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# House of Commons Debates

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Wednesday, November 6, 2024

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1405)

[*Translation*]

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

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### TORONTO EAST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

**Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the amazing 100th anniversary of the Toronto East Seventh-day Adventist Church. One of the oldest congregations in Ontario, Toronto East began as a small group gathering in a modest worship hall on Danforth Avenue. As the church grew, it moved several times to larger spaces, but it always stayed within Toronto's east end and is currently in my riding of Scarborough North.

Toronto East remains a beacon of faith, service and community, a fellowship filled with smiling faces, soulful music and spirited worship. I send my congratulations to pastors Selburn Fray and Nicholas Patrick and elders Enos Stewart and Jean Lazarus, as well as the wider congregation, on this century milestone. May Toronto East continue to inspire faith, love and hope for many more generations to come.

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### ROBERT SOPUCK

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Sopuck, a former member of Parliament for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, but more importantly, my friend and mentor.

I had already been here four years when Bob showed up. He caught my attention immediately with his keen interest in all matters of hunting, fishing, trapping and the outdoor way of life, and we became fast friends. It was not long before we were organizing

the Conservative hunting and angling caucus, wild fish and game potluck meals, and fishing on the Ottawa River on June evenings.

Bob was a fighter. He vigorously defended hunting, farming, ranching and common-sense conservation. He pushed for the recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program, which has left a lasting legacy of fisheries enhancement across Canada. He fought for us, so much so that he was named 2017 International Legislator of the Year by Safari Club International, just one of his many accolades.

I will miss Bob. I will miss the daily text messages, phone calls, emails and words of encouragement. I am sad that the trips we had planned will be left unfinished, but I will revel in the memories of the ones we took.

I hope there is a trout stream where Bob is now and that his fly rod is flexing from the tug of a beauty. I say to him, rest easy, partner.

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### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN AURORA—OAK RIDGES—RICHMOND HILL

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise as the elected representative of the people of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

This weekend, once again, I saw the great work being done within my riding by community organizations and individuals. I had the pleasure of participating in Yellow Brick House's 2024 Break the Silence, Step In My Shoes Walk. Together, we raised an incredible \$77,000 to support women and children fleeing domestic violence. The vital funding will provide shelter and life-saving services to those in need. I give a special thank you to Lorris Herenda, the president and CEO of the organization. As we recognize November as Woman Abuse Prevention Month, I encourage everyone to continue supporting organizations such as Yellow Brick House.

*Statements by Members*

On a different front, there was the retirement of a wonderful fire-fighter, Brad Humfryes. After decades of courageous service to our community, he has retired. His bravery and selfless commitment to our community has made a lasting mark. He and his wife, Sandra, have provided so much to our community in other ways. We wish him a well-deserved and fulfilling retirement.

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[Translation]

**LUCIEN FRANCOEUR**

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today, we are saddened to learn of the passing of rocker-poet Lucien Francoeur at the age of 76.

A passionate bearer of Quebec idiom and the first local poet to explore rap with *Rap-à-Billy*, Lucien Francoeur was a leader in Quebec counter-culture in the 1970s and 1980s. He and his band, Aut'Chose, released three defining albums: *Prends une chance avec moé*, *Une nuit comme une autre* and *Le cauchemar américain*.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to express my deepest condolences to his family and friends, and to all those who were inspired by this visionary rebel.

I will certainly raise a glass to my dear friend Lucien on Bernard Avenue in Montreal, where we have had the pleasure of sharing a drink, or at Zaricot in Saint-Hyacinthe, the last place I saw him in concert in 2020. Rock was in his blood, in his heart and in his mind. Goodbye, Lulu.

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[English]

**MONTÉRÉGIE WEST COMMUNITY NETWORK**

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the invaluable work and achievements of the Montérégie West Community Network and to congratulate it and its team as they celebrate 25 years. Founded in 1999 as the Chateauguay Focus Group and changed to MWCN in 2016, the organization has been steadfast in organizing and supporting services to the anglophone community in Quebec.

Whether it is bringing people together over coffee or dinner, celebrating the next generation of anglophone youth through awards and scholarships, mounting important educational campaigns, or being a strong voice when it is needed most, for a quarter century, its dedication and commitment have enriched Vaudreuil—Soulanges and the entire Montérégie region.

To Pauline, Matt, Tonya, Patricia, Joanne, Elizabeth, Lorie, Clement, Bryanna, Alexa, Kim, Nora, Tina and, of course, Nadya, I send my thanks for all they do, and I congratulate the Montérégie West Community Network on 25 years of exceptional service. Here is to the next 25 years to come.

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**OTONABEE-SOUTH MONAGHAN FOOD CUPBOARD**

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize the Otonabee-South Monaghan Food Cupboard. The Food Cup-

board is a small rural food bank in my riding that has seen demand increase exponentially. It had a record number of visitors in February and September of this year, and almost half of the families visiting the food bank have young children. The Food Cupboard has gone from being a helping hand to an absolute necessity for too many families in my riding.

I want to express my thanks to the Food Cupboard and make a promise to them, and all food banks across Canada, that a common-sense Conservative government would axe the carbon tax, which would lower the cost of food and dramatically reduce the number of Canadians experiencing food insecurity.

It is time for Canadians to emerge from nine years of economic malaise by voting for a Conservative government that would turn their hurt into hope and restore the promise of Canada.

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● (1410)

**JOHN LITTLE**

**Ms. Anna Gainey (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honour John Little, a pioneer of Canadian urban painting who passed away on October 28 at the age of 96.

For over 65 years, Mr. Little captured and chronicled Montreal's neighbourhoods, from Westmount to Little Burgundy and the Plateau to Mile End. His work celebrates the streetscapes and life of the city's core.

Mr. Little's gentle spirit and sense of humour endeared him to many. He was a passionate advocate for preserving Montreal's heritage, famously stating, "If we knock down all our old buildings..., we'll become a people without a past." His significant body of work on canvas serves as a reminder of the stories within our streets during a time of great change.

[Translation]

Mr. Little's legacy will inspire generations to come. His artistic genius and dedication to the soul of our city have left an indelible and unique mark on our country. May he rest in peace.

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[English]

**LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Conservative Party has an idea. His idea is to cut social housing programs, and one of the best examples I can cite is the housing accelerator plan.

*Statements by Members*

Many Conservatives know about that plan because many of them have been advocating for it, saying that it is a good plan. However, the leader of the Conservative-Reform party has made the decision that it is not good for Canadians. How unfortunate that is. He is putting at risk about half a million homes, which is serious stuff, and the type of leadership we are getting from the Conservative right today. It is all about cuts. He does not care about what is happening in our communities. When housing is a concern, where are the Conservatives? They are cutting away, to the disservice of all Canadians.

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**HOUSING**

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberal government is not worth the cost of housing. Young Canadians say that the current economic environment is impeding their ability to purchase homes. Our common-sense Conservative plan to axe the tax on new homes sold is being praised by Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

BILD GTA said that it applauds the Federal Conservative announcement: “This is a significant step forward in helping housing affordability.” Habitat for Humanity said that eliminating the GST would reduce costs. Tim Richter, founder and CEO of Canadian Alliance to End Homeless, stated, “This is smart.” The Canadian Real Estate Association said, “This proposed step is a positive move toward lowering building costs, increasing housing supply, and making homeownership more attainable for Canadians.”

Our tax cut would spark 30,000 extra homes being built every year. Only common-sense Conservatives will bring home the Canada promise.

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**ABORTION RIGHTS**

**Ms. Lisa Hefner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand up for a woman's right to choose what happens to her body, which is why we have introduced new legislation to ensure that, when a woman seeks reproductive care, she is not unwittingly walking into a clinic that tries to dissuade her from options like abortion.

According to the Abortion Rights Coalition, about 157 so-called pregnancy crisis centres in Canada are actually fronts for the anti-choice movement where, women tell us, they are deceived and made to feel more shame and extra distress at pivotally difficult times in their lives. More than 90% of these anti-choice centres have enjoyed status in Canada as registered charities. Now, they must clearly and fulsomely explain to clients what services they offer or they will lose their charitable status.

Also, according to the Abortion Rights Coalition, there are no pro-choice MPs in the Conservative Party. We know one member left to sit as an independent due to the growing anti-choice caucus. When will the Conservatives stop hiding their misogynistic agenda?

● (1415)

**LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is only one person keeping the Prime Minister in power and it is the leader of the NDP. Do members remember the stunt the NDP leader pulled just before the by-election in Elmwood—Transcona when he claimed he had ripped up his coalition deal with the Liberals? Well, it was just a stunt designed to deceive voters there. He said, “the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people.” Many agreed, but actions speak louder than words.

The NDP leader is the weak one because he still backs the Liberals and their costly, destructive policies. He has voted for the costly Liberal carbon tax over 24 times, pushing more than two million Canadians to food banks every month. He has voted for Liberal inflationary spending, backing waste like the Prime Minister's arrive scam. He supports hard drug legalization and soft-on-crime policies that led to a 50% increase in violent crime. He has sold out Canadians by supporting the Liberals, while supercharging crime, chaos, death and destruction in our communities.

Every day the Prime Minister remains in power is because of the NDP leader. We need a carbon tax election now.

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[Translation]

**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this week, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change proved himself to be the champion of consensus. Both environmental groups and Canada's energy industry have attacked his Liberal plan to cap Canadian energy production.

He was a champion of consensus thanks to his bad decision, and now he has a duty and obligation to be the champion of transparency in the SDTC scandal. After all, that is exactly why the House is currently paralyzed. The minister still holds assets in funds managed by Cycle Capital, which is literally at the heart of this scandal. Cycle Capital, headed by a former green fund board member, has received over \$10 million in public money.

We have been raising this issue for weeks in committee. Now, in response to valid questions from the Journal de Montréal, the minister's office has refused to give details of his holdings. Let us not forget that the Auditor General of Canada concluded that this green fund has paid out nearly \$400 million over the past five years while disregarding ethical rules.

The minister needs to shed light on this issue.

*Statements by Members**[English]***HARVIE BROTHERS**

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly recognize and celebrate the contribution of the Harvie family from Hants County, Nova Scotia, specifically eight brothers who served Canada during World War II. Marven, Burrell, Edmund, Victor, Garnet, Ernest, Ervin and Avarid Harvie all answered the call of duty to fight for democracy and freedom. Marven and Burrell made the ultimate sacrifice and were killed in action during the campaign in Europe. It is believed the Harvie brothers represent the most siblings from one family to serve in combat during World War II from North America or anywhere in the British Commonwealth.

I want to sincerely thank the Hants North Legion, notably Jeff Thurber and others who have worked so hard to dedicate a permanent, beautiful monument to recognize the Harvie brothers and other veterans who have served Canada across the Hants North community.

The Harvie brothers represent the epitome of sacrifice. To their family and to all those who have served and continue to serve with the Canadian Armed Forces, we as a country are forever grateful.

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**UNITED NATIONS**

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of the work of the United Nations. Canada helped build the UN. After the horrors of World War II, we were leaders in terms of peacekeeping and leaders in supporting peace and human rights through multilateralism. In recent months, we have seen an unprecedented attack on the UN by Israel's far-right government. It has killed UN workers in Gaza, pushed to defund and then ban UNRWA, bombed 70% of UNRWA locations in Gaza, shot at UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, banned the UN Secretary-General and attacked the UN special rapporteur on Palestine.

Where is Canada to defend the UN and stand up to Israel's far-right government waging genocide? Canada is part of the problem. We must never forget the lessons of history. Canada and Canadians can and must be a voice in support of the UN and multilateralism, and take concrete action to stop genocide and stand up for peace now.

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● (1420)

*[Translation]***PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES**

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since July 2023, we have been calling on the government to take responsibility for water contaminated by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, from CFB Bagotville.

Water treatment costs have skyrocketed, and Saguenay will have to spend \$7 million a year to provide residents of La Baie with drinking water until a permanent solution can be found. Quick action is imperative before these expenses turn into taxes for Saguenay residents. Municipal taxes should be used to fund city services,

not to fix the federal government's mistakes. Unfortunately, the costly Conservative-Liberal coalition seems unwilling to accept its responsibility. As their reign draws to a close, the Liberals would rather drag things out and then pass the buck to the next government. The Conservative member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is afraid to make commitments. He is so strangely silent on this issue that residents of La Baie are thinking of putting his picture on a milk carton to track him down.

Hope, however, is on the horizon: A responsible Bloc Québécois member is going to be elected in the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

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*[English]***INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while two million Canadians visit food banks every month, the radical Liberal environment minister continues to benefit from the Liberal green slush fund, where Liberal insiders funnelled \$400 million to their own companies. The Journal de Montréal reports that Cycle Capital companies received \$275 million from Canadian taxpayers while their founder sat on the slush fund board.

The radical Liberal environment minister was Cycle Capital's lobbyist prior to running for office, lobbying the Liberal government 47 times, including many meetings with the Prime Minister's friend Gerry Butts. The radical environment minister disclosed that he continues to hold a financial interest in Cycle Capital while sitting in cabinet. It pays well to be a friend of the Prime Minister.

While the radical Liberal environment minister is padding his pockets as Cycle Capital vacuums up taxpayer money, Canadians can no longer afford to heat, feed and house themselves. Is the minister's financial gain the reason the NDP-Liberals will not turn over the uncensored documents to the RCMP?

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*[Translation]***HOUSING**

**Ms. Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Conservative leader announced that he plans to cut housing projects across the country. He is proposing reckless cuts that will have a devastating impact on the progress Canada has made on housing. Even his own MPs are going behind his back to advocate for funding for their communities.

Let us be clear about what is at stake here. The Conservatives' reckless cuts to housing could put as many as 750,000 homes at risk over the next decade. Canadians cannot afford reckless Conservative cuts to housing. Conservative members need to stand up for their communities. Obviously, we need to build more homes, not fewer.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while Prime Minister Harper managed to get the buy America policies lifted, the Prime Minister capitulated and allowed Donald Trump to reimpose them. While Mr. Harper managed to get rid of softwood lumber tariffs, the Prime Minister again capitulated to Donald Trump, who reimposed them.

Will the Prime Minister call an election so that Canadians can elect a leader who will stand up for our jobs and bring our companies home?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader is talking nonsense. We stood up for supply management. We stood up for our aluminum and steel workers. We stood up for NAFTA by improving it for people on both sides of the border.

What is more, we know full well that the Americans are concerned about national security and defence. It is that Conservative Party and that Conservative leader who sat at the cabinet table and lowered defence spending to less than 1% of the GDP. He still refuses to take national security seriously and refuses to get security clearance and protect Canadians.

• (1425)

[*English*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, The New York Times reported a decade ago that Canada had the richest middle class in the world and that median incomes for Canadians were higher than in the United States. How things have changed. After nine years of Liberal taxes, red tape and attacks on our energy sector, Americans make \$32,000 more than Canadians, and now a newly elected American President wants to take our jobs for Americans.

We understand why Donald Trump wants to take Canadian jobs, but why does the Prime Minister want to help him?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when we successfully renegotiated NAFTA and protected Canadian jobs, protected steelworkers and aluminum workers, protected our supply-managed sectors and agricultural workers, protected Canadians from coast to coast to coast, the leader of the Conservative Party at the time referred to our approach as dumb.

Successfully standing up for Canadians is not dumb, but what is dumb is someone refusing to get their security clearance so they can actually protect members of their caucus, protect Canadians and get the briefings necessary on national security.

### *Oral Questions*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, his approach was dumb. It was dumb to let the Americans reimpose buy America rules that Harper had gotten lifted. It was dumb to let Trump impose softwood lumber tariffs that Biden has now doubled. What is dumb, dumber and dumbest of all is imposing a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax that will force our trucking companies, our factories and our mines to head south of the border into the arms of President Trump.

We know why he wants to create American jobs with Canadian money, but why does the Prime Minister want to help him?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we stood up and protected Canadian jobs, Canadian industry and Canadian trade. We know the American government cares about creating prosperity in North America, and we are going to do it together. What the American government, and particularly this President, also cares about is defence and national security.

The leader of the Conservative Party was sitting around the cabinet table when Conservatives dropped spending on defence to below 1%, and the Americans will not understand any more than Canadians do why the Leader of the Opposition refuses to take national security seriously and refuses to get his—

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

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I know it is Wednesday. It is really important, though, that we only recognize the person who is speaking at the time so the Speaker can hear what is going on.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, maybe the reason Conservatives were able to get rid of buy America and softwood lumber tariffs is that we helped the Americans crush the Taliban and ISIS, whereas the Prime Minister could not even shoot down a Chinese weather balloon over northern Canada. Now he wants to impose a tariff on his own companies, a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax, 300% higher than it is right now, where there is a 0% carbon tax south of the border.

Why does he want to create an avalanche of Canadian businesses, jobs and paycheques leaving for America?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we see once again right now the Conservative leader constantly talking down the members of the Canadian Armed Forces, talking down and nickel-and-diming our veterans. They shuttered nine veterans services offices; cut thousands of staff, people helping veterans; and made cuts to the Canadian Armed Forces that brought our spending on defence to below 1%. He will not even commit to our timeline to get it up to 2%, and he will not get his security clearance so that he can get the briefing necessary to keep all Canadians safe.

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, The New York Times reported that Canada had the richest middle class in the world and that median income in Canada was higher than in the United States. Today, Canadian workers earn \$34,000 less than their American counterparts after the Liberal tax hikes and economic barriers. Now an American president wants to take our jobs away and move them to the United States.

Why not hold an election so that Quebeckers can choose a prime minister who will stand up for their jobs?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians remember all too well how Stephen Harper had a tendency to capitulate to the Americans. In contrast, we stood up to protect supply management, to renegotiate NAFTA and to protect our aluminum and steel workers.

We will always protect Canadian workers, and we will invest in national security, something the Conservatives refused to do, since they reduced our defence investments to 1% of GDP. At the same time, the Conservative leader still refuses to get his security clearance and take national security seriously.

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**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, following President Trump's election win, it seems likely, if not certain, that a number of people who currently live in the United States will want to leave and seek asylum here in Canada.

Has the government already made plans to ensure regular and orderly management of our borders, including increased monitoring, given that people can claim asylum once they have been here for two weeks, like they did in the days of Roxham Road?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like any responsible government, we have been preparing for months, regardless of the outcome of last night's U.S. elections, regardless of the results. We will always be there to protect our economy, our forestry workers, our farmers, and our aluminum and steel workers. We will be there to protect the integrity of our borders and our immigration system.

We have always been able to work well with the Americans, and we will continue to do so in order to manage our borders and our economy responsibly.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that seems like a pretty broad answer considering the fact that there could be millions of people in the U.S. wanting to leave that country, maybe even in the short term. A significant number of them may very well be setting their sights on Canada and, if they manage to enter through an irregular border crossing and stay here for two weeks, they will be allowed to stay.

Will the government put measures in place? Will it at least ensure that the asylum seekers who arrive will be distributed according to the demographic weight of each province and of Quebec?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government has already demonstrated its ability to work to protect the integrity of our immigration system and our borders by working with the Americans to improve the safe third country system, to make sure we closed Roxham Road and to be able to take measures to ensure the best distribution of asylum seekers across the country.

We will continue to be responsible and reasonable and always ensure the integrity of our borders and our immigration system.

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[*English*]

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are worried that Donald Trump's plans will hurt people. They are particularly worried that his plans to impose across-the-board tariffs are going to hurt Canadian jobs. It is going to mean that the cost of everything goes up.

Will the Prime Minister state clearly, stand up today and say that Donald Trump's plans are wrong?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we have demonstrated before, we will continue to work constructively with the American administration. We will continue to defend Canadian jobs and interests while we look to create growth and prosperity on both sides of the border. We stood up for Canadian agricultural workers, for Canadian steel and aluminum workers, and for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. We did it with a team Canada approach that brought together labour unions, businesses and premiers of all different provinces. We will continue to work together to stand up for Canadians and create prosperity for everyone in North America.

• (1435)

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is cold comfort to Canadians who are worried about losing their jobs.



*Oral Questions***THE ECONOMY***[Translation]*

Donald Trump has proposed plans that threaten jobs in Canada. He has proposed plans to impose tariffs that will not only threaten jobs, but also increase the cost of living, which is already too high.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to state clearly today that Donald Trump is wrong?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Trump threatened to tear up NAFTA during his first term as president, we were able to work with him not only to stand up for workers and the Canadian economy, but also to improve the agreement and create opportunities for everyone in North America. We will continue to work responsibly to stand up for Canadian values, interests and jobs, knowing that we can do this together to create prosperity throughout North America.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after Mr. Harper managed to lift the softwood lumber tariffs, the Prime Minister capitulated and let the Americans reimpose those tariffs. Then, Mr. Biden doubled them. President Trump is threatening to go even further. Hundreds of workers in Saguenay have already lost their jobs because this Prime Minister capitulated.

When will an election be called so that Canadians can choose a prime minister who will defend our jobs and bring home powerful paycheques?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, when we defended NAFTA, jobs and Canadian workers, we worked with Conservative premiers, unions, and labour and industry groups across the country using a team Canada approach to defending Canadian interests and creating growth throughout North America. Only one party did not participate in that exercise, and that was the Conservative Party of Canada, which sulked and said that we should capitulate on everything and that everything was too important to try to stick up for ourselves. That is not what people want. People want a government—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister also capitulated on buy America, a policy that discriminates against our construction, steel and aluminum companies. They can no longer sell their materials to the U.S. for government construction projects. This provision was withdrawn during the Harper years but was reimposed by President Trump, with the consent of this Prime Minister, who agreed to sign a so-called free trade agreement that included a buy America policy.

Will the Prime Minister allow us to have an election so we can fight for our construction workers and workers in other sectors?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will always work with the Americans to create prosperity while also defending our workers here. Speaking of defence, we are not going to take any lessons from a member of Mr. Harper's cabinet, because this Conservative leader was there when the Harper government decided to cut defence investments to less than 1% of GDP, which the Americans absolutely do not want. We are going to increase that investment to 2%. The Conservative leader refuses to commit to that, and what is more, he refuses to get the security clearance needed to deal with national security issues.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, our economy per capita was equal to that of the United States. In fact, Canadian workers were earning more than their American counterparts. However, after nine years of taxes and economic roadblocks imposed by this radical Liberal government, we see that Americans are \$34,000 richer per person and that the United States' economy has grown by 18% per capita, while Canada's economy has declined.

We know why Mr. Trump wants to create jobs in the United States, but why does this Prime Minister want to help him?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know Donald Trump well enough to know that he would be extremely confused, as Canadians are, about why, at a time when all democracies are facing uncertainty and foreign aggression, the Leader of the Opposition still refuses to get the security clearance he needs to receive top secret briefings and protect his MPs and Canadians properly. The Conservative leader is turning down national security briefings.

Neither Donald Trump nor Canadians would understand why.

● (1440)

*[English]*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what President Trump must not understand, and must actually find kind of humorous, is that while he wants to take jobs from other countries and give them to Americans, he sees, here in Canada, a Prime Minister who wants to help him do it. Let us review the track record. The Prime Minister brought in a massive tax on energy that he wants to quadruple, which will drive our trucking, manufacturing, factories and other businesses abroad. He raised taxes on investment. He blocked key energy projects. He shipped half a trillion dollars down to the United States.

Is the Prime Minister auditioning to be the secretary of job creation in the United States?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the Leader of the Opposition needs to get his facts straight. In the nine years since we took office, foreign direct investment has increased by 60% in this country, so much so that, last year, we were number one per capita for foreign direct investment in the G20.

*Oral Questions*

We continue to work hand in hand with the United States, with whatever administration, to protect jobs and to grow our economies. What the American government will not understand is why the Conservative leader continues to refuse to get the security clearance necessary to protect Canadians, to protect us all from foreign interference.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, our per capita GDP, which is income per person, was equal to that in the United States. The New York Times said that Canadians were richer and that our workers were making more money. Since that time, the American economy has grown by 18% per person. In Canada, it is actually smaller. We have had the worst per capita GDP decline of any G7 country since the year before COVID, all after the Prime Minister hiked taxes on investment, on work and on business, and after he unleashed a wicked attack on our energy sector. Again, why is it that he keeps trying to create jobs for Americans?

Why do we not bring the jobs home?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, we see the Conservative leader cherry-picking his numbers. The reality is that the IMF predicts that Canada will have stronger economic growth next year than the United States, full stop. What he is trying to do is continue to talk down our economy. He pretends that maybe he is going to be able to deal with an American government that will not understand why he dropped defence spending to below 1% of GDP when he was last around the cabinet table and why he continues to refuse to get the necessary security clearance to get the briefings, to keep his own caucus safe, much less all Canadians.

\* \* \*

**CARBON PRICING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of anyone who would more favour quadrupling the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre in Canada than the Prime Minister. Maybe there is one person. Perhaps President Trump would not mind, because of course it would mean that our trucking companies, our factories and our mines would all shut down and go south of the border, where they would pay zero carbon tax.

We have enough to worry about with President Trump potentially imposing tariffs on Canadian companies.

Why would our government impose tariffs on ourselves?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition demonstrates that he has no understanding of the only way to build a stronger economy for the future. It is to protect the environment while, at the same time, putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians.

The Canada carbon rebate puts more money back in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadians, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, according to top economists and environmentalists across the country. We are putting more money in people's pockets, which the Leader of the Opposition wants to take away at a time when investments in jobs, in growth and in the future are more important than ever before.

[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, even the Leader of the Opposition is worried about the economic policies of the U.S. president-elect, who is actually one of his role models. Clearly, there is a problem.

I want to talk about trade. There are problems when it comes to supply management, aluminum and wood. Let us focus on supply management.

Is it not high time to protect supply management by passing Bill C-282? Is it not high time for him to pick up the phone and call his senators to get this bill sent back?

● (1445)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have been saying all along, we agree on this bill. We are in the process of making sure it passes in the Senate. We need to take a firm stand when it comes to supply management, which we have always defended.

Our government is the one that promised to never compromise on supply management in any future trade agreement. We are going to keep our promise.

I really appreciate the Bloc Québécois's support on this. We will continue to make sure that our farmers and supply management are protected.

\* \* \*

**SENIORS**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the difference between what the government says it is going to stand firm on and what it actually achieves is enough to worry anyone.

Let us talk about the risk of inflation. Many economists are saying that the Republicans' proposed economic policies are going to drive up inflation.

Is it not high time to protect the purchasing power of retirees aged 65 to 74 by restoring fairness for everyone who receives OAS benefits, as the Bloc Québécois is calling for?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we all know how difficult global inflation has been for Canadians, especially seniors.

That is why we have worked so hard as a government to bring inflation down in Canada faster than in the United States and faster than elsewhere in the world. That is also why interest rates are falling faster in Quebec than anywhere else in the world.

*Oral Questions*

We will continue to be a fiscally responsible government to ensure that people in this country continue to benefit from low inflation rates. We will continue to invest in programs like dental care and support for seniors, which will help them as well.

\* \* \*

[English]

**HOUSING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with the Prime Minister having capitulated and allowed former President Trump to reimpose the softwood lumber tariffs that Stephen Harper took off, and now Biden having doubled those tariffs, our softwood industry is hemorrhaging jobs. One way to boost the industry is to build some homes. It turns out I have a common-sense plan to cut the wasteful bureaucracy that has built zero homes, and use the savings to axe the sales tax and boost home building by 30,000 new homes per year.

Will the Prime Minister accept my common-sense plan?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the problem with the Leader of the Opposition's so-called plan is that it actually cuts billions of dollars of investments to municipalities across the country that are counting on them to build hundreds and even thousands of units of housing Canadians so desperately need. His plan is, once again, cuts and austerity, fights with municipalities and fights with the provinces, not building the homes that matter to Canadians. Once again, he is completely out to lunch and demonstrating an unwillingness to help Canadians, except for a willingness to help himself with political attacks.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the Prime Minister has doubled housing costs and Canada has the fewest homes per capita of any country in the G7. Maybe it is because the housing minister said, of the \$8 billion of bureaucracies, "the housing accelerator fund doesn't go toward the cost of building houses". He also said, "It doesn't actually lead to the construction of specific homes." The housing accelerator does not actually fund directly building homes and it has built zero homes; zero homes built with this bureaucracy.

Why not follow my common-sense plan to axe the sales tax and build the homes?.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 18 Conservative caucus members stood up and asked for housing investments in their municipalities across the country from the housing accelerator fund that the Leader of the Opposition is promising to cut.

I am going to channel my old job as a schoolteacher. The Leader of the Opposition actually spent a lot of time and effort rooting out which 18 members had asked for this money for their municipalities for housing. If he spent half as much time rooting out foreign interference as he did rooting out people who are asking for more housing, we might be better off as a country.

• (1450)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, those MPs were just trying to solve a case of unsolved mysteries. Where are all these homes? Can someone point out any one of them? They wrote the minister 18 letters. He got 18 letters

and he could not respond with even one home that his \$8 billion bureaucracy has built. All of these 18 MPs tried to help the hopeless minister.

Let me try again with a real plan to build the homes: axe the tax.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the MP for St. Albert—Edmonton said, "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".

At the same time, the mayor of Butternut Valley in New Brunswick pointed out that this is a program they need.

Even the local MP said that this funding "will provide much needed housing" in the city.

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

**The Speaker:** I do not like to interrupt the Prime Minister. He does have time left on his clock, but it was difficult for the Chair to decipher what was being said. I am going to ask him to take it to the last 15 seconds so that I can hear what is being answered.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the MP for Fundy Royal wrote that this funding "will provide much needed housing in this area", so much so that, when the Leader of the Opposition announced he would cancel it, the mayor of Butternut Valley in that riding, Alan Brown, responded very strongly that this money would help build homes and asked why the Conservative leader was blocking it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has lots of politicians who love to receive other people's money, but he does not have any homes to show for it. He is too afraid to have a carbon tax election. Let us have a compromise here. Why do we not have a housing tax election? Here is how it would work. The NDP-Liberals will campaign on giving billions more to bureaucracies and we will campaign on a plan to axe the tax and build the homes. What does he say to a housing tax election?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only so-called plan the Leader of the Opposition put forward is a plan for cuts and austerity, a plan to cut billions of dollars of investments that are needed by municipalities to unlock the building of thousands of homes. Why does he not want to see thousands of homes built across the country? Because he would rather instrumentalize, for his own political gain, the sufferings and the challenges faced by Canadians than solve the challenges, just like he refuses to solve the challenge of foreign interference in his own caucus by refusing to get the necessary security briefings and security clearance that will keep his caucus and Canadians safe.

*Oral Questions***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals continue to break their promise to eliminate the “marriage after 60” pension clause. They label women as “gold diggers” and push veterans and their families into poverty.

The government announced \$150 million for veterans five years ago, but has not spent a single penny. Veterans and their families are owed a good life. Will the Prime Minister eliminate this sexist, archaic pension clause or does he still believe veterans are asking for too much?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have invested over \$11 billion in supports for veterans over the past years after the Conservative government demonstrated that it was nickel-and-diming veterans for photo ops, shuttering nine veterans service centres and firing thousands of people working to directly support veterans.

We have been there for our veterans. We will continue to invest in supports for them. We will continue to protect them from the Conservative cuts. We will be there to honour and recognize their service, not just this week of Veterans' Week, but every single week throughout the year.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, more and more indigenous people are still dying at the hands of law enforcement officers. Despite urgent calls to save lives, the Liberals have done nothing. I grieve with the Inuit family in Salluit, Nunavut after their son Joshua was killed. We need justice for twins Joshua and Garnet Papigatuk. We need more de-escalation tactics and indigenous-led crisis response teams. When will the government listen to the urgent demands from indigenous peoples so they can live in safe communities?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know how difficult situations are in far too many indigenous communities, including Inuit communities across Nunavut, which is why we have tripled investments into indigenous communities since 2015 with \$32 billion in investments expected in 2024-25 alone. We know there is much more to do, including even stronger partnerships with respect to indigenous policing, with respect to community safety, with respect to housing and with respect to supports for young people. There is much more to do. We will continue to work hand in hand with local governments and indigenous governments to get it done.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last year, we signed an historic agreement with Quebec to make a joint investment of \$1.8 billion in affordable housing under the housing accelerator fund. Last week, the Conservative leader announced that he would eliminate that fund and tear up our agreement with Quebec, putting all of the projects in jeopardy.

The Prime Minister—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin. The Conservative leader's housing plan involves scrapping housing projects and investments across the country. In Quebec, his solution is to tear up the agreement that we signed with the province that will provide \$900 million for affordable housing projects. This would affect about 8,000 housing projects.

Even the Quebec finance minister thinks that this Conservative leader is costly and ineffective. Quebeckers cannot count on the Conservative leader. All they will get from him is cuts and austerity.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after the Prime Minister capitulated and allowed Mr. Trump to reimpose softwood lumber tariffs, three sawmills in Saguenay shut down.

One way to stimulate demand for Canadian lumber is to build houses. However, the Prime Minister is working hard to build bureaucracy instead, by creating programs that he admits do not even build housing. I have proposed eliminating the GST on new homes, which will spur the construction of another 30,000 homes.

Will he allow us to hold an election so that Quebeckers can vote to axe the GST on housing?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Quebeckers see very clearly what the Conservative Party is offering, and that is cuts and austerity. The Conservative leader is saying he would cut \$900 million in joint investments with Quebec that are intended to create roughly 8,000 affordable housing units.

That is what he wants for Quebeckers, to make cuts. He wants to scrap an agreement with Quebec so that he can play his political games. That is not what Quebeckers need. They need housing. They need investments. Those are what he wants to cut.

**The Speaker:** Before I recognize the Leader of the Opposition, I just want to remind all members not to stand up too soon, before they are recognized, even during question period, because it is a bit distracting. I have seen this on both sides of the House.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

• (1500)

[English]

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it would be bad enough for the Prime Minister to want to give our energy jobs to the Americans, who have doubled their production over the last couple of decades, but he wants to actually give our energy jobs over to the Venezuelan, Iranian and Russian dictatorships by cutting Canadian energy production by 35%. The Americans reduced their emissions, while ours went up, by increasing natural gas production and using it to replace dirty coal. We could do exactly the same. Why will the Prime Minister not follow a common-sense plan to produce more clean, green Canadian energy, rather than giving our jobs to dirty dictators?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what this little performance was designed to distract from is the fact that under the Conservative government of Mr. Harper and the current leader, they could not get anything built. We built the Trans Mountain pipeline extension. We built TMX. We understand that getting good prices for our oil was important, not just for Alberta but for the entire Canadian economy.

We are moving forward to make sure that even as oil companies are making record profits, we are putting a cap not on production and profits but on emissions because Canadians care.

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

**The Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member for Lakeland to please not take the floor unless she is recognized by the Chair.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives approved and saw the completion of four pipelines with no tax dollars to subsidize them because we believe businesses should make money rather than take money.

By contrast, the Prime Minister has pushed \$100 billion of energy investment out of Canada, most of it into the United States. I can imagine that the champagne will be popping over at the Trump Tower when they find out how much more Canadian money the Prime Minister wants to send south.

Why does he want to kill Canadian jobs? Why do we not bring home production and paycheques for our people?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition just admitted that he would not have put a penny into TMX. He would not have made it happen.

This matters to Alberta. It matters to the oil workers there—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The right hon. Prime Minister, from the top, please.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader just admitted he would not have invested in TMX. He would not have gotten it built.

### Oral Questions

However, on this side of the aisle, we will stand up for Alberta. We will stand up for our oil and gas workers across the country because we know that getting overseas markets for our oil and gas is—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, once again we see that the Conservative leader will not stand up for workers across the country. He will not stand up for Albertan oil workers. We got the TMX pipeline built because we know that getting a better price for our oil by being able to ship it across the Pacific is a way of creating jobs and prosperity, allowing us to build strong jobs and an economy for the future.

The Conservative leader does not understand that we need to invest in workers to build a stronger future, not offer them cuts.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when we were in government, we did not have to offer \$30-billion bailouts for pipelines, because they made money. That is how business works. The Prime Minister wants to create a bailout economy.

Let us clarify how this worked. Of the \$30 billion, \$7 billion went to a Texas oil company that took our tax dollars down to Texas to build American pipelines. All our exes are in Texas. Why do we not bring home those jobs for Canada?

• (1505)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we just heard very clearly from the leader of the Conservative Party that he would not have built the TMX pipeline. We know how important it is to make sure we get a good price for our oil so we can invest in the kinds of solutions and technologies that will continue to create prosperity and opportunity for energy workers not just in Alberta but right across the country. We will continue to be there to invest in a stronger future by understanding that renewables are an important part of the future, but we need to be able to pay for them.

The Conservative leader does not understand how to build a strong future or how to build a strong economy.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the United States has not even finished counting the votes and the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition are already arguing over who will be the most pro-oil. It is outrageous.

### Oral Questions

Do I understand correctly that they are both completely abandoning any consideration for the climate and the green economy in favour of a Canadian oil economy?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather ironic to be asked a question like that by someone who approved oil and gas exploration in Anticosti.

The reality is that we are well aware that we need to build a greener economy and protect the environment at the same time. That is why we are setting a cap on greenhouse gas emissions from Canada's oil and gas industry. We put a price on pollution while putting more money back in Canadians' pockets. We have continued to reduce our emissions while creating economic growth, a first for Canada.

We will protect the environment and we will create jobs.

\* \* \*

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister would be well advised to double-check the nonsense he is spouting. I have never approved oil and gas exploration anywhere in the world.

With that said, we will now talk about security, because tomorrow I will become the next leader in the House who has seen the report that names the MPs compromised by foreign powers. That leaves one leader who might not want to do some housecleaning among his gang.

When it comes to security, first of all, is the Prime Minister going to ensure that the Americans will keep supporting Ukraine? Second, is he going to contribute his 2% of the GDP to Canadian military spending?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, I may not always agree with the leader of the Bloc Québécois, but facts are facts, and I have to thank him for getting his security clearance so that he, like all the other party leaders, except for the Conservative Party leader, can live up to our responsibility to protect our democracy. Indeed, the Conservative Party leader, for some inexplicable reason—I do not know what he is hiding—refuses to get his security clearance and receive the secret security briefings that will enable him to protect his party and, therefore, protect democracy.

For some unknown reason, he refuses to take this seriously.

\* \* \*

[English]

### OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, given that we have just seen an American election, I can quote another American president, who could aptly describe the Prime Minister's economic policy: "If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it." Instead of doing none of the above, which would allow our entrepreneurs to actually build things on their own without sticking taxpayers with the bill, does he want to know our common-sense plan? We will re-

peal unconstitutional Bill C-69, we will scrap the cap and we will axe the tax.

Why will he not call a carbon tax election so we can bring home these jobs?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when we stood up for Canadian jobs, Canadian oil producers and Canadian steel and aluminum workers, the Conservative Party called that dumb. We will always stand up and defend Canadian jobs, as we have in the past, as we create more opportunities for Canadians right across the country and as we protect our national security.

What the Americans will not understand is why the Leader of the Opposition, who desperately wants to become prime minister, refuses to get the necessary security clearances so he can keep his party safe.

\* \* \*

● (1510)

### THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have already explained how half a trillion of our dollars have left the country since the Prime Minister took office. Canadian investment dollars are paying American workers while our people cannot afford food and homes. Do not take my word for how uninvestable the country has become. Take the word of carbon tax Carney. The Prime Minister's lead economic adviser has just moved his \$100-billion company to New York City.

If the Prime Minister's own top economic adviser does not have faith in his economic plan, then why should anyone else?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what the leader of the Conservative Party has not explained is why he is treating national security like a dodge ball game. He ducks allegations of foreign interference in his own caucus. He dives as he turns a blind eye toward investments in our communities by foreign interferers. He dodges the tools necessary to keep his party safe. Why will he not get the briefing, get the clearance and protect Canadians?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister likes to spread crackpot conspiracy theories instead of defending his economic record, but why would he not? When someone doubles housing costs, they distract. When they double food bank use, they divide. When they double gun crime, they use fear to turn people's attention away. When they double the national debt to a point that even their top economic adviser is fleeing the economic carnage they have created, they do anything possible to change the subject.

*Oral Questions*

If the Prime Minister cannot defend his economic record, why do we not have a carbon tax election so that I can take the lead?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the leader cannot even defend the members of his own caucus because he refuses to get the necessary security clearance. He likes to talk about crackpot conspiracy theories. It is not a crackpot conspiracy theory when his own members of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians signed a report, which was released publicly, that talks about the fact that the Indian government interfered in past Conservative leadership campaigns. Is that perhaps why he refuses to get the necessary security clearance? Does he not think he would pass the security clearance because of Indian interference in his—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

\* \* \*

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian veterans have bravely stood on the front lines, often at significant personal sacrifice, to protect the values that Canadians hold dear. They deserve our unwavering and ongoing support. Veterans still recall the severe cuts made by the previous Conservative government, which dismantled the very institutions meant to support them.

Can the Prime Minister inform the House about the measures our government has implemented to enhance and expand the important supports our Canadian veterans deserve?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Kitchener—Conestoga for his hard work and leadership.

Conservatives did not think twice when they cut vital supports for veterans and their loved ones. They even had the nerve to tell veterans, and are still saying it, that cutting over 1,000 workers would not impact veterans' abilities to get support, which of course it did.

While Conservatives slashed supports for our veterans, the Liberal government has invested more than \$11 billion in supports for veterans and their families. That is the right thing to do.

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**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost, crime or corruption.

We know that Parliament has been paralyzed for weeks now because he refuses to hand over evidence to the police in the \$400-million Liberal slush fund scandal. We have now found out what he might be hiding. It turns out that his radical environment minister has a stake in one of the companies that got 10 million of those dollars. This is a scam. By the way, the official that handed over the money had an interest in the very same company.

Is the Prime Minister covering this up because he is worried about the questions the police might have for his minister?

• (1515)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, despite the efforts of the Conservative leader to partisanize and polarize everything, we still live in a country where the police are independent and the judiciary is independent. The RCMP has clearly stated that it does not need and does not particularly want the documents that the Leader of the Opposition is freezing Parliament over.

We will continue to stand up for the integrity and independence of our police services, and we will, while we are at it, continue to encourage the Leader of the Opposition to get the necessary security clearance to see the threats to Canadians and protect his own caucus.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this morning the Journal de Montréal reported that Cycle Capital received \$10 million from the green fund, which is at the centre of a major \$400-million scandal.

Who owns that company? Who has a stake in that company? It is the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Is that why the Prime Minister is paralyzing Parliament, to withhold evidence of this scandal from the RCMP?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers and all Canadians understand how important it is for police forces to be independent from politicians, despite the Conservative leader's efforts to polarize and politicize the work of the RCMP and our other police forces.

We will respect the police and allow them to do their work, as we also expect the Conservative leader to take his national security responsibilities seriously and get his security clearance so that he can receive top secret briefings and protect his own members from foreign interference.

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

**The Speaker:** I invite the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable not to speak without first being recognized by the Chair.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after the Prime Minister was caught paying nine million tax dollars to buy a luxury, superexclusive condo on Billionaires' Row for his media pal and diplomat in New York Tom Clark, the diplomat in question denied he had any involvement in it. Well, now we have documents showing that he said his housing “requires immediate replacement”. It was not suitable for hosting or living. Wait until he finds out about the 1,400 homeless encampments in Ontario.

Why, while Canadians live through housing hell, must they spend their tax dollars on a \$9-million palace in the sky?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is playing silly games around partisanship, choosing to attack our hard-working diplomats and to use people in homeless encampments as props while offering nothing but cuts of billions of dollars' worth of investments. At the same time as he is doing this, he is refusing to take seriously allegations made by the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians that his very leadership, the leadership in which the diplomat in question, as a former journalist, moderated, was interfered with by the Indian government.

\* \* \*

● (1520)

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, foreign interference poses a real threat to democracies around the world. Bad actors like Russia, China and India use shady tactics to sow division and to further their own goals in countries like Canada, yet there is a deafening silence coming from the Leader of the Opposition.

Can the Prime Minister please explain to Canadians what is at stake and why the Conservative leader needs to take the issue seriously?

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

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, it is important that people who do not speak the other official language have the opportunity to hear the questions. Please do not talk when you have not been recognized by the Speaker, out of respect for our colleagues.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader does not do what is best for Canadians; he does what is best for his algorithm. He turns a blind eye to foreign interference in his own party because that boosts his YouTube following. Now he is dodging his security clearance because he is worried that it would not play well in his echo chamber.

The leader of the Conservative Party needs to take care to focus on Canadians instead of worrying about his own troll farm.

**YOUTH**

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, young Canadians are facing a serious crisis. Youth unemployment is now double the national average, and job security and workplace benefits are becoming a thing of the past. The cost of food is soaring, rent is skyrocketing and the cost of living is crushing. Young people do not have a fair shot under the Liberals, and the Conservatives' only answer is to cut services.

Young Canadians need hope and opportunity. Why is the Prime Minister letting them down?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I should think that young Canadians are preoccupied that the NDP seems to be letting them down by backing off on its commitment to put a price on pollution that also puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadians with the Canada carbon rebate.

I should be concerned that the NDP is continuing to allow the House debate to freeze and not pass our capital gains tax measures that would be putting more money in the pockets of young people while asking those who are making over \$250,000 a year in capital gains to make a smaller profit on those gains.

We are there for young people. We hope the NDP will be there too.

\* \* \*

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, at the time that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed, there was no left-right, Republican-Democrat or Liberal-Conservative divide on doing what science required. Maggie Thatcher and Brian Mulroney were front of the pack to get the treaty, but now Donald Trump is re-entering the White House, and we know that one of his first acts was to withdraw from the Paris Agreement.

Can the Prime Minister update us on what the Government of Canada and like-minded countries are doing to protect the multilateral international system, as flawed as it may be, to deliver on climate action?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what has become increasingly clear to everyone around the world, whether citizens, investors or governments of all political stripes, is that we cannot have a plan to grow the economy and support our citizens if we do not at the same time have a plan to reduce emissions and fight climate change. That is how we create the prosperity, the jobs and the opportunities for future generations.

We will continue to work hand in hand with partners from around the world as we protect biodiversity, as we create jobs, as we lower emissions, as we draw on investment and as we create the solutions on energy and technology that are going to bring Canadians forward.



### PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of our former colleague and current Minister of Energy and Minerals for the province of Alberta, the Hon. Brian Jean.

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

• (1525)

**The Speaker:** I also wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the 2024 Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering prize winner, Dr. Kerry Rowe.

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

**The Speaker:** Also with us are the winners of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council's John C. Polanyi Award, the Brockhouse Canada Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering and the Donna Strickland prize.

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

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** Also with us are the winners of the Synergy Awards for Innovation and the Arthur B. McDonald Fellowships.

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

\* \* \*

### TAIWAN

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion, which is seconded by the member for Humber River—Black Creek.

That, given that,

(i) Canada maintains unofficial, but robust and growing economic, cultural and people-to-people ties with Taiwan, based on fruitful cooperation on trade and investment, science and technology, education and youth exchanges, arts and cultural industries, and Indigenous affairs, all in keeping with Canada's foreign policy,

(ii) Canada continues to join likeminded partners in voicing support for Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations, such as the World Health Organization, the World Health Assembly, and the International Civil Aviation Organization,

the House recognize that the United Nations Resolution 2758 of October 25, 1971, does not establish the People's Republic of China's sovereignty over Taiwan and does not determine the future status of Taiwan in the United Nations, nor Taiwanese participation in UN agencies or international organizations.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[English]

### HAIDA NATION RECOGNITION ACT

(Bill S-16. On the Order: Government Orders:)

### Concurrence in Committee Reports

October 24, 2024—the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations—Consideration at report stage of Bill S-16, An Act respecting the recognition of the Haida Nation and the Council of the Haida Nation, as reported by the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs without amendment.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, Special Order or usual practice of the House, Bill S-16, an act respecting the recognition of the Haida Nation and the Council of the Haida Nation, shall be deemed concurred in at report stage, and deemed read a third time and passed.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to, bill concurred in at report stage, read a third time and passed)

## CONCURRENCE IN COMMITTEE REPORTS

[Translation]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

The House resumed from October 30 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:29 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

Call in the members.

• (1540)

[English]

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

(Division No. 879)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboultair	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

*Concurrence in Committee Reports*

Bezan	Bibeau	Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Bittle	Blair	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas	Lightbound	Lloyd
Blaney	Block	Lobb	Long
Blois	Boissonnault	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Boulerice	Bradford	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Bragdon	Brassard	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Brière	Brock	Maguire	Majumdar
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins	Maloney	Martel
Caputo	Carr	Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Carrie	Casey	Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Chabot	Chagger	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
Chahal	Chambers	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
Champagne	Champoux	McGuinty	McKay
Chatel	Chen	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
Chiang	Chong	McLeod	Melillo
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)	Mendicino	Miao
Cooper	Cormier	Michaud	Miller
Coteau	Dabrusin	Moore	Morantz
Dalton	Damoff	Morrice	Morrison
Dance	Dancho	Morrissey	Motz
Davidson	Davies	Murray	Muys
DeBellefeuille	Deltell	Naqvi	Nater
Desbiens	Desilets	Ng	Noormohamed
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Normandin	O'Connell
Diab	Doherty	Oliphant	O'Regan
Dong	Dowdall	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Dreeshen	Drouin	Pauzé	Perkins
Dubourg	Duclos	Perron	Petipas Taylor
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Plamondon	Poilevre
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi	Powlowski	Qualtrough
El-Khoury	Ellis	Rayes	Redekopp
Epp	Erskine-Smith	Reid	Rempel Garner
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)	Richards	Roberts
Fast	Ferreri	Robillard	Rodriguez
Fisher	Fonseca	Rogers	Romanado
Fortier	Fortin	Rood	Ruff
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Sahota	Sajjan
Freeland	Fry	Saks	Samson
Gaheer	Gainey	Sarai	Sauvé
Gallant	Garon	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Garrison	Gazan	Scheer	Schiefke
Généreux	Genuis	Schmale	Seeback
Gerretsen	Gill	Serré	Sgro
Gladu	Godin	Shanahan	Sheehan
Goodridge	Gould	Shields	Shiple
Gourde	Gray	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Green	Guilbeault	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Hajdu	Hallan	Singh	Small
Hanley	Hardie	Sorbara	Soroka
Hepfner	Hoback	Sousa	Steinley
Holland	Housefather	Ste-Marie	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)
Hughes	Hussen	Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)	St-Onge
Hutchings	Iacono	Strahl	Stubbs
Idlout	Ien	Sudds	Tassi
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Taylor Roy	Thériault
Jivani	Johns	Thompson	Tochor
Joly	Jones	Tolmie	Trudeau
Jowhari	Julian	Trudel	Turnbull
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Uppal	Valdez
Kelly	Khalid	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Khanna	Khera	Van Popta	Vandal
Kmiec	Koutrakis	Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Vidal	Vien
Kurek	Kusie	Viersen	Vignola
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Villemure	Virani
Lake	Lalonde	Vis	Wagantall
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux	Warkentin	Waugh
Lantsman	Lapointe	Webber	Weiler
Larouche	Lattanzio	Wilkinson	Williams
Lauzon	Lawrence	Williamson	Yip
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Zahid	Zarrillo
Lehoux	Lemire	Zimmer	Zuberi — 322

## NAYS

Nil

## PAIRED

## Members

Duncan (Etobicoke North)

Gaudreau

Kitchen

Mendès — 4

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

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**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, entitled “Conditions for Growth: Reconsidering Closed Work Permits in the Temporary Foreign Workers Program”.

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

**Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of His Majesty's official opposition, I have the honour to table the dissenting report to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration's closed work permits study.

The Conservative Party of Canada values the role of temporary foreign workers in supporting our nation's agriculture and other essential industries. Through our contributions to the committee's study, Conservatives sought reforms that would secure predictability and access to labour for sectors struggling with chronic worker shortages. Unfortunately, the final report fell short, failing to include key recommendations that would benefit workers, businesses and the broader economy.

In our dissenting report, we emphasize that the temporary foreign worker program should continue to address specific labour gaps, supporting rural and agricultural communities where Canadian workers are unavailable, while resisting an open work permit model that would undermine this goal. Additionally, we strongly condemn the baseless comments made by the UN special rapporteur, who referred to the temporary foreign worker program's agricultural stream as a “breeding ground for...slavery”. These inflammatory statements ignore the facts and undermine the hard work and ethical standards of Canadian farmers and business owners who strive to provide safe, respectful workplaces.

The Conservative Party will continue to advocate for solutions that safeguard worker rights and secure Canada's food and economic security.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1545)

**PETITIONS**

## OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of many constituents in Saanich—Gulf Islands, it is an honour to rise to present a petition dealing with the intersecting issues of the importance of old-growth forests for biodiversity, for climate action and indeed for their integral role in the traditional, cultural and spiritual wisdom of the indigenous peoples of this area, as well as looking at the threat to old-growth forests specifically on Vancouver Island. The last unprotected, intact old-growth valley on southern Vancouver Island is slated for logging.

Petitioners call on the government to work with the provinces and first nations to halt all logging of endangered old-growth ecosystems and for long-term protection of old-growth forests as well as to support value-added initiatives, such as banning the export of raw logs to ensure that sustainable production in local saw log operations can continue.

## NORTHERN COD FISHERY

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from Courtney Langille on behalf of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union, FFAW-Union.

This important petition received 1,695 signatures, the large majority from Newfoundland and Labrador, asking the government to, first, immediately revert the 2J3KL northern cod fishery to a stewardship fishery with access exclusive to Newfoundland and Labrador inshore and indigenous harvesters; second, reaffirm its commitment to allocate the first 115,000 tonnes of quota to those harvesters; and third, ensure large offshore druggers are not permitted to fish the stock until it has rebuilt to meet the 115,000-tonne threshold committed and to withstand the increased fishing pressures.

Northern cod is a historically and culturally critical species for Newfoundland and Labrador, and the petitioners fear another devastating stock collapse if it is not managed responsibly. It is for these reasons that I am honoured to stand and present this petition today.

## DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

**Ms. Anna Gainey (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to table petition 441-02837, which calls on the House of Commons to never pre-emptively invoke section 33, known as the notwithstanding clause, in federal legislation. It proposes a parliamentary review process for any pre-emptive use of the clause by provinces and territorial governments.

[Translation]

The pre-emptive use of section 33 is on the rise. It is a trend that is alarming Canadians and goes against the spirit and intended use of the clause.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition. The petitioners are calling on the government to scrap its reckless expansion of MAID to those suffering solely from an underlying mental health condition.

The petitioners note that it is impossible to determine whether a mental illness is irremediable, meaning that expanding MAID to those with a mental illness would lead to the deaths of people who could have otherwise gotten better. Second, it is impossible for clinicians to distinguish a rational MAID request from one motivated by suicidality. Accordingly, such an expansion, the petitioners note, would recklessly put some of the most vulnerable persons at risk.

## ELECTORAL REFORM

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

The first petition is with respect to petitioners who continue to be concerned about Canada's first-past-the post electoral system, noting that the results do not reflect the number of votes cast for each party. They go on to note the lower voter turnout in Ontario's last election as a trend of reduced voter engagement. They note that voters who support all parties in all age demographics across the country support the principle of proportional representation.

The petitioners go on to name a particular solution, the national citizens' assembly, which would give citizens a role in building consensus on a specific model to improve our electoral system in Canada. They note that citizen assemblies have been used in jurisdictions around the world, including Australia, Belgium, France and a number of others.

The petitioners have three calls to action for the government. They call on it to, first, establish a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform consisting of citizens reflecting the diversity of Canadian society; second, mandate that assembly to propose a specific design for an electoral system tailored to Canada's needs, which could make every vote count; and third, work across party lines to implement the changes before the next federal election.

● (1550)

## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, in the second petition, the petitioners note that Canada has committed harm towards indigenous people and communities through historical and ongoing colonization and genocide. They go on to note that indigenous peoples continue to face systemic racism, including in the health care, education, housing, child welfare and criminal justice systems. They go on to note that the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission laid out 94 calls to action and that the federal government is responsible, jointly or primarily, for 76 of these. Only 13 of those have been acted on to date.

The petitioners have several direct calls for the government, which include implementing all 94 calls to action of the TRC; urgently adopting all 231 calls for justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; and prioritiz-

ing funding and policies that advance the process of Canadian reconciliation and justice.

## CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the first petition I am presenting today is on extreme intoxication as a legal defence. Amendments were made to the Criminal Code on June 23, 2022, allowing for “extreme intoxication as a defence for violent [crimes] like assault and sexual assault, even where a reasonable person would not have foreseen the risk of a violent loss of control.”

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls found rates of violence against indigenous women and girls to be alarmingly higher than for any other demographic in Canada. First nations communities are often in rural areas that are underserved by law enforcement, creating longer response times and a greater potential for violent acts of crime. Alcoholism and substance abuse are rapidly growing issues, leaving first nations more vulnerable to acts of violence. According to the First Nations Health Authority, first nations make up only 3.3% of British Columbia's population but a staggering 15% of toxic drug deaths.

Therefore, the undersigned indigenous citizens of Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon call upon the federal government to remove their amendments to the Criminal Code related to extreme intoxication and uphold their commitment to protecting first nations women.

## NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I would like to present today is in response to Health Canada's changing rules related to natural health products. Health Canada recently proposed new and significant fees to import, manufacture and sell NHPs, along with new labelling laws. This means that consumer prices will rise and consumer choice will decline. Many Canadians rely on NHPs, which include basic, everyday products, such as toothpaste, vitamins, probiotics and fibre. Canada's current standards for natural health products already keep people safe. Therefore, the undersigned citizens of Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon call upon the Minister of Health to scrap the new regulations for natural health products.

## PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of the hard-working Burnaby firefighters in IAFF Local 323. They have added 80 signatures to the thousands of signatures we have seen coming in from across the country over the last few days. This petition is calling on the government for immediate action to ban PFAS in firefighter gear and firefighting foam. PFAS are man-made chemicals that are resistant to heat, water and oil, but their durability comes at a very significant cost.

The scientific evidence links these substances to severe health risks, including cancer. This puts firefighters, who already face incredibly hazardous conditions, at greater risk. Research also shows that PFAS can accumulate in the body, leading to serious health issues. Alarming, firefighters in Canada face a higher cancer risk than the general population, but we can mitigate this risk by regulating what we can control in their working conditions. Several other countries have restricted PFAS use; Canada must follow suit. Our firefighters deserve gear that is free from toxic chemicals. Let us protect those who risk their lives for us.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I present a petition today to highlight that universal public health care is a core part of our Canadian identity. Free availability, accessibility, equity and fairness in quality medical care across Canada are necessary parts of our universal public health system. Mental health is a real and important factor of an individual's well-being that is insufficiently provided for in the current system. Long-term care and prescribed medications also need to be considered as part of our national health care system. Health care investments in quality care should be transparent and accountable through data and science. The petitioners are, in essence, calling for the different provinces working with the federal government to protect our Canadian identity; our health care system is part of this.

- (1555)

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of concerned citizens and residents of Calgary regarding the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. Falun Gong is a spiritual discipline rooted in truth, compassion and tolerance, and it is practised by diverse communities across our nation. Since 1999, practitioners of Falun Gong have endured a brutal campaign against them, resulting in torture, imprisonment and death, with victims subjected to forced organ harvesting. This includes a Canadian citizen, Ms. Sun Qian, who was sentenced to eight years in prison.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to demand an end to the persecution, ensure the release of all prisoners of conscience, explicitly address Falun Gong persecution in our foreign policies and sanction the perpetrators under the Magnitsky act.

## PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to present a petition on behalf of Vancouver firefighters in

*Routine Proceedings*

IAFF Local 18. It addresses an urgent issue that has an impact on the health and safety of firefighters across Canada.

This petition, sponsored by my great colleague, the NDP MP for New Westminster—Burnaby, calls for immediate action to ban per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, PFAS, in firefighter gear and firefighting foam. These are man-made chemicals that are resistant to heat, water and oil, but their durability comes at a significant cost. Scientific evidence now conclusively links these substances to severe health risks, including cancer. This puts firefighters, who already face hazardous conditions, at greater risk.

Research shows that PFAS can accumulate in the body, leading to serious health issues. Alarming, firefighters face a higher cancer risk than the general population. We can mitigate this risk by regulating what we control in their working conditions. Several countries have restricted PFAS use; Canada must follow suit.

Our firefighters deserve gear that is free from toxic chemicals. Let us protect those who risk their lives for us.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is once again an honour to present a petition signed by many Canadians. In particular, testimony was heard before a parliamentary committee with regard to expanding euthanasia, where a representative from the Collège des médecins du Québec recommended that MAID should be expanded to include babies from birth to one year of age who come into the world with severe deformities and very serious syndromes.

The petitioners are very concerned about the proposal for the legalized killing of infants. It is deeply disturbing to Canadians and goes against the values Canadians hold dear. The petitioners emphasize that infanticide is always wrong.

I am proud to present this petition in the House here today.

*Routine Proceedings*

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the first petition I am presenting is from constituents concerned about the penalties associated with paper filings of tax returns. The petitioners note that tax filing is a requirement for most Canadian citizens, regardless of their ability to use or access online platforms. The paper filing has been available for decades, and the recent decision that CRA will no longer print line-by-line instructions in the paper package and will impose financial penalties for paper filing of certain taxes, including business filing and HST returns, unequally disadvantages vulnerable Canadians.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to remove all penalties associated with paper filing and to make available print copies of the line-by-line instructions for tax filing for anyone who requests it.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition I will present today is similar to that presented by a colleague. It raises concerns about proposals for the radical further expansion of what is already the most extreme, most liberal euthanasia regime on the planet.

The petitioners are deeply concerned about a proposal to allow involuntary euthanasia for infants. They believe that killing children is always wrong, and they call on the House to reject these dangerous, violent, extreme proposals for further expansion of this regime.

\* \* \*

● (1600)

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 2986, 2988 and 2991.

[Text]

Question No. 2986—**Mr. Alex Ruff:**

With regard to the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) contribution room being included on the Notice of Assessment (NOA) until February 2011: (a) what was the CRA's justification for removing the TFSA contribution room from the NOA; (b) has the CRA examined other methods to communicate the TFSA contribution room to those without access to the internet or phone services, and, if so, what methods have been examined, and why have they been implemented or not; (c) has the CRA received any complaints regarding the removal of the TFSA contribution room from the NOA since 2011; and (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, how many complaints were received, broken down by (i) province, (ii) federal riding adjusted to 2024 boundaries, (iii) communication medium (email, phone call, letter, etc.)?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question noted above, what follows is the response from the Canada Revenue Agency, CRA.

With regard to part (a), the TFSA contribution room was removed from the T1 notice of assessment, NOA, after 2011. At the time of this decision, the CRA was focused on enhancing the information available on My Account for individuals, found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/digital-services-individuals/account-individuals.html>. The CRA aimed to

make it a quality service for Canadians to obtain up-to-date details about their TFSA transactions and available contribution room.

As financial institutions are only required to file TFSA records by the end of February of the following year, and since information is subject to change due to late-filed or amended records, the TFSA contribution room on the T1 NOA could be outdated when the notice was issued or become outdated by the time an individual was ready to make a TFSA contribution. The CRA opted to encourage TFSA holders to refer to My Account to obtain their contribution room, as it is continuously updated as new or amended records are processed.

In all cases, it continues to be important for individuals to track transactions completed since January of the current year, as this information will not be reflected on My Account until the following year once it is reported by financial institutions.

With regard to part (b), taxpayers who cannot access their TFSA contribution room information online can either call or write to the CRA to request a paper copy of their TFSA room statement or TFSA transaction summary.

With regard to parts (c) and (d), while the CRA's service feedback system is a case management system that allows the CRA to track complaints submitted by Canadians for specific programs, it does not detail complaints that are specifically associated with the removal of the TFSA contribution room from the NOA. Therefore, it is not possible for the CRA to provide a breakdown by province, by federal riding boundaries or by communication medium to resolve complaints as information for the removal of TFSA contribution room from the NOA is not captured. For these reasons, the CRA is unable to provide a response in the manner requested.

Question No. 2988—**Mr. Andrew Scheer:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's announcement that Mark Carney would chair the Prime Minister's economic growth task force: (a) what measures, if any, are in place to ensure that Mr. Carney is not in a conflict of interest, including, but not limited to, any requirements to divest assets, put assets in a blind trust, or recuse himself from any advice that could impact the economic well-being of Brookfield Asset Management; (b) has the government received a list of assets, investments, and sources of revenue from Mr. Carney to ensure that he is not asked for advice on any issue which could have a financial implication for him; and (c) what measures, if any, are in place to ensure that Mr. Carney is not asked for advice for which his answer could cause a personal financial benefit?

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Special Advisor for Water, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Mark Carney has not been appointed to a position in the federal public administration and consequently is not a public office holder, as defined by the Conflict of Interest Act.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2991—Ms. Lori Idlout:**

With regard to government contracts with healthcare agencies to serve rural and remote Indigenous communities at Indigenous Services Canada, broken down by fiscal year, since 2017-18: (a) what is the total number of contracts signed; (b) what are the details of all contracts signed, including the (i) agency contracted, (ii) value of the contract, (iii) number of healthcare practitioners provided, (iv) duration of the contract; and (c) what is the total amount of extra costs incurred as a result of relying on contracted services instead of employing healthcare practitioners directly?

**Ms. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to government contracts with health care agencies to serve rural and remote indigenous communities, Indigenous Services Canada, ISC, does not systematically track this information in a centralized repository.

ISC undertook an extensive preliminary search in order to determine the amount of information that would fall within the scope of the question and the amount of time that would be required to prepare a comprehensive response.

The information requested is not systematically tracked in a centralized database, and producing a comprehensive response to this question would require a manual collection of information that is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

\* \* \*

[English]

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the government's response to Questions Nos. 2987, 2989, 2990, 2992 and 2993 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

**Question No. 2987—Mr. Sameer Zuberi:**

With regard to temporary resident visas and permits, or other types of visitor entry authorizations: (a) how many visas expire, between September 2024 and December 2025, broken down by type of visa; (b) how many visitors are currently in Canada without a temporary resident visa, in total and broken down by type of permit or other authorization; and (c) of the visitors in (b), how many have permits or authorizations scheduled to expire between September 2024 and December 2025, broken down by month and type of permit or authorization?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2989—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to statistics on child care spaces operating as part of the government's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreements: (a) how many child care spaces in the program are priced at or below the \$10 per day level, broken down by province or territory; (b) how many child care spaces in the program exceed the \$10 per day level, but receive a subsidy to lower the daily fee, broken down by province or territory; and (c) how many child care spaces does the government estimate there are in each province or territory that are operating without ELCC subsidized daily fee reductions?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2990—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to the requirements outlined in the Early Learning and Child Care Agreements for provinces and territories to report certain statistics and results related to agreement participation to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) by October 1 of each year: what are the details, including the statistics and re-

sults, of the information that was reported to ESDC for the time period covered by the filing with the October 1, 2023, deadline, broken down by province or territory?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2992—Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:**

With regard to government contracts with healthcare agencies to service the health and well-being of military members at the Department of National Defence and in the Canadian Armed Forces, broken down by fiscal year, since 2017-18: (a) what is the total number of contracts signed; (b) what are the details of all contracts signed, including the (i) agency contracted, (ii) value of the contract, (iii) number of healthcare practitioners provided, (iv) duration of the contract; and (c) what is the total amount of extra costs incurred as a result of relying on contracted services instead of employing healthcare practitioners directly?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2993—Mr. John Williamson:**

With regard to the Small Craft Harbours (SCH) program, broken down by year for each year from the 2019-20 fiscal year through the 2024-25 fiscal year: (a) what are the details of all project expenditures made by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) under the SCH program, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) location, (iv) project description or summary, (v) constituency, (vi) summary of what the amount was used for; (b) what is the amount of fixed annual funding allocated by the DFO to each harbour, broken down by location and constituency; (c) what specific criteria and metrics are used by the DFO to determine how much funding is allocated to each harbour; (d) what specific formula or grading system is used to determine how much funding each harbour is eligible for; (e) using the formula or grading system in (d), what grade or score did each harbour receive, broken down by location, and how much potential funding would be allocated to the harbour associated with such a grade or score; and (f) what are the details of all project applications received under the SCH program since January 1, 2019, which have not yet been funded, including, for each, the (i) date received, (ii) name of the harbour associated with the application, (iii) location, (iv) amount requested, (v) reason for which the funding has yet to be provided, (vi) funding expected to be provided in the future?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand at this time.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand at this time.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded division, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

*Privilege***ORDERS OF THE DAY**

[English]

**PRIVILEGE**

## REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed from November 5 consideration of the motion, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of rising in Canada's Parliament to join in the debate about the privilege question relating to the Liberal government's latest scandal: the green slush fund.

Before I do that, I just want to take a moment to mark this historic day and congratulate our neighbours to the south for a very decisive election. I congratulate Mr. Trump for regaining the White House. Canada and the U.S. have so many ties. They are not just economic, which is going to become very relevant for us, but also social and family ties. For me, it is my daughter, Kristi, her husband, Brad, and their four children, my grandchildren. They are all proud Americans living in the state of Washington.

What are the future relations of Canada and the U.S. going to look like? We do not have to look any further than a speech that President Kennedy gave here when he was first elected in 1961. He said, "Geography has made us neighbours. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners. And necessity has made us allies." That is as true today as it was 60 years ago.

It is often said that the success of a Canadian prime minister depends largely on how well they get along with the U.S. president. Politics is about relationships, after all. How is that going to look in the next little while? We do not have to look very far. History tells us that we should probably be having an election very soon.

This is now the fourth week we have been debating the Liberal government's refusal to produce documents relating to SDTC, Sustainable Development Technology Canada, also called the green slush fund lately. Parliament ordered the government and SDTC to produce documents in June.

Why are the Prime Minister, his cabinet and his government refusing to deliver those documents? We do not know, but the longer they delay, the more suspicious we become. Are some of the cabinet ministers involved? Are they involved in the graft related to the green slush fund? I think that they need to come out and tell us what is going on.

The Liberals have raised specious arguments about why they can ignore this order and why they do not have to comply with it. It is something about contravening the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. What are the arguments? We do not know because they have not stated them very clearly. Besides, who are the Liberals to judge? They are one of the litigants in this whole litigation. They are not the judge.

What the Liberals are conveniently ignoring is that the rights of Parliament are spelled out in our Constitution. We can look at sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but we can also look at the preamble of the Constitution Act, 1867,

which says Canada shall have a Constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. That goes back 157 years in our history.

Section 18 of the Constitution Act also defines parliamentary privilege for the House of Commons and all its members as those "enjoyed, and exercised by the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain". Those are the privileges as they existed the day that Canada became a nation on July 1, 1867.

That latter point is very important because with that comes 650 years of parliamentary tradition and history coming out of the mother of all parliaments in Westminster. One of those traditions is, of course, the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. It is that Parliament can make or unmake any law that it deems just and appropriate.

Another one of these age-old traditions is the concept of responsible government, where the government, the Prime Minister and his cabinet, must always retain the confidence of the House and must answer questions from the opposition during a daily question period relating to the business of government. A third way that the House of Commons keeps the government accountable is through motions directing the government to do certain things.

An early example of that, at least early in my career, was a Conservative opposition motion in December 2019, just a few months after I was elected, to create a special, all-party committee of parliamentarians on China-Canada relations. That motion passed with the support of the Bloc Québécois and the NDP members of Parliament. Only the Liberals voted against it.

• (1605)

Someone had pointed out at the time that this was the first time the Liberal government, under the current Prime Minister, had lost a significant vote. Of course, four years earlier, the Liberals had been elected as a majority government, so they could put through any legislation that they wanted or stop any legislation or motions they did not like. This was a whole new dynamic now, a minority government, and the Liberals had not yet figured out how to play nice with the opposition parties for a minority government and a minority Parliament to be successful.

I want to point out the Liberals did comply with that motion and we created a special committee on Canada-China relations. However, things deteriorated pretty quickly after that. We have seen time and again where the Liberals, under the current Prime Minister, have held Parliament in contempt. I am going to raise three examples of when that happened. Of course, just to anticipate the end of my speech, the third example is going to be the green slush fund, which is the subject of the day.



*Privilege*

The first example was a pandemic power grab. I remember that day very well. It was March 13, 2020. The World Health Organization had called this virus a worldwide pandemic. The parties consulted and we agreed that we would suspend Parliament for five weeks, hoping that perhaps the worst of things would be over by then. Then the Liberals tried to pull a fast one on us. Just a couple of weeks later, they put forward a proposal that Parliament would be suspended for a long period of time and that they would be given all the power they wanted to tax and spend as they pleased without parliamentary oversight, which we found just unbelievable. Parliament has worked very effectively during other times of crisis, so what was so different this time? We put a quick stop to this insanity and the Liberals had to back down.

The second example of the government holding Parliament in contempt was with the Winnipeg lab affair. The special committee on Canada-China relations, which we know the Liberals did not like very much, was investigating rumours that two employees of the Public Health Agency of Canada, PHAC, had been fired because of their direct ties to the Beijing Communist regime. The committee ordered the production of documents, similar to what we are doing with the green slush fund, and on June 2 Parliament voted to confirm that order. The Liberals voted no, of course. PHAC did not comply with this order. Therefore, on June 17, 2022, the House declared the agency to be in contempt of Parliament and ordered that the president appear in the House of Commons to be reprimanded in public and ordered to produce the documents. The Speaker of the day, Mr. Anthony Rota, supported the majority of the House, of course. He was doing his job—

• (1610)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member is still a sitting member of the House, so I would say that “the hon. member for Nipissing—Timiskaming” would be more appropriate.

The hon. member for Langley—Aldergrove.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, I have the greatest respect for the member for Nipissing—Timiskaming, who is a former Speaker of the House. He supported us, of course. He was doing his job. That is what the Speaker is supposed to do.

Now we know the Liberals did not like the special committee on China-Canada relations right from the start. We know that they did not like the makeup of the 43rd Parliament, a divided House, and we knew that they would not like this order for the production of documents because they wanted to keep all this ugly business that was going on in the Winnipeg labs and the relationship with the Wuhan lab in China under cover, but what we did not know was the degree of contempt that this Liberal Party held for Parliament. We found that out when the former Attorney General, the Liberal Attorney General, sued the former Speaker of the House, who was a member of the Liberal Party. There was a big showdown in court of the Attorney General's lawyers versus the Speaker's lawyers, all at the expense of taxpayers because we were paying for all the lawyers. We knew that this was a loser case right from the very start. We knew that no one was going to come out the winner, except for the lawyers maybe, who were charging their full hourly rate.

In the end, the whole case fizzled out when the Prime Minister made his trip to the Governor General's mansion and asked her to dissolve Parliament and to drop the writ for a new election. In the end, the 43rd Parliament lasted only a mere 23 months. We thought that the Prime Minister would do the responsible thing and wait until the pandemic was behind us, but, no, right in the middle of a pandemic, he thought that perhaps Canadians would affirm what he and the Liberals had been doing, and that they would return a majority government for the Liberals. We all know how that ended. The 44th Parliament, the one that we are in right now, looks very much like the 43rd Parliament. There was \$600 million spent in expenses to run that election campaign and the House looks almost exactly as it did before with roughly the same number of Liberals, Conservatives, NDP and Bloc Québécois. We lost some of our colleagues, we gained a few others; the same with the other parties. In the end, the Liberals, even though they lost the popular vote, had the most seats, so they got to form government. Conservatives were the official opposition while the Bloc Québécois and the NDP looked pretty much like they did before.

This brings me to the issue of the day, the green slush fund, which is the third example of the Liberal government holding Parliament in contempt. The scandal started with some whistle-blowers who worked at Sustainable Development Technology Canada who smelled a rat and called in the Auditor General. As a little bit of background, SDTC is a federally owned and created company with a mandate to promote public and private investment in green technology. That is a laudable goal, I would say. If the Prime Minister had just left things alone, SDTC today would still be functioning and fulfilling its mandate, but he could not resist putting his fingerprints all over that company. He fired the then board chair, Mr. Jim Balsillie, who was very capable at his job, but had some disagreements with the Prime Minister, so the Prime Minister put in all his own people, who were friends of the Liberal Party.

We know all of that from the Independent Auditor's Report, which was tabled with Parliament on June 4. I am not going to list everything from the report because many other speakers have already done so, but, for example, \$390 million was misallocated to insiders, board members who the Prime Minister had appointed. They had non-qualifying projects that did not even meet the criteria. As well, there were 186 instances of conflicts of interest as board directors had voted money for their own companies. “Hey, I'm going to step out of the room. Please vote for my application of a couple of million dollars and then I'll return the favour to you when it's your turn to step out.” It was just friends distributing taxpayer money amongst themselves. This is what one of the whistle-blowers said after the auditor's report came out:

Just as I was always confident that the Auditor General would confirm the financial mismanagement at SDTC, I remain equally confident that the RCMP will substantiate the criminal activities that occurred within the organization.

*Privilege*

• (1615)

These are very serious words. This was not just mismanagement, but criminal activity, so the official opposition did what we are supposed to do, which is to hold the government to account. We put forward a motion for the production of documents. The NDP and the Bloc Québécois voted with us, doing their jobs. As fellow opposition members, it is also their job to hold the government to account. That motion passed on June 10, six days after the Auditor General's report came out.

The Liberals, of course, were not happy that the motion passed, but this is the reality of a minority House, where they need to get the support of at least one of the other parties to get their way. They failed. They did not do that. The order was made. Parliament is supreme. Parliament has the authority to do this. It is definitely within our jurisdiction to do so, but the Liberals just refused. They think that they have some arguments to say that they do not have to comply with the order, and they did not. They ignored it.

As such, we came back here to Ottawa, to Parliament, in September, and things got ugly. We appealed to the Speaker and asked him to rule on the question of privilege. We argued, based on the age-old rules, that Parliament has the right to and the privilege of demanding the production of documents when it sees fit to do so. The Speaker ruled in our favour. I will read one sentence from the Speaker's ruling: "The Chair cannot come to any other conclusion but to find that a prima facie question of privilege has been established."

One would think that that would be the end of the story. It was pretty clear, but we know what these Liberals think about Speakers who make rulings that they disagree with. They sue them, hoping maybe to find a judge who would turn a blind eye to the centuries-old traditions of parliamentary proceedings and parliamentary privilege.

The Liberals did it before. Will they do it again, or will they just keep dodging and weaving as they have for the last four weeks, or actually since June, saying that nothing gets done around here? It is because of this contemptuous behaviour on the part of the Liberal government that things have ground to a halt here in Canada's Parliament.

We know the Liberals do not like an aggressive opposition. I get it. They think that we should all play nice. "Hey, we are all in this together", they like to say, but we are just doing our job as the official opposition, holding this government to account as prescribed by Canada's Constitution. Now the Liberals need to do their job and comply with the order so that we can all get back to work. That is what we want to do. We have important work to do here, but the Liberals' refusal to act is causing us to have ground to a halt here.

Now, the Liberals have not formally lost the confidence of the House because the New Democrats, despite all their bluff and blunder, continue to support this corrupt and incompetent regime, but the Liberals have lost the confidence of the people of Canada. I know that. This is what my colleagues and I are hearing at home, in our ridings, when we are out knocking on doors and when we are at events in our communities. It is what we heard in the two recent by-elections, where the Liberals' base supporters are even saying, "Enough is enough. It is time for a change".

Here is an idea for the Prime Minister: Do not comply with the order about the green slush fund. Do not even bother taking the Speaker to court. The Liberals would lose. He should take a walk to the Governor General's mansion and ask her to dissolve the 44th Parliament and call an election because that is what Canadians want. They are ready for a government that would stop the corruption, fix what the Liberals have broken and offer common-sense solutions to the problems facing ordinary Canadians, the people whom we listen to. Canadians deserve a government that would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

Canadians deserve a government that does not play favourites, but creates an environment where non-insiders can work hard and get ahead. Canadians deserve a Canada that delivers on its promise to all who call it home, which is that hard work earns a powerful paycheque for pensioners and for workers that buys an affordable home on a safe street in a country where everyone from anywhere can do anything, as long as they work hard. All of this is achievable, but first we need an election. There needs to be a call for a carbon tax election.

• (1620)

**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 cheap, or should I say a very expensive, political game, which is being orchestrated by the leader of the Conservative Party. It shows an absolute disrespect of what takes place in the House of Commons, on the floor here inside the chamber.

I refer the member to a story in *The Hill Times*. The author of the story is Steven Chaplin, a former senior legal counsel in the office of the House law clerk and parliamentary counsel. He is an expert, and he gives a very stark warning to all members of the House because of this game the official opposition is playing. He wrote, "It is time for the House to admit its overreach before the matter inevitably finds its way to the courts which do have the ability to determine and limit the House's powers, often beyond what the House may like."

The game that the Conservatives are playing is borderline contempt in itself, and it is coming from the office of the Conservative leader. I am wondering if the member has read the story, and if he has not read the story, would he commit to read the story and maybe share some of those conclusions with his leader?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, the only conclusion we care about is the conclusion that the House of Commons came to, which was to order the government to produce the documents.

Parliament is supreme. It is completely within our wheelhouse to be able to make that order for the production of documents. This is an age-old tradition, and the government should respect it. If the Liberals do not, then they should call an election. They should go to the people and let them judge. If they want to take the Speaker to court, well, they can try that too, but I would suggest calling an election and letting the people decide who is right.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member and enjoyed his speech.

I am glad the member raised the issue of the by-elections. Of course, as members know, we had two by-elections recently. One was in Elmwood—Transcona, where the Conservatives were badly defeated by the NDP. In LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, the Conservatives finished fourth. The Liberals were defeated in LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, and they finished with 5% of the vote in Elmwood—Transcona.

Now, we know about the Liberal scandals, and the NDP has been pivotal in getting to the bottom of each of those scandals, including SNC-Lavalin, the WE Charity and now the SDTC. We are supporting the motion.

However, the reason the Conservatives did so badly in the by-elections, of course, is that people are aware of the legacy of Conservative scandals. I just have to refer back to the period of the Harper regime and the ETS scandal, which was \$400 million; the G8 scandal, which was \$1 billion; the Phoenix pay scandal, which was \$2.2 billion; and the anti-terrorism funding, which was \$3.1 billion.

Conservatives were even worse, if we are talking in monetary terms, with their corruption, their failures and their scandals. They did not allow Parliament to get to the bottom of it. Does the member agree that that was a mistake and that the Conservatives owe Canadians an apology?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, I guess I am not surprised to hear a member of the NDP, which continues to support the Liberal Party in preventing an election that so many Canadians want, now looking back in history for other scandals to divert Canadians' attention from what is going on in Canada right now with the green slush fund. This is what our focus is right now. We want to get to the bottom of it. There is corruption. There are allegations of criminal activity. We need to get to the bottom of that, and I hope that the NDP will support us in the next non-confidence vote to defeat the government and force a carbon tax election.

• (1625)

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question on respect for the House and what is involved in respect for the House.

The Liberal government has shown zero respect to the House. It has shown zero regard to the rules of Parliament. I would ask the member if he would maybe talk a little bit about what his constituents have been telling him in regards to the Liberal government and its lack of respect for parliamentary procedure, lack of respect for their tax dollars and lack of respect for respecting the will of Parliament in this situation. How do they want to see this solved?

### *Privilege*

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I wish I could answer quoting directly from my constituents, but their statements would probably be ruled as unparliamentary.

People in my home community are fed up with the Liberal government. They want so desperately for there to be an election. So many people ask me when they see me, "Why are the Conservatives not putting forward a non-confidence vote?" I respond, "Well, we do it all the time, but with the support of the NDP, this government continues to stand."

They want an election. They realize the lack of respect that the Liberals have for Parliament after nine years. It is time for an election. It is time for the Liberals to make room for a Conservative government.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are watching a very long show. Every week for some time now we have been going over the same episode. Yes, the motion was supported by the opposition parties. Indeed, the fund we are talking about seemed rather seriously tainted, so the fund was blocked. Back home, there are companies that would benefit from this fund. However, it is being undermined by who knows what until the documents are produced. We want to have the documents.

Let us keep watching the episode. If the smoke clears tomorrow morning and we receive the documents, what does my colleague think will happen next?

[*English*]

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question: What would the next step be? The motion says that the documents should go to the law clerk and parliamentary counsel for them to review, and I am sure that we would take advice from them. The order also says that the documents should go to the RCMP. The Liberals are saying that it might be problematic for the officers to deal with it. Well, they are very smart people. They have very good lawyers on staff there. They will figure out what to do and what the next steps would be.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member made reference, in a response to one of the questions from the Conservative Party, to a lack of respect. Let me highlight the fact that the lack of respect is rooted within the Conservative leadership today. The current leader of the Conservative Party was the parliamentary secretary to Stephen Harper, who is the only prime minister in the entire Commonwealth who has been found in contempt of Parliament. Fast-forward to today, we have a leader of the official opposition who is virtually in contempt of the process here on the floor of the House of Commons. No matter what the Conservatives are saying, I ask the member to recognize this.

If the member were someone from outside of the Ottawa bubble, would he be following the Conservative Party, or would he be following the recommendations of the RCMP, the Auditor General of Canada and the former law clerk of the House of Commons, who are saying that the game the Conservatives are playing is, in essence, wrong? It is the Conservatives who are wrong, no matter how much they chirp from their seats.

*Privilege*

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, Parliament has the unfettered authority to do exactly what it has done. The Liberals keep trying to divert people's attention to something else, but the real issue of the day is why the government is refusing to produce the documents that it has been ordered to produce. What do the Liberals have to hide? Who are they protecting? Canadians want to know.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague continues to speak about calling an election. A million Canadians have now accessed the NDP's Canadian dental care plan. Would the member support the elimination of the Canadian dental care plan were he to form government? Is that the position of the Conservative Party?

● (1630)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party will put out its platform in due course. I am not going to answer that question directly, other than to say that we are sensitive to the needs of Canadians. We are, I believe, well attuned to the issues of the day, and we will have a platform that is going to be a winner in the next election.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I rise today, I follow a great speech by my colleague from Aldergrove, British Columbia. The member is a lawyer who has had a great deal of sophisticated input into the debate we have been having in the House over the last number of weeks. I am very appreciative of what he brings to the table as far as his legal input goes.

We have to make sure that we follow the rules of Parliament. My party and some members of other parties in the House have tried to hold the government to account for weeks so that it performs the role it is required to for Parliament. This is the executive. We are Parliament. Parliament has responsibilities, and we are here to fulfill our roles as parliamentarians. The government is trying not to fulfill its role and is trying to make Parliament as dumbed down as possible.

The problem with that, of course, is that Canada is a parliamentary democracy, and we have a sacred trust to uphold the House's rules for Canadians. They elect representatives from across this country and make sure they bring perspectives from our various ridings to the House of Commons, where we discuss issues with our peers and share perspectives.

We have rules here about how we make the government act, and the government is responsible to the House at the end of the day. I appreciate the ruling the Speaker came to that the government cannot avoid disclosing facts about the \$400-million scam at SDTC, Sustainable Development Technology Canada, and has to provide information to the House of Commons that the Auditor General exposed as money misspent through that program. We have called for those documents. There was a vote in the House, and the majority said it wanted those documents tabled, as is the rule in the House.

Let us get back to the core of this discussion and look at the amendments. Right now, we want to extend the time, through a subamendment, to make sure we get those documents, because time is obviously being ignored by the government. We want those documents. Parliament is due those documents by its very rules. To ignore those rules at this point in time is tantamount to saying that

Parliament does not matter. That is where the government is trying to get us to at some point in time, as if this is just a place we get to walk over, a hurdle we have to get through as the executive branch of government. It is not a hurdle. It is the Parliament of Canada.

We are coming up on Remembrance Day next week, of course. How many people have stood for Canada to make sure we have democratic values and have the ability to elect people to the House of Commons so we can pass laws and represent the people? Democracy is sacred. If we lose it, we will miss it in its entirety, and it will be very difficult to get back at the end of the day.

Every sovereign nation around the world is envious of the democratic countries around the world. The democratic countries are the most prosperous. We are the ones that involve our citizens. We are the ones that impact the world the most in what we do. What the government is trying to do is turn us into less of a democracy through this measure and half measure by half measure.

This has been happening, as my colleague pointed out, for four years now. Ever since the pandemic happened, the government has thought it is not accountable. It started with the pandemic. I was elected in 2019, and 2020 came along very quickly. The government then decided that it wanted all this money control, called special warrants, and for us to authorize a whole bunch of money so that we would not even have to sit in the House of Commons and it could do whatever it wanted.

One of the main roles of the House is to make sure that we oversee the spending of the government. It brings back estimates and brings its plans to us, and we have to approve them. We have to make sure we hold onto that and hold the government to account so it is accountable for that spending.

● (1635)

When I was elected, it was a great honour to sit in the House. There are 338 of us from across this country, and it is a great honour to come here and meet with people across the aisle to see how we can make this country better at the end of the day. That is not happening right now. The first step to making that happen is to follow the rules of this place. One cannot tear down the rules of this place and expect us to function as a legitimate parliamentary democracy. We have to respect that we have rules on how to interact together and how the government, which is in the front bench, responds to what the House demands of it. We have demanded many things in the House, and the government has ignored a lot of them.

*Privilege*

I recall the government held up one of the requirements we asked of it some time ago. Members will recall that the House demanded the IRGC in the Middle East be deemed a terrorist group. That was passed by Parliament years ago, and the government decided to ignore it until it was opportune not to, doing it just four months ago during a by-election in Toronto. Suddenly this was an issue and it had to obey the House of Commons' vote, and the government acquiesced, finally. Parliament was demanding this of the government and the government ignored it.

Now Parliament is demanding documents, and those documents are about a \$400-million scam. It is one of the many slush funds the government has. We are not the ones who initially started questioning what this was. It was the Auditor General who examined the books and said that a whole bunch of things were amiss. Think about that: \$400 million and hundreds of conflicts of interest where members of a board were giving money to their own companies and were not supposed to be doing so. That is the definition of conflict of interest.

This \$400 million was put into projects that were supposedly part of what we call the green shift or the energy transition, but the Auditor General said that most of these projects did not even qualify. This was money going out the door to projects that did not even meet the requirements of a program that was vaunted. This was the government's way of getting through the new transition that was going to happen. It turns out, as the Auditor General has pointed out, and we want the documents that show this clearly, that most of those projects did not even meet the requirements of the program as they were written on paper. It was just a whole bunch of Liberal-appointed insiders paying money to their own firms.

That is not something Canadians will tolerate. It is not something the House should tolerate. Show us the documents, and at that point in time we and the RCMP will determine if there are charges to be laid in this respect. We are not the police. Turn these documents over so we can see what charges can be laid and what should be done in this case. It is pretty clear that a lot went amiss in this distribution of \$400 million of taxpayer funds. That is on top of many other programs.

When I look at all these things, I see that each minister in the front bench has gone out of their way to create for themselves some fund where they can write cheques. There is the SIF from the Minister of Industry, and the finance minister got a new fund this past year, the Canada growth fund. Of course, there is the Canada Infrastructure Bank, as well as a whole bunch of other funds. We are just pushing money through the economy.

Some of the stuff the government is pushing money into is just a bunch of money for its friends. It is business that should have happened anyway, but because the government has a Liberal insider friend, that friend puts an extra few million dollars in their back pocket. Even though the projects should have made sense without government input, government friends take the money.

We need to get back to projects that make sense for the taxpayers of this country and get the government out of this slush fund business for its friends. There are many of these examples, and we need to expose each and every one of them. This is the first one, and the

Auditor General has already exposed it for what it is: an absolute scam, a \$400-million scam.

What I am looking for is what follows after that. When we take a look at how much money the government has spent in the last four years, it has overspent. Some of it was spent on the pandemic. Less than half of the money dispensed over the two pandemic years went toward dealing with the pandemic. Hundreds of billions of dollars went toward some kind of shift that did not happen.

● (1640)

Our greenhouse gas emissions are down only a slight bit, and much of that can be attributed to the offshoring of work that used to happen in Canada. It is a ridiculous equation at the end of the day. We have accomplished nothing for the world's environment. All we have accomplished is making sure we do not have any economic activity of note in Canada.

I will speak about misinformation by my colleague from Winnipeg North, which he provides over and over again. He stands up and challenges us, and when he speaks from the Liberal notes of the day, sometimes I cringe. I cringe because we are here representing something of a higher purpose: what is good for this country. What is good for this country is, of course, making sure we arrive at good decisions. Those decisions only arrive if we do the right thing and speak to truth all the way through.

The misinformation is the notion that if we get the documents we are entitled to as Parliament, it will contravene the Charter of Rights. I will challenge anybody here to say that in 1982, when the Charter of Rights was legitimized as part of the Canadian Constitution, the drafters anticipated that some documents would not be provided to parliamentarians because some lawyer with an opinion that might be trashed said this would contravene somebody's charter rights. This is the Parliament of Canada. It is supreme. We are demanding documents and we are due those documents. Those documents should arrive, and we are standing here upholding democracy, making sure they do arrive. Nothing further has to occur. This resolves itself when the documents get delivered in their entirety, and then we investigate what happened from there. Step one is to get those documents to the table.

There is more misinformation going on, and I heard a lot of it again today in the House of Commons. Earlier this week, I had to put up with two ministers announcing an emissions cap in the oil and gas industry. How does an emissions cap work? An emissions cap works by shutting down production in Canada. That is the only way to do it. We have been shown many times by industry and by all the scientists involved that if we shut down a million barrels a day of Canadian oil production, it will be quickly replaced by other suppliers around the world, end of story. Everybody knows that.

*Privilege*

In Canada, right now we are producing some of the most environmentally beneficial barrels of oil for the world economy, particularly for our partners south of the border. The Liberals want to penalize one industry at this point in time by using a vanity approach to what they think they are doing for the environment, but are accomplishing nothing but offshoring. That has to be challenged to its utmost, and I will stand up for people who are adding value throughout the energy supply chain in Canada, but also for the amount of technology being developed that deals with Canadian energy production to make the most efficient and environmentally friendly oil in the world. That advancement has happened significantly.

I also need to raise this, because I am not sure everybody remembers it: Canada is not a cheap place to produce oil. The reason we produce oil in North America, but in Canada in particular, is the security involved in making sure our energy sources are provided here. Otherwise, those energy sources would be supplied by other places around the world where oil is much less expensive and much less environmentally friendly, believe it or not. This energy molecule is still the most important in the world, and we continue to move it along so that we have other sources, because putting all our apples in one basket is not a good strategy.

Ensuring we have energy from many sources, like oil, natural gas, nuclear, hydro, wind, solar and geothermal, is part of our future, but we are not going to end one without punishing Canadians and the environment, because we cannot push a transition faster than it moves. That is all there is to it at the end of day. I have addressed that very clearly.

• (1645)

There is other misinformation we have talked about. I saw the Prime Minister stand up in the House during Question Period today and say he is standing up for Alberta oil workers, and I have never heard such nonsense. The Prime Minister, the government and the front bench are doing everything they can to punish the sector and make it seem like it is the sector that is responsible for the emissions around the world.

Yes, CO<sub>2</sub> comes from burning hydrocarbons, but CO<sub>2</sub> comes from every human activity. We need to try to mitigate CO<sub>2</sub>. We are doing our best, but shutting down Canada is not the solution to accomplish that.

I also speak to my colleague across the way from Winnipeg North because he has said a lot on this and it is always a speaking line off of the Liberal talking sheet of the day. The member talks about the contempt of my party's leader in the House. My leader is not showing contempt; he is doing his job, his role, as the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition. As opposed to the government's mouthpiece, he is actually sitting there holding the government to account.

We have talked about this many times, the whole notion that the Leader of the Opposition needs to have a security clearance in order to get this information. That is the government's job. The opposition leader's job is to hold the government to account on what it is actually supposed to provide here. He cannot usurp that role or he is defying his main role as the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition.

I am going to move on to a few things the members will appreciate. I have some issues around what this country is going to look like going forward, because this country is being torn apart by the government. We need to fix this budget; it is out of control. This country is \$1.3 trillion in debt, with another \$50 billion going into debt this year. How much debt can Canadians assume from the current public government? It has doubled since the government came into power, and it is not turning around. This notion that government debt can continue to accumulate, and Canadians can continue to bear the burden of that, only kicks the can down the road until programs do not get delivered to Canadians who are going to need those funds going forward.

Debt-to-GDP ratio is a ridiculous notion, frankly. How much money are we spending on servicing that debt? It is \$50 billion plus per year, which is about \$3,000 plus per Canadian household. Therefore, 3,000 dollars' worth of government services does not arrive because we are servicing a debt that is far out of control. We need to address that. We need to make sure we fix this budget and stop spending money willy-nilly, including on a \$400-million slush fund that went to a bunch of insiders, to bring that back home.

We also have a \$1.3-trillion deficit, which is about \$100,000 per household. We can tell that to every household in Canada: "The federal debt adds an extra \$100,000 to your actual debt, and you are paying the interest on that debt all the time and there is nothing you can do about it. Do not worry, everything is free in Canada. We will get you some more free programs. Do not worry about it. Nobody is going to worry about that debt. Well, your kids are going to worry about it, because somebody is going to have to deal with this."

Kicking the can down the road is no way to address what we need to deliver to Canadians. Dealing with debt is something we have to focus this government on, because it thinks it just has to continue spending more, and it is going to make facts up as it goes along.

I did not mention the emissions cap the Liberals talked about. It ties in with the debt situation. The emissions cap is going to harm a sector that provided \$45 billion to Canadians in 2022 through taxes that supply services, like health care, education and social services, across this country. I am asking how the government is going to replace that \$45 billion as it does its utmost to try to shut in an industry and an asset that is the envy of the world. The government seems bent on destroying that industry. We do not know what we have until we have thrown it away; this is something we have to try to hang on to.

• (1650)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Public Services and Procurement; the hon. member for Calgary Shepard, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship; the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, Carbon Pricing.

**Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest as my colleague across the way talked about respecting the will of the majority of Parliament. The majority of Parliament believes in \$10-a-day day care. The majority of Parliament believes in a national school food program. The majority of Parliament believes in putting money into investments for housing to municipalities, as do 18 Conservative members of Parliament.

If my hon. colleague believes in respecting the will of the majority of Parliament, does he also support these programs, which are supported by the majority of parliamentarians?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. I know everybody in this House wants to do well for the Canadians they represent. Whatever program that is, I am certain they want to deliver it.

I will put on the table, pushing back to my colleague across the way, that if we tell Canadians there is a new, free program but their kids are going to pay for it 20 years down the road, with interest along the way, their kids might have something to say about it first and foremost. We have to get back to that space where the programs we offer are the programs we are actually paying for, and we are not asking others to pay for them for us.

The next generation in Canada is going to have tougher choices to make because we have constrained it so badly. We should build the country of the future, not sit here and just shovel out cash today. We have choices to make. Nothing is free. Nothing can just happen. We have to make sure we look at our costing and our payments, and get the right things done for Canadians so we have a viable country going forward.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the question my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville asked earlier.

If we did get the documents, that would be great. Members could continue or begin their analysis, as the case may be, and ensure that processes are improved, which is our job at the end of the day. We need to make sure that the processes are properly implemented, if that is not already the case. If they are too complicated, we need to simplify them. It is all about saving money for taxpayers.

My question is this. If the documents are not handed over, if things continue to drag on, do questions of privilege then become a roundabout, insidious way of keeping the Liberal government in power until the Conservatives decide it is time to call an election?

Would it not be better to simply say that we realize we are not going to get them, so let us put it to a vote and just accept whatever happens with the current government?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting question. This is a rule of Parliament. Who is going to force compliance with the rules of Parliament, other than the opposition?

If our Bloc Québécois colleagues want to support us in our campaign to demand the documents from the Government of Canada, I invite them to stick with us. It is important to have the documents, for all of us here in Parliament.

### Privilege

It is important, and not just in this case. It is important for the future of the House of Commons. It is very important. That is the rule. How are we going to work together in the House of Commons? It is important. We are going to stay here.

My colleague asked if the Conservatives were going to delay calling an election. Of course not, we want an election as soon as possible.

• (1655)

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will start off with a comment and then go in to a question.

I will not fault my colleague for standing up for the oil and gas industry. Those are his constituents. Indeed, we need to have an intelligent conversation in this place about what to do with energy workers as the decades go on, what that transition is going to look like.

I listened to the member's comments about the economic value of oil and gas. I would like to point out to him that our oil and gas production is among the most energy-intensive on this planet. The other facts we have to look at are that the 10 warmest years on record all happened in the last decade, and that climate change itself has a real economic cost. We need only speak to Canada's hard-working farmers, who are on the front lines of climate change. The current business risk management programs are not adequately funding them to deal with climate-related disasters.

My question is on the process before us. I have heard the RCMP publicly comment that it would be uncomfortable for the RCMP to receive these documents. Given that the House is currently stuck, would it not be advisable for us to move this question of privilege to the procedure and House affairs committee? Then Conservatives could call the RCMP commissioner before that committee as a witness, and the commissioner could inform the Conservatives on the appropriate process for the handling of these documents.

Would that not be an advisable option?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the preamble and the actual question. However, my colleague is sort of saying, "We want to do indirectly what we could do more efficiently directly," and he has some RCMP friend who tells him he is uncomfortable with this process.

We are Parliament and our job here is not to make somebody comfortable. There has been some very serious corruption and we want to get to the bottom of it, as uncomfortable as my colleague says the RCMP might be when it uncovers these documents. If it makes the RCMP uncomfortable and squirmy because its boss over on the front bench of the Liberal government is going to say, "Oh my gosh, we have trodden way past where we should have," and the RCMP has to issue some warrants, that is going to be very uncomfortable for everybody.

*Privilege*

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are two things we know. We have been seized with this issue, as my colleague knows, for a month now, and the Liberals could end this by submitting the documents, unredacted. They could end it right now, tonight.

I have important issues in my riding, like the rural top-up that residents have been denied in York—Simcoe even though we are rural, like the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund and like Liberal-appointed senators interfering in my bill, Bill C-280, over in the Senate. We know that side of the House is now with bankers, and on this side of the House, we are with farmers.

I wonder if my colleague could point to a few pressing issues in his riding that we are not getting to because the Liberals are not producing these documents.

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of things we are not dealing with in this Parliament because the government digs its feet in the sand and is not going to abide by the rules of Parliament. It is not us who set those rules. It is the Speaker's rule, saying no other order of business shall be dealt with in this House until this matter has been dealt with, because the rules of Parliament say these documents must be provided.

We think about all the things happening across this country, including in my province of Alberta. We have to deal with all kinds of issues, including how we are going to change the Impact Assessment Act so it is constitutionally viable because the government made a gross overstep in passing legislation in that respect. The Liberals are stalled on that. I do not think they are stalled just because of this procedure; they are stalled because they do not want to perform their actual job in this Parliament. There is much to be done here.

**Mr. Ben Carr:** Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, the hon. member put it in quotation marks, but it was not a close, personal friend of my colleague from British Columbia but the commissioner of the RCMP who said the RCMP would be uncomfortable. There are no quotation marks needed because that is fact.

I want to go back for a moment to something my colleague said in a previous response to my question. He talked about burdening future generations. I am guessing he owns a house. I do not know for sure. I am guessing he did not pay cash for that house. He probably took out a mortgage. He borrowed money. Why did he borrow money, presumably? Why do Canadians borrow money? They do it to invest. Our government is investing in people.

I would ask him whether he believes a national school food program and child care are mere bureaucracy, as the Leader of the Opposition is so fond of saying.

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

**Mr. Ben Carr:** I will repeat that, Mr. Speaker, because I know the member was getting some advice.

Are the national school food program and \$10-a-day day care bureaucracy, in his mind? A simple yes or no would be helpful.

• (1700)

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I thank all my colleagues for the financial advice they give me in the House. I appreciate it.

The issue of what is investing and what is spending is nonsense. Governments are not investing right now. Governments are spending like crazy. It is not an investment to say, "We are spending everybody's money today, but do not worry about it in the future." It is gross overspending, and the Liberals have to start making choices for Canadians.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in this House and have my say about certain topics. Certainly, the SDTC scandal is one that has rocked this chamber for a long time now, and rightly so.

However, before we get to that, if I might, I want to speak a little bit about Lloyd Coady, a veteran in my riding, who will turn 100 years old on November 16. I can remember clearly when I had the opportunity to be the honorary colonel for The Nova Scotia Highlanders. Lloyd and I, one Remembrance Day, were standing on the dais and he asked me if I wanted to have a push-up contest. I politely declined. Then, as we stepped down off the dais, Lloyd wanted to have a running race. Once again, I thought that it would be rather impolite to do so. That being said, needless to say, Lloyd is in incredible shape and certainly an incredible guy. He was a medic during World War II.

God bless Lloyd. I wish him many more. I hope to see him before Remembrance Day this year and, of course, on Remembrance Day as well. What a guy.

That being said, I suspect Lloyd would be aghast with the details of the Sustainable Development Technology Canada fund. When we look at this, there was a whistle-blower who testified before the industry committee in the fall of 2023. I can remember my great friend from South Shore—St. Margarets telling me about this scandal day after day, and building this case, which he has been so successful at, and understanding that \$400 million had been given to Liberal insiders. This whistle-blower, in the fall of 2023, accused the federal government of having carried out an egregious cover-up. Of course, that is part of the reason we are here today.

Doug McConnachie, who at the time was the assistant deputy minister at ISED, was recorded by whistle-blowers saying the following about the SDTC, "There's a lot of sloppiness and laziness. There is some outright incompetence and, you know, the situation is just kind of untenable at this point."



The Auditor General's report on SDTC was damning. It found that SDTC had not set clear guidance to support staff and the project review committee to determine whether a project met all the eligibility criteria set out in the contribution agreements. Of course, it goes on and on. We know when this was further investigated there were 186 conflicts of interest and, as I mentioned at the outset, at least \$400 million of government money has been given to Liberal insiders. That is why we are here.

It is interesting, I have heard much of this debate and it fascinates me that it is okay to give some of the information, such as the redacted documents, but the NDP-Liberal government does not think it is okay to give all of the information by way of unredacted documents. I do not really understand that logic because, quite frankly, it is not logical. Therefore, we begin to understand that, in essence, that is what we are talking about here today, giving the full amount of information that is available. It is okay to give part of the information to the RCMP, but it is not okay to give all of the information to the RCMP. If that does not make any sense to people, it of course does not make any sense to those of us on this side of the House.

I think it is important that Canadians understand that it is the reckless spending that causes the difficulties we end up with. I know my colleague just before me answered the question about whether Canadians might consider that borrowing money to make investments makes good sense. Certainly, there have been a lot of schemes out there. Maybe that is what rich people do. I do not know. That being said, it really would not make any sense. One could borrow money at a low rate and invest it at a high rate, generally speaking, but I do not know who has the ability to access that kind of capital and what kind of a scheme one would have to be involved with. Actually, I do know what kind of scheme one could be involved in, the SDTC scheme.

• (1705)

If they knew their company was going to receive lots of money from the NDP-Liberal government, then it would make sense to borrow money to put into that company because they know their pockets are going to be flush with cash. This is, perhaps, much like the radical environment minister has been able to do, and we will talk about the radical environment minister a bit more.

We know on this side of the House, it is important to talk about four pillars of moving forward and how we are going to get rid of this corruption. Axing the carbon tax, of course, is one of those things that is part of the core being, and we have asked multiple times, on this side of the House, for a carbon tax election. This adds more fuel to the fire, because we often hear that we get more back in carbon rebates than we pay in.

I had a very astute constituent email my office, and I thought it fascinating, because his quote really cut very closely to the quick. He said only a fool would believe we are going to give the government money, and they are going to give us more back. Whoever heard of such a thing? If we could have a scheme like that, I would suggest it would be something great to invest in. That being said, I think this is more smoke and mirrors and sleight of hand. It could be a pyramid scheme like Amway, maybe, if any of us remember those days. That is much akin to what the SDTC scandal is.

### *Privilege*

Back to axing the tax, the Canadian Trucking Alliance reported in September that, "In 2024, the carbon tax will add just under \$2 billion to annual trucking costs in Canada. By 2030, the carbon tax will add more than \$4 billion to annual trucking costs, an overall increase of about 15%. Over the 12-year tax phase in, the tax will have cost the trucking industry more than \$26 billion." For everybody out there who was watching question period today, our leader talked about businesses being driven to the United States. Certainly, this is another scheme of the NDP-Liberal government to drive Canadian businesses south of the border where they do not have a carbon tax.

The article continues, "Due to razor thin margins in the trucking industry, these added costs cannot be absorbed and must be passed on to customers." This leads us to this incredibly important point, which those of us on this side of the House have said many times. I know the member from Winnipeg probably wants to join me in reciting it, but when we tax the farmer who grows the food and we tax the trucker who ships the food, then the person who buys the food has to pay all those costs as well. They end up getting taxed over and over again.

The Trucking Alliance also reported that, "virtually every good purchased by Canadian families and businesses involves truck transportation". Anywhere we go, we obviously see that. I remember a great billboard in the United States that had a picture of a baby on it, and underneath it was the caption "this is the only thing not delivered by a truck". The article continues, "this means those families and businesses are paying increasingly higher prices for those goods to pay for this ineffective tax." This is something we talk about when we knock on doors and we talk to folks, to real folks, as opposed to those the NDP-Liberals talk to; I do not know who they talk to. We know the cost of living is crippling the financial lives of Canadians.

We also know the tax will cost Canadians about \$30.5 billion by 2030, which works out to about \$1,824 per family in extra annual costs. We know what the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said about the damaging and damning carbon tax. In May of this year, on CTV's *Power Play*, he said, "Overall, a vast majority of people will be worse off under a carbon tax pricing regime than without, and we don't expect that to change." The NDP-Liberals want to manipulate and change the words of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, but that is a falsehood.

In his June 3 appearance before the finance committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer once again confirmed that, "The government has economic analysis on the impact of the carbon tax itself... We've seen that, staff in my office, but we've been told explicitly not to disclose and reference it." This a damaging attack by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

*Privilege*

What else is going on in terms of the finances of Canadians? We know that Foodbanks Canada reported more than two million Canadians visited food banks in March 2024, which is the highest in the history of reporting.

• (1710)

We look at that number of two million Canadians. My goodness, what a fantastic country we have. Why is the NDP-Liberal government spending money and driving Canadians to the food bank? When we look at Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia's food banks have reported 39,360 total visits in 2023-24, which is a 21% increase from the previous year and a 53% increase from 2019. Of course, sadly, many of those visiting food banks are children; 32.4%. Talking about the school food program, this is a problem that the NDP-Liberals have created and now, on behalf of Canada and Canadians, they want to spend some more money to solve a problem that they created by their vanity projects and their spending with abandon. Nearly 30% of food banks across Canada report that they are running out of food.

A report from Dalhousie University indicates that a family of four will see their grocery bills rise by over \$700 in 2024. That may not seem like a lot of money to a lot of people on the NDP-Liberal side of the House. Perhaps the Prime Minister does not think that is a lot of money. That being said, for those of us who grew up in circumstances where we perhaps did not have a proverbial silver spoon, we know that \$700 is still a lot of money. It is something that we need to be mindful of.

While I am talking about my childhood, I will give a shout-out to my mom, who is 91 and still living in the same trailer park that I grew up in. Hopefully, today, she is having a good day, still living independently at 91. That is certainly something. Hopefully I can repeat that.

These are the kinds of difficulties financially that Canadians are suffering from. The second major pillar, of course, on this side of the House, is building the homes. We know that 70% of those folks who are using food banks in Nova Scotia are residing in market rentals. When we look at the building permits from June 2024, we know that the total value of building permits in Canada fell 13.9% to \$9.9 billion in June 2024, and that decreases were reported in 11 of the 13 provinces and territories. I am sure that was much to the chagrin of the former failed immigration minister, who is now the flailing and floundering housing minister. Both residential and non-residential sectors experienced that reduction. As a constant dollar basis from 2017, representing 100, the total value of building permits declined 14.3% in June, following a 13.4% decline in May. Those are absolutely damning statistics when we hear a government spending absolutely billions of dollars on its so-called housing accelerator, etc.

Once again there has to be a bit of commentary here. I find it absolutely egregious that the housing minister wants to publish names of members on this side of the House. They have said that we should not be writing the minister while advocating for constituents. As we look at that, I do not know if there is a nicer word, but in my mind, this is like a bush league. When we write letters to the minister, even if the programs are absolutely sloppy and lazy, poorly administered and wasteful, much like the SDTC, we would

expect that the bush league minister really would not be going on and on, saying that this is something we should not do. Certainly I know that the people who have put me here have an expectation that I will advocate for them. I think it would be absolutely fascinating that when we form the next common-sense Conservative majority government on this side of the House, if every letter written to a minister would be made public, and that they would be out there supporting the wonderful things that we shall do, such as axing the tax, building the homes, fixing the budget and stopping the crime. However, looking at the polls, the housing minister is probably going to lose his seat anyway.

Again, there have been multiple failures with substantial declines and multi-unit construction intentions are down almost 20%. The overall residential decline was led by those reductions in June.

• (1715)

Since Toronto signed its housing accelerator fund agreement with the government in December, the number of units permitted is down 23.6%. As we can see, this is a sad state of affairs that continues. A StatsCan report on building permits from August reported a further 7% decline in the total value of Canadian building permits. If we say, as Liberals are wont to say, that the programs are incredible successes, why do the permits and the building of units continue to decline?

CMHC reported in September that the six-month trend in housing starts decreased by 1.3%, from 246,000 units in August to 243,000 units in September. The same thing is happening in the great province of Nova Scotia. In centres with more than 10,000 people, building starts declined by 40% between September 2023 and September 2024.

Are the Liberals' programs successful? No. Certainly the program that our leader has brought forward is easy to understand. It is easy to implement. It is removing the GST portion from new builds under a million dollars, saving a significant amount of money for Canadians.

We often, of course, talk about fixing the budget. My colleague has gone on at length about the \$1.3-trillion debt and the fact that the NDP-Liberal government, over the last nine years, has added more to the federal debt than all other previous governments combined. I think that sad statistic speaks for itself.

Of course, on this side of the House, we are also interested in stopping the crime. We know that between 2015 and 2023, hate crimes recorded by StatsCan increased by 275%. Police-reported homicides increased by 28%. Police-reported sexual offences against children increased by 153%, with 11,503 reported in 2023. There were almost 71% more sexual assaults of all kinds in 2023 than in 2015, with 36,625 being reported in 2023 across all three categories. In 2022, Canada had more homicides than in any year since 1992. There were 439 reports of human trafficking in 2023. This is almost lawlessness. There were 78,849 motor vehicle thefts reported in 2015 and 114,863 in 2023.

This is a sad state, and when, of course, the leader of this side of the House talks about Canada being broken, certainly I would suggest that Canadians believe it when they hear the incredibly egregious statistics.

This is really telling stuff. The Toronto Police Association on social media on October 21 stated, “Our communities are experiencing a 45% increase in shootings and a 62% increase in gun-related homicides compared to this time last year. What difference does your handgun ban make when 85% of guns seized by our members can be sourced to the United States? Your statement is out of touch and offensive to victims of crime and police officers everywhere. Whatever you think you’ve done to improve community safety has not worked.”

Police unions in Vancouver and Surrey also criticized the government when the Vancouver Police Union tweeted that the Prime Minister was “not aware of the ongoing gang war here in B.C. which is putting both our members and public at risk on a daily basis.” The stats, sadly, go on and on.

As we come to the end of my comments here today on SDTC, we also know that the radical environment minister, whom I referenced in the very beginning, has significant interest in Cycle Capital, which under the leadership of Ms. Méthot was given almost \$275 million in provincial and federal money. Of course the radical environment minister, sadly, still has a significant number of shares in the company. Even though he has been challenged three times to come to multiple different committees, he has still failed to appear.

I guess these questions remain: With the privilege debate ongoing and with the minister's failing to appear at committee, Conservatives on this side of the House want to know what is so damning inside the redacted documents, what there is to hide, and when Parliament can expect to see the documents, be able to debate the issue further and get back to the business at hand.

• (1720)

**Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back to something my hon. colleague referred to in an earlier exchange I had with another colleague. I believe that he was a medical professional prior to becoming a parliamentarian, so I presume he had many interactions with young people and their families, including a lot of talk about the social determinants of health.

I am wondering whether the member believes that offering food to children in schools is a policy that would benefit them and their

### *Privilege*

families, leading to an improvement in the social determinant of health, or whether he believes, like his leader, that it is simply bureaucracy.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity of being a family doctor for 26 years and then was elected to this place in 2021. In all of my years as a doctor, nobody had to come to me because they could not eat. There were no tent encampments, and people were not getting shot in the streets. All of these things have ramped up in the last several years.

In the last nine years, with the vast plethora of statistics that I have given to the chamber, we know that these things have ramped up because of the ineptitude of the NDP-Liberal government. We also know, as I said in my speech, from when we go door to door and talk to Canadians every day, that the thing they are suffering with is the cost of living.

If the foolhardy NDP-Liberal government were not spending money willy-nilly, it would not have to create a school food program to solve the economic crisis it has caused for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my seatmate for his speech.

He talked a lot about the cost of living and housing. I want to refer to two articles from *The Economist* that were published in mid-October. This magazine is very critical of the current government when it comes to housing. It indicated that the cost of housing has risen by 66% since 2015 and that Canada's per capita housing rate is very low compared to other OECD countries. *The Economist* said that one of the main reasons for this is that the government implemented a policy of massive immigration without a plan to support housing and social services. We have seen that there was no plan in that regard and, as my colleague said, there have been even fewer housing starts because of high interest rates. *The British magazine* is so harsh that it says that this problem cancels out all of the successful progressive policies implemented by the government.

What does my colleague think about that?

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my seatmate. That expression is new to me. I thank my colleague for that expression.

My colleague pointed out a number of problems with the NDP-Liberal government's plan. The issue is the cost of living. That is a problem. Building housing is also a big problem.

A lot of people come here to live. We need enough jobs for people who come here to Canada. We need services like health care and schools. These are a necessity for immigrants too. The government must have a plan. On this side of the House, there will be a plan for immigration to Canada.

It is very important, and I know it is very important for Quebecers too.

*Privilege*

● (1725)

[English]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of serving with my hon. colleague on the health committee for some time, and as he has told the House, he was a family physician for 26 years. He would, then, know of course that unmet oral health needs and poor oral health lead to serious overall health problems like cardiac issues, diabetes complications, low birth rate in women and infections of the upper and lower jaw.

I am wondering whether the member supports his leader's statement that he would cut the NDP's Canada dental care plan, which currently provides dental care to a million people and is slated to provide dental care to nine million people, and does he, as a physician, think that removing that dental care from people who do not have dental care coverage will promote better health in Canada?

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, I will start with an interesting point. I certainly have never heard our leader say that we are going to cut the dental care program. What we often hear about and see are incredibly foolish actions from the NDP-Liberals across the way, who are talking about the chopping and cutting or whatever foolishness they talk about. Those are not things we discuss on this side of the House.

We understand that the cost of living crisis is an incredible problem for Canadians. We also understand that it is important to have incredibly robust and fruitful conversations with folks who have tremendous experience with things like a dental program, and to meet with the Canadian Dental Association, which I have met with many times, to understand how the terrible current program could be improved upon.

We also know, and I spoke to some folks in Alberta this week, that the numbers that the Liberals have released and talk about, of a million people being served, are untrue; they are a bit of a fallacy the Liberals want to promote, maybe because a million is a nice, round number. However, that being said, on this side of the House we do not talk about the foolishness the Liberals want to demonstrate to Canadians about cuts, etc. We talk about making life better for Canadians.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Cumberland—Colchester's speech was excellent. A friend of mine moved out to his area, and he said that we could still actually get homes in the member's area for anywhere from \$200,000 to \$400,000, which means that just this one scandal, the \$400-million scandal, accounts for 1,000 to 2,000 homes that could be built in the member's riding.

We talk about the corruption that is consistently supported by the NDP. Its members talk about all the programs and things like that, but we are looking at billions of dollars of misappropriated and misspent money. As a physician, I think about the beds in hospitals that could have been built permanently for this amount of money.

Could the member comment on his own community and how much good could have been done with the funds if they had not been so misappropriated and given to Liberal friends?

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, certainly after the pandemic we saw lots of people, maybe some from Oshawa even, who decided they wanted to experience the great province of Nova Scotia and access housing and build housing there. We also know of course that an influx of people, often from Ontario, has caused housing prices to increase.

I am a little gun-shy now to say that I would support money from any project on the NDP-Liberal side of the House because, as I said, the bush-league tactics of the failing housing minister would say that the next headline in the paper will be that the member for Cumberland—Colchester is quite happy to support the SDTC's \$400 million coming to Nova Scotia and that the Liberals' failed program should be something I would be supporting. As I look at that and at the ridiculous nature of the things they want to disclose, again, it is nothing but bush league.

● (1730)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking today about a privilege motion, and we are talking about documents that should be provided, as the Speaker has ruled, to the procedure and House affairs committee. I do not believe that there are any members of the House who disagree that we need to call the question and let PROC do its work so we can get to the bottom of the issue.

The Conservatives talk about wanting the documents, wanting access to the information, yet their leader refuses to apply for security clearance. God forbid that the leader of the Conservative Party should become the prime minister of Canada, as he will automatically get the clearance, but today he knows that if he applied for it he would not qualify for it.

What I find interesting is that the government has shared that fewer than 15% of Conservative members are concerned about housing in their communities. Fewer than 15% of Conservative members have supported their municipalities by asking the Minister of Housing to provide support for them. The member is upset that we are sharing that there are 18 Conservative members who care about their communities and care about their housing, yet the question of privilege is entirely about access to documents.

When we give Conservatives information, they do not want it. On the information they have access to, their leader does not want to apply for the security clearance. Therefore what do they do? They attack Canadians.

A Canadian was killed on Canadian soil. The Conservative leader refuses to get his clearance. What do Conservatives do? They attack Sikhs and Hindus in Canada by cancelling Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas. They attack the government by questioning what the intelligence evidence is. The RCMP says that it does exist. I would ask the member this: If the Conservatives want access to the information, why is his leader not applying for a security clearance?

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. I was at a Diwali celebration last night led by one of our members from B.C. We were there with multiple supporters and enjoyed some great food.

**An hon. member:** Not true.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, I find it absolutely fascinating that members want to yell that it is not true. I would suggest that many of us were there. There are pictures. The members can look at them all they want, unless they want to put their tinfoil hats back on as they have all day and say that it is absolutely not true and that it is a conspiracy. Maybe we used artificial intelligence to create the photos.

The final thing I would say is that, any time the Prime Minister wants to release the names of the folks who are not defending this country and are working against us, all he has to do is stand up and do it. Here on this side of the House, we would be happy to have that happen.

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. When members have had an opportunity to ask a question, I would ask them to listen. If they have anything else to contribute, they can wait until the appropriate time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, here we are again discussing this privilege motion dealing with Liberal corruption at Sustainable Development Technology Canada, or SDTC. For those watching at home who are asking why we are here, the answer is simple: The Liberal government simply refuses to comply with an order from the House to produce unredacted documents in regard to the \$400-million green slush fund scandal at SDTC.

These documents would allow the RCMP to investigate the corruption of the Liberal insiders at SDTC, and despite a clear majority of MPs in the House voting to compel the government to release the documents, the government simply refuses to comply with the order of the House made by the democratically elected citizens of this country. Even the Prime Minister's Speaker agrees with us.

In September, the Speaker ruled, "The House has the undoubted right to order the production of any and all documents—"

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

• (1735)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I regret interrupting the member, and I apologize for it. It was already determined in the House that, when the Speaker is elected, they do not belong to the government or the opposition. The Speaker represents all members in this place. The member should—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I appreciate the hon. member's point of order. I want to remind members that, when a Speaker is elected, the Speaker is impartial and does not belong to a party.

The hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, let me rephrase.

We agree with the Speaker when he said, "The House has the undoubted right to order the production of any and all documents from any entity or individual it deems necessary to carry out its du-

### *Privilege*

ties." As such, I ask this again: Why are we here? We are here to hold this government accountable for its mess, corruption and wrongdoings. What would this motion do? The House is simply asking for these documents so that they can be turned over and scrutinized, not only by the RCMP, but by members of Parliament, because it is our privilege and our right to do so.

Nothing in our motion calls for the RCMP to conduct any type of investigation, and this is not an abnormal request, as the House enjoys the absolute and unfettered power to order the production of documents, which is not limited by any statute whatsoever. These powers are rooted in the very fabric of this House, having been enshrined in the Constitution Act of 1867 and the Parliament of Canada Act.

Here is a quick refresher on the role of Sustainable Development Technology Canada and why it is being investigated for corruption. SDTC is a federally funded non-profit founded in 2001. It was set up to approve and disburse funds to clean-tech companies. The latest mandate for the agency was to disburse \$1 billion over five years ending in 2025-26. Let us call this disbursement the "green slush fund". The wording of "slush fund" is deliberate. A slush fund is a reserve of money used for illicit purposes, usually pertaining to political bribery, and this is no exaggeration.

Doug McConnachie, the assistant deputy minister at Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and the whistle-blower who would expose the grift said that what happened at SDTC was "almost a sponsorship-scandal level kind of giveaway." The sponsorship scandal, if members remember, is what eventually brought down the previous Liberal government of prime ministers Paul Martin and Jean Chrétien. It should be noted that both scandals share certain similarities. Both involved Liberal Party insiders and firms profiting from hard-earned dollars of taxpayers through the diversion of funds from existing government programs created by Liberal governments.

Let us dig into the anatomy of a scandal. Coincidentally, 2015 was when we had our new government, this Liberal government. In 2015, the mastermind of the operation, Leah Lawrence, was hired to be the CEO of Sustainable Development Technology Canada. Under her direction, SDTC essentially turned into this green slush fund for her and her friends. Rather than funding green tech firms in a fair and transparent manner, she decided to use the fund to top up the companies of her and her friends. A key player in covering up her behaviour was her partner in crime, Annette Verschuren, who was appointed chair of the board.

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Annette used her position to protect Leah. Not wanting to miss out on the fund, the entire board then also partook in the scam. To compound these issues, subcontractors on projects were often affiliated with the CEO. Clearly in the wrong, the board members tried to cover their tracks by contracting an outside legal opinion saying it was okay to fund their own companies with the bonus money. This outside opinion was from Ed Vandenberg. He is a paid SDTC member.

There is no lack of salacious details to add in. I just cannot make this stuff up. It is truly stranger than fiction. If anyone is wondering what the government did when it found out about these issues, the answer is nothing. Just like the arrive scam app, this government's SDTC board fleeced taxpayers, and instead of reprimanding and firing these individuals, the Liberals ignored the issue and tried to cover up this abuse of taxpayer dollars.

It is not like the government was not warned. In fact, the whistle-blower referred to the initial investigation as a “whitewash”. The whistle-blowers reached out to both the government and the Privy Council Office, and despite warnings, the SDTC management team and board of directors remained in place months later. This must have been disheartening, yet, despite their claims falling on deaf ears, the eventual result was an inquiry into the matter conducted by Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton. The report confirmed that the whistle-blower complaints were actually valid and factual. Not only did the report confirm the multiple instances of corruption, but it also stated the government ignored these findings and continued to fund the organization despite being warned of the board's behaviour.

• (1740)

Sadly, this is not new behaviour, and it is part of a larger pattern. Over the past nine years, the government has exhibited a flagrant disregard for transparency and the rule of law.

Since the Prime Minister was elected, Canada has slid down the Transparency International Canada corruption perceptions index. Back in 2015, Canada placed as the ninth-least corrupt country in the world, with a score of 83 points, and we were improving. We can then fast-forward to 2022, when Canada was stuck in a tie for 14th place, with a score of 74 points. This is a loss of almost 10 percentage points.

In 2022, Transparency International Canada executive director James Cohen stated, “The problem of money-laundering in Canada and other corruption scandals have been headline news in recent years dragging down the perception of Canada as a clean country. This year's disappointing results show the need to take concrete action to restore Canada's reputation.” Those are not exactly glowing words, and they certainly confirm what Conservatives have been saying all along. Suffice it to say that the government did nothing to rectify this perception of corruption in Canada. This is corruption that it has created and condoned; it is damaging our international reputation.

Is it even a surprise that we have fallen so low? Since 2015, the volume of scandals has grown from a steady stream into a powerful torrent, starting with the cash for access scandal. That worked its way up to the infamous SNC-Lavalin corruption cover-up, blackface, the WE Charity, the Mark Norman affair, arrive scam, the

Winnipeg lab documents and foreign interference from state actors, such as China, India, Iran and Russia. The list of major scandals under the direction of the Prime Minister is too long for a 20-minute speech.

Of the sickening levels of graft at SDTC, one of the whistle-blowers had this to say:

The true failure of the situation stands at the feet of our current government, whose decision to protect wrongdoers and cover up their findings over the last 12 months is a serious indictment of how our democratic systems and institutions are being corrupted by political interference. It should never have taken two years for the issues to reach this point. What should have been a straightforward process turned into a bureaucratic nightmare that allowed SDTC to continue wasting millions of dollars and abusing countless employees over the last year.

Let us remember that, earlier on in my speech, I said that it was a \$1-billion fund. Of that \$1 billion, almost half of it, \$400 million, is what is in question in terms of being handed out inappropriately. The whistle-blowers also claimed, “[T]he current government is more interested in protecting themselves and protecting the situation from being a public nightmare. They would rather protect wrongdoers and financial mismanagement than have to deal with a situation like SDTC in the public sphere.” It is a cover-up. That is why we are here. The Liberal government does not want to be honest or transparent even now, when it is in direct contravention of an order to produce documents that was passed by a majority of MPs in this place.

Clearly, the government knew of the scandal and tried to hide it. It is really a testament to the moral integrity of whistle-blowers that we have this information in front of us today, and I thank them for it. For years, they had to toil in what they referred to as a “toxic” work environment, a place of work with high turnover and a culture in which loyalties were constantly tested by petty executives.

What is the scale of the scandal? On June 13, my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets requested a breakdown of the approved funding by the SDTC board. The Auditor General found that government officials sent nearly \$400 million in taxpayer funds to their own companies through inappropriately awarded contracts. In doing so, to quote myself, Blaine Calkins, they were responsible for “not one, not two, not 10, not 50, not 100 but 186 conflicts of interest.” That is truly an extraordinary number.

The government may try to deflect and say that SDTC is an arm's-length organization, but this is not true either, really. Another major finding of the Auditor General's investigation was that there were several severe lapses in the governance standards. It was only after the Prime Minister's hand-picked Liberal board members were appointed that this fund began voting for absurd amounts of taxpayer dollars for itself and hid its corrupt funnelling to board members' very own companies. In fact, the organization received a clean bill of health in 2017, before these corrupt board members were actually appointed.

• (1745)

Another interesting tidbit about the green slush fund is that the Minister of Environment served as a strategic adviser for a venture capital firm called Cycle Capital from 2009 to 2018, prior to his appointment to cabinet. The founder and owner of Cycle Capital sat on the same SDTC board that voted for Cycle Capital investments to receive a significant amount of funding. Will the Minister of Environment state if he still holds shares in Cycle Capital, and if so, how much has he stood to gain from these illicit investments?

If people are still not convinced of the need for these documents, please consider the words of our whistle-blower, who told the public accounts committee, "Just as I was always confident that the Auditor General would confirm the financial mismanagement at SDTC, I remain equally confident that the RCMP will substantiate the criminal activities that occurred within the organization." Those are not our words. Clearly, the whistle-blower believes this work is important, and we, as Conservatives, stand in solidarity with them.

In summary, we on the Conservative bench just want the government to turn over the SDTC green slush fund documents so that those responsible can be held accountable and taxpayers can know where their money went. Hopefully, we can recover some of those tax dollars for them.

SDTC's board was appointed by the government, and it was informed of the conflicts of interest held by the executives it chose, yet the government did not act for years. Because of this, we are saddled with another corruption scandal. The Auditor General's investigation has uncovered that \$400 million in SDTC funding was awarded to projects in which board members were conflicted during the five-year audit period.

That sum of money is nothing to laugh at, especially at a time when so many Canadians are struggling with everyday bills and affordability. These are funds that could have gone into building infrastructure, feeding the needy, tackling crime and dealing with the housing crisis that plagues our nation. Instead, the NDP-Liberal coalition government has paralyzed Parliament and made it impossible to address the serious issues facing Canadians.

It is time for the Prime Minister to take accountability and provide the documents outlining the conflicts of interest in the green slush fund. It is equally true that the MP for Saint-Maurice—Champlain, the minister of industry, should have done a better job of monitoring SDTC. The blame lies squarely at the feet of the Prime Minister and that minister.

I would like to leave members with a thought before I complete my speech. The Prime Minister once said, "One of the most impor-

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tant things in any leader or in any successful approach is to focus on connecting with people and really listening to them." It sounds like something he would say. I will just say to the Prime Minister that, if he will not release the documents, will he at least take stock of his own words and listen to the voice of Canadians, the great multitudes who are fed up with the corruption? They are telling him that it is time.

Taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and his time is up. It is time to heed the call of Canadians and put Canada on a path for a carbon tax election. Let us get to it .

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, let me be perfectly clear that the Conservatives are playing a multi-million dollar political game that is full of misinformation and completely off the topic of the motion the Conservatives brought forward.

What we are witnessing is the leader of the Conservative Party virtually using a contempt attitude toward the functionality of the chamber, which highlights the fact that he was the parliamentary secretary to the only prime minister, Stephen Harper, who has been held in contempt of Parliament.

The games are continuing today when we still see the leader of the Conservative Party refusing to get the security clearance. Why is that? What is in the background of the leader of the Conservative Party that he is so scared to get the security clearance? We know he is hiding something. What is he hiding, and why will the Conservative Party not stop the multi-million dollar game it is playing and get down to telling Canadians why the leader of the Conservative Party is so scared to tell Canadians about his past?

• (1750)

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure, but I am pretty sure that the tinfoil hat being worn by the parliamentary secretary could still pull up analog television.

This is about \$400 million that has been misappropriated and used inappropriately. The House has spoken. The House has said that the government is to produce the documents related to the green slush fund at SDTC. If the parliamentary secretary wants to do something useful, wants to do something constructive and wants to get his government's agenda back on track, he should listen to the will of the elected members of Parliament, of the House, who have said that we want these documents in the form where they are not redacted, full disclosure, tabled before the House.

As soon as he does that, this will end, and they can carry on with their destructive agenda, which they have done for the last nine years.

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[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we all want to have these documents to be able to do a complete analysis of the situation and make recommendations to improve the process. It is part of our job to request these documents to hold the government accountable, not to us, but to the public and the money it entrusts to us to manage.

We have been asking for these documents for four or five weeks and it seems clear that we will not be getting them. If we do not receive them, that means that the government is not transparent and, as such, we cannot have confidence in it. If this is a foregone conclusion, then we should be proceeding with triggering an election, unless the Conservatives have a secret agenda to keep the government in power until they decide it is time for an election.

The government does not have the confidence of the House. Why does the opposition not trigger an election?

[English]

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, the intimation that the Conservative Party is somehow propping up and extending the Parliament is simply absurd. We already had two direct motions of non-confidence that were brought forward when we reconvened here in the fall and, if I remember correctly, the member who asked me the question and her political party continue to support the continuation of the Parliament and the continuation of the Liberal government. They did not get what they asked for, so one can only assume that they are people of their word and that they will vote non-confidence at the next opportunity.

Suffice to say, in the meantime, it is our job, and it behooves us all as members of Parliament, to get the root of the matter. The root of the matter is that \$400 million of taxpayers' money was inappropriately used at SDTC and the green slush fund. That is money from my constituents' pockets. That is money from her constituents' pockets in Quebec. We deserve to know what those funds are. We have made a direct order as members of Parliament. We have that privilege and that entitlement to do so in the House.

The House has supremacy when it come to the order of the production of documents. It is not the first time that the government has failed to turn these documents over. If people remember correctly, we had the same problem with the Winnipeg lab documents, to the point where somebody was actually summoned before the bar for the first time in 113 years. This is a pattern with the government. It is a problem. We are either going to fold our tent and just buckle and let governments do whatever they want or we are going to stand proud as Canadians and we are going to actually restore the credibility of our nation, restore the credibility of this institution and make sure we actually get the documents that we have asked for as members of Parliament. I encourage her to stand in her place and make sure that she stands firm and that her party stands firm until we get these documents.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I like the member. He has been elected and re-elected numerous times. I have appreciated his work, most recently on natural health food products.

The reality is that he knows full well that the NDP and NDP MPs have gotten to the body of the WE Charity scandal, gotten to the bottom of the SNC-Lavalin scandal and are pushing to get to the bottom of the SDTC scandal. That is why we are supporting the motion.

I have asked this question numerous times and not a single Conservative has yet replied and that is with regard to the track record of cover-ups of the Harper regime. We saw massive spending scandals. The ETS scandal was \$400 million. The G8 scandal was \$1 billion. The Phoenix pay scandal was \$2.2 billion. The anti-terrorism funding, where they simply lost the paper trail, was \$3.1 billion.

Every single one of those scandals was covered up by the Harper regime. The member was here, so he is fully aware of that. As a former House officer, he is aware as well that this was absolutely inappropriate.

I am just asking for one Conservative member to stand up and say that they are sorry they covered up all of these spending scandals, that they are sorry that they did not allow Canadians to get to the bottom of this, that they used a majority government to basically shut down Parliament.

I am just asking for a single Conservative member to have the integrity to stand up and say that they were wrong.

Will the member do that?

• (1755)

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, I was here with the Right Hon. Stephen Harper when he was prime minister of Canada, and I can tell Canadians unequivocally that the Government of Canada has never been run more cleanly and more efficiently. I am proud of the track record of the previous Conservative government. I am going to be even more proud of the track record of a future Conservative government once we end the entitlement, corruption and absolute profligacy of the government, which has doubled our national debt. The amount that we are spending just to service the debt consumes the entirety of the GST alone.

The member who asked the question and his party have propped the government up through the worst parts of that spending and the worst accrual of that debt. We have seen scandal after scandal, including this one. We would not be here right now if it were not for the member, his leader and his party because this Parliament would have ended a long time ago. We are in a dystopian situation right now because the Liberals and the NDP have agreed and conspired to keep this Parliament going well beyond its due date. The member needs to look in the mirror.

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Red Deer—Lacombe for his excellent speech. There was a lot of common sense in there. He read a quote from the Prime Minister about listening, or at least the pretense of listening. He also talked about the whistle-blowers who have come forward, obviously at some risk to themselves and their careers.



If the Prime Minister is not willing to listen to us, should he and his government listen to the whistle-blowers who are bringing forward this information?

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, there were numerous protections that we brought forward in the previous Conservative administration, starting with the Federal Accountability Act, which created opportunities for various officers of Parliament. We would not even know some of these things if it were not for the hard work done through the Federal Accountability Act. It was the first piece of legislation that Stephen Harper brought forward, Bill C-2, back in 2006, if my memory serves me correctly.

Part of that work was strengthening protections for whistle-blowers. I think there is even more that we could do now because there is a culture of secrecy and fear in the government. In some cases, I hear these things. We need to make sure that people feel not only encouraged to, but also secure in coming forward with information of wrongdoing in the Government of Canada. We should not have a culture of secrecy.

The Prime Minister spoke of “sunny ways”, “transparency” and sunlight, but we have seen everything but in the last number of years from the government with the amount of money it has spent and the money that has gone out the door. We do not even know about some of the hundreds of millions and billions of dollars that were spent during COVID. There is no traceability or accountability with respect to that.

We need to strengthen whistle-blower protections. I thank the whistle-blowers. If the Prime Minister is not going to listen to the whistle-blowers, maybe he should listen to Canadians. I am sure they are ready to pass judgment on his performance.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The fourth party, the New Democratic Party, has missed 26—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** That is not a point of order. The next time the hon. member rises, he might want to quote the standing order or make reference to the procedure he is wanting to raise.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Foothills has the floor.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is unfortunate I have to rise to speak to this issue. This could have ended days ago had the Liberal government capitulated and shown the documents. It is obviously very frightened to show Canadians the level of scandal that is in those documents.

What we as parliamentarians are now facing is a Parliament, a House of Commons and a government in complete crisis. The lengths that the Prime Minister and his office will go to cover up this latest scandal is incredible. To basically shut down Parliament and not have any government business happening just to protect their own hide is very disingenuous to the members who are here, as we represent our constituents, and certainly to every Canadian who expects better from their government.

All parliamentarians represent those constituents who elected us, those families in our ridings who put their trust in us to represent them here. It is their privilege that we are demanding be honoured. The Speaker has ruled that the Liberal government should be handing over the documents, to show that Canadians can make that deci-

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sion for themselves and determine accountability if there is a scandal. It certainly seems the whistle-blowers and others have highlighted \$400 million in misappropriated taxpayer funds. Canadians have the right to see those documents. Canadians, who elected us to be here, have the right to make that determination.

What is at stake here is accountability in the House of Commons, where transparency and trust for all of us should be paramount, not just for the government in power. It is wielding that power as a sledgehammer over the House of Commons and over Canadians. I think we all would agree that oversight and transparency in Parliament are paramount to ensure that the trust of Canadians in what we do here is upheld. I certainly do not think that is happening right now, as the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister's Office are refusing to comply with a decision by the Speaker to produce those documents. The government is doing everything it can to hide that from Canadians.

This comes at a time when Canadians are frustrated. They are angry. They are struggling to make ends meet every single day. More than two million Canadians are visiting a food bank in a single month. Food insecurity in Canada is up 111%. Food inflation in Canada is 36% higher than it is in the United States. While Canadians are struggling, the Prime Minister and the Liberal-NDP government are taking Canadians' tax dollars and lining the pockets of their friends and insiders. We have hundreds, if not thousands, of homeless encampments popping up all across Canada. In Alberta, food bank use is up more than 35%. I have heard similar stories right across Canada. We saw a report the other day from Mississauga where food bank use was up 60%.

While Canadians are struggling just to put food on the table, the Liberal government is lining its pockets and the pockets of its friends with the dollars of Canadian taxpayers. The level of this scandal is something many of us have never seen before in Canada. The RCMP commissioner has confirmed that the Prime Minister's hand-picked directors in what we call the green slush fund are already under criminal investigation. Nine green slush fund board appointees have been implicated in funnelling this \$400 million to their own companies. The chair of the green slush fund board was hand-picked by the Prime Minister even though he was warned multiple times of a conflict of interest. Once again, the Prime Minister got his own way and did not care about a conflict of interest or the integrity of his government.

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The Prime Minister's hand-picked board of directors was funnelling \$400 million of taxpayer money to their own companies. That is unbelievable. It did not happen a couple of times; it happened more than 180 times. There was a blatant disregard for conflicts of interest, ethics, integrity and the sanctity of taxpayer dollars. It is one thing, maybe, to do something once or twice, like, "Okay, we made a mistake," but to say, "Oh, we did it once or twice and we got away with it. Let us just keep going and see how far we can get with this," and then do it more than 180 times is just unreal.

● (1800)

What we have now is the Liberal government, not only defying an order of this House to produce those required documents and turn them over to the RCMP but now obstructing justice by refusing to co-operate with that RCMP investigation. The Liberals are deliberately trying to distract and delay by wanting to send this to committee, wasting more time and more energy instead of giving Canadians the transparency they deserve right now by tabling those documents.

As I said when I spoke to this previously, when my home is robbed, I call the police. I do not ask my neighbours to get together and form a committee to discuss that robbery. That is what Canadians are asking for. The Liberals have robbed Canadians of their tax dollars, and Canadians are asking to call the police for an investigation into the misappropriation and mishandling of their tax dollars. The scale of this corruption is just disgusting, and Canadians are certainly outraged about how the Liberals are taking advantage of their position yet again. It is a story we have heard over and over from the current Liberal government, in particular, of enriching Liberals' friends and the government's insiders.

This Prime Minister has taken scandals, conflicts of interest and abuse of taxpayer money to new heights like no prime minister before. Insiders, bureaucrats and special interest groups have become fabulously wealthy under the current Liberal government, while Canadians are struggling every single day just to put food on the table, put fuel in their car, heat their homes and try to buy that first home. There has been \$54 million for arrive scam, \$237 million to a former Liberal MP for unused ventilators, \$150 million to SNC-Lavalin for unused field hospitals and \$12 million for Loblaws to buy new fridges and freezers despite record profits for that retailer.

I am not given enough time to go through every single scandal that the Liberals have endured in their nine years in government. However, I think my colleagues would really like to hear some of the greatest hits. This would make a best-selling K-TEL album. I may be dating myself with K-TEL, but *Hit Express* was one of the best ones ever, so I am going to give my colleagues my version of *Hit Express*.

First, we had the Aga Khan scandal. Canada's Ethics Commissioner ruled that the Prime Minister had indeed broken the conflict of interest rules, accepting vacations and gifts and flights from the Aga Khan in 2016. It was the first time in our history that a prime minister had been found to have committed such a transgression. He is the only Prime Minister to be found guilty of fraud and the Prime Minister gave himself consent to break that law that is in the Criminal Code.

Now, we will move to the SNC-Lavalin affair. Former justice minister, Jody Wilson-Raybould, accused her own government and its officials of inappropriately pressuring her to make a decision on the SNC-Lavalin affair to avoid a corruption trial. That affair led to the resignation of the Prime Minister's top aide, Gerald Butts; the minister herself, Ms. Wilson-Raybould; and Michael Wernick, the head of the federal bureaucracy at that time. Former public works minister, Jane Philpott, quit, citing her loss of confidence in the Prime Minister, and that the Prime Minister did indeed politically interfere with his own justice minister to try and save his friends at SNC-Lavalin.

Then, once again, when Canadians were at their most anxious and most stressed in the midst of a pandemic, the Prime Minister found yet another opportunity to try to enrich his friends. When Canadians were struggling, businesses were closing and kids were not in school, the Prime Minister, instead of helping Canadians, found a way to help his friends with the WE Charity scandal, which had previously paid nearly half a million dollars to his close family friends to appear at their events, despite claims to the contrary. However, the Liberals continued to double down with WE, trying to give the charity tens of millions of Canadian taxpayer dollars to run some programs through the pandemic. The Liberals defied the order once again in Parliament and blocked key players at WE from testifying at the ethics committee.

We will go back a bit further to an illegal casino magnate. I don't want people to forget about these, so I want to bring back some blasts from the past. In 2016 and 2017, the Prime Minister participated in fundraising events in Toronto and Vancouver that featured wealthy entrepreneurs. The architect of a heavily armed illegal casino operation in Markham twice had FaceTime calls with the Prime Minister and, surprise, he also has ties to the Chinese Communist Party. Also at those meetings was a Chinese billionaire and member of the Chinese people consultative conference, who made a \$1-million donation to the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, which was reported in *The Globe and Mail*.

● (1805)

In 2016, one of several additional scandals, all the way back when one of the Prime Minister's first scandals with a newly elected government, surrounded his attendance in the United States at pay-for-play fundraisers featuring billionaires with connections to the communist regime in China. Perhaps the most concerning is that the Liberal government openly ignored warnings from the House of Commons about attempts by communist Beijing to swing the results of two federal by-elections.

In early 2023, most of the board of directors resigned from the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation in light of a \$200,000 donation from political strategists and a billionaire with connections, once again, to the Communist regime in China. The foundation misled Canadians when it said the controversial donation made by two Chinese businessmen qualified as a Canadian donation. However, not surprisingly, emails revealed that the foundation corresponded with the China Cultural Industry Association, an arm of the Communist Party in Beijing. They contain the name that should be listed on the tax receipts for the donation, and where they were to be sent.

I do not know who does the oversight with the Liberal government; perhaps there is no oversight; that is obvious with the number of scandals there have been, including the one involving Jaspal Atwal. Photographs surfaced of Mr. Atwal posing with Canadian officials, and he obtained a travel visa and secured invitations to formal events with the Prime Minister on the official tour to India.

The Liberal research bureau, a taxpayer-funded office, paid \$75,000 in public funds to Data Sciences, a company owned by Tom Pitfield, a Liberal strategist who ran the last two digital election campaigns for the Prime Minister and who is a childhood friend of the Prime Minister.

Who could forget the arrive scam app? It is just another case of the government's spending way more money on something that would have taken a reasonable amount of time and a reasonable amount of money to develop. However, for the glitchy, often-criticized mobile app that was an absolute disaster and mandatory for Canadians during COVID-19, the initial budget was \$80,000.

The app ended up costing, from what we know, and it could be way more, at least \$60 million. The ridiculous thing is that the company that was asked to build the app, GC Strategies, had only two employees and did no IT service whatsoever, yet when the bills kept coming in to the government, and the bill kept getting higher and higher, no one said a thing. The government just kept paying the bills.

I am sure the folks at GC Strategies wondered how far they could push it, how many times they could go to the well before they got their fingers tapped a little bit. Apparently they could go 60 million times before anyone within the Liberal government and the bureaucracy said, "We started at \$80,000; we are now at \$60 million. Did we miss a zero somewhere, or is this legitimate?" Obviously it was not legitimate. Canadians still have not gotten their money back.

That was a regular occurrence with the government, as cabinet ministers have handed out sole-source contracts to friends and family. The international trade minister spent \$20,000 in media training for a close friend and staffer inside the office of the housing minister, who also paid \$93,000 in constituency funds to his sister.

Liberals also awarded nearly \$100 million in contracts to their good friends at McKinsey & Company, flouting procurement rules along the way. The report sparked serious concerns about cronyism in the government's outsourcing of its contracts. McKinsey management has long-standing and deep ties to the Liberal government.

McKinsey employed Dominic Barton as its global managing director from 2009 until his appointment as ambassador to China in 2019. Of 28 competitive bids, six appear to have been designed

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specifically with McKinsey in mind, based on the job description. This was a way for the Liberals to justify awarding the contracts to McKinsey. They had sourced them through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, which was also concerned about McKinsey's growing influence on their policy, without any public knowledge.

● (1810)

When the Liberals named the Ethics Commissioner's interim successor, they went with Martine Richard. She was a veteran lawyer in the commissioner's office, but she also happened to be the sister-in-law of the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

We now have the story of two Randys. There is a minister from Alberta. I honestly do not know how the minister goes back to his riding in Edmonton, looks his constituents in the face and says there are two Randys, but he is not the Randy they are looking for. We know he is misleading his constituents and Canadians.

There are not two Randys. The emails prove it. I would implore the Liberal minister from Edmonton to just come clean. It was his own company. He was still a shareholder and still had decision-making power when the company was getting government contracts during the pandemic. I hope he goes home to his riding and comes clean with his own constituents.

We now have Tom Clark. The Liberal-NDP government decided to purchase a \$9-million luxury condo on Billionaires' Row in New York. Just this week, Politico reported that Tom Clark was encouraging the government to purchase this new condo because his living standards in Manhattan were just unlivable. He first said he knew nothing about this purchase. I cannot imagine the squalor that Tom Clark was living with in Manhattan, when we have 1,400 homeless encampments just in Ontario.

Worse still, the decision to purchase this condo was only made after the Prime Minister visited Tom Clark in New York City; soon after, Global Affairs Canada decided to make this purchase on Billionaires' Row. Clearly, the Prime Minister takes very good care of his friends in their times of need, with an unlimited credit card backed by the taxpayer.

We had the clam scam. A number of these scandals have occurred.

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We now have a new one that I am not even sure many of my colleagues are aware of. The CRA was duped out of \$40 million. In the summer of 2023, a Canadian taxpayer logged on to his CRA account and falsely amended his tax returns; the CRA paid out \$40 million in fake tax returns. The worst part is that it was not the CRA that made the discovery that it was inadvertently paying out \$40 million. It was CIBC, the taxpayer's bank, that raised the alarm. It was odd that this one person was getting \$40 million from the CRA. How lax are the accountability and the metrics within the government if \$40 million just goes missing without anybody blinking an eye?

I wish I could say all this is surprising, but it just seems to be a regular occurrence with the government. We go on and on with these scandals. The truth is that these are not oversights or missteps. This is a habit. When we have a couple of mistakes, I think we can overlook them somewhat, but this is now tens of millions of dollars of taxpayer money. The Liberals are lining the pockets of their friends, Liberal insiders and people within the party.

Canadians have simply had enough. Canadians deserve to see the documents that show exactly how deep this rot goes. The Liberal government is blocking the transparency that Canadians deserve and that all members in the House, who were elected to represent our constituents, also deserve. I would encourage the Liberal government to honour the privilege of the House because that is the privilege of every single Canadian who sent us here.

• (1815)

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our colleague across the way is recounting many incidents, but when we ask his leader to get a security clearance, he dodges the question. What is he hiding? Is there a scandal in the making or a scandal to develop? Why does he not want to get a security clearance? What is so difficult about doing that? It is to protect Canadians.

The member is trying to preach to us, but his own leader does not want to get the security clearance so that we can get to the bottom of this and figure out what is happening with foreign interference. What does the member have to say about that?

• (1820)

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting to see what lengths the Liberal Party will go to try to deflect and distract from the scandals that are rotting on their side. The Prime Minister, who was—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I do want to remind members, and some of them have been here for quite some time, that if they have questions and comments, to please wait until the appropriate time. I have not recognized the hon. parliamentary secretary, so he should wait.

The hon. member for Foothills.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, it is good to see the energy from my Manitoba colleague on the Liberal side.

However, the Prime Minister was at the foreign interference inquest, and he claimed that he knows the names of members of Parliament, past and present, who wittingly or unwittingly co-operated

with foreign entities and foreign jurisdictions. The Prime Minister has the authority to name those members of Parliament. I would encourage the Prime Minister, and I would encourage the Liberal member to tell the Prime Minister, if indeed he has proof and evidence of members of Parliament, of people in the House, who, wittingly or unwittingly, aided a foreign entity or foreign jurisdiction and influenced Canadian elections, he should table those names.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the foundation format itself. We are talking here about a foundation that seems to have engaged in wrongdoing. We are asking the government for documents and the government is refusing to comply, which is why the question of privilege was raised.

When the Liberal government created 15 or so foundations in the late 1990s, the then auditor general, Sheila Fraser, quickly issued a scathing report. In this report, she urged caution, because a lot of taxpayer money was being paid out without proper oversight. The format itself was problematic.

Would it not be better to abolish these foundations so as to prevent this kind of problem from happening again?

[*English*]

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, my colleague from the Bloc has a good point.

Any legislation tabled by the NDP-Liberal government in its nine years develops a new department, a new level of bureaucracy, a new committee or a new board of directors. That is why we have seen the public service balloon by 50% under the government, and it is clear that, by developing all these new departments and all these new bureaucracies, the government is finding new ways to funnel money to the Liberals' friends and insiders.

We talk about ad scam. Ad scam helped bring down the previous Liberal government, and that was \$40 million. We are talking about \$400 million. That is the level of scandal, and I find it frustrating that, yet again, we do not have anyone in the press gallery. They do not seem to be paying attention to the level of this scandal. It deserves their attention.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, since the subject of foreign interference was already broached, I want to challenge my friend from Foothills on this point. I serve on the public safety committee. I have had the chance to directly question the current director of CSIS. Former directors of CSIS, former executives of CSIS and, in fact, every major person of note who is part of our national security and intelligence community say, without equivocation, that there is no justifiable reason for the Leader of the Opposition to continue not getting the security clearance.

This is not about naming names. It is about actions. They have all said it is about actions that a leader can take within their caucus, so again, I would like to challenge my friend. Does he think he knows better than current members of CSIS? Does his leader know better than current members of CSIS? I would challenge him to make that claim here on the floor of the House of Commons.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague from the NDP, but I have to say I am disappointed in that this discussion is about a level of scandal and taxpayer dollar abuse unlike any we have ever seen before, and he did not ask a question about that. He is asking a question about foreign interference. The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition's chief of staff have been given briefs on the foreign interference issue. I guess this just shows that, despite their ripping up of the agreement, the same old marriage stands and the Liberal-NDP coalition is as strong as ever.

• (1825)

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Foothills for his speech. The House has been seized with this issue for almost a month now, and it could end tonight if the Liberals would just produce the documents. What is concerning is the pressing issues that we are not dealing with. For example, my colleague from Foothills knows that the carbon tax issue for my riding of York—Simcoe is that we are not eligible for the rural top-up. We know the government loves to divide and it is dividing Canadians with the carbon tax based on geography. We are also not dealing with Liberal-appointed senators who are interfering with my bill, C-280, financial protection for fresh fruit and vegetable growers right across Canada. I know the member for Winnipeg North knows how important this bill is.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on that.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and the amazing work that he does in his riding, the soup-and-salad bowl of Canada. He brings up an excellent point. Just this week, I had a conversation with a potato farmer from P.E.I. who was in tears over the Liberals destroying his family farm as a result of the carbon tax and decisions that are making farming that much more difficult. I had a conversation today with another farmer from B.C., who organized an Ugly Potato Day where he had tens of thousands of people line up for hours in the pouring rain just to collect some misshapen potatoes, turnips, carrots and other vegetables because they cannot afford to put food on the table. These are the issues the House of Commons should be dealing with: the fact that we have two million Canadians lining up at a food bank in one month alone, food insecurity is up 111% , and our farmers at their very wits' end because of the carbon tax is making them uncompetitive and unsustainable.

The debate on this motion could end today if the Liberals would just swallow their pride, table the documents and let Canadians make their decision on the level of scandalousness in those documents.

**Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have a tremendous amount of respect for my colleague across the way, and I know that one of the things he respects, as a former journalist, is the citation of sources. I have listened intently to him reference, as has the Leader of the Opposition during debate in this

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chamber over the course of the past few weeks, 36% as an increase in food inflation costs in Canada versus the United States.

I am going to be a good educator and cite my source, the OECD, [oecd.org](http://oecd.org), which members can go to. The graph says that not only has food price inflation in Canada decreased from August 2024 to September 2024, whereas it has increased in the United States, but both countries' food inflation rates fall within two percentage points of one another.

My question for my hon. colleague across the way is very simple: Can he cite where he is sourcing the number 36% food inflation from?

**Mr. John Barlow:** Madam Speaker, I sure can.

The University of Dalhousie and the “food professor”, Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, and other universities did a study that measured food inflation that compared Canada and the United States. They found that for wholesale food prices in Canada, food inflation is 36% higher in Canada than it is in the United States. The member can look at the graph that is there; I would be happy to share it. The one factor making the difference is when the carbon tax increases every April, there is another spike in that difference between Canada and the United States in food inflation. One of the factors is that we have a carbon tax in Canada, and the United States does not.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Winnipeg South Centre for that question to my colleague from Foothills, because he just got a lesson handed to him.

I rise to add my voice to the important discussion we are having to hold the Liberal government to account for its refusal to provide documents in response to a House order. In particular, with this subamendment, we want to ensure that reasonable time is given to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to hear from witnesses and report back to the House. That debate, as we all know, has been a long one. However, the substance of the motion, amendments and subamendments matters because of the crucial issue we are dealing with: accountability in handling public funds, specifically those allocated to Sustainable Development Technology Canada, or SDTC, as it is known in the House. It is perhaps better known to Canadians as the Liberal green slush fund.

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The aim of this debate, and the reason we must continue our efforts to hold the Liberal government to account, is transparency. It is to obtain files, agreements, conflict of interest declarations and minutes of SDTC's board and project review committee. This is not an unreasonable request. Ensuring that public funds are managed with the highest standards of integrity is the role of all of us in this place.

The Speaker ruled that the Liberals violated a House order to turn over evidence to the police for a criminal investigation into the \$400-million Liberal scandal. However, compliance with this order has been far from acceptable. Many government entities either failed to produce the documents required or submitted versions so heavily redacted that they are practically useless. The Liberals' refusal to table these documents has left Parliament paralyzed, hindering our ability to do the work we were elected to do. I will have more to say on that later. For right now, at issue is the question of why the Liberals have refused to comply with the binding House order to produce documents related to SDTC.

We know that the Auditor General conducted a thorough investigation into SDTC's governance after a whistle-blower came forward. She determined that these complaints were rooted in serious issues within SDTC, and her investigation shockingly uncovered, as many of my colleagues have said, nearly 400 million dollars' worth of contracts that were inappropriately awarded by the board of directors, all of whom had multiple conflicts of interest.

The mishandling of SDTC, or the green slush fund, was stark. This program was designed to support innovation in sustainable technologies. Originally established in 2001, it operated with few issues under both Liberal and Conservative governments, that is until the Prime Minister took office.

The Auditor General released a damning report earlier this year revealing that \$123 million had been misappropriated by the board of SDTC. The report outlined serious governance failures, including 90 instances where conflict of interest policies were not followed. It allowed \$76 million to be spent on projects connected to friends of the Liberals who sat on the board, \$59 million to be awarded to projects that were not eligible for funding and \$12 million to be spent on projects that were conflicts of interest and were straight up ineligible for the funding. This represents a real betrayal, the betrayal of public trust. It represents a failure of effective oversight. It represents a culture of corruption that has troublingly flourished under the Liberal government.

I, like so many Canadians, am tired of watching the Liberal government drift from scandal to scandal, as just outlined by my colleague from Foothills, wasting millions of taxpayers' dollars along the way. This is not to mention refusing to be completely transparent when the Liberals are finally caught and held to account.

● (1830)

We were reminded of the lack of transparency and forthrightness at the public accounts committee just the other day, when the former Liberal minister overseeing SDTC made little effort to meaningfully answer even the simplest of questions. Throughout his testimony, Navdeep Bains said 16 times that he could not recall, did not know or did not receive details about the activities of SDTC, but he was only the minister in charge. With so little attention given

by the minister overseeing the fund, it is almost no wonder that so much mismanagement and so many conflicts of interest have been identified.

Despite what we have heard from some Liberal members, I want to emphasize that pushing for transparency is not an attack on privacy or due process. Instead, it is a call for accountability. Adding the Privacy Commissioner and other key figures as witnesses in this investigation is an important way to ensure a fair and thorough review.

Former minister Bains, choosing to ignore several warnings about her conflicts of interest, proceeded with the appointment of Annette Verschuren as SDTC chair after removing the previous chair. Under the watch of this Liberal appointee, conflicts of interest were tolerated and managed by the board. For example, board members would grant SDTC funding to companies in which they held stock or positions. Former minister Bains appointed five more board members, who engaged in similar behaviour by approving funding to companies in which they held ownership or seats on the board. Meanwhile, officials from the Department of Industry, Science and Economic Development sat on the board as observers and witnessed 96 conflicts of interest but did not intervene.

In January 2021, former minister Bains was replaced by the current minister, and in November 2022, whistle-blowers began raising internal concerns with the Auditor General about the unethical practices of SDTC. In February of last year, the Privy Council was briefed by whistle-blowers and two independent reports were commissioned. Then, later in September 2023, the allegations became public. However, it took the industry minister a month to move to suspend funding to the organization.

An Auditor General investigation followed, and her investigation made it abundantly clear that the failures uncovered by SDTC lie squarely at the feet of the former Liberal minister of industry, who failed to ensure proper oversight or governance. Instead, he turned a blind eye when it was revealed that public money was being funnelled to Liberal insiders, which brings us to today.

The Liberals continue to cover up this scandal by not tabling the requested documents on SDTC. It is notable that the Privacy Commissioner, unlike many other officials, followed the House's direction and produced unredacted documents. This is significant because the Privacy Commissioner understands the balance between transparency and privacy rights better than perhaps any official. He is someone who understands the stakes and the intricacies involved, and he found it reasonable to release unredacted documents. However, we are continually met with the Liberal government's objections to these disclosures, which its members claim could infringe on privacy rights or cause other harms, not to mention the harms they are already causing. If the Privacy Commissioner, the foremost expert on such matters, deems it acceptable to release these documents, it strikes me as fair to question the sincerity of these objections.

Let us return for a moment to the Auditor General's findings, which are very serious and concerning. Her office randomly received a subset of SDTC's contracts and discovered troubling patterns in the majority of them. Her findings indicate that a significant portion of the funds managed by SDTC may have been misallocated through conflicts of interest, mismanagement or perhaps even misconduct. Canadians have a right to know if their tax dollars are being spent appropriately and effectively.

The government's reluctance to provide the full unredacted documents requested by the House should give us all pause. By bringing forward witnesses, including the Privacy Commissioner, the RCMP commissioner and key members of SDTC, we can deliver the further transparency that Canadians deserve.

• (1835)

The fact is that Liberal appointees gave nearly 400 million tax dollars to their own companies, which involved 186 conflicts of interest. That is nearly \$400 million being wasted, or stolen, while so many of our fellow Canadians cannot afford the cost of groceries, gas and home heating.

I want to dwell on this point for a moment. The House continues to be paralyzed at a time when Canadians need real results. They need action on measures to improve affordability, whether we are talking about food, fuel or housing, and action on measures to get tough on crime. The NDP-Liberals are trying to create a false choice. They are telling Canadians that they should not be held to account for \$400 million of wasted or stolen tax dollars. They are telling Canadians that Parliament can only return to other business by letting these troubling details fall by the wayside. That is the false choice.

Parliament could return to other important business immediately if the Liberal government were to simply provide the documents it has been ordered to provide. It is that simple. It can just end the cover-up and hand over the evidence to the police so Parliament can get back to work for Canadians. The government needs to end the cover-up and let us talk about affordability for Canadian families.

After nine years of the Liberal government, life costs more and work does not pay. The Liberal carbon tax has driven up the cost of everything. Families were left to pay \$700 more for food this year than they paid in 2023, forcing them to eat less, skip meals, buy

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less food or buy less healthy food just to make ends meet. The government needs to end the cover-up and let us discuss what happens when we tax the farmer who makes the food, and the trucker who ships the food, with a carbon tax. Spoiler alert, we end up taxing the Canadians who have to buy the food.

The Canadian Trucking Alliance says that the Liberal carbon tax added \$2 billion to trucking costs this year, a number that will rise to \$4 billion by 2030. However, these figures only account for long-haul trucking. The total cost to the trucking industry is likely significantly higher, and these higher costs are inevitably passed on to consumers.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1840)

[*English*]

### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, here in the House of Commons, Conservatives have repeatedly made our priorities clear. We stand for the common sense of the common people. We stand for the common good. We defend the interests of everyday, extraordinary Canadians, who work hard and play by the rules. They are people who expect their tax dollars to be treated with respect and who expect a government to uphold the idea of a common citizenship aimed at securing the common good together, rather than elites who try to divide us.

The sad reality is that, for nine years, we have been governed by a radical NDP-Liberal coalition that has sought to advance the interests of well-connected insider elites at the expense of the common people. That is no more evident than in the case of the government's cozy relationship with the elite insider consultants at McKinsey.

I am following up tonight on a question I asked about the government's close relationship with McKinsey and work done by the Auditor General on that. This work revealed that, in about 200 million dollars' worth of contracts, most did not properly follow the rules. The government was clearly making efforts to support McKinsey.

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How this came about was that Dominic Barton, who is closely associated with the Prime Minister and people in his inner circle, was given the role of senior economic adviser to the government. In the context of that role, he had access to the Prime Minister to provide advice and so on. At the time, he was the managing partner for McKinsey. At the same time, consultants at McKinsey who were working under him were selling to the government.

Consultants were able to take advantage of this relationship to sell management consulting contracts to the government. That preferential relationship really benefited McKinsey. It allowed McKinsey to do more business under the Liberals, by massive amounts, than it ever had before. From the beginning, the government was serving the interests of well-connected, elite insiders. It has come to do so more over time.

What did Canadians get for these hundreds of millions of dollars that were sent to McKinsey, which the Auditor General said did not follow the rules? We received advice that could and should have been offered from within the public service.

Meanwhile, who are these consultants at McKinsey, the people the Liberals have chosen to be preferred beneficiaries of these advice contracts in government? McKinsey has a sordid record of involvement in scandal all over the world. Most notably, McKinsey advised Purdue Pharma on how to supercharge sales of opioids and, effectively, supercharge the opioid crisis.

This is another example, frankly, of how insider elites were able to cash in at the expense of common people. Many everyday people were prescribed opioids as a result of the false overpromotion of these products by Purdue, which was aided by McKinsey. In fact, they were disproportionately working Canadians; maybe because of physical labour, they were more likely to have workplace-related physical pain. This led to addiction, resulting in so much pain and suffering, which continues today.

The elite insiders at Purdue and at McKinsey were able to cash in, and they are still benefiting from government policy. Purdue produces Dilaudid for government-funded so-called safe supply programs, and McKinsey has benefited greatly from contracts with the government.

Why is the government so bent on supporting McKinsey instead of advancing the interests of the common people? It is a real shame.

• (1845)

**Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan talks about common sense. My mother used to say that common sense is not all that common, and every time I hear him speak, I realize how right my mother was.

Our government takes its responsibility as stewards of the public purse very seriously, and we are committed to making sure that government spending stands up to the highest levels of scrutiny. We welcome and accept the findings and recommendations of the Auditor General with regard to her most recent report on the procurement of professional services. The findings are very much in line with several previous internal and external reviews.

Let me remind the member across the way that independent audits of McKinsey found no evidence of political interference. The joint Treasury Board and Public Services and Procurement Canada review, however, reinforced that there are always opportunities to further improve and strengthen the Government of Canada's procurement practices, and that is exactly what we have done.

PSPC is the federal government's central purchasing agent and is committed to conducting procurements in an open, fair and transparent manner. Of course, the Government of Canada already has solid regulations, procedures and guidelines in place to make sure that happens in every department. However, we are always looking for ways to continuously improve our processes, to make them more rigorous and to ensure decisions and justifications are properly documented along the way.

To that end, PSPC has already instituted several changes. These include introducing a mandatory requirement for all contracting authorities to retain all and any documents related to contractual decisions for professional services. They also include changing how the department administers non-competitive national master standing offers by ensuring justifications are on file and that a challenge function occurs. In addition, the department has created a new position of chief, contract quality assurance and records compliance. This will help to ensure that critical elements of decision-making throughout the procurement process are properly documented, that guidelines and tools are put in place and that quality is being actively monitored. These efforts are consistent with PSPC's commitment to continuously improving government procurement practices more broadly, and I can say that we will keep looking for ways to strengthen the integrity of government procurement.

Regarding the Auditor General's June 2024 report, we accept her recommendation to further strengthen measures to appropriately report and monitor potential conflicts of interest. The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat now has new mandatory procedures that provide an additional check and balance for managers to reinforce their responsibilities and accountabilities when undertaking professional services procurement activities. As a department that has a proactive and rigorous process to identify conflicts of interest in the procurement process, PSPC is supporting the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat in the implementation of its new mandatory procedures.

I want to thank the Auditor General and her team for undertaking this review and for their findings and valuable recommendations. They will help us continue to improve our processes and ultimately strengthen the integrity of federal procurement and professional services. Our government will always do all that is possible to ensure the best value for Canadian taxpayers with all government procurements.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (1850)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, my colleague across the way began by telling us that his mother used to say common sense is not that common anymore. I want to assure the member's mother and all Canadians that we will soon be restoring common-sense leadership in this country. Right now, if we listen to the announcements coming from the government, we would think common sense has gone out of fashion, but after the next election, we will have a government that once again listens to the common sense of the common people.

What we hear from the government to defend the outrageous misuse of taxpayer dollars that we have seen throughout government contracting is that we can always do better or “better is always possible”, as the Prime Minister used to say. The fact is that things have gotten so much worse in the last nine years and better is indeed possible. It is necessary and it is what Canadians are demanding.

Will the member agree that it has been nine years of failure and we need a new common-sense government that will fix these challenges?

**Mr. James Maloney:** Madam Speaker, since we are determined to talk about family tonight, I will remind the member that his aunt not only lives in my riding but has my sign on her lawn and is a big supporter of mine. She will not agree with anything he just said, just to be perfectly clear, but I will leave that there.

The government takes its responsibility with respect to procurement very seriously. The government takes its responsibility to spend taxpayer dollars responsibly very seriously. The allegation made by the member opposite is utter rhetoric, which comes as no great surprise. I think I am accurate in saying that the member generates more eye-rolling on his own side of the House than he does on this side most days, but I want to thank him for his passion and for bringing this issue to the attention of the House again tonight.

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am rising to follow up on an immigration question I had asked the minister just a few weeks ago. I want to quote directly from the immigration levels plan that was tabled. It states on page 8, “Canada is in the midst of a housing crisis – highlighted by the insufficient supply of rental units and family homes. In this context, any population growth, which generally necessitates a corresponding increase in housing supply, puts additional strain on the overall supply and affordability of housing.” It goes on to cite how deep the housing crisis has become over the last few years.

It is an interesting quotation because it is the first time I have heard the government publicly admit that it has created a housing crisis in this country through its own policies. In fact, if we go back to October 2015, the month before the Prime Minister took power, people only needed 39% of the median pre-tax household income to afford the cost of home ownership, to be able to purchase a home. Now it is almost 60%. CMHC reported that housing starts continue to decline and the six-month trend reveals a 1.9% decrease from 246,972 units in August to 243,759 units in September. Housing starts are down 15% year to year.

Why did I talk about housing when I am talking about immigration? It is because two years ago, in a briefing note prepared by IR-CC officials to the Minister of Immigration, they warned him that repeat record-high immigration levels in previous target plans would lead to a housing crunch. It would lead to a housing crisis.

I have a simple question for the parliamentary secretary. Why did the immigration minister ignore those warnings from officials in 2022 and why did it take him two full years before he acted to reduce immigration levels from their record highs?

**Mr. Paul Chiang (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member's question gives me an opportunity to talk about how our immigration plan is adapting to the needs of our economy and communities.

We are listening to Canadians and taking action, as we have done since we formed government in 2015. For the first time, our levels plan sets targets for temporary residents, which include international students and temporary foreign workers, as well as for permanent residents. This approach to welcoming newcomers will help preserve the integrity of our immigration system while responding to community needs and positioning newcomers for success by having adequate resources to support them.

Immigration is essential for our economy and accounts for nearly all of Canada's labour force growth. Following the pandemic, we brought in temporary measures when we faced a severe labour shortage. The plan worked by helping our economy navigate a challenging period and recover more quickly, and prevented a recession. Our levels plan reaffirms our commitment to reducing temporary residence volumes to 5% of Canada's population by the end of 2026.

While we also reduce our permanent residence target, we will increase our focus on attracting the skilled workers we need to build new homes and provide patient care. We remain committed to reuniting families and are continuing our humanitarian tradition of resettling refugees. These lower targets for both temporary and permanent residents are expected to reduce the housing supply gap by roughly 670,000 units by the end of 2027.

On that side of the House, the leader of the official opposition speaks out of both sides of his mouth. Two years ago, during the pandemic, he said he would “remove gatekeepers to allow faster immigration”. Just this year, he went to a community event and said we need to “end the deportations”. He said, “We have a worker shortage in Canada. We have a demographic problem. Our population is too old...[and] we need these workers in our country.” A few months later, he went to a different community and said the opposite. He promises different things to different people. Canadians cannot trust a word he says.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

On this side of the House, we will always listen to Canadians all across the country. We are aware of the existing challenges and we are acting to address Canada's evolving needs. Our immigration plan will support our economy while responding to the pressures faced by families and communities.

● (1855)

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, the Liberal government has destroyed Canada's immigration system. I want to draw the parliamentary secretary's attention to the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, which just completed a survey of 20,000 newcomers and immigrants. It found that one in four newcomers are planning to leave Canada. The likeliest of those newcomers to leave are the economic class immigrants. The top reason for leaving is housing. People cannot find housing in this country, so they are going to leave. The top three urban centres they are going to be leaving are Toronto, Brampton and Vancouver.

Now that Canadians and newcomers are suffering from the Liberal-made housing crisis, what is the government's plan going to be? Can we expect further desperate, chaotic flip-flops?

**Mr. Paul Chiang:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for raising this issue, though I do take issue with his tone.

The government is addressing the challenges facing Canadians through our latest immigration levels plan. For the first time, it sets targets for temporary residents, as well as permanent residents. The reality is that the Leader of the Opposition has no plan for the future of Canada, and his made-up math formula on immigration just is not adding up. The only plan he has is to cut, cut and cut.

While the Conservative Party focuses on slogans, Liberals will remain focused on building a stronger, more sustainable immigration system that works for everyone. We are supporting newcomers' immigration and giving them a fair shot in Canada.

## CARBON PRICING

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we know that the cost of living in Canada has never been higher. Life has become unaffordable for far too many Canadians, and this historic cost of living crisis is not by chance. It is a direct result of the NDP-Liberal government's inflationary taxes and reckless spending.

The Liberals' costly and punishing carbon tax is significantly adding to the cost of gas, groceries, home heating and all basic necessities. Their failed carbon tax is pushing Canadians to the brink. The NDP-Liberals are still hell-bent on making things worse for Canadians. The NDP-Liberals' plan to quadruple the carbon tax by 2030 is only going to further drive the cost of everything up.

While the Liberals dive deeper and deeper into the pockets of hard-working Canadians, they have the audacity to stand in this place and tell Canadians over and over again that they are making them richer with the carbon tax. This is simply not true and Canadians know that this is not true. Parents who are skipping meals or who are lined up at food banks know that it is not true. Canadians who are living at unsafe or uncomfortable temperatures to save on energy costs know that it is not true. Seniors who are reportedly going without medicine to keep their heat on certainly know that it is not true.

No matter how many times the NDP-Liberals tell Canadians they are putting more money in their pockets, Canadians know the realities of the bills that they are facing. The NDP-Liberals may want to turn a blind eye to the suffering they are causing Canadians, but the numbers will not let them. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has once again confirmed that the NDP-Liberal carbon tax is impoverishing Canadians. The PBO's latest report on the carbon tax proves this and it proves it using the NDP-Liberals' own numbers.

Of course, we all recall that these were the numbers that they desperately tried to hide. The NDP-Liberals literally tried to silence the Parliamentary Budget Officer from exposing the truth about the impact of their carbon tax with a gag order. That is the length the Prime Minister is willing to go to in his effort to hide the fact that his carbon tax is nothing more than an expensive scam.

Despite what the NDP-Liberal government members say, the indisputable truth is that the carbon tax is making most Canadians poorer. The PBO has confirmed that Canadians will suffer a net cost, and that Canadians are paying more in the carbon tax than they will ever get back in rebates. In Saskatchewan, that is about \$894 more for the average person.

It is absolutely shameful that Canadian families who are already struggling to make ends meet are facing additional financial pressures because of the costly coalition. In the midst of an ongoing affordability crisis, the NDP-Liberals hiked their carbon tax by 23% last spring, and they remain hell-bent on quadrupling it. Canadians are desperate for some relief.

The reality is Canadians need help now. The Liberals and their NDP partners just do not get it. Conservatives would restore the Canadian promise that hard work is rewarded so that families do not have to decide between keeping a roof over their heads or putting food on the table. It is time for a carbon tax election so that common-sense Conservatives can offer Canadians some much-needed relief.

● (1900)

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is nice to be here in adjournment debate. I would like to thank my friend and colleague from the Conservative Party, with whom I have co-hosted events here on the Hill. I would like to thank her for her work for parents, and I enjoy the opportunity to talk about poverty elimination measures because it is a policy topic I am interested in personally.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I am going to focus my responses through two poverty elimination experts, economists from my colleague's province of Saskatchewan. The first is Brett Dolter, who is an assistant professor in the department of economics at the University of Regina. He said, in a recent article:

Even if you overlook the modelling omissions in the PBO report, their results still actually show that the 20 per cent of households with the lowest incomes get an average of \$720 extra back...and the next 20 per cent of households still get \$412 extra back....

What he is trying to indicate is that rebates are higher than the carbon tax for all poor folks in Saskatchewan. People on a lower income receive a lot more back through the Canada carbon rebate than they pay, and that is well documented in Saskatchewan by people who are working with folks who visit food banks. Another well-known Saskatchewan-based economics professor said that the misleading information has led to the belief that most Saskatchewan residents pay more, which is false.

In addition to the article I mentioned, I read an anecdote from Alan Holman, a man from Saskatoon who is on disability assistance. He says that without the Canada carbon rebate, he would have to scale back on spending for his everyday needs. He says that the Canada carbon rebate that he receives four times a year from the federal government is crucial for his household budget.

Also from Regina is Peter Gilmer, who is an advocate with the Anti-Poverty Ministry in Regina. He says that people on low income rely on the rebates to pay for the essentials. He also says, "For the vast majority of low-income people, whether they're on income security programs or earn low wages, they're actually better off in terms of the bottom line when receiving the rebate and paying [the carbon levy]."

Time and time again, members from the Conservative Party stand up in the House and talk about the hunger report from Food Banks Canada. The aforementioned event that my colleague and I have co-hosted here on the Hill was with Food Banks Canada. She will recall that every year, when representatives of Food Banks Canada come, they make four recommendations.

In its 108-page report this year, Food Banks Canada did not mention carbon pricing, because it knows there is no tax on groceries. Conservative members continually stand in the House to mislead Canadians to suggest that carbon pricing applies to food, but it simply does not. The Food Banks Canada hunger report would have indicated that.

If it were simply a case of removing the carbon price from food, that would be a simple fix, but there is not a carbon price on food, and actually the leading driver of higher food costs in Canada is climate change itself. If we bury our heads in the sand and pretend that climate change does not exist and is not impacting our daily lives, and if we just say it is somebody else's problem because we are a smaller country by population so other people ought to fix it first, well, I will say that in Canada I know that we all believe we are leaders.

I will finish by stating the four recommendations that Food Banks Canada has made to the federal government and to all governments across Canada: first, rebuilding Canada's social safety net; second, solving the affordability crisis; third, helping workers with

low incomes make ends meet; and fourth, addressing northern and remote food insecurity and poverty.

There are policy recommendations on all four, addressing the key issues. We have been rebuilding Canada's social safety net. One of the ways is through dental care. I just ask the member opposite, if she is going to quote Food Banks Canada, to please rely on the insight and the perspective it has shared, not on the Conservatives' own political rhetoric.

• (1905)

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, we know that the NDP-Liberal carbon tax is an expensive scam. Saskatchewanians are not receiving back more than they pay into it. We know that the Liberals have failed to meet every single one of their own environmental targets, but what they have unfortunately succeeded in doing is impoverishing Canadians.

The member on the other side says that food is not taxed, but he obviously does not understand how the supply chain works, especially when food is going into rural and remote communities. For anything that needs to be shipped by train, truck or car, there is a carbon tax on the fuel that is used for that. It is simply untrue to say that food is not taxed, let alone all other goods and services. When we are going to the grocery store, we are paying GST on diapers, for example.

I would just suggest that the member look at the facts. Carbon tax is on the whole of the supply chain, from the seed to the store.

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden:** Madam Speaker, I would like to go back to Saskatchewan resident and poverty elimination expert Mr. Gilmer, and I will again read from this article because I think it is quite informing. If the member opposite does not want to listen to Food Banks Canada, perhaps she could listen to food bank workers and poverty elimination experts from her riding, or at least from Regina.

In this case, an advocate says that politicians are disregarding the impact that the Canada carbon rebate has on household finances, particularly for lower income families. They are being "reckless and irresponsible". The article repeats that "the law to impose a carbon levy [to reduce carbon emissions] was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada" and describes Mr. Gilmer as saying, "when governments get into squabbles, it's usually those with low incomes who take the brunt."

As we have seen time and time again, the Conservatives are using lower income Canadians as a prop. They are suggesting that policies that are designed to lower our emissions are hurting lower income Canadians, when they are not. Mr. Gilmer said, "We need to make sure the rebate is in place." I could not agree more with that.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[Translation]*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Ac-

ordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:09 p.m.)

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