that caused much of this money, huge swaths, to be funnelled to their own companies. That, by definition, is corruption, especially if directors have not declared conflicts of interest, which they did not on 186 occasions. Directors did not recuse themselves or remove themselves from the process to ensure that

the integrity of the funding mechanism was maintained, and now we have this slush fund.

When we as MPs in the House became aware of this, we asked the government to deliver to Parliament all relevant documents relating to this scandal and corruption. That is the least Canadians should expect of their members of Parliament. Instead, the government said no and that these documents are confidential, sensitive and really not in the purview of Parliament. It said, "We are the government. We know best and we are not going to let you see those documents."

Of course, those of us in the opposition benches in the House got very upset. We said the government had no right to withhold documents that are relevant to a police investigation into corruption at the highest levels of government, so we went to the Speaker. We said we believed there was a breach of privilege here, and we asked him to order that these documents be turned over to Parliament for delivery to our police authorities, in this case the RCMP.

• (1635)

The Speaker of the House, the highest authority in Parliament, said yes, and he ordered the government, the Prime Minister, to turn over these documents to Parliament. That was the order of the Speaker of the House of Commons, the highest authority in Parliament. There is no appeal from that order or decision. The Speaker, who is a Liberal, made the decision to make that order, and what did the Prime Minister do? He defied the order. He said he was above Parliament and above the law and would not turn over those documents, except in redacted form.

For Canadians who do not understand what redaction is, it is simply censorship. What happens is that government bureaucrats, at the instruction of their political masters, will black out huge sections of these documents, then say they turned over some documents. Of course, there is nothing of value to be read because all the relevant information has been blacked out. That is what the Prime Minister did. He refused to divulge and disclose information to the House, the people's House, the House that should be accountable to Canadians. He said he was defying the Speaker, defying Parliament and defying MPs. He placed himself above the law and Parliament and did not give us those documents in unredacted form.

**An hon. member:** Shame.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, that is right. Shame on the Prime Minister and his government.

This is what happens in tinpot dictatorships. We have a Prime Minister who has established himself as the ultimate supreme authority in this country, above the law and above Parliament. I hope Canadians understand that. I know his government is imploding, but that is the kind of Prime Minister we have in Canada right now. He is willing to defy the rule of law.



This issue will be referred to a parliamentary committee, as it should be. Of course, the government wants this matter to go to committee without having any of the relevant documents available for investigation and review. It wants a parliamentary committee to undertake its work without having the information it would require and that our police authorities would require to get to the bottom of this very ugly and incredibly expensive scandal, the green slush fund.

We are talking about a billion-dollar slush fund from which \$330 million has been diverted to insiders and where 186 conflicts of interest by board members were never declared. A decision was made 186 times to act unethically on that board. It is unbelievable that this could happen in Canada today.

This matter is supposed to be referred to a committee, but we as a House, acting collectively, have decided that until the Speaker's ruling is complied with, we will not allow it to go to committee. It is that important. I believe Canadians who are watching today would agree with me and most of the members of the House that this scandal is of such proportion and significance that it goes to the very heart of the government. Canadians want this properly investigated and want the investigative authorities to have the information required to truly get to the bottom of it.

● (1640)

It has been said that a fish rots from its head. That is truly an apt description of the government and what is happening with the Prime Minister, in his office and within his cabinet. Certain ministers are doing their darndest to try to hide from Canadians the gravity of this scandal. It is disgraceful. They should not be surprised that this scandal has now bubbled to the surface and that Parliament is investigating this. It has been described as being of the same nature as the sponsorship scandal, which brought down the Chrétien government. Do members remember, "I am entitled to my entitlements"? This is akin to that.

I expect when all of this information comes out, as the government cannot hide this forever, that people are going to go to jail. I believe that hundreds of millions of dollars will have to be recovered from people who scammed taxpayers. I believe that the government is going to be held accountable in the next carbon tax election, which I hope takes place very soon, when Canadians can cast judgment on the corrupt, unethical and incompetent Liberal government.

We talked about accountability and transparency. The least I would expect of the government, when it gets caught red-handed with its hand in the cookie jar, is that it issues a *mea culpa*, says that it screwed up, there is a real problem here, it is going to get to the bottom of it, it wants to start afresh, it believes Canadians deserve to know how corrupt their government is and it moves forward accordingly.

Does the House remember, back in 2015, when the current Prime Minister was first elected, "sunny ways"? He sent a letter to each one of his cabinet ministers. It was headed, "Open and Accountable Government". I am going to read to members a portion of that letter that will demonstrate to them not only the lengths to which our Prime Minister went to pretend he was an ethical Prime Minister,

### Privilege

but how badly he has failed Canadians in delivering accountable government.

It reads, under, "A Message to Ministers", "At its heart is a simple idea: open government is good government." I think we can all agree on that.

It continues: "For Canadians to trust our government we must trust Canadians, and we will only be successful in implementing our agenda to the extent that we earn and keep this trust."

Have the Prime Minister and the government earned the trust of Canadians? I ask the Canadians who are watching this today to ask themselves this question. After 10 long years of the failed Liberal government, has it earned their trust?

It continues, "To be worthy of Canadians' trust, we must always act with integrity."

It also states, "The trust of Canadians will also rest on the accountability of our government."

Members should listen to this. It continues, "In our system, the highest manifestation of democratic accountability is the forum of Parliament."

Our Prime Minister, in his letter to his cabinet ministers claiming to be the bastion of integrity, wrote that.

● (1645)

Now the very same Prime Minister has not only contradicted his letter from 2015 but defied this Parliament. He has defied the Speaker of the House of Commons, our highest authority within Parliament, from whom there is no appeal. That is the Prime Minister today, an unworthy Prime Minister, unworthy of Canadians' trust.

I am very upset by what I have experienced in this House in the last 10 years. I have been a member of this chamber for almost 20 years. I have seen the cut and thrust of debate and the ups and downs of governments. None of us is perfect. I am not expecting perfection from anyone in this House. I do not expect perfection from our government, but I do expect excellence, integrity, honesty and transparency. Sadly, that is lacking from the government. That is why Canadians should no longer have any trust or confidence in the government.

I know my Liberal colleagues listening to me speak today know I am telling the truth. They are still propping up the Prime Minister, even though many of them privately are saying he has to go, they do not trust him anymore and he is not their guy. However, publicly, they are chugging along and clapping like trained seals. The reality is he has even lost the confidence of his own MPs. They just do not have the courage to stand up and be counted today. We deserve better than that.

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It gets worse. If I were only speaking about the green slush fund, that would be enough, but the government has a long history of corruption, graft, incompetence and recklessness. We will remember the SNC-Lavalin affair back in 2019 when the Prime Minister who stepped in to pervert the rule of law in Canada by interfering in a criminal prosecution of one of Canada's flagship companies, SNC-Lavalin. In the process, what did the Prime Minister do? He fired his justice minister, Canada's first indigenous female justice minister, a thoroughly capable woman. He fired another minister, Jane Philpott. It goes on. There was the WE Charity scandal and the vacation at the Aga Khan's island, whom he claimed was his friend. He was investigated for ethics violations. Time and time again, the government violates the trust of Canadians.

Therefore, I have a—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member's time is up. I gave him many signals and quite a bit of time to wrap up. We will go to questions and comments and the member can add further during that time.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for the member opposite and 20 years' service is absolutely incredible in this House. I take him at his word that he did not want to waste his time and ours this afternoon with that speech, but we did hear it.

I have a quote from the commissioner of the RCMP that I would like to read to the member opposite. He said:

...the RCMP's ability to receive and use information obtained through this production order and under the compulsory powers afforded by the Auditor General Act in the course of a criminal investigation could give rise to concerns under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is therefore highly unlikely that any information obtained by the RCMP under the Motion where privacy interests [exist] could be used to support a criminal prosecution or further a criminal investigation.

There is significant risk that the motion could be interpreted as a circumvention of normal investigative processes and Charter protections.

Again, I have a lot of respect for the member opposite, but I would like him to comment on the commissioner of the RCMP's words.

• (1650)

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, I would be glad to. This gives me an opportunity to move, seconded by the member for Brandon—Souris—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member can only move a motion during his speech; he cannot do so during questions and comments.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, I would be glad to respond to the question.

I noticed that the member for Saint John—Rothesay qualified the letter by including “where privacy interests exists”. Of course, privacy interests are sacrosanct in Canada. There is a reason why we have privacy interests in Canada, and we protect them at all costs. There is nothing that prevents this Parliament from receiving the

documentation that we have asked for and protecting the privacy interests of those who may be implicated. Therefore, there is no reason for the Prime Minister to defy the Speaker.

Imagine if the Speaker ordered documents, knowing full well that privacy interests are impaired. However, they are not. This is not an issue of charter rights being impaired. This is an issue of the integrity of this House and the transparency of the government.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have heard, over many days, many Conservative members point to a Liberal scandal. However, this member also pointed to how long he has been here. Some of those years overlap with years that I have been here, under the Harper government, where we also saw a number of scandals of the Conservatives' own making.

More important, when it comes to defending Canadians' concerns, such as the rising cost of living, where is the member and where are Conservatives? When it comes to standing with us in the NDP in calling for tax fairness and calling for concrete action to take on corporate greed from grocery stores and other corporations that are gouging Canadians, where are the Conservatives? Why do the Conservatives refuse to stand up to the rich and powerful when they have the chance, as they have the chance in this House? Why do they vote against Canadians' interests?

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, over the last 20 years, I do not think we have experienced the kind of affordability crisis that Canada sees today, and I thank the member for mentioning the affordability crisis. However, the best thing she and her NDP colleagues could do is force a carbon tax election so that Canadians can judge the failed Liberal government and install a Conservative government that would axe the tax and would build the homes and would stop the crime and would fix the budget.

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, as I have shared many times over the last month and a half of the speeches regarding this issue, Greens are concerned with the mismanagement of SDTC. It is why we supported the motion back in June. It is why we support this being actually investigated.

My question to the member for Abbotsford is one of clarification. In his speech, I believe he shared that Parliament is investigating this. Maybe I misheard. It has been a month and a half and having Conservative speeches one after the other is not really an investigation. It is a monologue, but it is not an investigation. Can the member clarify what an actual parliamentary investigation could look like, and how we could look to have one done? Potentially, voting on this motion could get us there.

*Privilege*

• (1655)

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, any investigation starts with the proper information and that proper information has not been provided by the government. This Parliament and this Speaker have determined that there are documents within the possession of the current government that are salient and relevant to an investigation of the green slush fund scandal. Until we receive that documentation, Parliament's hands are bound and our police authorities' hands are bound.

We are looking for documents to be delivered, as instructed by the Speaker. I have confidence that he has made the right decision and it is the majority of the members of this House who have supported him in that decision. We will not rest until we get those documents, unredacted.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I hope that the hon. member is not using his phone in the House.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague is a man of great experience but also of great integrity. Over the course of his career, he has demonstrated that. Over the course of the current government, it has demonstrated the exact opposite. In fact, over one-third of all scandals in the history of Canadian governance have been committed by the current government alone.

I wonder if my colleague has any thoughts about that and about how the Liberals have led without integrity. With his experience, maybe he could enlighten the government as to what it actually means to lead with integrity—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. If the hon. parliamentary secretary has anything to add, he should wait until questions and comments and then until he is recognized.

The hon. member for Abbotsford has the floor.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, let me just say something about integrity. I am a great believer in something called servant leadership. It is about serving others, putting the interests of others ahead of our own. That requires character.

That is the one thing I have found missing in the government, the character to lead this country with distinction and honour and to admit when it is wrong, to admit when it has screwed up. That is at the heart of what it means to be a servant leader, acknowledging, in complete humility, that we do not always get it right. I do not always get it right. Nobody in the House gets it right all the time. We should be open enough and humble enough to admit that. That is one thing I have found missing, and it is so desperately needed in government nowadays, to restore the integrity Canadians expect of their elected leaders here in Ottawa.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, on that note, I want to say, because I know the member is

not running again, that I certainly feel he has integrity and character.

I might put him on the spot by saying this, but the way he stood up for the Governor of the Bank of Canada, the way he stood up to the leader of his party and what the outcome of that was for him personally could not have been easy, but I admire him for doing that.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Madam Speaker, I did not hear a question but I thank the member for Kingston and the Islands for his very kind words. I have loved being a part of this parliamentary family in the House of Commons. I love my colleagues across the aisle as well. We often disagree, sometimes vehemently. Occasionally we heckle each other but hopefully it is always in a good natured way. I always appreciate a witty comment or two.

However, as we move forward, we need to restore Canadians' trust in the institution of Parliament. That is something I see declining rapidly. We cannot afford this as a country, and I hope that whoever follows me and whoever follows the current government after the carbon tax election will be able to restore that trust in government that Canadians expect.

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, Small Business; the member for Kitchener Centre, Persons with Disabilities; the member for Regina—Lewvan, Carbon Pricing.

[*English*]

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am glad I caught your eye so I could rise again to speak on this amendment.

We are in a situation now where Parliament has been paralyzed for multiple weeks because of the Liberal government's unwillingness to release all of the unredacted documents to the public. I spoke to the original main motion and the subamendment on this matter. I then told my constituents about the depth of the issue before the House, that the government was refusing to disclose documents that my constituents as taxpayers had already paid for, documents that by all rights they should obtain, because as taxpayers they have a right to know what their government is doing with both funds and documentation.

We are talking about almost \$400 million that was misappropriated, misspent and, as the Auditor General has indicated, corruptly sent to the crony friends who ministers of the Crown had appointed to the board of Sustainable Development Technology Canada, SDTC, which we have labelled as the green slush fund.

I heard a lot from my constituents who replied. They were very happy to see that all opposition parties, way back in June, voted as a group against the Liberal government, demanding that the documents be given to the House of Commons law clerk, who would then give them to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the RCMP.

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My constituents were pleased to see that, because they are just as worried as I am that close to \$400 million had been corruptly spent, corruptly sent to companies. In some cases, as the Auditor General discovered, about one in five or one in six companies that made applications and were given money had nothing to do with financing and supporting green technology, innovation and commercialization in Canada.

I tell my constituents about examples like that. How do we get to billions of dollars of deficits and new debt that is accumulated on the national Treasury that all citizens, all taxpayers, are responsible for? Well, it starts with millions and then it becomes billions. This is a perfect example: almost \$400 million that could have been spent on anything else, or it could have been saved. We could have had a lower deficit in a particular year.

Many Conservative members have asked what we could have done with the close to \$400 million that was corruptly spent by SDTC's board, by board members who were appointed by a now former industry minister. Again, as I recounted in a prior debate, this fund had a clean bill of health right up until the Liberals decided to muck around in the board, the individuals who were involved in decisions on which projects would be funded and which ones would not be funded.

First, the Liberals replaced the board chair. Jim Balsillie, a well-known entrepreneur in Canada who has had a lot of success in business, was really inconvenient for them, because he was criticizing government policy-making and government decisions. The government replaced him with a different board chair, Annette Verschuren, and then other board members started getting replaced.

This is where the issues began to accumulate, and this is why we find ourselves now considering the issue before the House of the government still refusing to hand over the documents. The House order that was passed back in June, which the government has refused to comply with in the time span that was given to it, was very direct and clear.

Any documents to do with SDTC or the green slush fund were to be given to the law clerk's office. The law clerk, who we all trust as parliamentarians, often works with different parliamentary committees when there are issues of documentation and redaction of documents. The House has an absolute and complete right to get unredacted documents of whatever type. We trust the law clerk to look at them carefully and decide which documents should be made available to parliamentarians.

In this situation, the House basically passed the motion, by majority vote, that the documents are to be given to the law clerk and then to the RCMP.

● (1705)

I have listened to the debate over the past few weeks from different Liberal caucus members, members of the government caucus, and an excuse they are giving is that some of these documents may infringe the charter rights of some Canadians. I would say that argument is specious. It is a ridiculous argument to make. The Liberals have never actually said which charter rights would be infringed.

The charter cannot be used as a shield for Liberal government corruption. That was never the intention when the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was ratified in the Constitution, for it to be used later by a government to say it cannot release documents because what may be seen in them could infringe on some types of rights. That was never the intention. It is a bad argument to make.

In the case of my constituents, based on the replies I have received to the newsletter I sent out, which contained more information on exactly what is going on and which types of documents we are requesting to see, they responded by saying they agree. It cannot be the case that a government could argue that the charter protects it and, therefore, it cannot release any documents.

Many of the documents the government has released were redacted, had portions blacked out, which is a frustration I have had for many years here. I see it being done at parliamentary committees and see it done literally in the House of Commons. We have made it very clear that if we had wanted redacted documents or to give that option to the Government of Canada, to the Liberal government, we would have said that in the motion.

The motion said we give some latitude to give redacted documents when it is, say, provincial-federal relations or private information, which are sections of the Access to Information Act that allow for redactions. We would have said, for machinery of government, government operations or cabinet confidences, the government did not need to give us those unredacted. We would have referenced parts of the ATIP act, but we did not. The motion just said to give all of the documents over.

The documents must be really bad. There must be something truly terrifying there for Liberal cabinet members and especially for the industry minister, because it was partially under his watch that decisions had to be made. The Liberals have run away from this fund. That is how bad it is.

The fund has basically been rolled into the National Research Council, and the Liberals have washed their hands of it and pretend as if they were not actively participating in what was going on. There were government officials in those meeting rooms with the board members. Again, these documents must be really awful to paralyze all of Parliament, where we have been debating this for weeks on end.

Back to my original point, I always tell my constituents why we want these documents. We want these documents because we need to get to the truth of what happened to the close to \$400 million that was corruptly allocated to companies. The Auditor General found 186 cases out of 400 cases where the conflict of interest rules were not followed, for a fund that, pre-2017, had a clean bill of health.

*Privilege*

The only thing that really changed between when the fund was originally created, in the 2000s, and 2017 is that this particular cabinet took over, and then the Liberals decided it would be okay to start finagling and making decisions that were wrong. The people they appointed made these corrupt decisions. The Liberals are responsible to the taxpayers, to the citizens of Canada, for releasing those documents to show us exactly where the money went.

After the rebate, the carbon tax is still costing the average Alberta family \$911. How many Alberta families could have their carbon tax covered for close to \$400 million? It is a huge number of people. I think the entire population of Alberta could have had their carbon tax paid for almost an entire year. It is real money. It would have a real impact on people in my riding. The carbon tax has had a real impact.

Canadians know they do not get all of the carbon tax back. They feel it in their pocketbook. They feel it at the end of the month when they are paying their bills. They feel it when they see how much income tax is deducted on their T4. They feel it when they are told the government is missing its budget forecast by \$7 billion to \$8 billion, because that is what the government has done here. That is about a 20% miss.

- (1710)

The deficit was closer to \$47 billion or \$48 billion for the last fiscal year. Then the Parliamentary Budget Officer added \$400 million to that, saying it was mismanaged. Then we add in this \$400 million, which was not just mismanaged, but corruptly directed to, sometimes, the board members of SDTC, the green slush fund, who would be a board member or a corporate officer of the company that received the money.

I remember my time at the Chamber of Commerce. This is corporate ethics 101 of the stuff we just cannot do under any circumstances. We are supposed to recuse ourselves from the decision-making process when we have situations where there is either a real conflict of interest or, even worse, a perception of a conflict of interest. This is a situation where those people appointed by the Liberal cabinet made those corrupt decisions. That is why taxpayers and citizens have a right to know how deep the rot goes.

This is from a newsletter that I sent to my constituents. In a prior speaking opportunity on the main motion, I related it back to my founding experiences as to what made me a Conservative. Why did I choose the Conservative Party of Canada as the vehicle for my ideas? I always describe it that way. There are lots of different political parties. They organize our passions. What are we passionate about? What are our priorities? I became a Conservative partially because of the 1995 referendum in the province of Quebec. Then the second major founding event in my life was the sponsorship scandal. The sponsorship scandal was another fund, not quite the same size with about a tenth of the money being corruptly spent, that was given to the advertising buddies of the Liberal Party of Canada.

Every single time there is a major corruption scandal in Canada, we somehow have a Liberal government in charge. It has been almost every single time. That to me was a very foundational event in my life. That is what led me become a Conservative, more philosophically, because corruptly assigning money that is taxpayers'

cash to the Liberals' friends and buddies is just wrong. It is plain wrong.

That should have been known by the people making these decisions. The Auditor General has basically indicated that. As she went through her audit, she explained, line by line, every single issue that existed with the green slush fund, but this has not been the only scandal. We also had SNC-Lavalin.

Every single time a scandal comes up, there is a sort of arc, where at first the Liberals deny that anything has gone on. That was the case with SNC-Lavalin and the deferred prosecution, which caused the firing of the first indigenous justice minister and attorney general in the history of Canada. She was fired, undeservedly fired. Then the former president of the treasury board was summarily fired. Both of them were expelled from the government caucus. That was the SNC-Lavalin scandal. At first, the Liberals denied it. They denied that the Globe and Mail story was true. Then they said the story is true, but not what we are pretending that it is. Eventually they said this is exactly how it happened. There was a recording that was released as well.

To me, the whole story, or arc, is happening again. The government, at first, insisted there was nothing to see here. It said there was nothing going on. Liberals got up in question period, answered questions and denied that anything went on as ardently as they possibly could. Eventually, the Auditor General's report said that the situation was untenable. There was not just corruption, but very deep corruption that went back to 2017, when decisions on who could make those decisions about how the money would be allocated by these board members were made by the cabinet.

In the case of Annette Verschuren, she even had \$200,000 given to one of her companies. These again are public documents. When she emailed some of the staff, they promised to find other funds in government from which her company could gain access to additional monies. The Government of Canada is not a piggy bank for Liberal crony friends. It is not a piggy bank for any of them.

Citizens in my riding, taxpayers, are young and old. They are not just 18-plus-year-olds who pay personal income tax. Teenagers are paying GST every single time. They are just as much taxpayers as anybody else. Now we have a situation where their money was corruptly spent. Their money was corruptly directed.

*Privilege*

We find ourselves here again looking at another Liberal scandal. This one is not so new. It is several weeks old now because the government is in contempt. That is what the Speaker basically ruled. The government is in contempt because of its refusal to give over documents. That is, to me, the textbook definition of contempt.

• (1715)

The Liberals are refusing to abide by an order that a majority of MPs in the House voted for. Many of the arguments they are now using when they get up at different times are that, well, it would be unwise to release them, it would be unfair to release them, or that it might violate some type of charter protections to release them. However, those are all arguments they should have made back in June to try to persuade parliamentarians that the original wording of the motion should not have passed, but that failed. The decision was made to have all of the documents released and to give all the documents over to the law clerk and to the RCMP.

Now, I have also heard the argument made by members on the opposite side that the RCMP does not want the documents. However, I would insist that they reread the letter because that is not what the RCMP said. It was very clear that, if the RCMP got the documents, it would look at them and then decide what to do with them, which is exactly what we have been saying all along. The RCMP will decide what to do with them. Nobody is directing the police forces here to do something in particular. It is not what the motion originally called for with the production of documents. The motion simply said that they should go from the law clerk to the RCMP. The Liberals need to just hand over the documents.

As well, it is difficult to subpoena or ask for the production of documents if we do not know that the documents exist. As an avid and enthusiastic user of the access to information laws in this country, I invite any member to look at my office expenses and see how often I expense ATIPs, which are five dollars each. It is some of the best money an opposition parliamentarian can spend, and I do a lot of them. However, I often get frustrated because I sometimes do not know the title of a document, and sometimes I have people tell me that the documentation does not exist.

As always, I have a Yiddish proverb. I was saving this one for last, and I know that members are waiting for it. A favourite one that I often use is, “Words should be weighed, not counted.”

My contribution today, which again reiterates the points we have made over the last several weeks, is that the arguments being advanced by the Liberals that they cannot simply give the documents because of the charter and freedoms are specious. They do not apply here and cannot be used to shield the Liberal government from corruption charges. It just does not make any sense.

It must be truly horrifying. How could the Liberals explain to Canadians how they misspent, corruptly misspent, almost \$400 million, and that almost \$60 million of the funds that went out had nothing to do with green technology spending? It is not me saying this, but the Auditor General of Canada saying it. She could not find in the eligibility criteria where that matched up with anything, but somehow that money still went out, corruptly. Also, the AG's report, which went up to \$400 million, is just a sample size. She did not look at every single project, which is why we want these docu-

ments from all the projects and all departments so that we know everything on this particular issue.

To conclude, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon—Souris:

That the amendment be amended by replacing the words “Friday, November 22, 2024” with the following: “the 30th sitting day following the adoption of this order”.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The amendment to the amendment is in order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague across the way. Both our fathers were in the Solidarity movement fighting the communist dictatorship in Poland. It was a country where politicians directed the police, and they directed the police to arrest my father.

Does the member not see how this Conservative motion weakens not only the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but also that incredibly important wall separating the politicians and the police in this country?

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, the member is correct. My dad was a member of the Solidarity movement. His father, being one of those who was arrested, probably ranks quite a bit higher in the esteem of many in the Polish-Canadian community because, especially if they were not a shipyard worker, but one of the mine workers, they were especially oppressed by the communist regime, the People's Republic of Poland.

However, I actually disagree with him. A perfect example of why I would say no is that it does not blur the lines. It blurs the lines when the government uses the Emergencies Act, invokes it with barely any notice and then rams it through and orders its backbenchers, who are wavering, that this is a matter of confidence. The Emergencies Act was used purely to direct the police on what to do over several days. That is when we really fog it over and confuse people because politicians do not direct police forces. They simply lay out the rules that are supposed to apply, but they do not select the people who are supposed to be arrested. The Emergencies Act being used by the government the member belongs to is the problem here.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said he went into politics during the referendum. So did I, but I did it for the right reasons.

I would like to point out something about the Harper government. The Auditor General's report came out in 2005, 19 years ago. Ten of those years were under the Harper government, and we must not forget that. Well, SDTC still exists, and the loss of control over public funds has never been resolved. It is clear that no matter which party forms government, the same thing always happens when it comes to interference and respect. I think we have to ask ourselves some questions. The problem right now is that we are not playing our role as legislators.

What does my colleague think of that?

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I do not entirely agree with what my colleague says about the time when Mr. Harper was in government as prime minister. It has been over nine years that another government has been in power. I would like to talk to her about the health of this particular fund. The Auditor General of Canada, year after year, has given the fund an excellent report card because all the processes that had to be followed regarding the allocation of taxpayer dollars were followed and all the rules were observed.

It was not until 2017, when people were appointed to run this fund, that we started to see problems. The Auditor General of Canada is now telling us that there are serious problems with this fund. That is why we are asking for these documents to be made public.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, the member for Calgary Shepard is someone I feel is particularly reasonable. I understand he has introduced another subamendment. It must be the third, fourth or fifth subamendment. I believe each one has come from the Conservatives on their own motion.

Can he explain what the purpose of these subamendments is, if not to prolong debate on the very thing that the Conservatives claim to want to be investigated?

● (1725)

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, “particularly reasonable” might just be a slogan I run on in my riding. I will credit him if it does happen in the next election.

We want the documents. We are talking about close to \$400 million in corruptly allocated funds from SDTC, the green slush fund. The public has a right to know how their money was misspent and corruptly spent. What we are asking the government to do is pretty darn simple: Give us all of the documents, unredacted. Give them to the law clerk so they can pass them over to the RCMP. The moment that happens, this paralysis that the Liberal government has imposed on parliamentarians, stopping us from doing legislative work, will end. It is their own obstruction and contempt of parliament that is causing the current paralysis. I invite them to simply release the documents. They can do it right now, this minute.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one of the things my hon. colleague did not mention in his speech on the relevance of the documents is that we have only had a partial look and we have information about only one part. There is much more to this slush fund. That is why we need the documents. I think he had an opinion about that.

### *Privilege*

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, the member for Bow River is exactly right. In the sample size that the Auditor General used to verify the process of spending and how decisions were made, she identified 186 particular situations where there was a conflict of interest or an apparent conflict of interest. These are situations where board members of the green slush fund should have recused themselves from the decision-making process.

Because the sample size does not include all the projects, there are projects for which we have no information. We really do not know how the decisions were made. Were the projects even eligible? As I mentioned in my intervention, close to \$60 million was allocated to companies that had nothing to do with green technology. There might be more, which is why we want all the documents to be released to the public through the intermediary of the law clerk's office.

The law clerk's office is deeply respected. In fact, one of the previous law clerks, I will remind the House, was actually appointed to become the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. That is how much esteem the House, and presumably the government, has for the law clerk's office. I put forward a motion at the immigration committee on a similar situation, which was passed, for the production of documents. Again, we trust the law clerk's office to get the job right.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have now heard from yet another Conservative talking about what the best interests of Canadians are. Obviously we support transparency and getting to the bottom of what the Liberals are hiding with respect to the scandal.

However, I want to go back to the question of the good of the Canadian public. We know that Canadians are having a more and more difficult time. Life has become increasingly unaffordable, yet what we hear from Conservatives are slogans around cutting. When they were in power, we know they cut health care and cut key programming. Certainly, regions like ours lost jobs and public services under the Harper government.

When the Conservatives talk about the best interest of the Canadian public, why do they not stand up and vote with us when it comes to measures on tax fairness and to taking on corporate greed that is gouging Canadian workers and Canadians across our country? When it comes to taking a stand in the House, why are they not on the side of Canadians who are suffering and are instead throwing around cheap slogans and not standing up for real solutions for Canadians?

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I invite the member to review the Hansard blues for my intervention. I am almost certain I did not use any abbreviations or the so-called slogans she is referring to.

*Privilege*

I have a worry, like my constituents do, about how government spends money. I think all opposition parties agree, because we all voted together for the production of the documents, that Liberal government corruption is never excusable. Its members should not be allowed to use the argument that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms allows them not to produce the documents. They cannot obstruct Parliament. They cannot paralyze Parliament. They cannot be in contempt of Parliament because they do not want to give us the documents.

I think what has always united opposition parties, whether Conservative, Bloc or New Democrat, is that we all agree that we are here to stop Liberal government corruption, because it is endemic. Every new government that comes in, whatever words its members use during the campaign, eventually leads to a situation where funds or programs that were working are bent to suit the needs of Liberal cabinet members and Liberal cronies.

I hope we will all agree that we will stand firm against the corruption and that we will not give the government the opportunity to continue to paralyze Parliament.

\* \* \*

● (1730)

[Translation]

**MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE**

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill, to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-269, an act respecting a national framework on advertising for sports betting.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PRIVILEGE**

## REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a bit remarkable that we are still here, four weeks later, and still quite delayed. I can hear some rumbling from some of my colleagues in the backbenches of the Liberal Party. I understand their frustration. They are frustrated because, of course, we are still waiting for the Liberal government to deliver documents that the majority of members—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It seems members want to interject before it is time for questions and comments, and it is very difficult for people at home or others in the chamber who want to hear.

The hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka has the floor.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Madam Speaker, my colleagues across the way are clearly very frustrated that we are still in this situation, but they know full well the reason we are still here is that a majority of

members of the House, the people's House, have demanded documents. It is the unassailable right of this place to demand documents from the executive. The Speaker even ruled in favour of the demand that was brought forward, and the government still continues to ignore the order. It is continuing to hide, and we keep demanding the documents.

It has been four weeks, and the Liberals have had to come up with different lines every week about why they simply cannot do what the House has demanded, despite the fact that they know full well the House has the complete authority to demand the documents and they should hand them over. However, they continue to be more interested in hiding documents and protecting their own backsides instead than in doing what the duly elected members of this place have demanded. It has been four weeks of this, when we could be debating the issues of the day.

There are real problems we face in this country that Canadians are struggling with. Let us talk about affordability for a moment. Why are we not talking about that? Food bank usage in Canada is higher than it has ever been in the history of tracking these things. We should be discussing ways to solve the problems.

The carbon tax, we know, makes everything more expensive. When we tax the farmer who grows the food and the trucker who delivers the food, when we tax food at every stage of the process, we make food more expensive. That includes taxing the food banks that buy food to serve people who need help. We could be debating how to eliminate the carbon tax and make food more affordable for Canadians; instead, we are still dealing with the cover-up of documents.

The carbon tax also makes heating our home more expensive. We are getting close to winter and it is starting to get a little chilly out there. I finally brought my winter coat from home because Ottawa is getting chillier. It is expensive to heat our homes, and winter is coming. Many Canadians are forced to choose between paying their heating bill this month or buying groceries. Constituents in my riding have visited me in tears because they do not know what they are going to do. The food bank in their community they used to donate to they are now using. They are worried. Many of them are ashamed. They cannot believe they are in this situation.

Why are we not debating proposals to make Canadians' lives easier, to make it easier for them to heat their home and buy food? We could be debating the Conservative proposal to axe the tax, eliminate the carbon tax that makes everything more expensive, yet here we are. We are still talking about getting the documents that the majority of members of the House, as is their right as elected representatives of the common people, have demanded, and the government still refuses. We could be solving problems. We could be focused on the problems if only we had a government that was open and transparent by default.



We will all recall the Prime Minister's talking about being open and transparent by default. I agree that government should be, but it is pretty clear, after the demonstration of four weeks of completely disrespecting the order of the House, that the government is anything but open and transparent by default. It is more interested in protecting itself and hiding the corruption, the rot at the centre of the government.

I was talking about homes and people who are struggling to pay to heat their home. That refers to people who actually have homes. There is no shortage of people in this country, young people particularly, who have given up on the dream of ever owning a home, never mind heating it. Eighty per cent of young people who do not own a home now believe that owning a home is only for the very rich. That is something we should be addressing in the House.

● (1735)

We should be fixing the problems and changing things in the House. Instead we are here trying to get documents and uncover the Liberals' corruption, but they continue to try to protect themselves and keep things hidden because they are not remotely close to open and transparent by default. After nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, not only is it not open and transparent by default, but home prices have doubled, rents have doubled and mortgage payments have doubled. It is no wonder that young people have simply given up on the dream of home ownership.

It is no wonder that young people have given up on this place's doing anything to solve the problems they face, because here we are, struggling to get documents that a majority of members of the House have demanded, as is their right, and the government continues to refuse to deliver them. It is as if it thinks it is all-powerful and does not have to listen to what the House says.

However, the House is supreme; that is parliamentary supremacy. I did a little lecture on that not too long ago. My colleague from Saint John—Rothesay remembers it. I see the giggle on his face because he knows it was a good speech. He understands the importance of parliamentary supremacy.

We should be debating things in the House right now that are not about the Liberals' cover-up but about solving problems for Canadians. In fact, the Conservative leader just proposed a brilliant idea that I know some of the members over there on the Liberal benches really like, which is to eliminate the federal sales tax on new homes sold for under a million dollars in this country. It has the potential of saving people up to \$50,000 on the purchase of a home.

Here is the thing: We are not debating the idea. We have not got a motion on the floor proposing that the government adopt the change and eliminate the federal sales tax on new homes, because it is trying to cover up its corruption. It is trying to cover its tracks in all the conflicts of interest, so here we are. We could be talking about how we could be saving Canadians \$50,000 on the purchase of a home, or \$2,200 a year in mortgage payments, which is about the same amount. Imagine what that could do. Imagine how many more people could afford to buy a home.

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition has written to the premiers to suggest they follow suit and eliminate the provincial sales tax on the purchase of a new home. In Ontario, that has the poten-

### *Privilege*

tial of reducing the cost of a new home by another 8%. It is a brilliant idea. It could save thousands of dollars on the cost of a new home. More Canadians could have a home.

For the 80% of young people who believe that owning a home is only for the very rich and who have given up on the dream of home ownership, we would actually be doing something to solve that. We would be delivering hope and solutions to young people, yet here we are still debating, still pushing, still pressuring the government to hand over the documents and to be open and transparent by default.

It is funny that we talk about transparency, because I am sure members will remember that on November 4, 2015, the then newly elected Liberal Prime Minister released an open letter. I am going to read from it:

...Canadians need to have faith in their government's honesty and willingness to listen. That is why we committed to set a higher bar for openness and transparency in Ottawa. Government and its information must be open by default. Simply put, it is time to shine more light on government to make sure it remains focused on the people it was created to serve—you.

That sure sounds refreshing. What a great idea that is: a government that is open by default. It promised to be. How has that gone since 2015?

Before I arrived here, I grew up in and spent a lifetime in municipal politics. I see a couple of colleagues who have been in municipal politics in Ontario. They know how local government works; it is absolutely open by default. Every council meeting and every committee meeting is open to the public. Closed sessions are a very rare thing; they are only for legal advice, purchasing property or dealing with staffing issues, such as if somebody has to be fired, for example. Everything else is open.

● (1740)

In fact, a majority of council members cannot just get together and have a chat. That is against the rules because it is like a council meeting in secret. It is open by default. I look at some colleagues who have lived in that world; they know, and I know they absolutely know, that they would not last very long if they ever operated at local council the way the government operates. They would be kicked out of office. It is a far cry here from what goes on at the local level, for sure.

We are asking why we need to be transparent in this case, what the need for transparency is here. The Liberal insiders on the Sustainable Development Technology Canada board broke the public trust. They did not care about the honour and integrity of the office they held.

*Privilege*

That was until November 2022, when literally heroic whistleblowers raised the alarm. They raised their concerns about what was going on in this agency. They called the Auditor General; at that point, the Auditor General saw enough of an issue that she launched an investigation. From this investigation, she found widespread conflicts of interest, corruption and abuse of Canadians' hard-earned dollars at Sustainable Development Technology Canada.

In fact, as has been said in here many times, the Auditor General found that 82% of the transactions involving payments from Sustainable Development Technology Canada to companies approved by the board of directors were conflicted. That is almost all of them. Over the five-year period the Auditor General examined, 82% of the transactions she reviewed were conflicted. Honestly, at the local level, in municipal government, they would go to jail for this kind of stuff. It is insane, yet here we are demanding documents for what amounts to corruption worth \$400 million.

This makes the sponsorship scandal back in the Chrétien era seem quite tiny by comparison. It is \$400 million, but they say no, we cannot show that information. It does not matter what Parliament, in its supremacy, has said. We have to protect this person; we have to protect that person. In truth, they are protecting themselves. This is a level of corruption and conflict of interest that is almost unimaginable. I cannot think of another example this bad in the history of this country.

Never mind the \$300 million of conflicted transactions, the Auditor General also found that the Liberal-appointed board funded \$58 million of projects that were not even eligible by the criteria of the agency. They did not meet the criteria. We talk to all kinds of agencies, such as charities and municipalities all across this country, that apply for federal programs all the time; they get turned down. They have amazing applications, and they do all the things they have to do. They dot all the i's and cross all the t's; they have amazing projects, amazing ideas, but they get turned down.

However, if people are Liberal insiders, it does not matter whether they meet the criteria, because someone has their back. They will take care of them. Can we imagine how many homes could be built with \$58 million? How many more people who cannot afford to buy food could be supported in this country? It was \$58 million; they were not even eligible, but they got their money.

How does this happen? We will go back. The House ordered the production of documents. A majority of members of the House voted back in June. A majority voted to hand over the documents. It is an extraordinary power. I know I have talked about this before. The government, the Prime Minister and the departments his cabinet controls have all just refused. They have redacted and removed portions of the documents the House has requested. They have just done their own thing.

• (1745)

We cannot think this is just a one-off. We might think, yes, it is a bit embarrassing that this arm's-length group did something that was not great, but we collapsed that; we have now done this other thing, and it is all good. The Liberals would like us to believe that they have it fixed, that everything is fine. They say, "Do not look

here. We can be trusted. Do not worry." However, the government has gone to great lengths to hide this, and it is not the first time. If this were the first time something like this had happened over the last nine years, we would think that maybe we could cut them some slack, they would fix things and maybe they were being honest. However, it is not the first time.

Canadians will remember the Winnipeg lab documents case. The government worked to hide documents related to the firing of two scientists at the national microbiology laboratory in Winnipeg. This is another example of the power of the House and its members. It is not because we are a power-hungry group but because, as we heard from the Prime Minister back when he talked about openness and transparency by default, sunlight is the best disinfectant. This \$400-million green slush fund is in desperate need of some sunlight.

The president of the Public Health Agency of Canada was called to the bar to be admonished by the former Speaker. We will all remember this. I remember it quite vividly because I am still a fairly new member of this place. That has not happened in something like 100 years, and there he was, standing there, being admonished. The Speaker said, "The [powers] in question, like all those enjoyed by the House collectively and by members individually, are essential to the performance of their duties. The House has the power, and indeed the duty, to reaffirm them when obstruction or interference impedes its deliberations."

That is why we are here today. The House has been seized of a matter. We have demanded documents related to multi-million dollar corruption, conflict of interest and giving of money to organizations that did not even comply with the rules. The green slush fund is corruption on a massive scale. The government is desperate to cover its tracks. It has ignored the order and the supremacy of the House for four weeks. Meanwhile, Canadians suffer, and we are not debating the solutions and solving problems that Canadians deserve answers and solutions for.

Here we are. We continue to debate, and these guys could solve it right now. They could hand over the documents. Let us be open and transparent by default. Let us shed some sunlight on this.

**Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will simply try to bring forward a bit of levity and take advantage of the comments component as opposed to a question.

I have two things to say. First, I thought that the member did a good job of using his own words. I enjoyed hearing discussion that was not manufactured by Conservative staff on a variety of different things. Second, in all honesty, I heard a lot of references from another colleague to Yiddish proverbs earlier, so I thought I would offer my colleague vocabulary that he could introduce into a future speech.

The member referenced Liberal backsides, so I thought I would tap into the former educator in me to teach him a word. The Yiddish word for backside is “tuchus”, so I hope that the word tuchus will find its way into the future remarks of my hon. colleague across the way.

● (1750)

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, that is a lovely set of remarks there, and I appreciate my colleague from Winnipeg South Centre's comment. I have added a new word to my vocabulary, and I appreciate that very much. Much like my colleague from Calgary Shepherd, I clearly need to use more Yiddish in my expressions around here; I will attempt to do so.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the member was talking about other people who ran for municipal office or sat on city councils, I could not help but think that he was referring to me. I will tell him something that I did not do when I was on city council, because I did spend a lot of time on city council in Ontario, as he did. I never once told the chief of police what to do. I never once collected evidence for the chief of police in Kingston. I actually went to the chief of police quite often to seek advice as to how to do things. I listened to the chief of police when they spoke to me, especially in the area of their expertise.

In this case, we have the chief of the RCMP, the RCMP commissioner, who says, “Any information obtained through the Motion or other compulsory authorities would need to be segregated from an RCMP investigation. There is significant risk that the Motion could be interpreted as circumvention of normal investigative processes and Charter protections.”

Therefore, in the interest of sharing stories from city councils, I am curious about this: How many times did the member tell his chief of police what to do?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, there is a very simple answer to that question. I, like the member, have spoken to the chief of police many times in my community and never told him what to do. The interesting thing about this, of course, is that the member did not ask the question just to get that answer. That is the simple answer. He asked that question to suggest that what we are trying to do is wrong.

The fact of the matter is that a majority of members of the House, not just Conservatives, have demanded documents that we would like to hand over to the police. We are not telling the police what to do with the documents or how to interpret them. We are not telling them how to manage their investigation.

The House has demanded documents; frankly, that should be the end of it, full stop. It is the supremacy of the House.

### *Privilege*

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague and I have both been municipal mayors in the past, and the documents and transparency are critical in municipal government. It is very open and transparent.

In this particular case, and the member may have been referring to it, we just asked for the documents to be produced so that we can move them to the next stage. People often say that we should take it to committee. However, we must take it to committee with the full documents, because if it goes to committee without the full documents, it will not work.

Does my hon. colleague have an opinion about why the full documents need to go to committee?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague, a former mayor himself, for the question. The situation here is that we were in week three or four, whatever it was, and the Liberals' line of argument was that we should send this to committee. Of course they want to send it to committee. Canadians should know that this is all part of their grand scheme to keep things covered up. Committee is a great place to go to bury things and try to keep things covered.

The fact of the matter is that we are not interested in playing the Liberal cover-up game. We are interested in full disclosure, full sunlight, openness and transparency by default, which is what they promised and have never delivered.

● (1755)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the motion we are debating is to send this to committee. The member is saying that the Liberal members suddenly decided they wanted to send this to committee. I do not even know if the member knows where he is right now. What is he even talking about?

More importantly, I want to go back to the previous exchange that I had with him. The member said all the Conservatives want to do is produce the documents, and they do not care what the RCMP does with them. He makes it sound all innocent. If he listened to what I actually said, the RCMP commissioner said the RCMP cannot do anything with information that is obtained in this fashion, because it is unprecedented. This is not a manner in which it can collect, gather and use evidence.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, I think that display is precisely what Canadians are sick and tired of after nine years of a smug Liberal government that is not open and transparent by default. In fact, the Liberals' constant message is that they know best. They will tell us what we should think and do. They say to just ignore the Conservatives and the will of this place; the Liberals know best. That is the real message. I hope Canadians see that. It is smug, arrogant and typically Liberal. Their time is up. We need solutions in this country, and here we are stuck trying to clean up their mess. They should just hand over the documents, and then we can move on.

**Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know Halloween is over, but it does seem to be a night of mayors, and for the Liberal Party, it seems to be a nightmare.

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While my colleague was sharing his speech, it was interesting. It brought me back to a time when we talked about accountability in the council chambers and how everything was transparent; people could see what was going on. We have not seen that with the government, and we have seen corruption to the core. It starts at the top.

Could the member give perspective on the difference between seeing a council and seeing the Liberal government in operation? Why are we dealing with this at a time such as this?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan was a legendary mayor in his own right, and he is absolutely right. There is example after example. Unfortunately, I only had 20 minutes to speak, so I could not give every example of Liberal corruption over the last nine years, but it goes on and on and on. The cover-ups are piling on top of each other, over and over again, because the government is about staying in power and protecting itself. It does not care what the people say in the House. This place represents the people. The people have spoken and it does not care.

It is arrogance. It is corruption. The Liberals will do anything they can to protect themselves and stay in power.

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening intently to what the member has said. When it comes to the Conservative motion and these documents, the Conservatives scream out that they want to see everything. However, when it comes to foreign interference, when it comes to getting a security clearance and when Canadian lives are at stake and at risk because of foreign actors, the leader of the Conservative opposition says that he does not want to hear or see anything. He will not get a security clearance. He will not see what the risks are to his own caucus and to Canadians.

Does the member not see the screaming hypocrisy of that position?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, I will tell members about screaming hypocrisy. It is in the fact that the Liberals could release the names. The leader of the official opposition has said to the Prime Minister very clearly to show us the names. He can release the names; he can go ahead and do it. If there is something we need to hear, they can tell us, but they will not do that because that is not a good political game.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is truly a privilege to stand here on behalf of the wonderful people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

When we talk about privilege, we must remember that our work here representing our constituents is an honour, not an entitlement. Privilege is something that we as parliamentarians have inherited through the centuries to ensure that we can speak and exercise our roles as grantors of supply and legislators. It is something entrusted to us, and we must ensure that when it comes time for a new generation of parliamentarians, it is in the same condition or better than when we received it. Canadians sent us here with the expectation that we will carry out these duties with respect and integrity.

Throughout my public service as a city councillor and now as a member of Parliament, I have consistently strived to maintain what I call the public trust. That is to say, in our conduct within our public institutions, we act as trustees of sorts. We may have legitimate disagreements about how best to pursue the public interest through reason, reflection, discussion and debates, but the heart of any decision must be centred on protecting the collective trust of the people we serve. People in positions of leadership make a point of carrying out duties that will maintain or enhance the trust in our system as much as possible. Unfortunately, what we have seen with Sustainable Development Technology Canada and its green slush fund falls far short of that standard.

Ultimately, it comes down to what kind of country we wish to see and believe in. It could be a country where hard work and sacrifice earn a powerful paycheque, where a citizen can afford nutritious food, gas and a home in a safe neighbourhood, and where they can raise a family, perhaps build a business or retire with dignity. However, it could be a country where hard work and sacrifice are viewed as something for lesser mortals, where family and high-corporate or political connections assure success rather than a better idea, a mousetrap or a hustle, where an economy of gatekeepers is made for and managed by the gatekeeping class and those seeking to join it, and where merit and hard work are undervalued in light of who someone knows and what they can do with their position of authority.

The latter description of country is corrosive, and it harms the previous version. It is not the kind of Canada I want to see for my children. However, here is where these two conflicting visions have collided.

Today, we have a Canada where over two million hard-working working-class people and those with lower incomes are lining up at food banks to feed themselves, while a rogue Crown corporation, appointed by the NDP-Liberal government, puts itself first in line for its own interests, not for the Canadians who are suffering the worst of our own made-in-Canada, GDP-per-head recession. In the past eight out of nine quarters, Canadians have seen their purchasing power erode. We are seeing the NDP-Liberal government, which brags that it is the most activist government ever, leave people to watch their dollar erode and our country's productivity erode. Those so-called progressives should be mindful of what U.S. economist Paul Krugman warned: "productivity isn't everything, but, in the long run, it is almost everything." That remark, after eight back-to-back quarters of a declining GDP per head, should act as a cold shower for all members of this place.

We have young people who are working multiple jobs only to find themselves locked out of the dream of home ownership, seniors who would prefer to volunteer at food banks, not line up at them, and families that use metal detectors to look for disposable needles and drug paraphernalia on their children's soccer field. They scratch their heads asking, "What has happened in this country?"

• (1800)

The member of Parliament for Carleton has said that he wants to restore the promise of Canada. His mission is to bring back the country we knew and still love. He wants to put hard work and merit as a first principle for getting ahead in this country. However, the member of Papineau, who is the Prime Minister, has essentially enabled the well-connected to get ahead, despite all of his talk about inclusiveness, at the expense of everyone else.

We have been debating this privilege motion for months. If we only listened to Liberal ministers or their parliamentary secretaries, those at home might think there is nothing to worry about. However, many Canadians are asking why this debate continues.

• (1805)

[Translation]

Let us review what we know. Sustainable Development Technology Canada, or SDTC, was founded in 2001 to provide taxpayer-funded support to green technology companies that were looking to be commercialized.

The foundation has received \$1 billion of taxpayer money since this Liberal government was elected. Investigations by parliamentary committees found that, over a five-year period reviewed by the Auditor General, 82% of the funding transactions approved by the board of directors involved conflicts of interest.

Let me say that again: 82% of the funding transactions approved by the board of directors involved conflicts of interest. According to the Auditor General, that is \$330 million of taxpayer money that was given to companies whose board members were in a conflict of interest when they voted to allocate the funds.

These figures can be alarming. Many Canadians get mad when they learn how much money was involved here. It gets worse. The Auditor General also found that the board of directors approved \$59 million in additional projects that were outside the foundation's mandate, breaking the SDTC contribution agreements and Canada's conflict of interest laws.

[English]

Let us not forget that the Auditor General wrote:

We found that the foundation awarded funding to 10 ineligible projects of 58 we examined. These 10 projects were awarded \$59 million even though they did not meet key requirements set out in the contribution agreements between the government and the foundation.

Let us stop for a moment. In my riding, I have had constituents who, through no fault of their own, were overpaid CERB. In those situations, CRA clawed back every single dollar of overpayment. I have also had citizens who were deemed ineligible for CERB funding after the fact, and they found every single dollar clawed back. What will happen to these ineligible projects at SDTC? Will these

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people have that money clawed back as well, or is it different when it comes to Liberal insiders pocketing tax dollars they are not eligible for? Do members of the Liberal government think that is right? It would be one set of rules for someone who received CERB payments they were not eligible for and a different set of rules for ineligible insiders cashing in on SDTC funding they were not eligible for.

How do these things happen? How is it that no one raised a red flag? Why is no one in the Liberal government saying we need to claw funds back? Why is it that fairness for everyone does not apply to Liberal insiders?

Let us be clear. The law clearly states that a Governor in Council appointee chosen by the government to oversee taxpayer funds should not personally benefit from their committee role, nor should their family, yet somehow, over five years, the board approved 405 transactions, and the Auditor General, after examining 226, discovered that 186 of them were conflicted, an astonishing 82% totalling \$330 million. This begs the question: If the Auditor General were to analyze all 400 transactions, how many more would show similar conflicts? Those 400 transactions represent \$832 million in taxpayer money. It appears that appointees selected by the Prime Minister and his cabinet position themselves to profit from this privilege. That is a staggering figure. Some might even call it outrageous.

• (1810)

[Translation]

The Auditor General identified nine directors as the people responsible for these conflicts of interest. That is why the CFO of the industry department told the whistle-blower that this issue was far bigger than the Chrétien government's \$42-million sponsorship scandal. What we are uncovering is just the tip of the iceberg.

I congratulate my colleagues on the committee for their diligent work in shedding light on these matters. Each layer they remove leads to requests for more documents that reveal more disturbing details. The government has consistently obstructed our efforts to obtain these documents, and we know why. Even a preliminary investigation by the Auditor General shows that \$390 million was paid out to Liberal insiders.

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[English]

The Liberals and the Prime Minister are resisting the production order for documents to be submitted to the RCMP. The Prime Minister's office defied the House's order and instructed departments to redact sensitive information, resulting in documents being heavily blacked out or not given at all. What are they hiding? We all know what the Liberals are hiding. I suspect they are hiding further misconduct and misuse of taxpayer funds.

The limited information we have seen, 226 out of 400 transactions, indicates this is just the beginning, amounting to \$390 million. Strangely, this does not seem to faze the NDP-Liberal government. It is almost as if the program was deliberately designed to work this way, Liberals benefiting Liberal appointees. This is reminiscent of past scandals, like SNC-Lavalin, where the Prime Minister attempted to exert pressure on then-member of Parliament for Vancouver Granville Jody Wilson-Raybould to protect his wealthy associates. When she refused to comply, our great feminist Prime Minister dismissed her. Similarly, when Dr. Jane Philpott spoke out against this pathetic and shameful treatment, she was also ousted.

This is the track record of our so-called feminist Prime Minister. This is the same Prime Minister who accepted a lavish vacation from the Aga Khan and has repeatedly violated ethical standards. It should come as no surprise that we find ourselves in yet another Liberal scandal involving the protection and enrichment of Liberal insiders, entitled to their entitlements.

Let us also not forget that millions of taxpayer dollars were funnelled to a charity that employed members of the Prime Minister's own family. Did he take responsibility? No, but his friend, Mr. Morneau did. It is funny how that works. It is always someone else who takes his hits. I guess that was a learning experience for the rest of us.

I must express my disappointment at the backbenchers on that side of the House. Sure, the infamous 24 who oppose the Prime Minister's continued premiership, and note I did not refer to it as leadership, have been making the news. Surely, there must be more than 24 who feel their government's stonewalling of this House's production order is out of order. They must be receiving the same calls and emails from constituents that I am.

They should remember that while they sit on the government side, unless they are in cabinet, and it might be stretched to a parliamentary secretary, technically anyone who is not in cabinet is not part of the government. Those MPs work for the Canadians who elected them. Those seats do not belong to the Prime Minister or his prime ministerial office. They belong to the people that those MPs represent.

I encourage them to reflect on why they ran for public office. I doubt any of them imagined that they would spend their time covering for entitled Liberal insiders who have profited from ill-gotten gains. Yet, here we are, debating a motion of privilege because the Prime Minister prioritizes protecting his job and his friends over safeguarding taxpayer money.

[Translation]

Setting aside all the discussions about privacy protection and quotes from former law clerks, it boils down to this: SDTC's board of directors used this Liberal slush fund to get rich, and the Auditor General caught it in the act.

With the help of a whistle-blower, my colleagues discovered even more corruption. The House ordered documents to be produced so that the RCMP could determine whether a criminal investigation is justified. The Liberal government refused to produce the documents, which, according to the Speaker's ruling, constitutes a breach of our privilege. For nearly three months now, instead of working for Canadians, we have been obstructed by a government that is trying to protect a Prime Minister who has clearly been here too long.

• (1815)

[English]

One day, hopefully soon, Canadians will return to the polls to decide who will lead this great country. Will they choose a party and a leader who have shown a lack of respect for hard-earned tax dollars, a deficit of ethics and limited moral backbone, a government that has enriched its friends while doubling housing costs, sent two million Canadians to food banks, and allowed crime and public disorder to rise, or will they choose a common-sense government led by the hon. member for Carleton, one that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budgets and stop the crime? I believe Canadians will make the right choice. I look forward to that day.

Before I end my comments, I just want to recite one more time the importance of this particular debate. It is about this place that we work in, the public trust that we have been asked to hold. I am not asking for Liberal, NDP, Bloc or Green members to agree with me. We can fight all those battles. We can discuss and debate the ideas about how best to serve the public interest. However, that public trust means that we have to view this place as being worthy so that when we discuss our work in Parliament, we can say a majority of the House decided to force the government to bring forward documents and the government followed that order, the same as a court order would be in any other circumstance.

This is Parliament. These are the rules that we have inherited. This is the chamber that we have all sought and given so much to be here so that so we can represent our constituents. Let us ensure that when we give the torch to the next generation of parliamentarians, they can look us in the eye and say this is as good as or better than when we found it. We cannot allow this privilege to be something we can fritter away. This is something that we need to press the government on. Government members themselves, who are not part of the cabinet, should be impressing upon their own Prime Minister and his cabinet just to open it up. Let these things come forward and then we can move to other discussions. However, right now, to allow the Liberal government just to pass on this, that it will not comply with something that has been ordered, is wrong.

We have a duty to this place to make sure that those orders mean something and to force the government to start honouring the traditions of this great country and the Westminster system that has served it so well.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think one of the concerns I have heard expressed is about the supremacy of Parliament itself, that when Parliament makes an order, with the Speaker directly making the order, it is our own business. The supremacy of Parliament is at stake here, in following what we believe should be done within our own Parliament, the House of Commons.

I would like to have my colleague's opinion on this particular point.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to rail a little bit about the Trudeau Sr.'s use of the charter to essentially Americanize our system and to remove some of the supremacy of Parliament. I do not believe the trust that was given to those members of Parliament at that time was honoured because, essentially, the supremacy of Parliament when it comes to certain elements of law-making is no longer supreme. I accept that the Supreme Court exists and can rule on the constitutionality of said laws under the charter. I respect that.

What I will also say is that it means more so than ever that over matters under our own jurisdiction, specifically a production order on the government, that the government should not believe that it exists upon itself. In our system it is brought from us, the legislative branch, to the executive branch. They are tied at the hip for a reason. A government cannot start spending without honouring the Parliament as a whole around it.

I think that we have to show that when we do a production order, we mean business. The government should respect that, absolutely, along the lines of supremacy of Parliament. Absolutely, in our business, this is something the government should believe is sacrosanct. I encourage all members of this place to tell the government to start acting like it.

• (1820)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is not our first rodeo on this issue of the government refusing to hand over documents. Last year, when we had the McKinsey scandal, the operations committee passed a unanimous decision for the government to turn over all the documents, both from McKinsey but also from all the departments related to McKinsey.

McKinsey, as many people realize, is probably one of the most abhorrent consulting companies in the world, responsible for horrors in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, but also the opioid crisis in North America, especially in the States. Funnily enough, McKinsey complied with the order. Every single document McKinsey had, it turned over. The government actually refused; 19 departments refused to hand over documents.

We did find one document, though, from the government to McKinsey advising it not to turn over documents that Parliament ordered. I want to ask my colleague, what does he think when a company as abhorrent as McKinsey will follow the rule of Parliament but the Liberal government does not?

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**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, the member's question touches on a number of things. The commitment to a rule of law means it is not up to the judgment of the men and women who are in positions of authority to ultimately decide whether a case is right or it is wrong. That is decided by laws, as they are laid out.

In this place, the government serves the House of Commons, and when a majority of the House of Commons asks for a production order, it is expected to be followed. The member made the point about public trust, that essential element where people look to comply with their democratic institutions because they see it is in the part of the bigger picture, even if in some cases, as he pointed out, this particular company created all sorts of new structures to game the incentives of the market.

What I would simply say is that the government needs to start treating the office it has as a position of trust. It needs to start treating this chamber as royally as it deserves because, if we do not, we lessen this institution and we let it down. We let our constituents down. The government must comply. That is what our Constitution says. Parliament is supreme and can make orders to the government, not the other way around.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague touched on something that is really important, which is the trust that people have in their democracy. This particular case is an example of trust and how important it is that taxpayers, our constituents, have a level of trust. This is how we lose this level of trust. We are working to try to re-establish that by what we are asking. My colleague has been here a long and understands what trust is. How important is trust in this particular issue?

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, in a free and open society, people only make decisions if they know there is certainty. How do we know that when we get out of bed in the morning we are not going to get run over? We trust that the system is going to operate as it should. This is one of the reasons we have representative democracy, where we are not all voting on an app, like perhaps some jurisdictions do. In places like Switzerland, its law allows for direct democracy. That involves too much time and consideration, and many Canadians just want to know that when they elect a member of Parliament, that person is going to come to Ottawa and be powerful, speak up for their interests and make sure they have a government that respects the rule of law, the Constitution and Parliament and those people who are working in it.

We have to respect ourselves, and a big part of that is trust that when someone votes for someone, they are going to be good actors. I am sure the Prime Minister has spoken lots about that, especially in his victory speech in 2015. "Sunny ways", my friend, sunny ways. Lord Acton said that all politics end in failure.

It does not mean people are failures, it just means the grand visions we have sometimes hit reality. The one thing we should never lose is trust, so let us show trust in the process. Let us get the government to give us the documents so we can properly show the Canadian public we are trustworthy and that our democracy delivers for them.

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• (1825)

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start by recognizing that the member for Winnipeg South Centre used a Yiddish term. I am really pleased that we are using more Yiddish in the chamber.

Will the member join me in kvetching a little and complaining about the government? Almost \$400 million was corruptly spent, which is what the documents are related to. What the Auditor General reported was that the figure was based on an incomplete sample of all the projects where the green slush fund board members, in some cases corruptly, directed money to their own companies.

I wonder whether the member could expand on what could possibly have been done if the whole \$1 billion had been spent differently. What other projects or initiatives could we have spent on, or what lower taxes or a smaller deficit could we have achieved? I just want to give an expansive opportunity for the member to kvetch with me and complain about Liberal government corruption.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, it is an excellent point, because the Auditor General has publicly said that their office has asked for more funding because under the Liberal government, spending has gone up by unbelievable amounts and has effectively doubled our debt. Canadians may not feel that they are getting better results for it, but more money has sloshed through the system through Parliament, and the Auditor General has felt they could not do as good a job.

The member is 100% right; I think about 40% or fewer of the projects were sampled, and the Auditor General found 282 different cases of conflict of interest or instances where the rules were not followed. I raised the case of ineligible companies receiving funding and getting different treatment than ineligible Canadians when they applied for CERB and had to pay it all back. At the end of the day, there are so many other priorities that could have happened.

The one point I want to home in on is that the whole idea of the Auditor General is that we have a trustworthy source that is non-partisan and that we can all agree on. I really do not understand where backbench members of the Liberal caucus are on this. They should be knocking down the door, saying, "The Auditor General has said something is wrong. What are we doing to fix it?"

Why are they not giving Parliament the documents? Was it incompetence by the minister? Was it just the board itself? We need to have answers.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I like to refer to "Edmonton West Edmonton Mall" as the official name of my riding.

I am very pleased to rise to discuss the privilege motion we have before us, specifically on the green slush fund but on one of the government's many environmental, green scandals. Yes, I did say "scandals". I am sure a lot of us are wondering, "Scandals, plural?"

Yes, I have scanned through some, and there are five we are looking at right now. There is, of course, the green slush fund. We have the Environment Canada contribution audit scandal. We have the net-zero accelerator scandal. I will get to those later. We also have the government misleading Canadians and the House, repeatedly, on the carbon tax.

Many members, including the Prime Minister, have stood in the House and said the carbon tax was revenue-neutral. In fact, we went back through Hansard and counted 37 times that the Liberals claimed the carbon tax was revenue-neutral. The problem is that the public accounts very clearly stated that \$100 million was being diverted to other uses. It is not revenue-neutral, as proven by the public accounts.

We have also heard the government repeatedly say that more money would go back in the pockets of Canadians, yet the Parliamentary Budget Officer has come out and stated very clearly that, because of the effects on the economy and the knock-on costs as the tax goes through the system, Canadians are worse off. Albertans will be worse off by over \$750 per family because of the carbon tax.

We have the Parks Canada scandal, under Environment Canada, with the unfortunate issue of Jasper burning. I used to work for a company that had a hotel in Jasper. Unfortunately, a lot of employees are now out of work and also homeless. The government, of course, quickly blamed everything on climate change.

In fact, we have seen in documents that have come out that the government, for years, ignored warnings of a buildup of dead trees, bushes, leaves and other items due to the mountain pine beetle. They ignored it all for political optics. I am going to read from an access to information email from Environment Canada: "At what point do we make the organizational decision to cancel planned prescribed burns in Western Canada? As more and more media articles raise public concern over drought conditions, public and political perception may become more important than actual prescription windows." Here we have the government stating that perhaps optics are more important than the actual fix we know about, which is clearing the trees and prescribed burns.

Despite so many things to talk about, I only have so much time, so I am going to focus on three. The first is, of course, the green slush fund, which is Sustainable Development Technology Canada, or SDTC.

Parliament has ordered documents to be handed over and the Liberals are refusing to hand over those documents, which makes us wonder what they are hiding. What are they hiding that is so bad that the government is allowing weeks and weeks of its legislative agenda to be pushed aside for this debate? Is it that 400 million taxpayer dollars were being funnelled by Liberal insiders to other Liberal insiders? Is it that the Liberal appointees ignored conflict rules 88 times when funnelling this money to Liberal insiders, or is it perhaps the millions given to ineligible recipients?



The Industry Canada contribution agreement, which was the contract, basically, that outlined eligibility and the rules to follow, clearly stated that all conflicts on the board of SDTC had to be reported to the minister.

In committee, we asked former Liberal minister Navdeep Bains about this and there was no answer. It got so bad that we are approaching a privilege motion in the public accounts committee over his refusal to answer. Again, this was right in the contribution contract with Industry Canada. Navdeep Bains or the current minister would have to have been advised of these 88 conflicts of interest, which led to millions, hundreds of millions, of taxpayer dollars going to Liberal insiders or ineligible recipients. Did the ministers know and do nothing, or were the ministers not informed? These documents would tell us, but the Liberals will not.

● (1830)

I have to wonder if these documents further implicate the Minister of Environment. This same minister was financially involved in Cycle Capital, which was a recipient of tens of millions of dollars of the green slush fund. Of course, the founding member of Cycle Capital was on the board of SDTC. The founding member, the minister's partner, Andrée-Lise Méthot, was at the public accounts committee and we asked her about these conflicts. However, she noted that she and the minister barely made any money off of some of these grants.

Think about that. At what point does it become okay to have corruption? Is it if we barely make any money? Are we setting the new bar that it is okay to be corrupt as long as we barely make any money? That question could be answered by the documents and by the government, but it is not.

We further heard from a senior bureaucrat of the Privy Council. The Privy Council, of course, is the Prime Minister's department, in informal terms; it is the department that serves the Prime Minister. This senior bureaucrat from the Privy Council, when we asked about why she had not turned over documents as ordered by Parliament, said that she was refusing to release the documents until she received permission from the former head of the board of SDTC, Annette Verschuren. This is the same Annette Verschuren who was found guilty by the Ethics Commissioner for violating conflict of interest agreements with SDTC grants.

Here we have the Prime Minister's department stating that it needs permission from someone found guilty of violating the ethics code before it will hand over the unredacted documents that Parliament has ordered. We also have the Liberal-appointed chair sending taxpayers' dollars to her own company. Again, the government will not turn over the documents until it receives permission from her, for privacy reasons. Keep in mind that this was the hand-picked chair of Liberal minister Navdeep Bains, who, working outside of the application process, reached out and chose her after the application process for the role had closed. Again, here we have the Liberal government blocking access.

I want to move on to the next green scandal, the net-zero accelerator. Like the expensive Liberal housing accelerator that does not actually build houses, the net-zero accelerator does not actually reduce emissions. The environment commissioner reported that \$8 billion for programs was paid out to ineligible companies, most

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with no plan to reduce emissions. The actual cost to Canadian taxpayers per tonne of reduced emissions was \$523. If we think about that, the current carbon tax is working its way up to about \$170, and the government paid \$523 per tonne of reduced emissions.

The commissioner commented in his report that the money given out was "not part of any coherent...policy on decarbonization". Of course, it is only \$8 billion between friends. He also commented that the vast majority of projects have no written commitment "to reduce a precise amount of emissions". If only life were so easy that we could give out \$8 billion without telling the government what we were going to do with it or what we were going to achieve. Companies awarded billions had not even completed feasibility studies on how they were going to reduce emissions.

● (1835)

The department raided other funding programs to top up funding to the net-zero accelerator because so much money had been committed to these companies that were not eligible and had not provided information on how they were going to reduce emissions. Funding was approved before the Liberals even did due diligence on the applications.

One may ask what some of these companies are that were so deserving of the corporate welfare from taxpayers. One of them is a company called Geely. This is a China-owned car company that builds electric vehicles with forced Uyghur labour. Yes, Canadian taxpayers, through our friends in the Liberal government, are giving it corporate welfare for electric vehicles made in China by forced labour to be brought into the Canadian market. This is the same car company that will be paying 100% higher tariffs on the cars built, subsidized by Canadians, using forced labour and brought into Canada.

However, it gets worse. One would ask how it could get worse. The Ukrainian National Agency on Corruption Prevention states that Geely is a sponsor of war. It continues to help fund the Russian economy by continuing to do business in Russia and paying taxes in Russia. There is an independent Ukrainian agency noting that this company is a sponsor of war, but, what the heck, let us give them taxpayers' money anyway.

### *Privilege*

There is Stellantis, which is worth a market cap of \$55 billion. It has half a billion dollars more on top of all the money it receives for the battery plants. General Motors, worth \$70 billion, got \$100 million of taxpayers' corporate welfare. Pratt & Whitney, worth \$222 billion, almost a quarter of a trillion dollars, got \$60 million. All in all, \$8 billion was given to companies worth over \$900 billion.

I go back to what the environment commissioner said, that the money was given out without due diligence or proof that emissions would be reduced. The environment commissioner stated that the program did not even help the largest emitters in the country, the low-hanging fruit, where we could get the most bang from the buck. We heard the Prime Minister state today that the government was going to go after the oil and gas industry because it was the largest emitter and it would have the easiest path to reduce emissions. We have the environment commissioner noting the same government gave out \$8 billion of corporate welfare, but did not even target the largest emitters, where we would get the most bang for the buck.

The funny part of the report, on page 8 for those following at home, is where the environment commissioner notes that the government stated that any project above "\$50 million also requires Treasury Board approval, concurrence letters from ministers of other concerned departments, and Cabinet approval, which can be fast-tracked with a letter to the Prime Minister". Again, billions of dollars were given to companies that were not eligible, but it would have gone through Treasury Board and the minister. The Treasury Board and the minister did not do their jobs.

We would think that somewhere along the line, with \$100 million going to General Motors, which is worth \$70 billion, someone would have asked if the due diligence had been done and whether it was the right thing to do, but no. In fact, they even had a way to skirt the rules by fast-tracking this money by going right to the Prime Minister. I read in the report that the environment commissioner stated due diligence was not done. Companies received funding even before the project was properly vetted. How much money was given out from taxpayers that was fast-tracked by the Prime Minister so the government could have optics instead of actual action on the environment?

Now I come to the last scandal I want to talk about tonight, which is the Environment Canada contribution audit scandal. This is right from Environment Canada. Its internal auditors put out a report noting problems with the governance and conflict of interest rules, which we have heard about before, as well as weak guidelines on cash management for the grants and contributions given out by Environment Canada.

• (1840)

We would think that Environment Canada would be about helping the environment, but when we look through the report, we would find that were wrong if we thought that. Where did taxpayers' money go from Environment Canada? I will give some great examples.

The Iron Ore Company, which owns Rio Tinto, got \$18 million. Today, visitors from the juvenile diabetes research foundation came to our offices. They were looking for \$15 million of funding over

four years. They believe that they would have a medical breakthrough to cure type 1 diabetes. They are that close; they just need \$15 million for four years.

However, where are we spending the money? Eighteen million dollars went to Rio Tinto. Oh, and by the way, it is the same Rio Tinto that got fined half a million dollars by the Quebec government for dumping harmful substances into the Saguenay River. Environment Canada is rewarding companies that have been fined for polluting.

Glencore, worth \$53 billion, got \$10 million of corporate welfare. This is after pleading guilty to corruption charges. It had to pay a settlement of a billion and a half dollars to the U.S. government, but it had \$10 million towards the fine from Canada. Lafarge got \$14 million. Guess what Lafarge got in trouble for and what it did with some of the money? It got fined for paying ISIS. Think about that, some of the worst atrocities done by the terrorists in ISIS, which was funded by Lafarge. The company was ordered by the U.S. government to pay a \$780-million penalty. It is still operating in Syria right now, by the way. The taxpayers are helping the company through Environment Canada.

Copper Mountain Mine got \$3 million, even though its head of security pleaded guilty to murdering indigenous activists. We are rewarding that through Environment Canada. Indigenous activists fighting for the environment were murdered by the company, but the Liberal government, Environment Canada, with its radical environment minister, is sending it corporate welfare.

Oh, there is Stellantis again. It was given \$2.5 million. By the way, Stellantis was also fined for emissions cheating in Europe. Again, Environment Canada is giving corporate welfare to a company that was fined for cheating on the environment rules in Europe. Taxpayers are paying their fine, basically. Another one, QuadReal Property Group, was given \$2.5 million. The company has been blacklisted in the U.S. for investments in companies in China using forced labour.

Owens Corning was given \$2.5 million in taxpayers' money through Environment Canada. It was fined for hazardous waste violations, so there is another big company helping destroy the environment, but the government is giving it taxpayers' money. One of my favourites is that Cornell University has a \$15-billion endowment fund, but Environment Canada is funding students in a foreign university instead of funding here.

I want to get back to the issue at hand, which is that the government will not hand over the documents. Michel Bédard, who is the law clerk and appeared at both the public accounts committee and at OGGO, made this statement: “There is no limit to the right of the House of Commons and of its committees to order the production of documents, providing that the documents are available in paper or electronic form and are in Canada.”

This is the crux of the issue. It is very clear that Parliament has the right to order the documents. Committee has demanded them. Parliament has demanded them. The government has given up four or five weeks of its legislative agenda to prevent the documents from coming out. We have to ask what it is hiding.

• (1845)

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the information from my colleague, including the details he gave about where taxpayers' money was going and to what dubious causes it might have been sent. However, sending the issue to committee is not what this is about; it is about producing documents because the House has ordered them to be produced, and for no other reason. That is the supremacy of Parliament.

What is the member's opinion on the supremacy of Parliament to control what it needs to do in its own House?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right: Parliament is supreme, and that is the issue here.

We have had department after department come before committee, both in operations committee on the McKinsey scandal and this one. Unelected officials have come to tell us that Parliament is not supreme and that they do not have to obey the law.

We had the PCO, the Privy Council Office, tell us that the information act and the Privacy Act supersede the Constitution and Parliament. We had other departments come and actually lie to committee about why they would not turn over documents. If they are not going to turn over documents and obey the law here, what else are they going to violate the law on?

• (1850)

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have had a chance to speak to the amendment and the motion before.

I remember, in university, I wrote a paper asking if the Liberal government had lost the legitimacy to govern. I asked if it had lost the trust of Canadians across the country. That was during the ad scam.

Could my colleague tell us how the ad scam scandal that took down the corrupt Chrétien-Martin Liberal government compare? How does the green slush fund scandal compare to ad scam, in size and the dollar amount? Obviously, that was focused a lot in Quebec, and this slush fund scandal is focused across the country.

How much bigger is the green slush fund scandal than the ad scam scandal that took down the Chrétien-Martin government?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, in the grand scheme of things, ad scam is peanuts compared to this.

### *Privilege*

This is about \$400 million, funnelled from Liberal insiders to Liberal insiders through the green slush fund. We have clear rules actually stating that, before the money can go, people have to sign off on the contribution agreement; the Minister of Industry has to be informed within one month when there is a conflict. It is right there in writing in the contribution agreement. We also heard from a whistle-blower, who said they came forward and made the minister aware of this scandal, of these conflicts, but no action was taken.

Ad scam was horrible. It brought down the previous Liberal government. This should bring down the current government.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this government should hand over the unredacted documents and be more transparent.

If the Conservatives come to power one day, how do they plan to strengthen transparency to earn Canadians' trust?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. We can do a lot of things to strengthen transparency. A very large one was supporting Bill C-290, by my colleague from the Bloc, on whistle-blower protection. We actually need to reopen that bill and make it stronger so that we are protecting whistle-blowers and not corrupt government officials.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for a wonderful speech. He has even educated me this evening. Maybe he could explain something to Canadians watching tonight.

As I speak to my constituents, they are appalled by what is happening and asking why the government will not release the documents. They feel that, as shareholders of this country, they deserve answers. Could the member please explain to them that, when we have the next election, they need to make sure to vote for the Conservative Party of Canada?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, that is a tough but fair question. Just having a member like the member we have representing King—Vaughan would be enough to convince them to vote for the Conservatives.

This is an important issue. We saw, out of ad scam, that we had new transparency laws. The Federal Accountability Act was brought in by former prime minister Stephen Harper. I think the good that we are going to see come out of these scandals is a demand and action from the future Conservative Party in government to ensure that we do have transparency and, just as important, accountability. Canadians will then know that their hard-earned tax dollars are going to what Canadians want, and not to corporate welfare or Liberal insiders, but to Canadians.

*Privilege*

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave a wonderful answer to the question I asked a few minutes ago. I have a follow-up question because his answer triggered something.

How many innovation ministers does he think might be implicated in this scandal because there have been several since the current one? I am wondering how many innovation ministers, possibly because of the scandal, could still be deeply involved. How many does the member think are involved in this? Does it go back all the way to 2015? I wonder if my colleague has an answer for that question.

• (1855)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to my friend for Regina—Lewvan again because that is probably the most I have spoken to him in a while.

I think the issues are deep. The SDTC is not a new program. It has been around for a couple of decades. Up until this government took over, the Auditor General had given a clean bill of health for the program and for its investments. This has only been since this government has taken over.

The Auditor General very clearly stated in her report that this falls at the feet of the current industry minister. It is very clear from the documentation we have seen with the contribution agreements that he had to have been told that there were conflicts, and he purposely ignored that because it was benefiting Liberal insiders, or he refused to ask if there were issues. We had a whistle-blower who made it very clear that the current minister was aware that these issues were brought forward. We have also seen the previous minister, Navdeep Bains, go around the application process to hand-pick the CEO, who was later convicted of violating conflict of interest rules, the same person who the Privy Council is now protecting by refusing to turn over the documents.

It is very clear that the rot is deep, and I think this is why the government is refusing to hand over the documents.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague went through details, I think we have often mentioned that between \$300 million and \$400 million has been discovered at this point, but there is a lot more information. There were only 180-some cases that were looked at, and there are a lot more in that documentation. This is another reason we need the full disclosure because this is not all of it. There is much more. As my colleague has established in his speech, we have just seen the tip of the iceberg. To my colleague, why does he believe we need to look at more?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, we need to look at more so that we can clear the air to find out and get to the bottom of just how much taxpayers' money has gone to insiders, and how much taxpayers' money has gone to ineligible companies. It is actually right in the contribution agreement. Off the top of my head, I think it is on page 29, if the Liberals want to look it up. However, SDTC and industry have an obligation to go after funds that were given out but were not eligible.

We have asked repeatedly if the government did that, as is required in the contribution agreement. The answer, repeatedly, is that the Liberals completely derail and go onto a different topic. They

refuse to answer. It is right in the contribution agreement. SDTC has an obligation to recover taxpayers' money and return it. I think the current government is protecting its insiders so that they do not have to pay back what has been stolen from taxpayers.

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the scandal continues. Parliament continues to uncover more evidence of the shameful record of the Prime Minister and the Liberal government after nine long years. Canadians are once again seeing that the Liberal government is not worth the corruption. It is deeply concerning to witness the government covering up another scandal.

Every day, Conservatives expose more of the Prime Minister's corruption. We bring forward important testimony and new evidence that the Liberal government has tried to hide from Canadians. It is because of this corrupt and potentially criminal behaviour that Conservatives must rise in the House to bring home the facts, directly to Canadians. With so much going on, it is important to bring all Canadians up to speed on the deeply troubling situation that has paralyzed Parliament.

For weeks, the Prime Minister has defied the will of Parliament by refusing to produce documents ordered by the House of Commons. For weeks, Conservatives have demanded that he surrender this evidence so parliamentarians can uncover the corruption that has seeped into another Liberal green slush fund: Sustainable Development Technology Canada, also known as SDTC. This is my second time rising in the House, and I will continue to rise as long as the Liberals refuse to hand over evidence to the RCMP. Conservatives will not allow the Prime Minister or his caucus to hide the truth that Canadians deserve.

How did we get here? For those just tuning into this scandal, I would like to explain how SDTC started to rot. According to the program's website, SDTC was a government-funded program that claimed to help "Canadian companies develop and deploy sustainable technologies by delivering critical funding support at every stage of their journey — from seed to success."

What the program's website does not tell Canadians is that the SDTC program became corrupt when the Liberals made changes to its board of directors. In 2019, under the direction of the Liberal industry minister, new appointments were made to the SDTC board. The website does not tell us that many of these appointees' own companies would soon be caught in conflicts of interest with the same funds they were responsible for handing out. The SDTC website does not tell us that Liberal insiders began to siphon funds into their own pockets and were getting rich for years while the Prime Minister and his cabinet turned a blind eye.

*Privilege*

How do we know this happened? In a tremendously brave manner, whistle-blowers came forward to call out the corruption they saw while working at SDTC. Without their honesty, the scandal may have never been uncovered. Thanks to these whistle-blowers, the alarms started to sound on the Liberal government.

The ensuing investigations would suggest SDTC's negligence was much more than just mismanagement of funds. I refer to investigations, plural, because both the Ethics Commissioner and the Auditor General have reported findings of greed and corruption that were allowed to thrive under the Liberal government's watch. Over the course of multiple investigations, including investigations by Conservatives at committees, it seems Parliament has only scratched the surface of the Liberal corruption. What started as tens of thousands of Canadian tax dollars being quietly directed to Liberal insiders turned into hundreds of thousands, which turned into millions, then tens of millions and finally hundreds of millions of dollars.

Multiple investigations have revealed that through the green slush fund, \$390 million in funding was approved for projects that had extremely concerning conflicts. What the Auditor General found, which was truly disturbing, was evidence that the Liberals' green slush fund had handed out \$58 million to projects without a promise that the contribution agreement terms were met. Another \$58 million went to 10 projects deemed ineligible as they, at times, could not prove an environmental benefit or were not developing green technology. Finally, there was \$334 million in over 186 cases where SDTC board members held a conflict of interest.

- (1900)

This shocking misdirection of funds by Liberal-appointed board members has opened the eyes of Canadians to a corruption that demands Parliament's full attention. I am sure Canadians from my riding in Manitoba can think of many ways these hundreds of millions of dollars could have been used, whether it is improving internet and cellular connectivity in rural and remote regions or investing in law enforcement to crack down on crime. Instead, Liberal insiders got rich in the name of fighting climate change, all under the Prime Minister and his minister's watch.

I am proud to say that upon discovering this gross negligence and potentially criminal acts, the Conservatives stood firm and demanded that a proper investigation take place. The Conservatives voted to pass an order in the House of Commons to force the Liberals to hand over documents involved in their green slush fund. We demanded that these documents be handed over to the RCMP so a proper investigation could take place. However, surprise, surprise, the Liberals, who voted against the document production order, refused to release the documents to the House of Commons. This is undoubtedly a breach of parliamentary privilege, as the Speaker of the House of Commons has ruled. It is on this breach of privilege that my Conservative colleagues continue to rise today.

Not only were the Liberals caught giving funds to their Liberal friends, the minister responsible was also exposed for handing out tax dollars to projects without guaranteeing the projects would do good for the environment. This proves once again that the Liberals are nothing more than fake environmentalists. The Liberals failed to manage this program, leading to \$390 million going into the

bank accounts of Liberal insiders. Some SDTC recipients had no requirement to meet the environmental goals set out in the fund, and others were not even eligible for the funding.

This is not the first time we have seen the Liberals mislead Canadians about the environmental record. After nine years, the Liberals have proven to be fake environmentalists. In the environment committee, Conservatives have uncovered extreme negligence and a cover-up attempt by the Liberal government and its environment minister.

Evidence revealed at the Jasper wildfire investigation proves the Liberals do not care about the environment and will not accept responsibility for the damage their action caused. During the national tragedy this last July, a third of Jasper burned, resulting in nearly a billion dollars in damage and leaving over 2,000 people homeless. The environment committee launched an investigation into the Jasper wildfire. What it revealed was shocking.

For years, the Liberals were warned by experts that the deadfall caused by an infestation of mountain pine beetle meant the forest was a tinderbox waiting to ignite. Instead of taking action, the Liberals ignored experts and played politics. An email obtained by the Jasper wildfire investigation revealed that senior officials in the environment minister's department discussed cancelling prescribed burns months before the Jasper wildfires: "At what point do we make the organizational decision to cancel...prescribed burns in Western Canada?" They went on: "political perception may become more important than actual prescription windows."

In fact, alarm bells rang for years under the Liberal government, as local forestry experts raised concerns with forest mismanagement. In a situation similar to the one we are discussing today, whistle-blowers came to the committee to speak the truth. The Jasper wildfire investigation heard from professional foresters who warned the Liberal government in 2017 that a devastating fire in Jasper was not a matter of if but when. The same professional forester revealed, "Nothing was done to address the landscape of the beetle-killed timber to prevent the megafire of July 22, 2024."

- (1905)

While the Liberal's radical environment minister falsely claimed that his department did everything it could to prevent the fires, Conservatives exposed that Liberals ignored warnings about Jasper for years.

*Privilege*

In fact, just like the green slush fund, the Liberals are failing to co-operate with another investigation, the Jasper wildfire investigation. On October 9, the Prime Minister appointed a minister responsible for Jasper's recovery. On that same day, Conservatives passed a motion calling for the minister to testify at the Jasper wildfire investigation. That was 27 days ago. Despite this, the minister has gone into hiding. He does not want to come to committee, where he will be held accountable. Canadians want to know what the minister is hiding from this committee, and why he will not show up to answer the people of Jasper, who have lost their homes because of the Liberal government's inaction. This is just another example of Liberal cover-ups and corruption.

While the minister responsible for Jasper will not testify, Conservatives have continued this investigation on behalf of Canadians. The Jasper wildfire investigation also revealed that a Parks Canada employee, who spoke out about the mismanagement in Jasper, was fired under the Liberal government. The Jasper wildfire investigation also heard from professional forester Ken Hodges, who asked whether the inaction by the Liberal government could be considered criminal. Why does the question of criminality keep coming up under the government?

The forestry expert submitted a written submission to the Jasper wildfire investigation that stated, "Was the inaction by Parks, knowing the issue and concerns, that created this catastrophe a criminal act?" Canadians should be concerned by this question, which shows once again how often the Liberal government's actions blur the lines between negligence and criminal behaviour. The Jasper wildfire investigation is ongoing, as Conservatives continue to uncover powerful evidence that shows Liberal negligence allowed Jasper to burn.

We have to hold the government accountable. This is precisely why the SDTC documents must be handed over to the RCMP, so Canadians can understand just how corrupt this deal was and whether it was criminal. Canadians are rightfully wondering about this.

To the millions of Canadians who are outraged to learn about this corrupt and potentially criminal use of Canadian tax dollars, I would direct them to yet another Liberal handout that has just been exposed. I refer to yet another flashy Liberal announcement earlier this September, this time for a project the Prime Minister claimed would bring high-speed Internet to Canadians.

The Prime Minister claimed his government had signed a \$2-billion deal with Telesat, which would lead to "better and faster Internet service, even in rural, remote, and Northern communities."

The Prime Minister went on to claim, "Telesat Lightspeed will expand Internet and 5G networks in communities across Canada, with affordable, high-speed broadband connectivity."

The Prime Minister also said, "The network will accelerate the federal government's work to connect all Canadians to high-speed Internet by 2030."

The Liberal government handed out tax dollars in another deal they claim will connect rural and remote Canadians, but guess what we just learned? There is zero commitment to connect any house-

hold with Internet with this \$2 billion. There is zero, nothing, nada and none.

I asked the government, in a written question, "What are the complete details of financial penalties, if any, for not connecting the number of households agreed to in the funding agreement?" This was the minister's response, who, by the way, was the same minister overseeing the green slush fund: "The funding agreement does not include any commitment in regards to number of households to be connected to high-speed Internet", then went on to say, "and so there are no associated financial penalties in this regard."

• (1910)

Can members actually believe this? It is a \$2-billion joke. Canadians are being forced to pay \$2 billion for a connectivity program that may not connect a single household. How can we expect to connect Canadians to high-speed Internet when our contract does not even set a minimum number of households that must be connected? Was it laziness, neglect or corruption? It was probably all of the above. At the end of the day, this means Canadians will not receive the connectivity services they paid for, even though these services can mean the difference between life and death, especially in rural and remote regions.

The news comes after last year's findings in the Auditor General's damning report of the Liberal government's discovery that over a million households in rural Canada and over half of first nations still do not have access to high-speed Internet. It is becoming very clear that the Liberals measure success by how many tax dollars they spend instead of by the results they achieve. It seems that the Prime Minister has no problem sending money to his friends in big corporations; he does not expect to receive anything in return for Canadians. It is no wonder that, despite multi-billion dollar deals, Canadians are still not connected, especially in rural and remote areas.

This is why Conservatives are fighting for taxpayers. Allowing the Liberals' phony deals to go unchecked means more out-of-control spending and corruption, which only harms Canadians. Canadians know they cannot trust the Prime Minister to get results. The only people better off after nine years under the current Prime Minister are Liberal insiders.

Despite the Prime Minister's claim, in 2015, that his government would be "open and transparent", Canadians only see corruption and cover-ups. The Prime Minister's corruption and scandals are becoming so damning that even members of his own caucus have lost faith in him. The Prime Minister is hoping that the green slush fund scandal disappears, but Canadians will not let him get away with this. All the outraged Canadians watching from home can see a clear but unmistakable pattern. While Conservatives continue to expose the truth by asking questions, there seems to be no end to the Liberal scandals. Whether we look at past scandals, such as SNC-Lavalin, the WE Charity or the arrive scam, or the ongoing investigations, such as those into the Jasper wildfire or the \$8-billion net-zero accelerator fund, new scandals are coming to light every day. There are new scandals like their \$2-billion Telesat deal, mentioned today.

All these blunders have a few things in common. They all have the fingerprints of the Prime Minister on them. They all involve Liberal negligence and the misuse of taxpayer dollars. Canadians are worse off for each and every scandal the Liberals have created. The Prime Minister has inflicted incredible damage on Canadians' well-being. Billions of Canadian tax dollars are being mismanaged by the Liberal government and, in some cases, going directly to the funds, with no real commitment to get results for Canadians, who foot the bill. Then, coincidentally, the same funds find their way into the pockets of Liberal insiders.

It has become clear that, instead of working to ensure Canadians have affordable food to eat, Liberals are focused on ensuring that Liberals can fill their bank accounts. Instead of building enough affordable homes for Canadians to live in, Liberals choose to build a bureaucracy of red tape. Canadians deserve a government that can benefit them, not just the Liberal elite. I hope the Liberals can end the cover-up and hand over the documents, so we can expose to Canadians just how deep the Liberals' corruption runs.

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Larry Brock:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to once again offer my sincere apologies to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and to all my colleagues.

[*English*]

All members are free to speak in the official language of their choice, and my comments were inappropriate.

[*Translation*]

I am sorry.

[*English*]

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the pattern that my colleague established of the problems we have had with the Liberal government over the last few years. In this particular case it is about the money, the corruption, the uncovering of those problems and the responsibility to return this money.

Could he please respond to what he believes is important about this cover-up?

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Mr. Speaker, these dollars belong to taxpayers. These are not our dollars. This scandal, this whole debate, is all

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about what we do here in Parliament as members of Parliament. We have a responsibility to everybody who votes for us. Meanwhile, the Liberal government and the Prime Minister are blowing all Canadians off. This should not be accepted by anybody. We cannot have a carbon tax election fast enough.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1920)

[*English*]

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, in October, I asked the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Small Business why it was okay for Liberals to enrich their friends through Sustainable Development Technology Canada while small businesses are struggling. SDTC was established in 2001 and it operated with few issues under both previous Liberal and Conservative governments until the Prime Minister took office.

Earlier this year, the Auditor General released a damning report that outlined serious governance failures including 186 conflicts and over \$400 million in misspent funds. The Auditor General made it clear that this scandal falls squarely on the shoulder of the current Liberal minister, who did not sufficiently monitor the contracts that were given to Liberal insiders. The Liberals' refusal to table documents regarding the green slush fund has effectively paralyzed our Parliament, hindering our ability to do work for which we were elected. This obstruction makes it impossible for us to address pressing issues like Canada's poor economic environment with high business insolvencies, a lack of productivity and high tax burdens.

Indeed, small businesses are struggling more than ever. Business insolvencies were reported at 6,331 for the 12-month period ending August 2024, an increase of 51.6% year over year. More businesses closed than opened in four of the past five months. For example, in July 2024, we had 42,346 closing businesses and only 41,738 opening businesses.

Canada's productivity has been stagnant since 2019, going from bad to worse since the pandemic, while other countries in the OECD have seen economic indicators improving. In key sectors, the combined activity of our agriculture, utilities, manufacturing and construction have fallen from one-third to one-quarter of the Canadian economy from 20 years ago. The construction sector has experienced some of the worst productivity in Canada.

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The Bank of Canada's "Monetary Policy Report" in July 2024 reduced its forecast for overall Canadian productivity over the next two years, citing constraints on housing construction coming from structural factors such as the availability of land, zoning restrictions and a lack of skilled labour as the key concerns.

According to the Canadian Survey on Business Conditions, in the third quarter of 2024, half of all businesses reported rising inflation as an expected obstacle over the next three months. The rising cost of inputs was the second-most frequently reported, followed by rising interest rates and debt costs. As well, Canadians are now being taxed higher on their capital gains. Business groups are saying that these changes are unwise at a time of weak productivity. More than half of small business owners believe it will affect the eventual sale of their business and that high capital gains are among the most economically damaging form of taxation because they reduce the incentive to innovate and invest. This will penalize a lifetime of hard work. I might add that Environment and Climate Change Canada's estimates of the cost of the carbon tax in 2030 is that it will cost the inflation-adjusted GDP \$25 billion.

Will the government release the green slush fund documents so that Parliament can get back to the important issues of this country?

**Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business and to the Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to comments made earlier by the hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon regarding support for small businesses.

Our government understands the important role that small businesses play in the economy. This is why we will deliver \$2.5 billion to close to 600,000 small and medium-sized enterprises by the end of the year through the Canada carbon rebate.

We have negotiated agreements with both Visa and Mastercard to reduce their interchange fees by up to 27%, or by \$1 billion over the next five years. This means that more small businesses will be able to invest in their operations, create good jobs and strengthen our economy. To help Canadian businesses thrive, we have also invested in them through the Canada summer jobs programs and My Main Street programs.

We lowered the small business tax rate from 11% to 9%. This is in recognition of the vital role that small businesses play in our economy and to enable business owners to have more cash flow. In 2024, small businesses and medium-sized enterprises will save an estimated \$6.2 billion because of the preferred small business tax rate.

To encourage Canadian innovators to turn their ideas into growing businesses, our government announced the creation of the Canadian entrepreneurs' incentive, which would reduce the inclusion rate to one-third of a lifetime maximum of \$2 million in eligible capital gains. Combined with the increased \$1.25-million lifetime capital gains exemption, the Canadian entrepreneurs' incentive would make eligible business owners better off when selling business shares worth up to \$6.25 million.

The government's latest budget devotes \$200 million to renewing the venture capital catalyst initiative, with a goal of supporting ven-

ture capital for entrepreneurs who are part of equity-deserving groups, and investing in underserved communities and those outside key metropolitan areas. This will ensure that more small businesses owned by women and members of the Black, 2SLGBTQI+ and indigenous communities have access to the capital they need to start up and scale up.

Giving young people the option to choose entrepreneurship as a valuable career path for the future is important to our government. That is why in budget 2024 we invested \$60 million in Futurepreneur Canada to help the organization increase its capacity to support young Canadian entrepreneurs.

These measures combined make a real, tangible difference that supports small businesses, including those led by women and members of equity-deserving groups.

• (1925)

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that in every Liberal budget, there seems to be a line item for every issue facing our country. However, the Liberal approach fails to address the broader economic conditions that government programs, on a one-off basis, cannot address. We need a government right now that is going to address the overall productivity of the Canadian economy and the overall state of our economy so that the statistics I outlined related to business closures, business openings and the productivity crisis we face in our country are addressed.

We need to create an environment for the economy to thrive once again, and that will only come through broad-based tax measures, changes to the tax code and changes to the way the government treats the natural resource sector.

**Mr. Bryan May:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are going to continue to support small and medium-sized businesses. We are empowering entrepreneurs. We are increasing the lifetime capital gains exemption. We are investing in Canadian start-ups, and we are supporting equity-deserving entrepreneurs and businesses. This also gives me the opportunity to highlight that we have negotiated agreements with both Visa and Mastercard to lower interchange fees by up to 27% as of October 19 of this year.

Our government is committed to supporting small businesses, economic growth and prosperity for all Canadians. We have been with small businesses and supporting small businesses from day one, and the opposition has voted against all of it.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am back tonight to continue calling on the government to fix the Canada disability benefit. It is particularly timely because we are now nearing the time when we would expect to see its fall economic statement. It is an opportunity for the government to right a wrong. The stakes are pretty high: 1.5 million folks with disabilities are living in poverty across the country, which is 40% of all of those living in poverty in Canada.

It was the Liberal Party's own platform in 2021 that said that a re-elected Liberal government would implement the Canada disability benefit, saying, "this new benefit will reduce poverty among persons with disabilities in the same manner as the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Canada Child Benefit". Both programs are in the order of tens of millions of dollars. I think it is around \$15 billion for the Canada child benefit.

The minister, at the time, said that this would be a generational program, a sleeper legacy piece, if we do this right.

We are now nearing the end of the government's mandate. The fall economic statement is likely the last opportunity to fix the benefit before we head into an election. If nothing is done, here is the reality: The proposed benefit amount is currently capped at a maximum of \$200 a month and would not even start until July 2025. It is going to be limited to those who can access the incredibly burdensome disability tax credit.

Recent modelling from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives shows that only 10,000 people will be lifted above the poverty line by the benefit, as is currently laid out. Here is Inclusion Canada commenting on it: "Our disappointment cannot be overstated".

The government has got to fix the benefit, and the disability community has been calling for specifically seven things to address to fix the Canada disability benefit: first, remove the barriers to application by automatically enrolling recipients in provincial and territorial disability programs as well as those who currently receive CPPD in the Canada disability benefit and remove the requirement for a DTC; second, remove the additional barrier of another application that it has proposed in the regulations with a simple opt-out option for those who do not wish to receive the Canada disability benefit; third, support the dignity and the independence of each person with a disability by means testing the benefit against an individual's income; fourth, increase the maximum amount to lift folks with disabilities above the poverty line, taking into account the added cost for those who live with a disability; fifth, raise the income threshold so that it takes into account the added cost of living with a disability; sixth, fast-track the implementation and delivery of the benefit; seventh, issue retroactive payments dating back to when the legislation was passed in June 2023.

The government could pay for this easily if it redirected the subsidies it currently gives to the oil and gas industry every single year. That was about \$18.5 billion in 2023 alone. This is about honouring the government's own promise. It is about addressing poverty. It is about listening to the disability community.

My question to the parliamentary secretary is this: Will the government do it?

• (1930)

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Kitchener Centre for his advocacy and also thank the disability community for its advocacy over the last several years. Everyone in Canada should be able to live in dignity. Our government is dedicated to this principle. We are prioritizing the needs of persons with disabilities and the disability community, and we are working toward meaningful solutions, solutions that matter and are impactful. It was our Liberal government that enacted the Accessible Canada Act. This was the first national Canadian legislation that impacted all government departments and federally regulated agencies.

[Translation]

We are committed to making Canada more accessible and inclusive.

[English]

We launched the disability inclusion action plan, our blueprint for change. A key component of the plan is a robust employment strategy. The strategy is integral to supporting persons with disabilities and helping them to enter the workforce. In fact, Statistics Canada estimates that over one million working-age Canadians with disabilities could participate in the labour market if they had a fully inclusive environment. We are committed to providing that fully inclusive environment for the one million Canadians of working age with disabilities.

Our government is committed to removing barriers through programs like the enabling accessibility fund, which supports essential improvements such as ramps, accessible doors, accessible washrooms and accessible offices. Additionally, the opportunities fund assists individuals with disabilities in preparing for, finding and maintaining employment. It also helps to advance careers.

Together these initiatives help foster accessible communities and workplaces and enable us to tap into this important and valuable talent pool.

• (1935)

[Translation]

Our government has invested more than any other federal government to support Canadians with disabilities, but there is still a lot of work to do. With the Canada disability benefit, our government is taking another historic step forward.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

[English]

As a cornerstone of the disability inclusion action plan, the Canada disability benefit aims to enhance the financial security of low-income working-age persons with disabilities. Importantly, the disability benefit is designed to supplement existing disability support programs, not replace them.

[Translation]

The provinces and territories play an essential role in the payment of benefits.

[English]

We aim to see the combined federal, provincial and territorial benefits improve supports for persons with disabilities to match the levels of old age security and the guaranteed income supplement. This significant adjustment is essential in order to effectively address the rate of poverty facing persons with disabilities. The Canada disability benefit allows our government to work with provinces and territories to see that there are no more clawbacks of existing benefits.

[Translation]

Together we can explore the best ways to improve our collective assistance to persons with disabilities. We understand that the disabilities community is eager for the payments to be made. We are too.

[English]

We are moving swiftly towards establishing essential components of the disability benefit and delivering on it. It will be in people's pockets as of July, and we are committed to that.

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the government can move swiftly. It did so with the Canada emergency response benefit, CERB, in the midst of the pandemic. Within weeks, a framework was designed. When it came to people with disabilities, though, the promise was made over four years ago and the current session of Parliament is now nearing its end.

There is a really critical economic document coming out in the coming weeks. It is an opportunity for the government to show the disability community that it has actually been heard, and an opportunity for the government to see persons with disabilities and the reality of how insufficient what the government has proposed is. A maximum of \$200 a month, limited to those people who can get through the burdensome disability tax credit application process, is not what the government promised in the throne speech years ago or in its platform.

Will the Liberals take this moment to reflect on the feedback they have heard from the disability community and demonstrate they have heard the disability community by doing better and fixing the Canada disability benefit?

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to again thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his advocacy.

Our government is committed to supporting persons with disabilities. The first cheques for the disability benefit will be in people's pockets as of July. This is an important and historic benefit for all working-age persons with disabilities in our country living in chal-

lenging times. It will help reduce poverty and support the financial security of so many people.

The Canada disability benefit is a major milestone in our government's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Our government is moving as quickly as possible to get the money to people who need it most.

The Conservative Party has said it supports persons with disabilities. However, there is a question mark in regard to which programs the Conservative Party would cut first. We have heard this from the Conservative leader in the past. We would like to know if this benefit would be cut by Conservatives in the future.

## CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to wrap up this evening's events and ask some follow-up questions, on the carbon tax, to what I asked the Minister of Environment a week ago in question period.

We all know the carbon tax costs a majority of Canadians much more than they get back in rebates. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that time and time again and recently confirmed it in his most recent PBO report. We all know the Canadian Trucking Alliance has said the carbon tax, from 2019 to 2030, will cost the trucking industry \$26 billion.

How do the NDP-Liberals not think that that cost will get passed on to consumers, for example, at the grocery store? We have seen grocery costs skyrocket under the NDP-Liberal government over the last few years. I am sure whoever gets up on that side will say we have heard the PBO say eight out of 10 Canadians are better off with the carbon tax rebate, but it is not true.

When we take in the total cost, the indirect cost, of the carbon tax, I would say a vast majority of Canadians are worse off. The rebate is minuscule, and the carbon tax is put on, in most parts of the country, home heating and air conditioning; every time people fill up their gas tank and every time they go to the grocery store, they get hit again.

Canadians now realize the NDP-Liberal government is not worth the cost. Over the nine long years it has been in government, everything has gone up in price. We have heard it time and again: costs are up, taxes are up and time is up. It is time to have a carbon tax election.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

We even see the Liberals' junior partner, the NDP, waffling a bit on the carbon tax. We saw the member for Burnaby South, right in the middle of the Elmwood—Transcona by-election, say that maybe the New Democrats are not in favour of a carbon tax. Only days later, he flip-flopped back to come on board. We saw the NDP Premier in B.C., Mr. Eby, say the carbon tax is hurting people in B.C., and maybe the government would revisit that. He made that promise during an election campaign, but once again, the NDP will go back to their old ways of foisting the carbon tax on the Canadian people in B.C., and making them pay more each and every day.

I would like a clear answer from whichever Liberal is going to give an answer this evening about why the Liberals continue to break the promise they gave in the 2019 campaign that they would never raise the carbon tax past \$50 a tonne. It was in the campaign platform. That was the Liberal commitment, that they would never raise the carbon tax past \$50 a tonne.

What we are going to see by 2030 is a quadrupling of the carbon tax. It is going to cost each and every Canadian an extra 61¢ a litre. That is an undeniable fact. I am hoping to have an answer to why the Liberals are breaking their promise to Canadians and quadrupling the carbon tax.

● (1940)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, without an ounce of irony, the hon. member gets up and talks about breaking promises. That member ran on pricing pollution; he and every member of his party ran on a carbon tax. It is in his platform.

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

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** Mr. Speaker, he is heckling; he says, "Show me where it is." There was an announcement. It was on the cover of the Conservatives' platform. The guy with the muscles, whom they got rid of a little bit after, ran on a carbon price.

It is shocking. I looked it up before the speech, and more than half of the member's province is currently in drought conditions. However, in his entire speech, he did not talk about any action on climate change. Climate change is affecting the farmers, whom he purports to stand up for, in dramatic ways. It is affecting yields and their livelihood, and he says, "I don't care." Maybe in Regina, the impact on farmers of climate change beyond the borders of his riding does not matter. However, as the hon. member and I have discussed, we both like to eat. Is it not important that we stand up for farmers, that we stand up for our economy and that we fight climate change? If not for them, should we not do it for our kids, who are facing this?

Looking at my phone right now, it is 18°C on November 5 in Ottawa. We can see the impacts of climate change with our own eyes, and the hon. member just wants to stick his head in the sand. He quotes the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I do not know that he has even read the report, but the report specifically says that eight out of 10 Canadians do better under the carbon pricing system. However, he is the person who would speak to 100 doctors who say that smoking is bad for a person, speak to one doctor who says it is okay, and then say it is great to smoke. He would say that we should really do that, regardless of what the other 99 doctors said.

Three hundred of the top economists in this country have said that carbon pricing works and that it puts more money in the pockets of Canadians; however, this member does not care. He went through his speech without even mentioning the rebate. Yes, costs get passed down, but there is a rebate back, and because more money is put in their pocket, Canadians are better off.

It is shocking that the members from the other side do not care about the environment, do not care about climate change, when it is an existential threat to Canada and Canadians.

● (1945)

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, there was so much wrong in that answer. I want to unpack it, but I do not have the time. However, one thing I will say, as a father of three, is that smoking is very bad. Please be assured that I do not think smoking is a good thing for anyone. I would just like to get that on the record.

I was not sure that my hon. colleague was going to answer, but I am glad he answered because I enjoy his clever banter every now and then. However, I will invite him out to Saskatchewan. I was born and raised on a farm, and so I know quite a few people who still ranch and farm. We will tour southwestern Saskatchewan. I am sure the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands would help us out. We will tour northern Saskatchewan and go to every farmyard we can. The member can talk about the efficacy of the carbon tax and if it is helping or not. I will put our position on the table, and we can see what the people of Saskatchewan think is better. We can do that or have a carbon tax election.

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member thinks I come from, but there is a lot of agricultural land. I speak to farmers in Niagara, especially grape growers, and they are incredibly worried about climate change. Looking at British Columbia, farmers have lost 95% of their crops because of the impacts of climate change.

The hon. member does not care. He buries his head in the sand and still does not acknowledge that eight out of 10 Canadians are better off with the rebate system in place. Not only has the Parliamentary Budget Officer said so, but 300 of the top economists in this country have as well. Again, he would pick that one doctor who says smoking is okay, regardless.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:47 p.m.)

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