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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

PRIVILEGE

REFUSAL OF WITNESS TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS FROM STANDING
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the question of privilege raised by the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford on November 7.

I, too, attended the November 5 meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security at which Lauren Chen was called to testify. I have to say that, like all my colleagues from all parties, I was rather shocked and appalled to see Ms. Chen systematically refuse to answer members' questions, despite the fact that she was unanimously and formally ordered to do so. The committee was asking the witness about what I believe is an extremely serious and important issue regarding Russian interference and the disinformation campaign in Canada. Lauren Chen was named in an indictment against two employees of the Russian public broadcaster in the judicial district of New York, in the United States.

I will provide some context. Ms. Chen and her husband, Liam Donovan, own Roaming Millennial Inc., based in Pointe-Claire, Quebec. This business is cited in a 32-page indictment brought a few weeks ago, in September, by the U.S. Attorney General against two Russian employees of the RT television network. These employees are charged with making illegal payments of \$10 million to businesses owned by Quebec YouTuber Chen and her husband through a complex network of shell companies. The money went to hire very popular right-wing influencers to disseminate content and messaging reflecting the secret intentions of the Russian government to an American audience, according to the U.S. Justice Department.

Ms. Chen was summoned to appear before a committee. It took several invitations before she finally agreed to come testify. Accompanied by her lawyer, she came on November 5 and read a statement that she had sent us previously. Afterwards, she declined to answer any of the questions put to her by the committee. Ms. Chen was so obstinate in her systematic refusal to answer that she even refused to answer a very simple question that I asked. I

asked her for her first and last name. She refused to answer. I asked her for her nationality. Here again she refused to answer. Understandably, the committee members found this somewhat frustrating. We were fully prepared to ask her serious questions about her involvement in Russian disinformation campaigns in Canada, but she refused to answer.

If we recall the House of Commons' tradition and procedural rules associated with parliamentary privilege, persons testifying before a committee enjoy the same protection as members, which is to say free speech so that they can express themselves freely without fear that their words might be used against them in another proceeding. This immunity derives from section 18 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and section 4 of the Parliament of Canada Act. The courts confirmed that this immunity must extend to persons appearing before the House or one of its committees, the aim being to encourage people to communicate all information they possess in a frank and transparent manner. Otherwise, it is clear that Parliament would be unable to carry out its work effectively and unimpeded.

Thus protected, the people who testify before a parliamentary committee must answer the questions asked, save for one exception. A witness may derogate from this rule by raising an objection concerning a question asked by a member of the committee. However, if the committee finds that the question requires a response, the witness must comply and answer, failing which they may be reported to the House. If the committee reports the witness to the House, they may be accused of breach of parliamentary privilege or contempt of parliament. This is what the House decided in the case of Kristian Firth, who refused to answer questions put to him by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, and whose answers to some questions appeared to the committee to be lies. Here we are referring to the order adopted unanimously by the House of Commons on April 8.

In the Bloc Québécois's opinion, today's matter is akin to a breach of privilege or, at the very least, contempt of Parliament, since Lauren Chen refused to answer any of the committee's questions, although she was fully aware of House procedure and practice. She herself mentioned House practices in her opening speech. Thus, the Bloc Québécois believes it is important that the House seriously discuss the matter so that this type of scenario, which unfortunately appears to be increasing in frequency, does not happen again.

Privilege

However, the Bloc Québécois finds that the reason provided by Ms. Chen to justify her systematic refusal to answer might require an analysis of whether the immunity relating to freedom of speech extended to Canadian defendants applies before a body having jurisdiction in another country, in this case the United States, considering that Ms. Chen is currently being investigated in a criminal matter in that country following allegations. I am referring to *United States v. Kalashnikov et al.*, 24CR519, (S.D.N.Y. 2024).

Ms. Chen also mentioned that in her preliminary statement. She frequently referred to the possibility of invoking the fifth amendment of the United States Constitution, as is done in that country to avoid answering questions. We know that that does not apply here in Canada. What we can glean from her testimony, or at least from the little she provided as testimony, is that she was afraid that what she said before a House of Commons of Canada committee could be held against her in the United States. In that case, I think it is important to take that into account. We believe that the case should be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

• (1010)

The Speaker: I would like to thank the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

I will now recognize the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul, who also wishes to speak to the question of privilege.

[*English*]

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my comments to the question of privilege raised by the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford on November 7 concerning the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, of which I am vice-chair. I echo many of the comments made by the member of Bloc Québécois, who is also a vice-chair of the committee.

Conservatives are very concerned with the display we saw at the public safety committee on November 5 by Ms. Lauren Chen. The committee is studying the impact of Russian disinformation in Canada. All committees have heard testimony, in this study and others, that Russian interference in Canada is a very serious matter. Russia is looking to sow division and discord in Canada, and it ultimately wants Canada to fail and be weak. What is happening in the western world because of Russia is a very serious matter, and we have been studying that as a priority at the public safety committee over the last few weeks.

I found what happened on November 5 to be quite appalling and an affront to our ability to use accountability tools to hold ministers and others accountable. They are a check on power that we have as official opposition members and members of committee.

Ms. Chen was first invited to willingly come to committee to answer quite serious allegations. There is a United States Department of Justice indictment that involves her company, Tenet Media. The allegations are that her company received \$10 million from covert agents from Russia Today for the purpose of spreading Russian propaganda through her platform. It is quite a serious matter and an issue that is at the heart of what we are discussing at committee.

We invited Ms. Chen to committee, and her testimony was welcome by all parties, but she refused to come willingly. Some of the allegations against her company and against her and the covert actions she allegedly engaged in are quite shocking. She invited other influencers to speak and, as the allegations go, failed to inform them where the funding came from and of the influence that Russia Today had on her platform. All of these individuals were sharing their message under Tenet Media, which was being influenced by Russia, according to the allegations. This is a very serious matter that is topical to our study at committee.

Ms. Chen was invited but refused, so the committee unanimously agreed to summon her. When she came, and I have never been witness to this but I know it has happened at other committees, she refused to answer any questions. As the Bloc member pointed out, she asked Ms. Chen her name and she would not even answer that question, let alone important questions we had about the influence of Russia Today, which is the propaganda arm of Russia that is looking to undermine and weaken Canada, and the involvement she had in playing along with it and receiving millions of dollars to do that. These were very important questions that are of primary importance to the health of our democracy and our ability to hold wrongdoers accountable. She refused to answer them.

The NDP member and the Bloc member outlined, and I agree with their assessment, various regulations in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, 2017, on pages 1078 to 1079, which states: “Witnesses must answer all questions which the committee puts to them.” We agree with that.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that you know procedure better than anyone, other than perhaps the experts sitting at the table in front of you, whom we all rely on, but beyond that, when you are considering this question of privilege, I would ask you to consider the impact your ruling will have. Do we want to allow, as parliamentarians and committee members, a precedent to be set, which I would argue is very dangerous, for the accountability mechanisms we have as parliamentarians? If this is allowed to go ahead and Ms. Chen is not called to the bar or is not held accountable for her lack of responses, what does that say to all other witnesses? What does that say to ministers of any political stripe? What does that say to anyone invited to committee who is a bit uncomfortable or, for whatever reason, does not want to answer questions? What does that really say?

Your ruling will set down that either Parliament believes it is unacceptable and people must come to committee to answer questions or they do not have to if they do not feel like it. I would ask for you to consider what precedent this will set moving forward, because I think it will be quite impactful.

• (1015)

If Ms. Chen gets away with her bad behaviour without a clear reprimand, it will be deeply impactful and concerning for Parliament and for the ability of committees to hold wrongdoers accountable. Again, she has not been convicted of anything. She has not actually been formally charged. What we are saying, and what we are concerned with at committee, is that she took money from Russia to further their propaganda, which aims to undermine Canada and other western actors.

What she was there to talk about is very serious, and we need those answers from her. Regardless of that, if she is allowed to get away without a reprimand from Parliament, as we have seen with Kristian Firth and others, that is a very dangerous precedent to set for accountability. We would be saying, as Parliament, that it is okay if someone comes to committee and does not answer any of our questions.

The committee does incredibly important work. All the committees are seized with critical issues right now. If we have witnesses who come and do not have to answer, what are we all doing this for? What is our duty as parliamentarians at committee? What is our duty as opposition members if people can just show up and say nothing? In our rule books, we have as precedent for hundreds of years that people have to come and answer questions; she did not do that. In fact, I found that it was quite insulting to the institution at large, to parliamentarians at the table who have been duly elected by the Canadian public to fulfill their duties.

We have been appointed to committee. Our duty is to hold people accountable, to gather expert testimony, to finalize reports, to issue recommendations to Parliament, to ensure that Canada and Canadians are well aware of what is going on in these critical issues they are concerned about. Russian disinformation deeply impacts us all, just as interference from China, India, Iran and Pakistan does. This is not a nothing issue. This is a critical issue that has an impact on modern democracies and the foundations and the security of our institutions.

I would ask you to consider, Mr. Speaker, the precedent that your ruling will set. Whatever it is, it will be of paramount importance. Given that all parties support this and have supported it every step of the way, in fact, this is not a partisan issue. This has nothing to do with somebody's political leanings or even with the issue itself, although it is serious, as I have outlined. The question is this: Can people come to committee and disrespect Parliament by saying nothing? I would say no, and I hope that you agree, Mr. Speaker, after you review this and rule on this question of privilege.

Conservatives have supported this. We have been in lockstep with other parties on this. It speaks volumes that we are united on something for once. It is a very serious matter, Mr. Speaker, and I ask that you use the tools at your disposal and at Parliament's disposal to ensure that anyone who is doing this is held accountable.

To conclude on the specific matter Ms. Chen was called to committee about, as a patriotic Canadian and somebody who loves this country and is honoured to serve it in this capacity, I was quite appalled to read that indictment and to think that a fellow Canadian is taking money from a foreign government to undermine the Canadian interest. I was appalled as a parliamentarian to sit across from

Points of Order

someone who refused to answer for her own actions, who did not have the integrity to answer for what she had allegedly done. There is a lot in here that sets quite a precedent. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to consider those things holistically and, at the end of the day, consider whether our privilege as parliamentarians has been violated.

When someone is invited to a committee by all members and summoned to answer questions on something of this magnitude of importance, and even if it is any other issue, do we not have the privilege to hear answers to those questions? Is that not a centuries-old tradition? If someone is allowed not to answer, what does that say about the strength of our democracy, the committee process or our ability as duly elected parliamentarians to hold people accountable? It calls into question all of those powers.

This is a much bigger question of our democratic institutions, Mr. Speaker, and I ask that you consider that holistically and really think about the seriousness of the decision you make and the precedent it will set. Ultimately, the Conservatives believe that committees and the powers we have should be used to hold wrongdoers accountable. It is tough to say this in the House because it is a very serious allegation, but someone who may very well be a traitor to this country needs to be held accountable for not coming to committee and answering questions on those allegations. I would ask you to consider that as a patriotic Canadian.

The Conservatives want to see people held accountable. They want to see our powers maintained. They want to see respect for this place maintained. This happens with decisions you are about to make.

• (1020)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

[*Translation*]

Once again, I would like to thank the hon. member who spoke earlier for her comments on this very serious matter. The Speaker will take into consideration all the comments made by the representatives of the various political parties. I hope that we will soon be hearing from those representatives on this issue.

POINTS OF ORDER

[*English*]

USE OF PROPS IN THE HOUSE

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a separate point of order. It was raised by the member for Edmonton Strathcona yesterday with respect to pins that are worn in this place. Briefly—

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The Speaker: I thank the hon. member. Yesterday, I heard a couple of interventions on this, and the Chair endeavours to come back to the House as soon as possible. I think the Chair has heard a pretty comprehensive perspective on this.

If he has a new and pertinent approach, I will invite the hon. member to share a short declaration.

The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, I understand that this is something you are currently reviewing. I think it is important for you to be aware that, as someone who wears a moosehide pin in the House on a regular basis, I wear the pin most days, all year round, including during the 16 days of action against gender-based violence. I also wear it when I speak in this place with respect to the epidemic of gender-based violence. Mr. Speaker, I encourage you to include that in your consideration of different members in this place who wear pins when they are in fact speaking about the topic related to that pin.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, with regard to the interventions that were made in the House on this, you were asked to equate a watermelon pin with the poppy, the remembrance poppy. I would hope that no one in this place meant that. I would ask that, in your deliberations, you do not equate the two, Mr. Speaker. The poppy stands as a symbol of the Canadian Armed Forces' contributions to our country and our right to stand in this place free of persecution. That was ridiculous.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the intervention from the member for Calgary Nose Hill misrepresented the intervention by the member for Edmonton Strathcona yesterday.

• (1025)

The Speaker: We are now getting into debate, and I see that all the members are rising to participate. I have heard all the interventions I need to hear in order to come back to the House with some guidance on this issue.

I see that the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge is rising. I hope his point of order will be equally new, pertinent and brief, as well as not entering into new debate.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is different. Yesterday, you made a ruling and informed the House that you would come back. I am just confused because, this morning, you have allowed debate about that on which you had already made a ruling. Mr. Speaker, I wonder which rulings you are allowed to revisit and keep talking about and which are actually firm and have to be complied with.

The Speaker: There was no ruling yesterday. I had indicated to the House that I would come back with some guidance or with a ruling if necessary, and I will. Some hon. members wanted to raise some issues. I allowed them the opportunity to raise issues that were pertinent, brief and new. I thank the hon. member for his intervention.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR UNIVERSAL EYE CARE ACT

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-419, An Act to establish a national strategy for universal eye care.

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the national strategy for a universal eye care act, with thanks to the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley for seconding the bill.

The legislation would mandate the development of a national strategy to support universal access to eye care, vision correction and vision aids by the Minister of Health. Currently, access to eye care varies widely across Canada, resulting in inequitable outcomes. More than 70% of private eye care expenses are incurred by Canadians out of pocket, putting a significant strain on household budgets.

The bill is the result of the vision of a talented high school student from my riding of Vancouver Kingsway, Delina Nguyen from Windermere Secondary School. Delina is this year's winner of my annual Create Your Canada contest, which is held in high schools across Vancouver Kingsway.

I hope all parliamentarians will support her vision for a better Canada and work with the NDP to create truly head-to-toe public, universal access to health care for everyone. I thank Delina.

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

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I move that the 21st report of the Standing Committee on International Trade, presented on Wednesday, October 30, be concurred in.

The number of shipments seized at Canadian customs, all regions combined, for use of forced labour is zero. That does not include the one shipment that was seized in 2021 and then released following an appeal by the importer. In comparison, Washington seizes billions of dollars' worth of goods, and all from a single region, Xinjiang.

Canada is absolutely lax. In March 2023, Ottawa released its budget. It announced the government's intention to "introduce legislation by 2024 to eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains to strengthen the import ban on goods produced using forced labour." This is written in black and white on page 171 of the English version and page 192 of the French version. Until proven otherwise, we are in 2024. No bill was introduced before the end of 2023. This is another promise broken and a promise immediately rehashed.

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In March 2024, in its new budget, Ottawa indicates yet again its intention “to introduce legislation in 2024 to eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains and to strengthen the import ban on goods produced with forced labour.” Again, it is written in black and white. No need to believe me, anyone can read it on page 369 of the French version and page 320 of the English version.

I had this motion adopted in committee to ensure that members could call out this broken promise and find it unacceptable and to stress that time is of the essence. The motion was not supported by the parties, it was adopted by the majority in committee. The Conservatives voted in favour of the motion and so did the NDP. Now, we are moving the motion in the House because there is a month left. The House must clearly state that it considers this inaction to be deplorable and that the use of practices that violate the fundamental rights of workers, vulnerable people and children is totally unacceptable.

I remind you once again that, in March 2023, they said the same thing, that they would present something before the end of the year. I proposed a motion before the Standing Committee on International Trade suggesting that we write a letter to the government to remind it of its commitment to introduce a bill before 2023 and demand an explanation for its inaction. This motion was unanimously adopted, but it was never acted on. The government did not deign to reply.

This same government then shamelessly did a cut-and-paste in its next budget, as if it were business as usual, simply changing “end of 2023” to “end of 2024”. It simply changed the deadline before which it would not even think of lifting a finger. We have had it. Parliament must stand up and clearly state, by adopting our motion, that this will not work this time. Consumers do not want blood on their hands.

I will make a few comparisons. United States Customs and Border Protection has the power to refuse waivers for goods it reasonably believes were manufactured through forced labour. These refusals can target a company, a region or a country.

What follows is important. The onus is on the importers to convince United States Customs and Border Protection that the goods were not made through forced labour. In addition, in December 2021, the United States passed a law preventing forced labour by Uyghurs, which creates a rebuttable presumption that all imported goods, products, items and merchandise grown, mined, produced or manufactured wholly or in part in the Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region, or by companies that appear on a list prepared by the U.S. government are manufactured through the use of forced labour and are denied entry into the United States.

They take for granted that everything that comes from the list or the region comes from forced labour. The importer bears the burden of proof, because the United States' rebuttable presumption also applies to goods manufactured in or shipped to China and other countries that include materials or inputs manufactured in Xinjiang or that transit that country. The burden of proof is therefore on the importer.

• (1030)

In Canada, we just have the customs tariff as the legislative framework that allows customs officials not to consider goods as banned, but rather to determine the tariff classification of the imported goods. This is done on a case-by-case basis, based on the likelihood that forced labour was used according to the information available at the time of importation. Therefore, giving the Canada Border Services Agency the responsibility of screening goods amounts to assuming that the use of forced labour to produce those goods can be determined by a flashlight inspection of the cargo. That is really what that means. The brilliant result of this approach is that nothing has ever been seized at the Canadian border. The federal government allows companies to act with virtual impunity.

This applies not just to imports, but, if we consider a broader spectrum and perspective, it also applies to behaviours, accountability and due diligence of Canadian firms abroad. In 2023, the House of Commons passed, by a majority, Bills-211. At the time, Ottawa framed this as a bold move, but at the end of the day it has proven to be toothless. The only thing the bill did was introduce a reporting requirement but only for businesses with 250 or more employees with significant active income. They are only required to prepare a small annual report on the measures taken on forced labour and child labour. That is the only matter covered here. Some will say that a business that refuses to produce this report could be fined, and that is certainly true, but there is nothing stopping a business from putting out a report stating that it did not take any measures. It can simply send that off and it has met its requirement, full stop. It can do the same thing the following year too. That is the extent of it. I would argue that this law is as useless as the Senate that created and introduced it. Producing a report, even one stating that nothing was done, does not exactly amount to a due diligence law.

What we have here is a typically Canadian attitude, reflecting the same culture of symbolism. Ottawa would have been completely free to sit on its purported laurels, had there been any laurels to sit on. That is why I voted against this empty shell of a bill at the time, along with my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois and the NDP.

Instead, I am co-sponsoring Bill C-262, which comes from the NDP. We have always said that when the idea is good, we will have no problem supporting it, and so I am pleased to co-sponsor this bill, which covers all human rights and businesses of all sizes. It seeks to involve the affected communities and, above all, it provides recourse to the victims. That is what an actual due diligence law to address the matter would look like.

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Ottawa may not carefully screen goods entering the country through its approach, which makes customs officers responsible for seizures and removes the onus of proof from importers, but, as I have just shown, it is no more serious about the behaviours of Canadian firms abroad. This is also evident in the trade agreements submitted to us. Lofty principles are bandied about, but without any obligations attached. Ideas and international conventions are referenced, but there are no obligations or genuine accountability. For example, in the case of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, the only amendment received in committee was mine. It stated that this chapter was fine and good, but the Minister of International Trade should have to report annually to the House on what is going on over there in terms of human rights and corporate behaviour.

The same applies to this office called the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise. Basically, it is a complaints bureau, a pretty apathetic response to some truly scandalous behaviour. Its mandate is to “review a complaint that is submitted by a Canadian company that believes it is the subject of an unfounded human rights abuse allegation”.

When the position was created in 2018, the Canadian government pledged that this officer would have the investigative powers to require businesses to produce documents and to compel them to testify. Both of these powers strike me as important in the case of an inquiry. I would even say that they are fundamental. As I stand here today, these powers have yet to be assigned.

• (1035)

In fact, the Mining Association of Canada is opposed to this and declared it in a public statement. We take comfort in the fact that the ombudsperson has a lovely website, but we would prefer the office to have the capacity to require entities to produce documents and compel their testimony.

In 2009, a Bloc bill seeking the creation of an extraterritorial activities review commission for Canadian businesses died on the Order Paper. This politically independent commission would not have simply received complaints but would have been able to launch its own inquiries. Even without a complaint, it could have launched its own inquiries and publicly called on the Department of Foreign Affairs to withdraw its support of offending mining corporations. This would have represented a truly effective mechanism. Unsurprisingly, Parliament did not go along with it.

I myself attempted, in my capacity as member, to file a motion seeking the unanimous consent of the House of Commons to establish a genuine institution to monitor the behaviours of Canadian businesses abroad. Needless to say, the motion did not receive unanimous consent.

If I bring up the mining companies, it is because I find them particularly interesting. Even though Canada can be characterized as an imperialistic, colonial and world-dominating country, it is still a sieve, a haven for foreign interests. Today, roughly three-quarters of the world's mining companies are Canadian, and the vast majority of them are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, meaning they can speculate on the value of mines. Canada is just a flag of convenience for companies, who need only open a post office box to be considered Canadian. A number of these mining companies are Canadian in name only. To take advantage of Ottawa's lax legisla-

tion, any investor can found their company with Canadian joint shareholders, but can conduct mining operations in a developing country.

A number of businesses with questionable behaviours receive financial support from Export Development Canada, whose accountability mechanisms are very limited. Its representatives were questioned in committee. Let us say that they do not exactly dig deep to learn where the money is going. There is also diplomatic support on the part of Canadian embassies.

In a report published in 2022, the Justice and Corporate Accountability Project mentions, for example, serious acts of violence at the Marlin mine in Guatemala. This mine was acquired in 2006 by Goldcorp, a Canadian mining company. There were credible allegations of environmental contamination and harm to human health. According to the report, the activities of certain Canadian public servants in 2010 and 2011 seeking to defend the interests of Goldcorp undermined the efforts of communities, mostly Mayan indigenous communities, to access the inter-American human rights system and its support to defend their rights. Canada is therefore providing both diplomatic and financial support.

While Canada is currently negotiating a free trade deal with Ecuador, we might ask why the Canadian ambassador there has refused to meet with the country's indigenous businesses but immediately agreed to meet with mining representatives. He did not have a problem with that. That same ambassador, who did not seem to appreciate my questions when he came to testify before the Standing Committee on International Trade, frequently rolling his eyes, even rejected the concerns of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights about the troubling unrest in two regions where police repression was especially abusive, particularly to ensure the imposition of Canadian mining investments suspected of having an impact on water contamination and social division.

There is another case, which made the news a few weeks ago, concerning the behaviour of Barrick Gold, another Canadian mining company, in Tanzania. We keep seeing examples of this. It is a serious issue. We hear about the eviction of villagers and other outrageous incidents. In November 2022, legal action was brought against Barrick Gold in Ontario following allegations of brutal murders, shootings and torture committed by police officers responsible for watching the mine. This is the seventh case of human rights violations filed by foreign plaintiffs against a Canadian mining company since 2010.

Since 1997, nine complaints have been filed in Canadian courts against mining companies following allegations surrounding their activities abroad. These cases involve assault, shootings, gang rapes of local indigenous women by the mine's security officers, the use of slaves, and the contamination of a river with mining waste.

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• (1040)

During human rights missions to Chile in 2020 and Colombia in 2021, I was able to hear first-hand accounts from affected communities detailing water pollution, air contamination, security militias firing on civilians at point-blank range and evictions of local residents. In Colombia, I personally witnessed a mining company's private security detail directing traffic on a public road. Is this normal? In 2016, a report entitled "The 'Canada Brand'" found that violence associated with Canadian mining companies in Latin America had led to 44 deaths, 30 of which were classified as targeted.

There is no shortage of terrifying stories. I do not have enough time to go through them all, but there are definitely a lot of them. Another report, released in 2009, noted that "Canadian companies have been the most significant group involved in unfortunate incidents in the developing world" and that "Canadian companies are more likely to be engaged in community conflict [and] environmental and unethical behaviour". The Canadian Centre for the Study of Resource Conflict reported that Canada held the record for the most violations among developed countries operating mines in developing countries.

A 2016 report by York University researchers documented incidents from 2000 to 2015 that were corroborated by at least two independent sources. It found 44 deaths, 403 injuries and 709 cases of criminalization. There was a widespread geographical distribution of violence, since deaths occurred in 11 countries, injuries were suffered in 13 countries, and criminalization occurred in 12 countries. Interestingly, the report notes that Canadian companies that are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange do not include reports of violence in their mandatory reports on company performance.

The fight against human rights violations committed for the sake of profit will require a whole spectrum of solutions. I have some ideas I would like to share, even though I know that not everyone in the House will agree with them: requiring importers to prove that their goods were not produced with forced labour; passing real due diligence legislation, like Bill C-262, to crack down harder on Canadian firms operating abroad; offering victims genuine recourse; giving the ombudsperson more powers, in the absence of a real, politically independent commission capable of launching its own investigations, which we think would have been the ideal solution; ending Ottawa's diplomatic policy of complicity; and taking a closer look at where Export Development Canada's money is going in other countries.

These are ideas. Not everyone in the House would agree with them. I have talked to the other parties about this. We will not all agree on what we would like to see in a future bill. However, we can agree that we cannot judge what we have not seen and that, at this point in time, we should have seen it a year ago. I therefore call on the entire House to clearly and strongly remind the government of its promise, which it has yet to fulfill, to table a bill by the end of the year. Consumers do not want blood on their hands.

• (1045)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr.

Speaker, I appreciate the discussion on this, which we will no doubt be having over the next few hours. I am interested in getting the member's thoughts in regard to Bill S-211, the forced labour bill, which passed and took effect. It does all of us a great service. We know some of the results are very encouraging, and it is a wonderful, significant step forward, given that there was nothing prior to it.

Beyond some of the comments he has already put on the record, could the member explain why he is not content with that, or why he wants to see it expanded?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I am puzzled by my colleague's question, because I did address that point. I devoted several minutes to talking about Bill S-211.

That bill that does not cover all human rights. I would remind my colleagues that the UN recognizes human rights as a whole, whereas that bill addresses only forced labour by adults and children, which I obviously agree with, but which is not enough, and only applies to companies with 250 or more employees and significant revenues. It does not require them to take measures, but merely to report on the measures that have been taken. A company could just write: "We did not put any measures in place, thank you, goodbye, see you next year".

Evidently, I voted against this bill. I do not regret voting against it, because I knew that this would happen, that we would be told for the next 10 years that they did something and that everything is great now. It is not enough. That bill is entirely useless.

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the report on forced labour uses very strong language to denounce the government's failures. It describes the government's failures to take seriously the issue of forced labour as deplorable.

I note that in the committee meeting where this report was adopted, the Liberal chair of that committee, the member for Humber River—Black Creek, voted in favour of the motion. We have a Liberal member voting in favour of a motion that calls her own government's performance on the issue of forced labour absolutely deplorable.

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However, it is no wonder Liberal members find the actions of their own government deplorable on this file as it relates to Uyghur forced labour in particular, about which the member spoke. The Americans have been so far ahead, stopping many shipments of goods over concerns about forced labour from the Uyghur regions, but Canada has not stopped a single shipment. I believe this puts us in breach of our obligations under CUSMA to have all partners to that agreement act to combat forced labour. Therefore, this is going to be a challenge not only to us morally, but also in Canada-U.S. relations in that we are not doing our part.

I would like to hear the member's reflections, in particular on the impact on Canada-U.S. relations of the failure of the government to take the issue of forced labour seriously.

• (1050)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I need to start by clarifying something for my colleague. The Liberal chair did not vote in favour of the motion. She was absent that day. His Conservative colleague, the committee's vice-chair, was presiding that day. The vote came down to a tie, and it was his colleague who voted in favour of the motion. I thank him for that. I thank the Conservatives for supporting our motion. I hope that they will also support this motion, enabling a majority of the House to clearly express its dissatisfaction with the government.

As I said, the situation is unacceptable. No shipments from any region have been seized, while the Americans have seized billions of dollars' worth of merchandise from a single region. Honestly, the comparison is absolutely ludicrous. My colleague is right to note that it is not just a moral issue. Of course, there are many human rights organizations, and the practices we are talking about are totally immoral at every level. However, there is also a geopolitical and economic aspect. There is the matter of the confidence that our neighbours to the south have in us. Everyone keeps saying that there is going to be a lot of upheaval soon. There is a lot of uncertainty. I think we need to start proving to the United States that we do not just import Chinese goods no questions asked.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot for his speech.

[*English*]

It has been a pleasure working with the member on the international trade file. I am sorry that I am not on that file anymore, but we have been through all of this together.

I am glad he mentioned Bill S-211, which the NDP also thought was completely inadequate. The Bloc and the NDP voted against it, while the Conservatives and Liberals voted in favour. The member supported Bill C-262, brought forward by the NDP member for New Westminster—Burnaby, which would be a significant and great improvement on what the government is doing.

There are so many things I would like to ask my colleague, because I know he has a lot of good things to say about the subject, but I will hone in on one thing that I know the international trade committee was studying, which is the free trade agreement with Ecuador.

The federal government is now negotiating with Ecuador, and it is clear that it wants to put in investor-state dispute mechanisms to protect Canadian mining companies in their fight against indigenous people, against minorities and people living on the land in Ecuador. This goes against the real sense of what Canada should be doing in the world.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, my colleague touched on a number of areas.

We support Bill C-262. I am a supporter and co-sponsor of the bill, and I thank the NDP for bringing it forward. We support this legislation and, as co-sponsor, I fully and freely endorse it. It is a perfect example of genuine due diligence legislation.

The Conservatives and the Liberals voted for Bill S-211. As I said at the end of my speech, we are unlikely to see eye to eye on what elements should be included in legislation on importing goods produced using forced labour or on eliminating forced labour from supply chains. I respect that. That is democracy. We will have a chance to debate the issue in due course.

Today, we need to refocus the debate around a simple reminder. The House has to send a clear message to the government that it broke its promise and that it has to bring us something. We keep hearing that governing is all about planning. The government needs to bring us a bill so that we can debate it. Our opinions will probably differ, but we should at least remind it that the promise it made has not been kept.

Regarding Ecuador, my colleague was there, too. A lot of promises were made and a lot of things were said. As I said in my speech, when the Canadian ambassador appeared before the committee, he could not explain or justify the violence there. He could not explain why he went to meet with mining companies, but not with indigenous communities. This situation does need to be monitored very closely. I even had some women from Ecuador come and speak at a press conference a few weeks ago, and they urged us to pay closer attention to what is happening there.

• (1055)

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his excellent work, his meticulousness and his powerful speech. I would like him to speak more about the fact that Canada tends to be all talk and no action. It makes lofty promises but does not follow through. There is a lot of tearful rhetoric, but in reality, real abuse is taking place. As we speak, real people are being subjected to rape and forced labour.

I would like to give my colleague the opportunity to really hammer home this message.

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Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I would need a good two or three hours because there is so much to say about that. I have just been asked a question by a colleague from my own party, and I am tempted to pretend that I am reading from notes and to say that I thank him for his hard work and his very relevant question.

However, I did not know the question in advance and I do not have an answer written down. There are so many things to say about that issue and about so many similar issues. I can link back to a question that one of my Conservative colleagues asked me earlier.

Setting aside the moral and common sense aspects, this country is allergic to the concept of having a strategy, to the idea of using levers and having a government that can provide policy direction regarding forced labour, foreign investments and many other issues. All of that is interrelated. Washington must think we are complete bozos. Actually, I should not have said “we”, because “we” includes the person who is speaking, and I do not consider myself a Canadian. Anyway, Canada is seen as a weak country and a laggard in all of these areas when it comes to policy. The issue that we are talking about is a matter of North American geopolitical security.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, forced labour is not something new; it has been around for many years. When I listen to the questions and answers, it is a bit much to hear a Conservative talk about forced labour, when Stephen Harper and the current leader of the Conservative Party did absolutely nothing to deal with it. I will be fair: When Senate Bill S-211 was before us, the Conservatives joined us in passing it. At the very least, Conservatives have done some positive things in working with the government and recognizing the issue of forced labour.

It is interesting that we are now having the debate on the issue primarily because of what I have often referred to as a multi-million dollar game the Conservatives are playing. As opposed to other opposition parties participating directly in the filibuster game, they are bringing forward motions for concurrence. I can appreciate the frustration other opposition parties are feeling because day after day for weeks now, the Conservative Party has filibustered, putting the self-interest of the leader of the Conservative Party and the Conservative Party in general ahead of the interests of Canadians.

The filibustering prevents us debating things such as the legislative agenda that would assist Canadians in many different ways, whether it is protecting children against the Internet, transferring military court to civilian court on issues of sexual violence, Canadian citizenship or the fall economic statement. These are just part of the government agenda.

There is also Private Members' Business and there are opposition day motions. I suggest the current debate would have been a great debate for an opposition day motion. I truly believe that, because at the end of the day, forced labour, as I said, is nothing new, even though Stephen Harper and the current leader of the Conservative Party ignored it 100% during their tenure. It would have been a great discussion to have, and in the end it would have been great to have a positive resolution to it.

We have raised the issue in budgets, as has been pointed out. The motion itself went before the standing committee, and I compliment the efforts of the standing committee with respect to the people it listened to and its coming up with a report, but I would remind members that we have made a commitment to bring forward government legislation that would look at improving Bill S-211.

Of course we have to look at why we are having a difficult time getting legislation through the House of Commons, but that is not the fault of the Government of Canada or even the Bloc or the New Democrats. That responsibility falls on the shoulders of the leader of the official opposition. We will continue to look at ways to bring in the legislation that we have committed to.

• (1100)

Hopefully there will be the same sense of enthusiasm as with the first Conservative question when we bring in legislation, and there will be a warmth to the idea to allow debate to occur and possibly even to allow legislation to go to committee and ultimately pass through third reading and be given royal assent. What a wonderful idea that would be, but somehow we have to dislodge the leader of the Conservative Party's belief that Parliament is here to serve him and him alone. We need to understand that Parliament is here to serve Canadians first and foremost, and then we will be able to ultimately do more for Canadians.

On the issue of forced labour, one does not need to expand on the literally millions of individuals around the world who are affected. In virtually every country, there is forced labour being put into place. We need to recognize, as we have as a government, that the government can play a significant role.

There are some people who have absolutely no time for the Senate. I for one see great value in the Senate, and Bill S-211 is a good example of that. When the Senate of Canada passed that legislation through its system, it came to the House of Commons. First reading of the bill took place on May 3, 2022, and second reading was then completed on June 1, 2022. It then went to committee in November 2022. Report stage was completed on March 6, 2023, and third reading was completed on May 3, 2023. Royal assent was given shortly thereafter, and the legislation took effect in January of this year.

That is the type of thing that can take place, not only on Senate legislation but also on government legislation. Now that there is a leader of the Conservative Party who puts his interests first and foremost, the primary difference is that legislation is being put on hold more and more often. This is a direct result of his self-interest.

There are many pieces of legislation before the House and many that are going to be introduced to the House that deserve the merit not only of debate but also of going through the process and ultimately becoming law. I would suggest that Canada is a better society as a direct result of Bill S-211. Think of the results there have been with Bill S-211. Before the legislation passed through the House with the support of the Liberals and the Conservatives, there was nothing really in place to report forced labour.

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As a direct result of the bill's getting royal assent and January being the date the legislation came into effect, there have been literally thousands and thousands of businesses or companies that have had to report in on the issue of forced labour in the supply chains. We have now identified that a very high percentage of those that have reported in are raising concerns in regard to forced labour in the supply chain. For the first time, the government actually has a much better sense of the degree to which forced labour is being used here in the Canadian supply chain.

• (1105)

The issue of forced labour is something the government takes seriously. When we were having the trade negotiations with the United States, on the one hand the Conservatives were crying and wanting to capitulate and say, "It does not matter; just get an agreement." That was the Conservative approach to the Donald Trump first trade discussions that were taking place: Capitulate, do whatever it is that the United States wants and just get an agreement signed.

We worked very hard on CUSMA. Canada has, I would argue, the very best individual abilities in the world in terms of negotiating trade agreements, and I do not say that lightly. No government in the history of Canada has signed off on more trade agreements than the current government has. We do that because we recognize the true value of trade for Canada.

If we want to strengthen Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it, we have to focus attention on trade. Through that, working with Canadians and working with the different partners, record numbers of new jobs having been created, virtually double the number of jobs that Stephen Harper created in his nine years of governance.

With respect to how the issue has been evolving, we can look at the CUSMA deal and see that within it, we negotiated to prohibit importing goods made by forced labour. Does that mean it is a perfect deal? No one is saying that; there is always room for improvement. When we sit down with President-elect Trump in the future, members can know that we will have Canadian interests in our minds and heart. Unlike the Conservatives, who will advocate to capitulate based on their previous negotiations, we will ensure that the deal is in the best interests of Canadians. We have the record to clearly demonstrate this as a government that has signed off on far more trade agreements not only than Stephen Harper but also more than in the history of Canada.

People understand and know how important trade is between Canada and the United States. When we talk about jobs, we are talking about hundreds of thousands of good-quality Canadian jobs that are dependent on successful negotiations, and Canadians need to be aware that it is the current government and Prime Minister that got and signed off on the trade agreement known as CUSMA with the United States. It was the Conservatives who wanted us to capitulate and give the Americans whatever they wanted. It is because of our experience in dealing with trade agreements that we were able to achieve what we received. Within that, we talked about labour.

Interestingly, the House will remember one of the most recent trade agreements that we signed off on was the Canada-Ukraine

Free Trade Agreement update. We will remember that, because the leader of the Conservative Party actually voted against it and instructed his minions to follow suit and vote against it. I withdraw the word "minions" just in case some people are a little offended by it. The Conservatives voted against a trade agreement. What is really interesting is that the very first trade agreement that the Conservatives, from what I can recall, ever voted against was the Canada-Ukraine trade agreement update.

We were talking earlier about a question of privilege about the influence that Russia is having. There is a story about how Russian influencers are trying to say all these bad things about our Prime Minister in an attempt to prop up the Conservative Party of Canada. There is an interesting connection there, and we will have to wait and see.

• (1110)

I would love to see this issue go to the standing committee. I would love the opportunity to see to what degree we would have interference affecting the Conservative Party going into the next election. However, I digress somewhat.

I believe that when we look at where we go from here, whether it is with respect to budgetary measures, legislative measures or dealing with the issue of forced labour, we continue to move forward. That is why the minister has provided assurances, as instructed by the Prime Minister in the form of mandate letters, that we will put into place legislation that will enhance and protect the interests of Canadians. We know the values we have say that we have to look at our supply chains and deal with the forced labour issue. That is something the Government of Canada is prepared to do in a very real and tangible way. That is why we have maintained the commitment that we will, in fact, be bringing in legislation to that effect before the end of the year.

I have three minutes to go. That is not enough time. At the end of the day, we could talk about trade, supply lines and related issues like forced labour, for many hours. As a government, more so than the Conservative government ever did, we understand how, by looking at trade and international trade, we can build a stronger and healthier middle class while at the same time dealing with the social issues that Canadians are concerned about. With respect to issues such as forced labour, in particular in areas like mining and manufacturing, as the Prime Minister has clearly shown, we can do both. The numbers show that, through the policies we have put into place that were driven by budgetary and legislative measures, we have built a healthier middle class, especially in these economic times, which can be a challenge for many of the constituents we represent.

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The nice thing is that things are getting better. Interest rates are going down. Affordability is so much better. The inflation rate is below 2%. We are doing, in comparison with other countries, exceptionally well. However, that does not mean that we cannot do better. That is why we have a Prime Minister, a government and members of the Liberal caucus who continue to persist every day in improving conditions for Canadians. That is where our focus is, unlike the self-serving interests and focus of the Conservative leader and the Conservative caucus today.

Having said all that, I move:

That the question be now put.

• (1115)

The Deputy Speaker: The motion is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering why the government is so eager to move on from debate on this issue. Certainly, it is an important motion that has been put forward on behalf of my colleagues. I do not understand why the government is so eager to move on. What does it have to hide?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, seriously, I do not know if the member fully understands the process. On a concurrence report, we have a three-hour debate. What we are doing is just kind of advancing it in case anyone stops talking. If people stop talking, then we can actually go to the question on it. I am very comfortable having the full three-hour debate. At the end of the three hours, the question will ultimately be put, and we will have a vote on it tomorrow. Members of the Conservative Party do not need to push the panic button yet.

At the end of the day, hopefully, they will get back to their filibuster on the privilege issue. I am sure that they are glad that they do not have to talk purely on privilege and that they can change the topic, while at the same time continuing with their irresponsible, multi-million dollar filibuster. That is ultimately what we have witnessed every day now for many weeks because the leader of the Conservative Party is more interested in himself, his personal advancement and the Conservative Party than the interests of Canadians.

We find that very shameful. That is fine, but we will continue to focus on Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to paraphrase the song, all we get from the government is “words, words and more words”. No, “thank you, not for [us, but it can] offer them to someone else”.

In the March 2023 budget, the government promised to introduce a bill, but it did not do it. It promised to do it last March, but it did not do it. Now, once again, it is telling us it is going to do it.

When is the government going to table this bill? What is it waiting for, the apocalypse?

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the government indicated that it would be doing it in 2024. If the member takes a look at the calendar, he will find that 2024 has not come to an end.

Before he passes judgment on that issue, he might want to reflect not only on how members of the Bloc can see government bring in legislation, but how we could actually advance legislation. It is one thing to bring in legislation, but it is another thing to get it to advance through the system.

The only way we can advance legislation through the system, because we have a minority government, is to have other political parties that are like-minded and prepared to work hard for all people in all regions. That means that we have to focus some attention on trying to get the leader of the Conservative Party to stop with this day after day of filibustering.

I would argue that the leader of the Conservative Party is borderline in contempt of Parliament because of the way he is filibustering and ultimately abusing the rights of all members of the House.

• (1120)

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, November 20 is National Day of the Child. It is a day to celebrate and honour children.

However, today, around the world, 160 million children, many as young as five years old, are forced to work and are denied the opportunity to go to school. We have been calling on the government for due diligence legislation, human rights legislation. We have criticized the government's deeply flawed approach.

It was not just the NDP and the Bloc criticizing the government's approach to Bill S-211. It was Oxfam Canada, Amnesty International Canada and Human Rights Watch Canada. They stood together to say that Canada's appalling record on human rights violations abroad cannot be addressed with an empty bill that just pays lip service to this issue.

Now, I hear the government saying that it is going to bring in legislation, but forgive me if I am skeptical and if Canadians are skeptical of more Liberal promises. Will the member commit to truly rigorous accountability and due diligence legislation that will hold these companies liable?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, when we talk about Bill S-211 and the government working at getting the support from the Conservative Party where we were ultimately able to pass the legislation, I understand the NDP and the Bloc were somewhat uncomfortable with the legislation. There has been a very significant, positive impact from that legislation already to date, and we have seen thousands and thousands of companies that have now reported. We know there is a very high percentage of areas where there is forced labour that needs to be factored in and we believe we will have better legislation introduced before the end of the year.

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I would remind members of the New Democratic Party that before this administration, absolutely nothing was being done on the issue and it has been a very busy legislative agenda. For the last number of weeks, all we have seen is a great deal of filibustering, preventing legislation from passing any stage by the Conservative Party. We look to our friends within the NDP, who have worked with us in the past, to try to get legislation through. Hopefully, we will get the bill the minister is talking to a first reading, and even get it beyond that. In order to do that, we need to have a partner.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting because the member does speak to the government's intentions of advancing legislation. I know constituents within the riding of Waterloo sent me to this place to have tough conversations to actually get work done on their behalf. They cannot be here, so I try to have conversations with a diversity of perspectives. When it comes to legislation on forced labour, they know the government has intentions to advance it, yet they recognize the Conservatives have paralyzed the House. They brought it to a standstill. They refuse to have work done.

Today, we started the House on points of order and just comments in regards to witnesses at committee and not having the best interest of Canadians at hand. What is clear is that the Conservatives have gone to former prime minister Stephen Harper's way and they will fight for Conservatives, but they will not fight for Canadians. That is one of the reasons I put my name on a ballot. I think the member has articulated very clearly that the Bloc and the NDP suggest they want to get work done, but they do not want to get work done because they know how we can get back onto a legislative agenda. They know they have a role to play, but they refuse to play that role.

I would like to ask the member, when it comes to the intentions in the House, when it comes to actually getting work done, how we can get this work done. Today is moved by the Bloc Québécois, which just wants to separate our country. The NDP is more concerned about my attire than it is about policy. What can we do in the House to actually get to the legislative agenda so we can deliver for Canadians, middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join them? Today, this concurrence motion, I agree, is very important. I think the issue is very important, but the government has signalled time and time again that it wants to advance legislation.

Why is the government not able to advance legislation?

• (1125)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the former prime minister Stephen Harper was the only prime minister in the history of Canada, in fact, in the entire British Commonwealth, to be held in contempt of Parliament. His parliamentary secretary at the time was the leader of the Conservative Party today. Nothing has changed. The leader of the Conservative Party today feels he can borderline be in contempt of this institution by playing this multi-million dollar filibuster game. Outside the chamber, he is the only leader who does not recognize he has a moral responsibility to get security clearance so we can deal with the issue of foreign interference in a better way.

Foreign interference is such a serious issue. We have seen people murdered. We have seen all forms of extortion. We have seen polit-

ical manipulation that goes right to the leaderships of political parties, including the Conservative Party, yet we still have one leader in the House of Commons today, the Conservative leader, who refuses to get the security clearance to become informed. What is the leader of the Conservative Party hiding from Canadians? Why will he not come clean and tell us why he really refuses to get that security clearance?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think it is important for the record that I note that the leader of the official opposition does not—

The Deputy Speaker: That is debate.

We will resume debate with the hon. member for Bay of Quinte.

Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to start debate, and I am also pleased to announce that I will be sharing my time with the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

Canada needs a government that understands how to build an open economy, how to build an economy, how to create jobs and how to create powerful paycheques to ensure that we have economic growth, not only for our nation, but also for our provinces, our regions and our citizens.

The book *Why Nations Fail*, which is, by the way, the finance minister's favourite book, emphasizes that countries prosper when they foster open economic systems that create opportunities for growth and provide incentives for people to save, innovate and invest. When we look at Canada right now and the challenges Canadians have, we see that they are losing those opportunities and those opportunities are going south.

We can talk about the carbon tax, which is set to increase again on April 1. It punishes our farmers and our businesses. We can talk about a housing crisis, which is the largest in the history of this country, through which we have seen rents double, mortgage payments double, and the amount needed for a down payment double. We talk about debt and a budget. We are already talking about increased deficits coming to the budget, if we ever see one, for 2025.

What does that mean? It has been proven over the last four years that we have increased the debt. We have increased spending from an ever-increasing, growing government. We have high inflation, and high inflation adds cost, the invisible tax, to every Canadian.

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An open economy is not just about trade. It is about democracy. A strong democracy promotes freedom, transparency and fairness, not only within our borders, but also for those we engage with around the world through our trading agreements. The trade agreements we have in Canada were all set up by the previous government. The European Union trade agreement was set up by Stephen Harper. When we look at the TPP, which became the CPTPP, it was set up by Stephen Harper. The Liberal government, when it came into power, got to sign those agreements, but they were agreements set in stone based on our shared democracy, our shared freedom and those values.

Over the last nine years, we have seen those values erode, and we have seen certain parts of our trading relationships result in forced labour. There are forced labour camps that are forcing citizens into camps, into gruelling conditions, and those products are ending up on Canadian shores. When we look at our trade and our democracy, we see that Canada is a steward for freedom. We need to ensure that we have democracy and freedom here at home and in nations abroad. We can use the trading relationships we have with nations to ensure we force the values that we find important. I am going to walk members through a couple of stats on this.

In China, reports indicate that over three million innocent Uyghurs are currently detained in concentration camps, where they face indoctrination, forced labour and torture in various degrees. Forced labour is the work or service of any person under the threat of penalty for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily. It is estimated that more than 80,000 Uyghurs were transferred out of East Turkestan to work in factories across China between 2017 and 2019.

I am going to walk members through a day in a labour camp because it is really important for Canadians to understand their stories of survival and resilience. Imagine someone being abruptly taken from their home, their family and their life, accused of crimes they did not commit or simply targeted because of their ethnicity or beliefs. This is the reality for countless individuals detained in forced labour camps across the world, particularly in regions like Xinjiang, China, where Uyghurs and other minorities endure unimaginable hardships.

A person arrives at a sprawling facility surrounded by high walls, watchtowers and armed guards. There is no trial and no lawyer. There is just an accusation. Their identity as a Uyghur, a Turkic Muslim, or a member of another minority group is enough to condemn them. Upon arrival, they are stripped of their belongings, including any dignity. Uniforms replace their clothes, and their name is replaced by a number.

Each day begins before sunrise with roll calls and chants praising the government. After that, the work begins. For many, this means long hours in poorly ventilated workshops or factories producing textiles, electronics or even solar panels for export. Other people are sent to agricultural fields, where they pick cotton under the scorching sun for 12 to 16 hours a day, with minimal breaks.

● (1130)

Conditions are gruelling. There are no safety measures, and injuries are common. A cut from factory machinery or a sprain in the field is not treated. People are expected to work through the pain.

Malnutrition is rampant, with meals consisting of watery soup, a piece of bread and occasionally some rice. Hunger gnaws at them constantly, sapping their energy and their spirit.

There is punishment. Stepping out, even unintentionally, results in severe punishment. Some are beaten for slowing down or for failing to meet their quotas.

Beyond forced labour, detainees are subject to indoctrination, including hours of mandatory classes teaching loyalty to the state and to its leaders, and denouncing religion or cultural practices. Uyghur detainees are often forced to denounce Islam, shave their beards or eat pork as signs of progress, and the end never comes. There is no clear end.

For those listening at home, that is the reality of forced labour, and the fact is that Canada, to this point, has not announced or brought to Parliament any legislation to disallow this kind of treatment. That allows these products to end up on Canadian shores.

The products are many. I will list some of the products that we are bringing to Canada. There are textiles, electronics, agricultural products, cotton, artificial sweeteners, Christmas decorations, coal, footwear, garments, gloves, hair products, nails, toys and tomato products. These are the products coming in, and the U.S. Department of Labor has announced other products that it is including, such as steel, aluminum and seafood.

Canada is not the nation it needs to be. Our failure to address forced labour in our supply chains is both a moral and an economic failure. The United States has taken decisive action to combat forced labour, and despite clear evidence of forced labour in global supply chains, Canada has done little more than pay lip service. The U.S. has banned products tied to forced labour, especially from China, while Canada allows these goods into our markets.

In February 2021, the House of Commons voted 266-0 to recognize China's treatment of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims as genocide. One would think that was all of Parliament, but no, the Prime Minister and his cabinet abstained from the vote, including the member for Waterloo, who was just standing up in the House. They abstained from the vote and said that they did not have enough information. There is enough information to show that this is inhumane treatment and what the toll has been, yet Canada stands talking about being a steward of trade and democracy in the world, but has, so far, not run legislation to outlaw this forced labour being part of trade and included in our supply lines.

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America took the lead. In 2020, when the U.S. enacted the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, blocking imports tied to human rights abuses in China, the legislation set a global standard, showing that trade must align with ethical practices. I will list a couple of instances where this fell through the cracks in Canada.

In November 2021, the Canada Border Services Agency intercepted a shipment of women's and children's clothing suspected to have links to forced labour. In January 2021, at least 18 Canadian companies imported PPE from Top Glove, a Malaysian manufacturer banned by the U.S. over forced labour concerns. This brings me to our main point. When it comes to Canada not being aligned with other nations, it is going to affect our trading relationships, and our trading relationship with the Americans is the worst of all at present.

This issue and others have misaligned us from the world's largest, and our number one, trading partner. When Stephen Harper was in power, we were the U.S.'s number one trading partner, and now we are the third trading partner for the Americans. Mexico is number one. Canada is number three. That is because of the lack of trade relationships and partnerships that this government has, but most importantly, it is because the Liberals fail to link freedom and democracy with trade and with the growing threat of slave labour in China and other nations. We have to fix that, and a Conservative government would ensure that we do great trade with good nations, that we do it ethically and responsibly, and that we outlaw slave labour from nations such as China.

● (1135)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I found the member's comments really interesting because Conservatives, quite like the NDP, like to take credit for things that they have not done. Within the riding of Waterloo, constituents are really proud of the diversity of the conversations we have.

When we were up against the U.S. when it came to CUSMA, or NAFTA 2.0, it was interesting because all political parties came together to fight for Canada. What we have seen since then is a Conservative approach of returning to former prime minister Stephen Harper's ways of only fighting for Conservatives. That is not the Canadian way.

I was born and raised in the Waterloo region. I was born Canadian. I chose my political party, but I will always fight for my constituents. I will always fight for my community and our country first. Conservatives right now are hell-bent on having an election rather than fighting for Canada. I found the member's comments quite interesting. He likes to be on the attack, but Conservatives do not want to recognize the approach they took in the past, which actually divided communities.

If this issue is so important to the member, will he commit to calling the question on the question of privilege, which all members agree to, so that we can bring legislation forward and address the issues that matter to my constituents? I am sure they matter to his constituents as well.

I hope we are in agreement that we have to fight for Canada, first and foremost. I hope he would pick our country over our political parties. I sure do.

Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, we will commit to ending the privilege debate when the government hands over the unredacted documents the House has asked for. This is the fifth week now of debate on this issue, which has stalled any legislation. The member is right that there has been lots of good legislation that the government has put forth on behalf of all Canadians.

Let us make one thing clear: We are here on behalf of Canadians. Conservatives will go out to talk about fixing the budget by ensuring that we axe the tax, build homes and stop the crime. However, we will do that on behalf of Canadians. We will continue to do that on behalf of Canadians.

● (1140)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning, *The Globe and Mail*, out of Toronto, published an editorial saying that it is essential that the government hand over the documents we have been requesting for 26 sitting days now.

What does my hon. colleague from Bay of Quinte think about this editorial, and why does he think the government is still stubbornly refusing to hand over the documents?

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say *bienvenue* to our newest colleague in the House of Commons.

The *Globe and Mail*, other newspapers, pundits and, most importantly, Canadians have stated that they want Parliament to either move on or to have an election so that Canadians can decide on behalf of Parliament.

The House represents the people. The member of the House, enabled by the power of Parliament, requested that documents be handed over. The Liberal government refuses to hand the documents over, and of course, Parliament is paralyzed because of the government.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think that this is an important issue to all of us. This is something that was unanimously supported at committee and in the House.

As well, we have not seen the government take action when it comes to modern-day slavery in Canadian supply chains. Will my colleague stand today to make a commitment that Conservatives will hold big corporations to account to ensure that those companies beef up their disclosures so that we see what is in the supply chains? Will they block and go after those big corporations that are practising modern-day slavery and support eliminating forced labour in our supply chains?

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Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague that we have to look at our supply chains as a whole. That means ensuring we look at our trading agreements to make sure that Canada wins when it comes to trading agreements for better jobs and better paycheques. However, when it comes to corporations, the answer is more competition. When we look at what it means to ensure that companies are acting more ethically and more responsibly in creating better paycheques, better working positions and working for their unions, it is competition that will bring that.

Of course, the government's role then is to ensure that we have good laws and good trading agreements to ensure that those supply chains are ethical and are the best for Canadians. However, most importantly, it is competition that brings that aspect to Canadian corporations and helps fix this big problem.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is increasingly pressing, not only in terms of human rights, but also for Canada's economic future: forced labour in our supply chains.

This scourge directly affects the goods that enter our market, specifically products from China, a country where forced labour practices are well documented but where efforts to end those practices remain inadequate. This is largely a result of the Liberal government's inaction. This situation is all the more concerning when we consider the economic and morally unacceptable consequences of these practices.

Beyond the low-price manufactured goods, entire industries are affected by this systemic exploitation of vulnerable workers. The impact is real and goes well beyond simple ethical considerations. It affects our supply chains, our economy and the labour conditions of our own citizens.

Take the electric vehicle battery industry as an example. The essential materials needed to produce these batteries, like polysilicon, largely come from the Xinjiang region of China, which is infamous for its use of forced Uyghur labour. For the most part, the polysilicon used to manufacture solar panels and batteries is produced by workers forced to labour under inhumane conditions.

These minerals and components find their way into our supply chains and are used in industries considered key to Canada's energy future, especially the transition to electric vehicles. Not only are these criminal practices a human rights issue, they also threaten the competitiveness of our businesses. By allowing these products to enter the Canadian market, the government is fostering unfair competition that forces Canadian companies, held to strict environmental standards and decent wage practices, to compete with products produced by exploited workers, obviously at a much lower cost.

It is vital to remember that China, despite its international commitments, continues to cover up and encourage forced labour practices in its factories. The Uyghurs, a Muslim minority, are persecuted and used for forced labour under conditions akin to modern-day slavery. Millions of these workers are forced to produce goods ranging from clothing and electronics to products used in the construction and renewable energy sectors.

The fact is, behind the cheap products on our shelves lies systematic and intentional exploitation. Our supply chains are contaminated by these unfair practices, and our government's response is inadequate. By allowing these products into our country, we are violating the ethical principles that we claim to uphold.

Almost two years ago, in March 2023, the Liberal government committed to legislating against the importation of products made with forced labour, but no law has been passed in the year since. There was even a unanimous motion adopted in November 2023 calling on the government to honour its commitments.

• (1145)

Once again, this government has failed to take any concrete action. Nothing has been done to effectively stop these goods from infiltrating our markets. This inaction is more than just a moral lapse. It is also a strategic error that will weaken our economy in the long term.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government has passed legislation, such as the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which systematically prohibits the import of goods from that region of China. These measures have been a model of responsibility, offering American companies protection against unfair competition from products manufactured under absolutely unacceptable conditions. In the meantime, the Canadian government, with no equivalent legislation, is allowing products made under slave labour conditions to enter freely. In 2023, no products were stopped at the Canadian border because of forced labour. While the U.S. intercepted thousands of shipments, Canada stood back and did nothing.

The lack of concrete measures puts our Canadian businesses at a disadvantage. They face foreign competition that uses absolutely unacceptable practices while benefiting from subsidies, weaker environmental regulations and inhumane labour practices. Our local manufacturers are subject to labour standards that ensure the dignity and safety of our workers. However, that generates additional costs that they have to cover in order to comply with these ethical principles.

The injustice does not end there. Our businesses also have to pay carbon taxes and comply with strict regulations. Meanwhile, China is not subject to the same restrictions and continues to flood our markets with products manufactured in deplorable conditions. This distortion of competition directly compromises our ability to be competitive on international markets and jeopardizes not only our competitiveness but also the jobs of millions of Canadians. The Liberals have failed to deal with this direct threat against our economy and our principles.

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In its March 2023 budget, the government announced its intention “to introduce legislation by 2024 to eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains to strengthen the import ban on goods produced using forced labour.” In its March 2024 budget, the government announced that it would implement a similar measure in 2024. To date, the government has not followed through on that commitment. It has not yet introduced any such legislation.

• (1150)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is in regard to Bill S-211. Through it, literally thousands of companies have come forward, as obligated by law, to indicate issues concerning the exploitation of labour. We have seen a very high percentage of forced labour being used in the supply chain. As a result, we are bringing in legislation that will hopefully provide more strength to Bill S-211.

Does the member opposite believe there is any obligation on the Conservative Party to allow legislation to not only be introduced but also voted on, so it can go to committee and go through the system?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, I think we have to be very vigilant about forced labour. We have to ensure that our actions are ethical. I would like to remind my colleague of something. I doubt he wants to talk about his government's inaction, but I want to mention the unfair practices that are being used abroad, internationally. Absolutely nothing has been done since 2023, and we are not protecting our market.

I think it is important that a new government be put in place. Our party will keep a close eye on this issue.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord for the sensitivity he showed in his remarks on an issue that is taking a major human toll. This is a serious blot on Canada's record and it is a disgrace. The Bloc Québécois has moved this motion to put pressure on the government to introduce the bill it has promised, not once but twice. The bill would seek to ban forced labour in Canadian supply chains.

We are in a politically charged environment. Let us imagine that an election is finally called and we put an end to whatever is happening here, or, rather, what is not happening. Would my colleague commit, on behalf of the Conservative government, to introducing this bill himself to ban forced labour in Canadian supply chains?

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important to be vigilant when it comes to forced labour in our Canadian supply chain. Again, we need to protect our market from products from China. This government has not done anything about that, even though there have been calls to take action since 2023. Unfair practices are being used, and they are undermining our Canadian market.

• (1155)

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we have this time today to remind the government of the promise it made in the budget this year to table legislation to eliminate forced labour from Canadian supply chains. However, when I asked the member for Bay of Quinte about whether his party would prioritize taking action on this, he said that we needed more competition. More competition is not going to solve getting rid of modern-day slavery and eliminating forced labour in Canadian supply chains. This effort would require corporations to have more disclosures when it comes to forced labour.

I know the Conservatives constantly talk about getting rid of red tape for businesses, which is something I support. In this case, and I support this too, do the Conservatives support ensuring that businesses are more accountable and put human rights first, or do they support allowing corporations to have a free ride when it comes to using modern-day slavery to make profit?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, again, we have to be very vigilant about forced labour in our Canadian supply chains. It is extremely important and I share my colleague's opinion. The fact remains that we are talking about China, which is sending us goods produced with forced labour. That is unfair to Canadian companies. We still wonder how our neighbours, the Americans, can already have intercepted thousands of shipments containing goods produced by forced labour, while we in Canada still have not done anything.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this issue. It is important to recognize the significance of it, because this place and the other place, the Senate, have already passed some legislation with respect to forced labour. However, that fraudulent legislation never did the things for which New Democrats have called for many years. The products and the types of impacts for an economy are certainly significant, not only with regard to the impacts on the individuals, most often being children, but also prisons and other places that we have to compete against with respect to our economy.

With respect to child labour, everybody likes to say that they are opposed to it, but at the same time they are knowingly allowing our supply chains to be affected by those types of economic contributors without repercussions. That is significant.

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The argument used to be that forced labour happened in some of the most suspicious companies out there. It may not have been mainstream companies, maybe ones not even traded on the stock market or ones that were from developing countries. In the last couple of years, we have seen an increase of forced labour in the supply chain, including by some companies in the United States, which were called out for this. This also included major automotive manufacturers, some of the gig economy and a number of different groups that we would not normally expect this type of behaviour.

Over the years, we have talked about trade, trade agreements, opening the markets and ending this type of practice. It has been used as an excuse over and over. When we actually needed the fight to happen, thankfully the former member for Essex, Tracey Ramsey, who represented the NDP at that time, fought to include labour and the environment in the new NAFTA. We can call it the USMCA, CUMSA or NAFTA 2.0, but the reality is that we finally have taken some modest steps and have incorporated labour laws in that trade agreement, as well as the environment.

That is significantly different, because the New Democrats raised this concern consistently as the country went down several different paths with regard to trade agreements. One after the other happened during the Harper regime and the Conservatives made sure that every time we tried to move amendments covering human rights, the environment and issues like child labour in the agreements, those amendments were defeated. Many of those countries still continue to have some of the practices we raised and they have an increased impact on our trade and supply chain to this day. The notion was that we were going to diversify our economy with these agreements, but we have seen the increase of these problems, not the decrease, related to the promises that were made.

On top of that, it was often said that Canada would get into a supply surplus with regard to those countries we had signed agreements with, but we have not. With every agreement, except for the United States, we are in a trade deficit. Therefore, not only did we enter agreements where we have lost part of the economy and have become a deficit trading nation, we have also surrendered any opportunity to effectively negotiate improvements for the environment and the economy.

From a mere selfish point of view, with regard to the use of this reprehensible part of our economy, is the self-interest of Canadians. Some who have come from those countries continue to lose their jobs or do not get economic investment because of child and slave labour that is continually used within the system. A recent report talks about some of these things.

The motion we are dealing with was promised before, in 2023, and we were supposed to have improvements. There was well-recognized criticism that what we passed would not improve things whatsoever. Basically, it has done the worst of things, which is to provide a shield for the government to hide behind when we know these practices are increasing.

● (1200)

We have also seen it in key parts of our economy like never before. I introduced legislation on knock-offs and other types of rip-offs related to copyright and other infringement, so CBSA officers could apprehend goods and services at the border and get proper

training. Counterfeit issues like that are important for the New Democrats.

We may not think they are that important. Sometimes this involves running shoes, purses, clothing or other items, but it has escalated to airplane, automotive parts and hospital merchandise. One of the things was electrical panels. Even things that appear to be copyrighted properly are part of the sophistication of organized crime that uses child and slave labour as part of their repertoire to bring in profits that go to other types of crime across the globe. It is important to recognize that we are not dealing with this in the supply chain in our country.

In the debates that took place before in this chamber, mostly from the Conservatives and Liberals at the time, it was noted that this would have an ill effect on the Canadian economy and consumers, so they had to risk keeping this and the environment out of trade agreements. The reality is that this will cost Canadians more in the future because the resources and profits from this into our supply chain is then used for other illegal activity. It is not like it goes back into the organizations growing their systems independently from that. The ones that use this are using other types of criminal activity with the resources from it.

It is one of the reasons why I fought for this for a number of years, and we did get the change. At one point, we used to be able to write off any environmental fine, penalty or criminal fine that took place as a business-related expense, and the NDP fixed that and had it eliminated through a budgetary process. I give Ralph Goodale credit. He had to write it into his budget because the rest of us collectively in the industry committee and others supported my motion to hold up the committee, and we doggedly pursued it. A number of different people, including all the opposition parties, were against the Liberals and fought it for over a month and a half until we got the Liberals to agree to do this. They finally did it after breaking their word three times.

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Specifically, it involves hundreds of millions of dollars per year. There were cases at that time where drug companies were illegally manufacturing harmful drugs. They went through the court system and were fined up to \$40 million, in one example, but then they got \$11 million back at tax time as a business-related expense. There were other companies that did environmental damage and would later get part of that money back, up to 50%, at tax time as a business-related expense.

It did two things that were absurd. First, criminal activity should never be subsidized, but it had been for decades under Liberals and Conservatives prior to that. It was attractive to invest in Canada because companies could do whatever they wanted. They would get caught and then they could get some of that money back at tax time. Second, it was also used as a subsidy against businesses that wanted to do the right thing and invest in proper environmental and other practices. Instead of dumping oil down the sewer system or somewhere else or using capture, containment and treatment incentives, which costs more money, the subsidies of the people who got caught later on would be the incentive to do it again and again.

There is no difference with regard to this case. If there are no economic repercussions of any magnitude, from the smallest to the largest, it only encourages reinvestment into child labour or the support of countries that continue to turn a blind eye to child labour and a continued dependency model that does not allow free market forces to enter in a competitive nature and provide products that do that.

One of the saddest examples I have seen of the abuse of this issue, in particular, is the decline in Toronto, but also, more specifically, the decline in Quebec of the garment industry.

• (1205)

For many years, we saw different types of trade agreements go through. Other countries, knowing the problems with that, would get preferential treatment to the Canadian market despite us raising these issues. I think of Jordan as an example. I think of when we went to the Caribbean. I think of other countries that moved their garment industries, especially in the Montreal region and other parts of Quebec, overseas. At that time, we were sold the lie that we could not manufacture anymore because it was not competitive enough. We were told that there was nobody willing to invest, that the workers could not do the jobs and that was why we had to let the industry go overseas.

We had the same philosophy with the tech industry. Everybody is complaining now because of the issues with respect to microchips. At one time, Canada was a world leader of that industry, which was in the Mississauga area of Ontario, but we let that go to a developing country. It is now the world leader. We are seeing the United States and others reshoring.

It was the same with the garment industry at that time. We were told all these different things and the only thing we could do was to accept it as *fait accompli*. All we did was push the problems further on. Then what happens is that when workers reunite in those countries to push back about that, the operators of this behaviour just move to another country. I think about some of the workers in Mexico and other places like that. This pushes it further away and there still is no solution.

I remember when we were looking at the current agreement under NAFTA with the workers who came from Mexico to Parliament Hill. The argument that was pushed against them, which was put out there by the right wing and those who believed in so-called free trade, was that it would take jobs away from those poor workers. If they wanted the same standards and the same or similar wages, then the companies would close and move those jobs unilaterally.

However, what we heard from those workers was that they needed us to stand up for them because it would never solve itself, that we had to put the actual measures in the agreement so that they could stop these people from reshoring outside of their zone. There would be something legislative related to the trade in the trade agreement between Canada and the United States. It would give them some empowerment, because it made it more difficult for those companies to then close the shops. They were willing to take that risk because they knew, and what had always been the case, that every single time they fought for something it would be diminished, it would be eliminated. Instead of raising everybody up, or partially up, it would then be taken away. By not addressing this issue, we see what has taken place in the Canadian economy.

One report that will come forward is on how child and forced labour continues to grow. Here are some statistics on it.

Canadian imports of risky goods totalled \$34 billion in 2016, up from \$26 billion in 2012, which is a 31% increase in the value of risky goods coming from countries with a higher incidence of child and or forced labour. It is pretty disturbing when we break out some of the data.

There was a 42% increase in garment imports from Bangladesh. We have also seen what has taken place with climate change in Bangladesh. We have seen the extreme poverty. We have seen all those different things, and we cannot continue to turn a blind eye to it.

There was a 97% increase in tomato imports from Mexico. That is significant for our region, which has the greenhouse industry. We have a number of different operators. As supply is increased into the market, we need to address this. This should be forced through our negotiations with NAFTA. We have to push on that harder.

There was a 107% increase in coffee imports from the Dominican Republic. That is another destination of choice for tourism, but at the same time, it has exploited the market.

There was a 124% increase in footwear imports from India. We can see again where we have had a detailed development take place in Canada with regard to the Modi government, not only with respect to how it operates but the difficulty in its own country with regard to human rights and the very openness of many things, including political and others. India's involvement in the Canadian electoral system and with respect to Canadian citizens should be a motivator for the government to bring into effect legislation that will be more significant to push back against that.

● (1210)

It is interesting. I saw this hands-off approach by Conservatives and Liberals first-hand. I am retired from hockey coaching at the moment, but I had a chance to coach for several years, until about seven years ago. Some parents on teams that we coached actually had people coming from India to train in the engineering field, then going back to India. They would take the job out of Canada. They actually had people coming into our country and training for those positions; people would then lose their job after training that person.

When we look at a country such as India, as in this instance, that should be motivation enough for the Liberal government to do this as a way of pushing back, very specifically and very carefully, to the benefit of many Canadians.

There has been an 8,852% increase in palm oil imports from Indonesia. This is another country that has some well-documented issues with regard to its human rights record. In fact, I got involved in politics in Windsor, back in the day; at that time, it was the Indonesian genocide in East Timor that later led to some of my work for the genocide recognition of this place, of Srebrenica and others.

There is a good, well-documented historical case there of problems. Do Canadians actually care about this issue? They do care. Right now, however, we do very little to educate Canadians, or to put information in front of the public, about who are the worst operators of this type of behaviour, and if they are in our supply chain, how we get them out.

If we are going to fall behind global leaders in regard to dealing with this, it would be at the expense of what Canadians want, and it is going to be at the expense of our jobs and our manufacturing. We saw what COVID did with the supply chain. It is interesting because it became attractive. There have been massive subsidies provided for the manufacturers and others over time to deal with the subsidization in other places with regard to the auto industry and other types of industries, including our buying a leaky pipeline and the umpteen billions that we are continuing to pay for, and paying interest on, as we are in a deficit projection right now.

There has been an increase in investment, and that should come with additional conditions in terms of supporting Canadians and their priorities. That is the way to deal with it. I was around all the time when they actually said, "No, we have to get into the service industry. We cannot do manufacturing anymore. It is not cost effective." They said all that.

Now you see even the right wing in the United States pushing to try to get some of these jobs. We also have some of the right wing in the U.S. funding some of those jobs.

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With regard to our position on this particular issue, we want to see the report come forward with the recommendations. We want to see Canada take advantage of tabling something. This is really important: Even if we table legislation here, it is not necessarily going to get through this chamber and the other chamber in time.

If we look at and actually check the government reports on this, five days ago, it was still calling for information with regard to opinions on this. Everything that it is doing right now to say it is coming in at the end of the year is just basically a whitewash of the reality that we saw none of this come forward until this committee report pushed the issue even further. This is something that I support and that New Democrats support.

We warned everyone that we would be in this situation. We warned that it is actually going to have a negative impact not only on the children's lives and the slave labour lives, but also the economy with regard to pushing Canadians with legitimate business interests and investment out of markets that they really should actually have an advantage in. That would provide taxes, resources, jobs and a series of different benefits. Then we would be able to help other countries with regard to bringing them into real compliance with our trade agreements.

As I wrap up here, I would say that it is really important to notice that we are in this situation for a reason. It is because successive Conservative and Liberal governments have been comfortable with this hidden secret, and when the rock is turned over, every single time, we see things scurry out. We know what is in there. It is also in parts of our newer economy as well. When we look at some of the electronics and some of the brands that are involved, we know that this is not going anywhere. In fact, it is getting deeper, as the stats I just read show. It will also play out across the globe with regard to minerals, resources and so forth. We are creating a dependency model, and all members in this chamber should be very uncomfortable because we actually set ourselves up to be at this point.

Routine Proceedings

• (1215)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have been talking a lot about Bill S-211 as a good, positive first step. I understand that the NDP voted against that particular private member's bill, which was sponsored through the Senate. The government has committed to bringing in further legislation in terms of first reading before the end of the year. I hope it will address some of the concerns that the member has raised. However, it is one thing for us to introduce legislation. We have other legislation that is actually on the Order Paper, some really good stuff. The NDP is actually supporting a lot of it, whether it is the citizenship or the protecting children over the Internet legislation, yet it all seems to be at a standstill. Could he just provide his thoughts in regard to how he believes we could overcome this?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, we just need to get the documents that we have been asking for; we can then move ahead. It is as simple as that. Second to that, if the government wants to, if it has legislation that is sitting on the shelf or whatever, there are certain components that it can actually release to the public. If it cannot physically table it here entirely, it can still table a lot of the different information about that legislation. It may not get here into the chamber right now, but it could actually get us ready to roll on this.

I could also bring up the fact that, if the legislation is in good order, we could actually have our critics work on it so that we could pass it expeditiously in the House. The government can do a lot of things, but I do not believe that the legislation is drafted and available. I have been waiting in the industry committee for amendments on Bill C-27 for almost half a year now, and we are still waiting for those amendments on its own government legislation.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, to my hon. colleague, with his long history on this file and his tremendous understanding of our industry, one industry that I am concerned about is sugar beets and sugar in Canada. We are down 8%, and we now import from various sources that do not have the same environmental standards we do in Canada. They used to have sugar beet refining in Ontario. They now grow them in Ontario but ship them a long way away, to Michigan, on trucks.

What would his opinion be on trade, that we are getting cane syrup from somewhere else in some of the countries that would not have the standards for labour or the environment that we do in Canada?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I actually appreciate this question. It is an interesting case. I am somewhat familiar with the sugar beet issue because it is part of how dependent we have become upon others for refining. We can start to look at some of the refining in Canada, for example, even the refining of rice.

The member brings up a really interesting point, which is that we are actually creating more production costs by having to ship products to the United States and deal with all kinds of different things. We do not have a good system in place to deal with it, and we could actually have the investment grow for refining, replacing manufacturing equipment and so forth. That is why I have been a strong supporter of the capital cost reduction allowance as part of manufacturing and making sure that the actual equipment gets the sub-

sidy and not the company, or reduced taxation, so that the equipment gets there. It is harder to take the equipment away, and this actually allows for the increased thing. Sugar beet refining is a good example of several sectors out there that may seem single and small on their own, but when we start to lump them together, we are losing our impact.

• (1220)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, here we are talking about forced labour and our supply chains. When we look at what is happening here in Canada, we had the report of the special rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery. She cited that modern-day slavery is happening today in our temporary foreign worker program.

In my riding, there were some workers who were working for a local mill, and they were living in deplorable conditions. There was no running water, no sewage treatment and no flushing toilets. The horrific conditions they were in were unbelievable. When this was uncovered, the government did not send inspectors in to come and help them. It took amounts of pressure to actually get them the support they needed.

Finally, they were removed by a local non-profit that helped house them and give them support while they waited a couple of months to get open permits. These workers were subjected to horrific working and living conditions.

In Port Alberni, our community is reeling from what happened to these workers, and it is a human rights issue that needs to be addressed. Could my colleague express the flaws in the temporary foreign worker program and what is happening to workers here at home?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, it was the Harper administration that really exposed us to and brought in this foreign worker program in 2014. We saw some things that were being done by the operators in this program, which are the companies. They have often been some of the larger companies, but there have also been family-owned ones that were very wealthy. I have seen this in the agriculture sector around my neck of the woods, for sure. The response by the Conservatives and Liberals on this issue was to subsidize the corporations and these rich families with more money, living condition supports and other types of taxpayer supports to help offset the cruelty that was taking place on their almost plantation-like systems of bringing foreign workers in there.

The excuse was that they could not find any Canadians for these types of things. At the same time, we had lots of Canadians in my riding who were willing to go out there, but they had no form of transportation. The wages are low, the training is bad, and the investment is poor. The response has always been to provide more subsidies to the corporations and to the rich families. That has to end. Canadians want to work, but there has to be proper transportation and safety; they have to be paid a fair market wage. Those are the reasons we see issues of fairness depressed with regard to wages and working conditions. It has to end.

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[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, we know that my colleague from Windsor West is a long-standing advocate for human rights. I think he has been in the House since at least 2006.

I would like to hear his comments about the federal government's inaction and the image it is projecting on the world stage. Above all, I would like to know how fed up he is with the fact that this government keeps kicking the problem down the road, year after year, and refusing to take concrete action to stop forced child labour from making its way into federal government supply chains.

[English]

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Bloc, who has also been part of the industry committee for many years, for raising this issue and other economic issues and how they relate to human rights.

He is absolutely correct; it is embarrassing not only on a level for our country but also for the House of Commons and the Senate. They pass phony laws that do not really actually affect what we say and do. When it comes to dealing with children, shame on us and shame on the other House for doing that; we actually use that as a shield to protect from real, good change. This has to end right now. We also have to make sure that we live up to our trade agreements with the United States and Mexico by pushing human rights and environmental rights in the agreement that we have. That is going to be more investment, not only in terms of fairness across the board for all of us, but also then being able to compete more internationally and to be stronger than ever before.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, to follow up on the question I posed, the member had indicated to just give the Conservatives what they want. However, the Conservatives want us to grab unredacted documents and hand them directly over to the RCMP. The RCMP has said it does not want that. The Auditor General of Canada has said they do not want that. Other legal experts have said that it should not happen.

Does the member believe that we should listen to the Conservative Party or the RCMP, Auditor General and other legal experts? Who would he listen to if he were me?

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

• (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There is an hon. member who is trying to answer questions, but he does not have the floor. I would ask him to wait until the appropriate time.

The hon. member for Windsor West.

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, we are talking about another issue, but I find it ironic. I was in this chamber when the Liberals, under their current leader, supported Stephen Harper over 110 times on confidence motions without getting a single thing from the Conservatives at that time. There was nothing on the environment, nothing on the economy, nothing on human rights and nothing at all for anybody on anything. Therefore, we will take no lectures from the Liberals in terms of their dilemma on how they deal with things. I saw the physical evidence as the Harper government tore

down labour rights, tore down environmental issues and invested in things that were not good for Canadians. During that time, we had austerity issues get reversed, and the Conservatives actually ran up one of the largest deficits in Canadian history. All of that was done with the support of the Liberal Party unilaterally, with not a single condition over 110 votes. That is important to note because that is the real history of Canada.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, respect for human rights, labour and the environment lies at the heart of our trade policies and our high-standard trade agreements. Canada's trade agreements prioritize Canadian values, focusing on workers' rights, environmental standards and opportunities for under-represented businesses like SMEs, women-owned businesses and indigenous enterprises.

It is the current government that signed the CPTPP, CETA and the new CUSMA agreement with our largest trading partners in both the U.S. and Mexico, and we will continue to create more jobs through trade as we continue to focus on opening new markets for Canadian businesses. More Canadian products shipped abroad means more good-paying Canadian jobs in communities across Canada.

I think it is safe to say that members of the House deplore the continued existence of forced labour in today's global supply chains. It is a priority that is very important to our government and that we have included in our budget to very clearly state that we would have legislation introduced by the end of this year. However, as we have seen, the Conservative members who continue to gum up the House, paralyzing the House and wasting millions of dollars are in fact blocking very important legislation like this from coming forward.

For those watching, it is important to note that the official opposition is in fact opposing the very legislation we were hoping to bring forward, by blocking and paralyzing the chamber using ill-informed tactics that no Canadians appreciate. Canadians want us to be able to work together to bring forward legislation that would help eradicate forced labour in our supply chains.

Forced labour traps workers in conditions of exploitation and abuse. It is a denial of human freedom and dignity. Forced labour is wholly incompatible with building a more prosperous, fairer global economy. It is a practice that undermines jobs and businesses where fundamental labour rights are respected. Enterprises that use and profit from forced labour not only deny the rights of their workers but also prevent Canadians and Canadian businesses from competing on a level playing field.

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Forced labour contradicts the values that we as Canadians share with so many other people around the world. It is a practice that Canada and the rest of the international community must look to end. There is no question that eradicating forced labour is both an essential task and urgent one. I therefore welcome the opportunity to inform the House about actions the government is taking to maintain Canada's leadership in the global effort to eradicate forced labour and to uphold workers' rights.

Members of the House will recall that Canada introduced a forced labour import prohibition in 2020. The change was part of implementing our trade agreement with the United States and Mexico, CUSMA. The prohibition operates to stop goods from entering Canada that are mined, manufactured or produced wholly or in part by forced labour or compulsory child labour.

I am proud to say that Canada was the second country in the world, after only the United States, to implement a ban on forced labour imports. The import ban remains a vital part of our effort to eradicate forced labour from Canada's international supply chains. It is also important to delivering on the common goal of all the CUSMA partners to eliminate all forms of forced labour. That is why the government has committed to introducing legislation this year that would make Canada's ban even stronger.

In October, the Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development launched public consultations on potential measures to strengthen the import ban. As part of this process, the government has published and is seeking feedback on concrete options to enhance the ban. The options include a possible requirement for importers of publicly designated at-risk goods to provide additional documentation on the supply chain journey of those goods when seeking to bring them into Canada. In short, this would place an onus on importers to demonstrate why the ban should not apply to any designated at-risk goods they wish to bring into Canada.

The government shares the ambition of members of the House to strengthen Canada's forced labour import ban, but at the same time the government recognizes the importance of consulting with all Canadians to ensure that any new measures would be effective and fit for purpose while maintaining Canada's economic competitiveness. We look forward to hearing from Canadian consumers, businesses and other stakeholders through the consultation process launched earlier this fall and to moving forward once their voices have been heard.

• (1230)

The government is committed to protecting labour rights and promoting responsible business practices in Canada's international supply chains. I know that all members of the House share these goals, including the goal of the eradication of forced labour in Canadian supply chains. The government looks forward to working with members of the House to adopt legislation to strengthen the ban and to give Canadians greater confidence that goods imported into Canada are not tainted by forced labour. My hope is the Conservatives and the Bloc end their silly tactics to jam the House so we can bring legislation forward to fight forced labour and support Canadians.

As we heard from both the RCMP and the Auditor General, there are processes in place for members of the House to bring forward concerns, and the Speaker has ruled on this as well, to further study the issue at committee. As we have heard, members opposite rightfully raise concerns of forced labour, and I hope they end their delay tactics in the House to seize up the floor so we can bring forward legislation on forced labour, which is very important.

We mentioned very clearly in our budget that we want to be able to bring forward legislation to make sure we eradicate forced labour from our supply chains. We know it impacts Canadian businesses. We want businesses to remain competitive, but again, it is very important for those watching at home to know that we are able to table and introduce the legislation while hearing the concerns of the Conservatives and the Bloc, but it is also important we bring forward legislation that supports Canadians and ends forced labour in our supply chains.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague began his speech by claiming that the Liberals' hands are tied because the Conservatives are gumming up the House. However, this promise is more than one month old. The House has only been paralyzed for a month. The Liberals promised in budget 2023 that they would take action by the end of 2023, but they did not do it. They made the same promise in budget 2024, which was in March, not September, but again, they did not keep it. I hope they will spare us their fake excuses.

My colleague seems to be saying that because the opposition is holding up the House, there is nothing the Liberals can do. When the opposition's privilege motion eventually ends, do the Liberals have a bill ready to put forward before Christmas? Time is short. I have a hard time believing that that they have a bill ready and waiting. People should be careful about making excuses.

• (1235)

[*English*]

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Madam Speaker, I had hoped to answer the question in French; I am working on my French.

The member's question is an important one. When we talk about forced labour, something that has come up in our international trade committee from the Bloc member is the importance of the legislation. I asked the member at committee, as well as outside the committee, whether, if this was so important and such a high priority for him, he would commit to ending what is happening in the House of Commons, the delay tactics, so we can ensure that we bring the important legislation forward.

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While there is more to do, our government already has a number of measures in place to address forced labour, including enforceable labour provisions in free trade agreements and providing assistance to partner countries. We all know this is a very complex issue that transcends international borders. We will continue to work with all colleagues here and of course abroad to introduce new requirements and enforce existing bans on goods made with forced labour. As I said in my speech, there have been consultations going on over the last couple of months with the businesses, industries and stakeholders that have a very important role to play in the conversation.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, in the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, there is a provision to prevent the use of forced labour in supply chains. The United States enacted strict and bold legislation to do this four years ago. It has seized goods worth \$3.62 billion because it took it seriously. The Liberal government has not taken it seriously. I know the Bloc Québécois cares about it and I know the NDP cares about it.

The Liberals do not care, because they have seized zero goods, not a single dollar's worth of goods in four years. They talk about some proposed legislation and say that they are doing this and doing that, but what they have done has accomplished nothing. How can the member stand here and justify the U.S.'s seizing 3.62 billion dollars' worth of goods and the corrupt Liberal government's seizing zero?

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Madam Speaker, the member opposite and I sat on the trade committee together, and I enjoy working with him.

I think it is important to note that CBSA has intercepted shipments; it has done due diligence. Of course there is always more to do and nothing is ever perfect. I think it is very important that in addition to shipment interceptions, we withdraw trade commissioner services that support businesses in trading, should they be found to be using forced labour. When awarding contracts, the Department of Public Services and Procurement Canada requires suppliers to agree to terms and conditions prohibiting the use of forced labour.

As I said, we are working across government and with international partners to ensure that Canadian businesses at home and abroad are not involved in supply chains involving forced labour. We expect Canadian companies around the world to respect human rights and to operate at the highest ethical standards. I think it is very important to go back to the point that we continue working with our partners, including CBSA, so we can eradicate forced labour throughout our supply chain.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have enjoyed working with the parliamentary secretary on the international trade committee for the past while. I know he is in favour of the motion here today because he voted for the original letter that we sent to the government.

The member mentioned responsible enterprise in his speech. I just wonder whether he could comment on the fact that the commissioner for responsible enterprise has been before us in committee twice, and that both times she has said that she needs more power to do her job. Nobody is sending her work, because she cannot do it. She needs the power to get documents and testimony from

companies, and she does not have that power. I want to know whether the member supports giving her that power so we can have responsible enterprise from Canadians around the world.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Madam Speaker, I do miss seeing the hon. member across the way at trade committee.

It is very important that he mentions CORE and the mandate we have given it. I know that the ombudsperson has active investigations going on with companies that are operating around the world. Again, as I said, we expect Canadian enterprises and businesses that are operating anywhere in the world to make sure that they respect human rights and environmental and labour practices. Yes, we do have a standard to keep here in the House, but we also expect our businesses and enterprises operating around the world to respect that standard and ensure that Canadian labour processes, environmental processes and others are followed.

● (1240)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the comments that the parliamentary secretary shared, and I appreciated the approach he was taking because I do believe that within the House of Commons we have important work to do, which includes government legislation and private members' legislation. Private member's bills have not been able to advance because the Conservatives refuse to put our country and our communities first. The Leader of the official opposition has silenced 18 Conservative members from even advancing housing issues and supporting municipalities. I am talking about fewer than 15% of members on their benches who are actually supporting municipalities by ensuring that their communities have adequate housing.

Conservatives will choose Conservative partisan politics before they will choose Canada. That is an approach we saw under former prime minister Stephen Harper, and we will see it happen again, so I hope Canadians are paying attention. Today the Bloc is defending the Conservative approach, which I find disappointing. I do usually appreciate the approach the Bloc members take because they tend to advance policy rather than partisan politics, but I know they want to divide our country. I do not stand for that. The NDP showed clearly in the by-election that it will also choose partisan politics.

Why is it that we are not able to advance legislation on the topic? I believe it is a really important topic, so I would like to hear the member's comments.

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Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned private member's bills. Bill S-211, which was brought forward to the House, brought up the very important issue from my colleague from Scarborough—Guildwood about forced labour. The member has a very good point: With the Conservatives' teaming up with other opposition parties gumming up the House, we are not able to bring forward important private member bills to ensure that we are able to support Canadians or even speak of legislation that can be tabled in the House, should the Conservatives end their delay tactics and filibusters and wasting millions of dollars by gumming up the House and delivering the same speech over and over again.

For the people watching at home, I will say that I get emails saying, "I heard that speech already. Why are we still talking about that?" I think it is important that the Conservatives follow the RCMP and the Auditor General's recommendations, because there is a process in place and the Speaker has ruled on the matter, so we can continue bringing forward legislation and members can bring forward their private member's bills.

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Waterloo for reminding us that, at the end of the day, if we really want to protect Quebeckers and give them access to the best possible goods, independence is the best solution.

In the meantime, I will talk about my colleague's speech. I think it is extremely disingenuous to claim that the reason the government has not yet delivered on its promise to introduce legislation to clean up supply chains is because the House is paralyzed. We know that the real reason the House is paralyzed is because the government refuses to hand over the documents to the House.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[English]

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Madam Speaker, we are ready to get to work for Canadians. I hope, as I said before, the Conservatives end their delay tactics and follow the processes in place. It is not up to MPs to talk down the RCMP or the Auditor General. It is important that we follow the process brought forward.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Prince Albert.

After hearing the parliamentary secretary's speech, I thought it would be fun for us to take a little trip back in time to understand how we got here and why Canada has such an abysmal track record on stopping goods made with forced labour from entering Canada. It is as a result of the corrupt Liberal government.

I have the former minister of labour's mandate letter from 2021, almost four years ago. The mandate letter says:

With the support of the Minister of Public Safety, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, introduce legislation to eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains...

That was in 2021. I just checked and it is 2024. No, we have not been asleep for these past three years. We have just watched the corrupt, incompetent Liberal government do absolutely nothing on

this file. Why would the government not do anything? Our largest trading partner, the United States, took bold action right away and has had remarkable success in seizing goods made with forced labour. Canada, on the other hand, has seized one shipment and then released it. That is the Liberal track record on forced labour.

We have to ask ourselves why. Why have the Liberals not done anything about it? Is it because, perhaps, Beijing-controlled companies donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Trudeau Foundation? That could be it. Could it be, according to journalist Sam Cooper, that members of the Liberal cabinet have been co-opted by Beijing influence? That could be one of the reasons. The result of this has been an embarrassment, and our trading partners are taking notice, including the United States.

We have an issue that has not gone away. In fact, in October 2022, a mere two years ago, the former minister of labour was at committee and I presented what was going on: The United States had taken bold action. It published an entities list that listed dozens and dozens of Chinese corporations that it knew were engaging in the use of Uyghur forced labour. Those entities were banned from bringing goods into the United States.

I asked the minister why the Liberals did not just copy it. If they cannot do the work themselves, why would they not just take it? I offered to hand it to the minister. I said we could cut down on goods coming in with forced labour right now. It would take five minutes. Did the Liberals do it? No, of course they did not. They did not use the United States' entities list.

What has been the result? The United States has now seized 3.62 billion dollars' worth of goods that were made with forced labour. Over the same period of time, how many goods made with forced labour has the corrupt Liberal government seized? Does anyone want to hazard a guess? Do any of the Liberal members want to hazard a guess? I will tell them how much: zero, nothing. The Liberals seized one shipment and had to turn it back.

One might ask why, if the Liberals went through the step of seizing these goods, they would ship them back. That is an interesting question. It comes down to the rules that Canada adopted to allow CBSA to seize goods. Those in the United States know this is tough, so they said that if a shipment is suspected of being made with forced labour, whoever is importing or shipping the goods would have to prove that they were not made with forced labour. The onus, the burden, goes back to companies, and of course, since most of them cannot prove it, the U.S. seized 3.62 billion dollars' worth of goods.

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• (1245)

What did the corrupt Liberal government do for the standard? It set the standard that the CBSA has to prove the goods were made with forced labour, which, with the resources the CBSA has, it cannot do. The CBSA seized one shipment, but could not prove that it was made with forced labour, so it was allowed to come into the country. The Liberals are actively allowing this to happen. They have taken no steps.

The minister was obligated in his mandate letter to introduce legislation. It has been almost four years, and the minister has not introduced a single piece of legislation to cut down on this. The government has not changed the standard that it forced the CBSA to adopt, which does not make it easier to seize goods made with forced labour. As a result, the CBSA has seized nothing. We know that goods coming into Canada are made with forced labour, and I think Canadians would be outraged if they knew they might be buying goods made with forced labour.

Forced labour is a despicable way to produce goods, and there have been videos and exposés on how this is happening, particularly in the Xinjiang region of China. For the Liberals to have done nothing is, quite frankly, disgusting. They now stand here and hide behind their refusal to provide documents from the green slush fund, as if this is the problem. They have had four years to do something. The debate on their failure to produce documents to show their corruption has been going on for four weeks, but this is suddenly the problem. This shows how bereft of a moral compass the government is.

I will go back to why this has happened. Why is Canada not doing anything under the Liberals to seize these goods? Is it because Beijing-controlled companies donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Trudeau Foundation? I do not know, but it looks a little fishy. Is it because there have been exposés by journalists who have made it very clear that there is a lot of influence from Beijing in the Liberal Party's cabinet?

When we look at the results of this, we are led to the conclusion that, as Shakespeare said, "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." There is something rotten in the Liberal government. It has been woefully inadequate in its response to the forced labour issue, and there are serious consequences to that.

The United States is our largest trading partner. Canada is a trading nation. It is in our free trade agreement with the United States that we have to eliminate forced labour from our supply chains. The government has not done that. It has not done a single thing in four years, and there will be consequences.

A giant report was just delivered to the United States Senate on forced labour in supply chains, and guess where the U.S. is pointing the finger. It is at Canada and Mexico. It is despicable that the government has done nothing to crack down on this while Chinese corporations abuse Uyghurs in forced labour camps and send goods to Canada with no fear of consequences. The government's lack of action is disgusting enough, but now it is putting our trading relationship with the United States in jeopardy. Why is it doing that?

There is something very rotten going on with the Liberal government on this issue. As I said at committee to the minister, the gov-

ernment could take quick steps right away. It could adopt the entities list that the United States has published. The United States government did its due diligence. It looked into companies that are known to produce things in the Xinjiang region of China or have supply chains that have goods that come from there, and it said these entities could not export goods to the United States. The government could just copy and paste that. I know the government has a hard time doing anything and copying and pasting would be so much work, but that is a simple way to right away crack down on the issue. It has not; it has refused. Canadians should wonder why.

• (1250)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, talk about being misleading. The member is full of something that I cannot say because it would be unparliamentary.

The member tried to give a false impression that the government has done nothing, but what would he say about the passing of Bill S-211? As a direct result of that legislation, not hundreds but thousands of companies are now registered, raising the profile of the issue so that we can bring forward legislation before the end of the year. Contrast that to Stephen Harper, the member's idol. He did zip, nothing. Oh, I am sorry. Harper's government signed a secret trade agreement with China.

I wonder if the member has the intestinal fortitude to apologize for misleading the House.

• (1255)

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the one who should apologize is the one who gave the unhinged rant that was just delivered.

Yes, a private member's bill was passed, which requires a voluntary website where they have to maybe disclose whether or not they think they might have forced labour in their supply chains. Look, I am sorry, but the bill is a joke.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the member called the legislation a joke—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry, but that is a point of debate and not a point of order.

The hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon has about 30 seconds to wrap up.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the Liberals passed a terrible piece of legislation. I voted for it, because at least it was better than the garbage the Liberals have delivered over these years. I do not know how that member sits there. You have allowed billions of dollars of goods made with forced labour to come into Canada, and you stand there and laugh. Your government is corrupt. It is a disgrace—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the member is pointing directly to me and saying "you". I can assure the member that I do nothing at the border. In fact, I support good legislation—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There was a point of order, and I will entertain that point of order, but then it became a point of debate.

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I will indicate to the hon. member that I was going to let him finish wrapping up, because that is where we were at, but he knows full well that he is to address questions and comments through the Chair. Also, the hon. parliamentary secretary knows that he had an opportunity to ask a question, but then kept interrupting the member while he was speaking. He knows full well that, if he is not recognized, he is not to respond until it is time for questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun.

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. Conservative colleague for his speech, which he embellished with the words of Shakespeare himself. We saw earlier that the Liberal government remains committed to working. However, when my colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue asked the Conservative member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord whether a future Conservative government would commit to introducing a bill on forced labour, he did not get an answer.

I would therefore like my hon. Conservative colleague to tell me whether the Conservative Party of Canada would commit to introducing a bill on this issue if it were to take power someday.

[*English*]

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, yes, we will absolutely eliminate forced labour from our supply chains, as opposed to this government that pretends it is going to and had a minister charged in their mandate letter to introduce legislation to get forced labour out of our supply chains, but no minister has done that. Instead, it relies on some private member's bill from a random backbench Liberal and says that it has actually done something.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, while we are talking about forced labour in Canada's supply chains, I want to talk about what is happening here at home.

We had the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery comment. She highlighted that the temporary foreign worker program in Canada is being used as modern-day slavery by some bad players. Now, in my hometown of Port Alberni, 15 temporary foreign workers had the courage to come forward, after working long hours and not getting paid overtime, not getting paid the wages they were promised and having no running water with 15 men living in a trailer, although there were initially 30 of them, exposed to unsafe working conditions. This was a company that the Conservative leader cozied up to and did a big photo shoot with. Guess what? When this became public, he was nowhere to be found to stand up for these workers.

Will the member condemn the San Group for what it did and how it mistreated these workers? We stand in this House and condemn what it did to those workers.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, it is well known how the temporary foreign worker program has been turned into a disaster by this NDP-Liberal government. What is amazing to me is the member from the NDP, and all the other NDP members, who could actually bring the abuse of this program to a halt. They could stop all of the corruption that is going on if only they had the guts to vote no confidence in this government. Instead, they continue to

prop up this moribund, corrupt Liberal government every chance they get.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

• (1300)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni had an opportunity to ask a question. If he has any more to add, he needs to wait until the appropriate time. It is not respectful to be trying to interject while someone else has the floor.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Madam Speaker, I can see that you are upset today, and I do not blame you; Canadians are upset with this debate we are having today. The fact that we are having this debate has Canadians upset because they thought this was being taken care of. They thought this issue was being addressed by legislation. Canadians would not believe what is going on and what has been going on at our borders and how the current government has broken our border system and broken our systems altogether.

I rise today to speak to this very important issue regarding forced and child labour in the supply chains and why the government must do more to rid the country of this problem.

Before I begin, I will give a bit of history. On January 1, the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act, known as the supply chains act, came into effect. It was not a great bill, but at least it was something. I was happy to see this private member's bill pass, as I voted for it along with nearly everyone in this House. That bill was the first step in Canada's long road to ridding our supply chains of forced labour and child labour. By asking the government departments and private businesses if their supply chains carry a risk of forced or child labour, we can begin to properly measure the size of the problem and take steps toward a solution.

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In this scenario, we are just talking about finding a benchmark. We are just trying to see how big the problem possibly could be. I will compare it to what my friend from Dufferin—Caledon, the shadow minister for labour, talked about in regard to what has been going on in the U.S. The Americans are not just identifying; they are actually taking action. We are at least identifying the issue. In the case of the supply chains act, identifying a risk of forced labour means that the government department or business determines there is some possibility that forced or child labour might have been used. However, what was learned by implementing the supply chains act is that Canada was late to the table. Numerous other jurisdictions have already implemented forced labour laws. This list includes the United Kingdom Modern Slavery Act, the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act and the Australian Modern Slavery Act. Many of our closest allies and trading partners drew the world's attention to the problem of modern slavery in supply chains and passed meaningful legislation to work toward a solution, but the current government took nearly six years to finally pass legislation and still fails to meaningfully enact it.

The Canada supply chains act took numerous years to become law. It was first proposed in 2021 and only received royal assent on January 1, 2024. The government was well aware of its pending implementation. In fact, many Liberals voted for this bill, including the Prime Minister himself. With near-unanimous consent by members of the government, supported by His Majesty's loyal opposition, and three committee hearings at the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, the government members cannot plead ignorant to the issue of forced labour in supply chains.

That then leads me to the matter we are debating here today: the government's failure to propose meaningful legislation that rids the supply chains of forced labour once and for all. Today's motion, that the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade presented on Wednesday, October 30 be concurred in, is an embarrassment for the current Liberal government. What we are debating here today is for the government to acknowledge that it has been dragging its heels with respect to implementing meaningful legislation that would combat forced labour.

Unfortunately, Bill S-211, while a positive step forward, is a limited step forward. It was limited in its mandate and, through the reports submitted by the Department of Public Safety, we have learned the Government of Canada and private businesses have a glaring problem. It was not as if the government was not aware of this, though. In the Liberals' budget presented in March 2023, the Liberal government indicated its intention to introduce anti-forced labour legislation by the end of 2024. The Liberals then followed up this spring with a statement and repeated themselves in the latest budget presentation in March, again indicating they wish to present anti-forced labour legislation by the end of 2024. It is now November 19 and there is no legislation in sight.

This is a grave dereliction of duty as it is the government's legislation that is required to fix this problem. Ignorance of the problem here is no excuse; it is simply laziness and incompetence. The Liberal government has been aware of the problem for years. Its own ministers voted on the topic in two budgets in 2023 and 2024. It was indicated that it was a priority for the government and yet,

nothing has happened. In the meantime, we have received government reports from the Department of Public Safety demonstrating the scale of the issue and the number of government departments that have identified a risk of forced or child labour in their supply chains. This is unacceptable.

● (1305)

I would like to make clear just how significant the problem of forced labour is in our Canadian supply chains and to do this, it is important to look at the statistics on the matter. Before I jump into those, I would ask my colleagues in the House to remember what we are really discussing here today. Modern slavery is not a singular problem. These are individuals and, in many cases, children who are victims of an abusive system. The supply chains act, Bill S-211, mandates the Government of Canada to prepare an annual report highlighting the prevalence of forced and child labour in the supply chain. With responses by government departments, agencies and private businesses, the Minister of Public Safety is responsible for tabling an annual report to Parliament.

This past September 30, we received the government's inaugural report, and it was not positive. In the report entitled "2024 Annual Report to Parliament on the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act", the Minister of Public Safety outlined the degree to which the government sourced supplies that carry the risk of forced labour. This is the report, a very damning report, excuse use my language, to the government, as the statistics will tell us.

In 2024, 17.2% of government institutions had identified that parts of their activities and supply chains had a risk of forced labour or child labour being used. Almost 20% of the government's own departments identified the possibility of child labour or slavery being used in their supply chains, the people they buy from.

Some 37.9% of government institutions started the process of identifying the risks, but highlighted that there were still gaps in the assessment. That tells us that a good chunk of departments still have not even done a full assessment at this point in time, yet almost 20% of those supply chains are at risk of using forced or child labour.

Some 44.8% had not started the process of identifying risks at all. That means 44% of government departments have not even gone through the process that they are mandated to do. We are getting stats of 17.2% of the supply chains for government without 44% of them even reporting. What is the actual number? It is disgusting, declaringly horrible, and yet the government has done nothing to fix it.

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To remedy the glaring issue that 17.2% of government departments that identified risk of forced labour in their supply chains, only two government institutions indicated they had implemented actions to prevent forced or child labour and associated harms from reoccurring. In all the government departments, only two are doing something, meaning there are numerous government institutions that are aware they have forced or child labour problems and have not done anything.

However, what I find even more concerning is that while responding to the questions was mandatory, again 44.8% of government institutions did not even start the process of identifying risks in their supply chain. Ignorance of the law excuses no one. “The head of every government institution must, on or before May 31 of each year, report to the Minister on the steps the government institution has taken during its previous financial year to prevent and reduce the risk that forced labour or child labour is used at any step of the production of goods produced, purchased or distributed by the government institution.” This is a direct quote from Bill S-211. That is what the Minister of Public Safety himself voted for. Why has he not enforced the laws he is mandated to enforce?

To conclude, it is beyond unacceptable that the Liberal government is not giving the attention that is required to remove forced labour from our supply chains. It is beyond unacceptable that the government continues to drag its heels on meaningful legislation that would rid our supply chains of forced labour. It is beyond unacceptable that 17% of government institutions had identified parts of their activities and supply chains that carry a risk of forced labour or child labour being used. It is beyond unacceptable that only two government institutions are trying to do something about it. The fact that 44% of government institutions could just opt out of reporting is also horrible, and it is ridiculous that the minister failed to do his job.

In fact, it is quite telling how little the government cares about removing forced and child labour that its own ministers and departments missed mandatory deadlines and failed to report information they are required to report. Forced and child labour in our supply chains has been identified as a leading issue by our allies. It is time we take it seriously. The impact this has on those who are exploited is unimaginable. Vulnerable people and children are victims of the government's inattentiveness and claiming that it did not know is inexcusable and, frankly, untrue.

It is time the government take the issue of forced labour and child labour seriously, and remove it from the government procurement process and our store shelves. We can see there are lots of things to talk about regarding this issue and there is not enough time. I have not even talked about the implications on trade and what it means to our allies when we are laggards.

● (1310)

The government is going around the world preaching to everybody about something while doing nothing about it here at home. This is another example of the government saying that they are going to do something but never actually accomplishing anything.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments and his

sensitivity. This major issue is a disgrace to Canada and the entire world. We must find ways to take action and change things.

My question is very simple. Will a future Conservative government commit to introducing the bill that the Liberals have been refusing to introduce for the past two years and since coming to power nearly a decade ago?

If we want things to change, we need a bill.

Will the Conservatives commit to introducing one?

[*English*]

Mr. Randy Hoback: Madam Speaker, it is not just about passing legislation. It is about having the ability to enact the legislation. We have a piece of legislation that has already passed, and they are not even acting on it. It is sitting there.

That is one thing that is different between Conservatives and Liberals. Liberals talk. They will talk and talk. We take action. When we say we are going to do something, we are going to do it. We stand behind our words. When it comes to forced labour, yes, we would see legislation brought in on forced labour. Not only that, we would see action to get it out of our supply chains.

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am disappointed to hear the member talk about the piece of legislation the Liberals already passed, and I was disappointed to see the Conservatives vote in favour of it. Bill S-211 was an empty bill and it was criticized by Amnesty International. It was criticized by Human Rights Watch. It was criticized by the international organizations that are working on the ground to try to end forced labour and to ensure human rights are upheld around the world.

I want to ask about contemporary slavery here at home. The United Nations special rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery has called the temporary foreign worker program a “breeding ground” for this kind of abuse. Some examples are wage theft, excessive work hours, limited breaks and physical abuse. Can the member speak to the urgency of not only addressing the horrific violations around the world but also addressing them here at home in Canada?

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Mr. Randy Hoback: Madam Speaker, those are two great questions. I will start off with the first one on Bill S-211. It is not a great piece of legislation. We agree with them on that. The reality is that it is a piece of legislation that gives us some benchmarks and some reporting tools to get a sense of how bad the problem is here in Canada. What we have seen is in the government's own departments, and 17.2% of them have child or forced labour as part of their supply chains. We would not have known that without Bill S-211. They would not have reported it or have been forced to report it. While not perfect, the legislation at least gives us some data we can move forward with and puts more accountability on the minister to see results.

In regard to the temporary foreign workers program, I have many examples of businesses that are using the program that are models. It has worked for both the employees and the employer, and it has been good for everybody involved. There are always some bad actors. There are always some bad examples, and we have to put in place the appropriate rules to get rid of those bad apples so it does not happen again.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to pick up on the discussion on Bill S-211 because it was legislation for which both the government and the Conservatives saw merit in passing. Today, we see many fruits from that. We are talking about thousands of companies that have now reported in because of that legislation. Through that, we have a very good sense of the degree of the depth of the issue. As a result, the discussions that preceded the writing of the bill that we will be seeing before the end of the year were well informed.

I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts on the important role Bill S-211 played in helping Canadians better understand the situation and that there are going to be ramifications.

• (1315)

Mr. Randy Hoback: Madam Speaker, the reality is that the Liberals knew it was a problem a long time ago. They did not need Bill S-211 to bring in legislation that would have done something to reduce the problem of forced labour. They could have taken action similar to what the U.S., Australia and the U.K. have done, but they chose not to.

When they brought in Bill S-211 and they started looking at the benchmarks, 44% of the government departments did not even report. Can the member tell me why that is? That is not acceptable. It is in the legislation that they have to report, yet they have not. Out of the 56% that did report, we know that 17.2% of their supply chains have forced labour in them.

The Liberals know they have a problem. They have had a problem within their own government institutions and their own procurement process, and they have done nothing to fix it. Only two departments have actually taken actions to try to curb this. The rest have put their heads in the sand, and the ministers have done nothing. In reality, they have done nothing to fix this problem. They have the data in front of them. They have had it for years. Where is the legislation? It is November. I still do not see it.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I must admit I am a little surprised that this is being dis-

cussed on the floor of the House today. I would have liked to have prepared a bit more, but here we are.

I am, surprise, surprise, the obscure backbencher who put forward Bill S-211. I thought I would share with hon. members and the public at large the journey, the four- or five-year journey, to this point when we are saying whatever it is that we are saying.

The concept of the bill was introduced to me at least four or five years ago, when World Vision sponsored some British legislators to come to Canada to talk about their version of this kind of transparency bill. I was kind of attracted to the idea. I thought it was a good idea, so I thought to myself, well, let us put together a piece of legislation.

We put together a piece of legislation and, of course, the process being the process that it is around here, the legislation died on the Order Paper, and we had an election, so that went nowhere. Then I did it again in the interim between 2019 and 2021, and it, too, went nowhere.

Meanwhile, both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party decided that this was something that should be in a platform. If we read the platforms of both parties, the commitments mirror Bill S-211 by some considerable measure. Both the Conservatives and the Liberals thought that transparency legislation would be good.

By this time, we thought maybe we should get a little bit smarter and introduce the legislation in the Senate. Then we would not be hampered by the peculiar rules of the House of Commons, where there is an order of precedence, and if a member is unlucky, their legislation is at the bottom of the order of precedence. However, if the member is lucky, they are at the top and get a chance to run a piece of legislation through the House during a mandate.

Then 2021 came along, and it was in both parties' platforms. We had a draft bill on order, ready to go. Indeed, four cabinet ministers had this kind of legislation in their mandate, and, arguably, this kind of legislation would have fulfilled the mandate obligations in their mandate letters.

We took the bill and made it a stronger piece of legislation than that in England, Australia or California. Canada went from laggard to leader in the process. We started the bill in the Senate this time, as the Senate does not have the peculiar rules of this place, and we were fortunate to be able to get the bill dealt with in an expeditious manner, virtually without amendment. Then it came here.

When it came up on the Order Paper, we had virtually the unanimous consent of members, and I think it was a unanimous vote, to move the bill from the floor of the House to committee.

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Then we had other parties, particularly the Bloc and the NDP, wanting to bolt onto the bill a whole bunch of things, which broadly could be described as due diligence. In simple language, due diligence in this case essentially meant that, if one discovers the supply chain flaw, they actually have to fix it. That is in the legislation that is in Germany and in France. It is an appearance of a good idea without actually being a good idea.

● (1320)

The immediate consequence of comparing due diligence in France with Canadian transparency legislation is that it would eliminate 98% of Canadian companies because the threshold for the French legislation was companies with at least 5,000 employees. Canada does not have that many companies with 5,000 employees. Because all the companies below that threshold would not have any obligation to comply with anything, we would have had an appearance of doing something good when the reality was something else, so we resisted the notion that we could bolt on due diligence legislation to this transparency bill.

We did make it a transparency bill on steroids because, unlike what was done with the Australian or English legislation, we brought in obligations to government entities, the theory being that we cannot tell people what to do and then not do it ourselves. If I have a disappointment, as my friend previous alluded to, it is that I wish that, in the final report, the government entities, and they are not just federal government entities but Canadian government entities, would have complied at a more vigorous rate than they ended up doing. However, we put that into the bill.

The other thing that was really unique about this bill that gave it some more teeth was that we obligated the senior leadership of the entity to sign the report. When a CEO or CFO signs a report, it becomes a public document. The consequence of becoming a public document is that various other entities read it. Suddenly, if one is borrowing \$100 million, the bank will read their supply chain report. If we had not put that in, one could say whatever they wanted to say. Now one has to have a sign-off from the CEO or CFO and it becomes a board obligation in the same way that, if one files a prospectus, one has to say that the statements in it are true and swear that those statements are true. Therefore, in the ultimate implementation of the legislation, which was over 6,000 entities, there were a lot of lawyers and a lot of compliance officers reviewing these statements for their truthfulness and accuracy. It became a pretty interesting disclosure of a significant amount of data.

When we went to the committee, we lost the support of the Bloc and the NDP, who in my judgment made foolish decisions about bolting onto a piece of legislation something the legislation was not designed for in the enthusiasm to run before one walks or finding perfection before one gets to the good. We then got it to the House for the final debate. The Conservative Party and the Liberal Party supported the bill. The cabinet supported the bill, and it received royal assent in May of 2023.

Then there was a period of time between May 2023 and the coming into force date of January 1, 2024, when guidance was written on how to report. There were extensive consultations with the industry writ large, the entities that would be caught by this legislation. I attended a number of seminars. I know that public safety

gave a number of seminars. The information was collated and the drafting of the expectations of the report was put together somewhere about this time last year. That is probably where it ultimately landed.

● (1325)

It came into force on January 1 of this year. The first reporting period was May of this year, and to my surprise, over 6,000 entities responded. The trouble is that we do not know out of how many. Maybe 10,000 entities should have responded. That is one of the flaws in the report.

The report was then tabled in September of this year. I have it on my table here. One thing that is disturbing about it is that 38% of the entities that responded confirmed they had identified that parts of their activities and supply chains carried the risk of forced labour, which means that 38% of 6,000 filing entities say they think they have a problem. These are the entities that responded. We have no information on those that did not respond.

The Speaker and I have spoken personally about this before. Canada has a significant problem with slave products in our supply chains. We are all members of a larger Canadian society, and we need to deal with this issue. I would urge colleagues to urge the government to disaggregate this data so that we know what problem we have. Also, as members have alluded to, we have a problem at the border. It is a real problem, a personal problem, and not only that, but it is becoming an international trade problem. One can be reasonably assured that this will come up in future negotiations for the USMCA and with various other trade groups.

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

[*Translation*]

The question is on the motion.

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

[*English*]

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

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

• (1330)

POINTS OF ORDER

USE OF PROPS IN THE HOUSE—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised on November 18, 2024, by the member for Edmonton Strathcona regarding the wearing of lapel pins in the House.

During Oral Questions that day, the Chair cautioned all members to be mindful in this regard. The member for Edmonton Strathcona argued that pins are regularly worn in the House without them being considered props. The Chair undertook to consider the matter and return to the House. Other members also intervened briefly on this matter.

Using visual displays of any kind to illustrate remarks or to emphasize positions in the House is normally considered a breach of decorum. Typically, members are called to order by the Chair when they use displays that cause disorder, no matter what message is conveyed. This extends to the wearing of buttons and lapel pins.

[Translation]

As stated in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 618:

While political buttons and lapel pins have not been considered exhibits as long as they do not cause disorder, the Speaker has interrupted a division to request that certain Members remove “props” from their lapels.

[English]

In a ruling on a similar matter, Deputy Speaker Savoie stated on June 23, 2011, at page 980 of the Debates:

We are in a grey zone because in many cases some buttons or scarves have been allowed. It seems to me from reading the precedents that the test is whether they cause disorder, and apparently they have this evening. I would ask that the buttons be removed.

[Translation]

As several members pointed out, including the members for Edmonton Strathcona and Kitchener Centre, there are sometimes situations where members of all parties wear pins, ribbons or displays to show their support for a particular cause and this elicits no reaction. In other cases, objections are raised as some feel they are being used as props to emphasize a political point about which there is some disagreement.

[English]

The Chair is in no way commenting on the worthiness of any particular cause, as I know members, as do all Canadians in general, hold strong views on a variety of subjects. However, our practice in this place is that members express their points of view through their words and their votes rather than through displays. Therefore, the litmus test just described, that is, whether a button or a pin causes disorder, will continue to guide the Chair in enforcing this rule of decorum.

Now, given the wide scope of interpretation involved, the Chair seeks the co-operation of all members to be judicious in choosing to wear buttons or pins and to be equally judicious in choosing to raise their concern with the Chair. I ask all members for their co-operation in this regard.

Speaker's Ruling

[Translation]

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable on a point of order.

Mr. Luc Berthold: I am asking for a quorum count, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: We will check.

And the count having been taken:

The Speaker: We have quorum.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am gravely concerned, because your ruling makes it very difficult for members of the House to know how to act going forward. My worry is that you are taking direction from those who are loudest, those who are most obnoxiously loud, sitting right next to you, rather than from all of those in the House equally. I have to say—

The Speaker: The hon. member is entering into debate, and I am going to ask her to read my ruling carefully. She will discover that the normal procedures and practices of this place will continue. I ask members to be judicious in what they do when either wearing pins or raising concerns with the Chair.

• (1335)

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The Speaker: I hope this is not an issue about the ruling that I just issued. I just ask—

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I would like you to respect my parliamentary privilege to raise a point of order.

The Speaker: The hon. member has the right to raise a point of order, but the Chair also has the right to stand up and ask whether it is with regard to the ruling I just gave.

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

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I just need clarification. I wear, for example, a red dress pin to signify the ongoing genocide against indigenous women in Canada. I have worn shirts to signify the genocide that happened to indigenous people. I am wearing—

The Speaker: The hon. member is now engaging in a debate on the ruling that I just gave. I will invite the hon. member, and all hon. members, to please read the ruling carefully.

The hon. member for Victoria is rising on a point of order, and I hope it is not with regard to the same issues that have been raised.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Speaker, it does not have to do with the pins. It is a point of order to ask for clarification about my colleague from Winnipeg Centre, who just rose to add new and pertinent information for you. I am asking for clarity on whether you will allow her to speak to give her point of order.

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The Speaker: I am afraid that is not a point of order. The Speaker has made a ruling. I invite the hon. member to take a look at it and not engage in debate. There are avenues she could proceed with on that point.

* * *

PETITIONS

FALUN GONG

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very gracious of colleagues to finally give me the time I need to table a sufficient number of petitions.

The first petition highlights the horrific persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in the People's Republic of China. We table these petitions regularly, but there are a number of practitioners and leaders of the Falun Gong community on the Hill today, and I think all members would join me in welcoming them.

In tabling this petition on the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, I want to highlight three specific cases of practitioners who are imprisoned in China: Sun Qian, a Canadian citizen from Vancouver who was illegally sentenced to prison for eight years simply because of being a Falun Gong practitioner; Xie Mingguang, the father of a permanent resident living in Regina who was imprisoned for being a Falun Gong practitioner and faces torture as a result; and He Lizhong, the brother of a Canadian citizen from Mississauga who was also illegally arrested simply for being a Falun Gong practitioner.

These and other cases of Canadian citizens or people with close ties to Canada who face persecution in the PRC because they are Falun Gong practitioners need to be highlighted. I join colleagues in highlighting these specific cases, as well as calling for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in general.

The petitioners want the House to take strong, clear action opposing the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners and to explicitly continue to call for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong.

UKRAINE

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the next petition I am tabling highlights the situation in Ukraine, as it is 1,000 days since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. I join colleagues in deploring that invasion and in calling for strong action to deliver the support to Ukraine, weapons and other forms of support, that it urgently needs and to do so without delay.

The petitioners further highlight some of the inconsistencies with respect to the immigration regime involving Ukrainians who have come to Canada, and they call on the government to allow Ukrainian youth, under the Canada-Ukraine authorization—

• (1340)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There is a point of order from the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I apologize to the member opposite, but what we have witnessed in the past is that he has a number of petitions to present. As other members would like

to present petitions, it would be kind of the member to let them do so. We can always go back to the member, but I understand there are other members who want to present petitions. I say this for what it is worth. In the past, the member has been very generous by allowing other members to table their petitions before he does his because he typically has a series of petitions.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I was going to advise the hon. member at some point that he needs to wrap it up.

Petitions are supposed to be summarized briefly. A number of individuals want to table petitions, so I remind members to be respectful of others who want to table petitions. The procedures specify that I have the ability to stop members from tabling petitions when others want to table them.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan has the floor.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, the point of order took much more time than I intended to take.

The petition I was just tabling highlights a call for Ukrainian youth to access the Canada summer jobs program.

FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will conclude with a petition in support of Bill C-257, which would ban discrimination on the basis of political belief or activity. The petitioners want to see the House support Bill C-257 to protect Canadians from political discrimination.

HONG KONG

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise to table e-petition 5137. The petition gathered 3,497 signatures. In addition, on a previous occasion, I tabled a similar petition that had 152 signatures on it. There are another 717 signatures to be certified from Toronto and another 247 signatures to be certified from Vancouver, for a total of 4,613.

The petitioners note that on August 12, Hong Kong's top court upheld the convictions of seven of Hong Kong's most prominent pro-democracy activists, including 82-year-old Martin Lee and 76-year-old Jimmy Lai, for participating in a peaceful demonstration on August 18, 2019. The group of 47, which includes legislators, were found guilty on May 30 in the exercise of their democratic rights for participating in the election primaries.

Chow Hang-tung and former leaders of the Hong Kong Alliance have been arrested for holding annual candlelight vigils in remembrance of the 1989 Tiananmen massacre. Given the extraterritorial reach of the national security law in article 23, there is ongoing fear of surveillance among the Hong Kong diaspora. In light of the recent spying charges laid against staff at the Hong Kong Economic Trade Office in the United Kingdom, Hong Kongers want to be reassured that this is not happening in Canada.

The petitioners are therefore calling on the Government of Canada to call on Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China to release Jimmy Lai, Chow Hang-tung, the group of 47 and others, whose only crime was to exercise their rights and freedoms as prescribed by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights; to stop according any special rights of diplomatic status to the Hong Kong Economic Trade Office; and, finally, to proactively apply sanctions under the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act against Chinese and Hong Kong officials.

GO TRANSIT

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of folks who note that residents from across Waterloo region have long expressed frustration with the unreliability and lack of access to GO Transit, particularly GO train service between Kitchener and Toronto.

The petitioners also note that our community has been promised two-way, all-day, GO train service every 15 minutes for over 10 years. They note that there is plenty of demand for this service and that research has shown that the demand will increase by 400% by 2031. The petitioners go on to note that the federal government committed 40% of the project cost, \$752 million, back in 2017, and that as of today there are no timelines to complete the project, leaving folks on overcrowded buses.

The petitioners call on a number of items from the Government of Canada, most notably to demand timelines for project completion from the province and to report back to our community on those timelines.

• (1345)

PAKISTAN

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to present two petitions today, both signed by the Pakistani community in Regina, Saskatchewan, and both concerning the well-being of former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan, who is currently imprisoned in that country for reasons that the United Nations have found to be an arbitrary detention and a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The first petition calls on the Government of Canada to direct the High Commissioner of Canada in Pakistan to visit Imran Khan in prison and report back on his treatment and condition.

The second petition calls on the Government of Canada to use diplomacy to call on the Government of Pakistan to release Imran Khan from prison altogether.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present these petitions today.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to table e-petition 5126, which has over a thousand signatures. It is particularly timely given that the Peace Train is arriving in Ottawa tomorrow, and many of its riders are signatories to this petition.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to establish and fund a centre of excellence for peace and justice fo-

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cused on research, education and training in conflict resolution, diplomacy and peace operations for Canadian civilians, police, military personnel and the international community. They highlight that with the closing of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, Canada has lost an important civilian-led, independent, institutional structure that supported effective research policy and training in peace operations and conflict resolution. They note that an open society and an informed public in Parliament is essential for the understanding of complex issues of violent conflict and for achieving lasting peace and disarmament; that the lack of universal respect for observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is the underlying cause of violent conflict; and that upholding the basics of justice, equality, freedom, security and well-being for all is essential in preventing conflict in war and for Canada's own security and stability.

The petitioners also highlight that Canada signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, pledging itself to achieve cooperation with the United Nations on the promotion of universal respect and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Last, the petitioners note that Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Canada's adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples reflect our commitment to the principles of justice, equality and freedom.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I table a petition signed by many constituents and others dealing with the growth of the Indo-Canadian community, which has been absolutely wonderful to see. However, one of the direct results of that is the demand to have international flights, not only from that community but other communities, which would see more international flights taking place between Canada and Europe, and in this case to India.

Ultimately, the petitioners would love to see a flight going directly from the city of Winnipeg to New Delhi.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 3003, 3010, 3019, 3024, 3026, 3031, 3033 and 3036.

[Text]

Question No. 3003—**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:**

With regard to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and the cost of raising a child in Canada: (a) what is the benchmark used within ESDC regarding the minimum cost of raising a child in Canada, broken down by the (i) age, (ii) province or territory of residence, of the child; (b) where does the benchmark in (a) originate; (c) how often is the benchmark updated; and (d) what formula is used to determine the benchmark?

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Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Employment and Social Development Canada, ESDC, does not use a benchmark as there is currently no officially recognized benchmark for the minimum cost of raising a child in Canada. Most analytical approaches that examine the cost of raising children focus on direct or out-of-pocket costs.

A 2023 study from Statistics Canada examined pooled data from the survey of household spending, SHS, for the period of 2014-17 to provide Canada-level estimates on child expenditures that account for children aged 0 to 22 years who live at home. The results from this study indicated as follows. A two-parent, middle-income family with two children spends about \$293,000, on average, from birth to age 17, an average of \$17,235 per year, raising a child. Two-parent families with two children and an annual income of more than \$135,790 spent on average \$403,910 per child from birth to age 17. The same sized family making less than \$83,013, by comparison, spent on average 52% less per child, or \$238,190. One-parent families with two children and an annual average income of less than \$83,013 spent on average \$231,260 per child from birth to age 17, while those making \$83,013 or more spent \$372,110 per child. When adult children aged 18 to 22 living with their parent or parents are considered, the overall amount spent rises by almost one-third, or 29%, for both single- and two-parent families.

Question No. 3010—**Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to the announcement made by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry on June 6, 2024, that effective immediately Sustainable Development Technology Canada funding would resume under reinforced contribution agreements with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED): for each agreement, what (i) is the name of the company with which it was signed, (ii) is the name of the project that is receiving funding, (iii) is the projected environmental benefit that is expected from the project, (iv) is the projected emission reduction that is expected from the project, (v) is the total cost of the project, (vi) is the total amount of funding announced, (vii) is the total amount of funding distributed thus far, (viii) is the total amount of funding received for the project from other granting agencies managed by ISED, (ix) are the criteria considered to be eligible for a project?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, ISED, maintains a single reinforced contribution agreement, CA, with the Canada Foundation for Sustainable Development Technology, SDTC, due to the arm's-length nature of the organization. SDTC was set up by Parliament to deliver funding to eligible recipients under a further distribution of a contribution funding model, and as such, ISED is not a party to the funding agreements between SDTC and ultimate recipients, that is, clean technology companies.

ISED has a CA with SDTC for the SD tech fund. The goal of the SD tech fund is to advance clean technology innovation in Canada, specifically by funding and supporting technology projects at the pre-commercial development and demonstration stages. SD tech fund funding is distributed to projects named in individual funding agreements that SDTC maintains with project proponents.

As per the CA, the two main objectives of the SD tech fund are to contribute to achieving Canada's environmental objectives, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, and contribute

to Canada's sustainable economic growth by enabling Canadian entities to compete globally in the clean technology sector.

ISED's CA with SDTC does not include projected emission reductions expected from individual projects funded under the SD tech fund.

The federal contribution to the SD tech fund under the reinforced contribution agreement for 2021-26 totals \$547,621,802, inclusive of the amounts already disbursed to SDTC.

Since 2001, funding announced for the SD tech fund has totalled \$2.1 billion and is as follows: \$100 million over five years in 2001, \$250 million over five years in 2004, \$200 million over five years in 2005, \$40 million over two years in 2011, \$325 million over five years in 2013, \$50 million over four years in 2016, \$400 million over five years in 2017 and \$750 million over five years in 2020, not all of which has been disbursed.

Since its inception, the Government of Canada has disbursed \$1,476,941,199 to SDTC.

Federal funding for the SD tech fund does not include funding from other granting agencies managed by ISED.

Project eligibility criteria for the SD tech fund, as outlined in ISED's CA with SDTC, include projects carried on or primarily carried on in Canada by an ultimate recipient to develop and demonstrate new technologies to promote sustainable development, such as technologies related to energy end-use in sectors such as transportation and buildings; technologies related to capture and storage, utilization and storage and more efficient technologies shown to result in a net reduction in greenhouses gases;

Technologies related to renewable energy and low-carbon fuel production and related technologies; greenhouse gas emissions reduction technologies related to areas other than energy production and use; air quality improvement technologies; enabling or cross-cutting technologies, including sensors and controls, energy efficiency, monitoring and data-enabled solutions; water quality and quantity improvement technologies, including wastewater treatment technologies and water conservation technologies; waste management technologies, including those designed to prevent, reduce or eliminate solid waste generation or discharge, as well as materials recovery processes;

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Soil quality improvement technologies, including the remediation of contaminants in soil and sediments; technologies related to the protection, management and restoration of natural systems; technologies related to sustainable agriculture and food production, such as precision agriculture, regenerative agriculture, indoor farming and alternative protein production; and front end development work, associated with technologies listed above, that will lead to final investment decisions for high capital-intensive projects.

Question No. 3019—Mr. Tako Van Popta:

With regard to the Lytton Homeowner Resilient Rebuild Program: (a) how much money has been distributed through the program to date; (b) how many recipients have received funding through the program; (c) what was the average payment amount received; and (d) how many applications have been received to date?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), for the Lytton homeowner resilient rebuild program, Pacific Economic Development Canada, or PacifiCan, distributed \$5,000 between May 31, 2023, and September 27, 2024. To receive the fire-resilient or fire-resilient and net-zero homes grants, the homeowner is required to complete home construction and meet all stated program requirements. As of September 27, 2024, two recipients were in the process of home rebuilding but had not yet achieved the requirement of completing home construction.

With regard to part (b), as of September 27, 2024, a total amount of \$477,856 has been committed toward six recipients.

With regard to part (c), the average payment to participants is \$5,000 as of September 27, 2024. The average is expected to be \$79,643 once grants are distributed.

With regard to part (d), as of September 27, 2024, PacifiCan received seven applications. The program will continue to accept applications until March 31, 2026, to help ensure as many eligible homeowners as possible can access the program on their rebuild timelines.

Question No. 3024—Ms. Lori Idlout:

With regard to the Indigenous Health Equity Fund for fiscal year 2024-25: (a) what are the details of all distinctions-based funding supports delivered to First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, including the (i) name of the community or Nation, (ii) amount of funding delivered, (iii) program authority under which the funding was authorized; (b) what is the total number of applications for distinctions-based funding that were (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) denied; (c) what are the details of all targeted initiatives that received funding, including the (i) community or organization name, (ii) amount of funding delivered or approved, (iii) initiative or approach funded; and (d) what is the total number of applications for targeted initiatives that were (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) denied?

Ms. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, starting in 2024-25, the Government of Canada is providing \$2 billion over 10 years, or \$200 million annually, through the indigenous health equity fund in support of indigenous-led approaches to increase access to quality and culturally safe health care services. Since it was announced in 2023-24, Indigenous Services Canada, ISC, has been working with first nations, Inuit and Métis partners on its design and implementation. As a result, this funding has two components. First, there is distinctions-based funding, which means long-term, predictable and flexible support for first nations, Inuit and Métis health priorities, at approximately \$190 million annually. Second, there is

targeted initiatives funding, which means short-term support to indigenous organizations for innovative, activity-driven and crosscutting indigenous health priorities, at approximately \$10 million annually.

With respect to distinctions-based funding, this funding support is being distributed annually as follows: \$142.5 million for first nations, \$28.5 million for Inuit and \$19 million for Métis. For first nations, funding is being distributed on the basis of population, with adjustments for community size and remoteness. For Inuit, allocations to the four Inuit treaty organizations are being provided as per the direction of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's board of directors, which is consistent with the Inuit Nunangat policy. For Métis, allocations to the Manitoba Métis Federation and current governing members of the Métis National Council are being provided as per their historical resolution on funding distribution.

With respect to implementation, it is important to note that the administration of funding is shared between ISC and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, with the former responsible for the distribution of funding to first nations and administration of the targeted initiatives program, and with the latter responsible for the distribution of funding to modern treaty and self-governing first nations, Inuit and Métis. While funding is currently in the process of being distributed to some partners, both departments are continuing to have discussions with regional indigenous leadership on how best to distribute this funding to their communities, which is respecting the principle of indigenous self-determination. Once these discussions conclude, funding will be fully transferred pending receipt of their implementation plans, which will provide both departments a sense of their priorities in health.

With respect to targeted initiatives, the program launched a call for proposal process on June 3, 2024. The deadline for submissions was July 31, 2024. Through this process, the program received nearly 60 proposals totalling more than \$24 million. The department is finalizing its review, and decisions on funding are expected by the end of October. As a result, it would be premature to provide information on who submitted plans at this point in time. More information on specific projects that will be funded under this program will be forthcoming once decisions are finalized and communicated respectively with indigenous organizations.

Question No. 3026—Mr. John Barlow:

With regard to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's AgriScience Program Clusters Component, broken down by year for each of the last ten fiscal years: (a) which organizations applied for funding through the program; and (b) how much was (i) requested, (ii) received, by each organization in (a)?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, AAFC, which includes the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency, undertook a 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. AAFC concluded that producing and validating 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.

Question No. 3031—Mr. Michael Cooper:

With regard to the government's announcement on September 27, 2023, that it would provide \$14 million to help Afghan refugees and host communities impacted by flooding in Pakistan: (a) what is the breakdown of the \$14 million, including how much went to (i) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), (ii) the World Health Organization (WHO), (iii) other recipients, including how much each received; (b) what are the details of the amount that went to the UNHCR, including (i) which specific projects it funded, (ii) how much funding each project received, (iii) who administered the project; (c) what are the details of the amount that went to the WHO, including (i) which specific projects it funded, (ii) how much funding each project received, (iii) who administered the project; and (d) what specific oversights were in place to ensure that the funding was spent appropriately and did not end up in the hands of the Taliban or other groups that were not intended to receive the funding?

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada, GAC, ministers.

With regard to part (a), on September 27, 2023, the Government of Canada publicly announced funding for two development assistance projects, valued at a total of \$14 million, in support of Afghan refugees and host-communities impacted by the 2022 flood crisis in Pakistan. Of the total \$14 million announced, \$10 million in development assistance funding was provided by the Government of Canada and directly received by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, for project implementation efforts within Pakistan. Of the total \$14 million announced, \$4 million in development assistance funding was provided by the Government of Canada and directly received by the World Health Organization, WHO, for project implementation efforts within Pakistan. None of the \$14 million announced by the Government of Canada was provided to or received by other recipients.

With regard to part (b), the funds provided to UNHCR by the Government of Canada supported essential services for Afghan refugees and host communities grappling with the flood crisis in Pakistan. The \$10 million in development assistance funded a bilateral Government of Canada project entitled "Essential Services to Afghan Refugees and Host Communities in Pakistan". The Government of Canada allocated the full \$10 million in development funding to this project. It is fully administered directly by UNHCR in Pakistan.

With regard to part (c), the development funding provided by the Government of Canada to WHO was in support of health services to Afghan refugees and host communities in flood affected areas in Pakistan. The \$4 million in development assistance supported the project entitled "Health Assistance for Afghan Refugees and Host

Communities in Pakistan". This project received the full \$4 million allocation. It is administered directly by WHO in Pakistan.

With regard to part (d), project funds were directly provided by the Government of Canada to UNHCR and WHO for programming delivered to support Afghan refugees and host-communities located within Pakistan. Global Affairs Canada exercises due diligence to oversee and monitor project implementation and delivery to ensure the effective use of Canadian funds for approved purposes. These efforts include, but are not limited to, visiting project implementation sites in Pakistan, meeting with project partners and beneficiaries in Pakistan and requiring that programming partners provide the Government of Canada with project financial and results reporting. In addition, the Government of Canada includes anti-terrorism clauses in its funding agreements with humanitarian and development partners to prevent funds from being diverted.

The links referenced are as follows. The Government of Canada news release, NR, project announcement, dated September 27, 2023, is at <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2023/09/canada-announces-funding-to-help-afghan-refugees-and-host-communities-impacted-by-last-years-flooding-in-pakistan.html>. Global Affairs Canada's project browser link for UNHCR implemented project information, last updated in September 2024, is at <https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/p012289001>. Global Affairs Canada's project browser link for WHO implemented project information, last updated in September 2024, is at <https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/p011526001>.

Question No. 3033—Mr. Kyle Seeback:

With regard to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) how does IRCC use artificial intelligence (AI) in the processing of applications; (b) what concerns or issues about the use of AI in the processing of applications is IRCC aware of, and how has each one of those concerns or issues been addressed; and (c) does IRCC use AI in any circumstances outside of the processing of applications and, if so, how is it used?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Paul Chiang (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, IRCC, uses advanced analytics, AA; artificial intelligence, AI; and other non-AI-based automated decision support systems to identify routine applications for streamlined processing and make positive decisions on these applications, as well as to perform other functions, such as the sorting of applications based on common characteristics and flagging potential risk factors that may then be investigated by an officer.

This enables IRCC to automate some processing steps for routine applications. By leveraging technology, IRCC is able to direct officer resources toward more complex applications and increase the efficiency of our processing.

These systems do not use opaque AI, do not automatically learn or adjust on their own and are not used to refuse any applications, recommend refusing applications or deny entry to Canada. IRCC does not use any external generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, in support of decision-making on client applications. IRCC officers remain central to immigration processing and continue to exercise their authority and discretion in decision-making.

With regard to part (b), IRCC is aware that the use of AI in the processing of applications raises concerns related to bias, transparency, privacy, accuracy, reliability, etc.

At this time, none of IRCC's automated decision support tools, including those that have been developed with AA and AI, can refuse an application, nor can they recommend a refusal to an officer. All final decisions to refuse applications are made by officers after individualized assessments of a file. Officers are provided with training on IRCC's automated decision support systems in order to ensure they understand that a lack of an automated approval does not constitute a recommendation to refuse an application.

To address AI concerns or issues, IRCC follows the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, TBS, directives and conducts algorithmic impact assessments, AIA, for all relevant automated processes and tool systems that play a role in administrative decision-making, whether these systems use AI or not. The AIA is a Government of Canada governance process intended to assist in determining risk and mitigate potential negative impacts of automated decision-making systems.

The department has developed detailed guidance, which includes a policy playbook on automated support for decision-making, to help consider how these technologies can be used responsibly, effectively and efficiently. IRCC has also established an internal governance framework to ensure that AI support tools go through a rigorous review and approval process, which includes coordination with legal experts, policy experts and privacy experts.

Furthermore, IRCC has endorsed its comprehensive AI strategy, which is being finalized to be published in the coming months. This strategy outlines the department's responsible approach to AI adoption, and places a significant emphasis on implementing strong AI governance while integrating new policies, guidelines and best practices.

With regard to part (c), IRCC uses AI beyond application processing: IRCC is piloting AI for fraud detection, for triaging client emails to provide faster replies and for aiding research and policy development. IRCC also uses AI-powered computer vision to help validate identities, to crop passport photos and, for the online citizenship test, to prevent cheating. IRCC uses natural language processing to categorize client enquiries, freeing officers for client support, which powers QUAID, a chatbot for handling general enquiries with pre-set responses. Lastly, IRCC has opened up public generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT and CoPilot, for employees to use for personal productivity regarding drafting emails, translation, drafting presentations, etc., and has provided guidance to employees aligned to the TBS policy on the use of generative AI for personal productivity.

In alignment with the Privacy Act and the Access to Information Act, IRCC has drafted internal guidance on the use of generative artificial intelligence in application processing. Employees have been clearly informed that entering personal, sensitive, classified and protected information into external AI tools is non-compliant with the Privacy Act and IRCC's approach. Additionally, IRCC is educating employees and following TBS's newly published "Generative AI in your daily work" directive, found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai/generative-ai-your-daily-work.html>, which describes how generative AI should and should not be used.

Question No. 3036—**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's announcement that Mark Carney would chair the Prime Minister's task force on economic growth, has the government: (a) received a list of who are the other members of the task force, and, if so, who are they; (b) been made aware of the dates the task force met, and, if so, on what dates; and (c) been provided with recommendations that the task force made related to economic growth, and, if so, what were the recommendations?

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Special Advisor for Water, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the individual named in the Order Paper question has not been appointed to any Government of Canada roles since October 2007, when he was appointed as Governor of the Bank of Canada by the Hon. Jim Flaherty, the then minister of finance.

* * *

● (1350)

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the Government's response to Questions Nos. 2999 to 3002, 3004 to 3009, 3011 to 3018, 3020 to 3023, 3025, 3027 to 3030, 3032, 3034, 3035, 3037 and 3038 could be made for orders for return, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

Routine Proceedings

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2999—Mr. Gérard Deltell:

With regard to government funding for Équiterre, since November 4, 2015, broken down by department or agency: (a) what are the details of each instance where the government provided funding to Équiterre, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) type of funding (grant, loan, contract, etc.), (iv) details of the funding agreement, (v) purpose of the funding; and (b) for each funding instance that was in the form of a contract, was the contract awarded through a sole-sourced or competitive bid process?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3000—Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:

With regard to government assistance available to clients of the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada: (a) what is the duration of the program from a client's date of arrival in Canada to its end; (b) what are the criteria for determining the duration of the program for each client; (c) what are the criteria required for extending the duration of the program, and for how long can it be extended; (d) what are the criteria for determining the allowance amount for each client; (e) what is the total possible amount of the monthly allowance per client category; (f) what is the total possible amount of monthly allowance under the employment incentive policy of the RAP program per client category; (g) what is the total amount to which RAP recipients are entitled per month through the child tax benefit per client category; (h) what is the total amount to which recipients are entitled per month through the RAP housing top-up allowance per client category; (i) what is the total amount of the start-up allowance entitled to clients of the program, broken down by client category; and (j) what are the minimum and maximum allowances of other sources of income available to RAP clients, broken down by client category and type of income?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3001—Mr. Clifford Small:

With regard to federally-funded salmon hatcheries in British Columbia, the Maritimes and Newfoundland and Labrador: (a) how many federally-funded salmon hatcheries are currently in operation in (i) British Columbia, (ii) the Maritimes, (iii) Newfoundland and Labrador; (b) what has been the yearly amount of federal funding spent on hatcheries, broken down by each of the last five years, in (i) British Columbia, (ii) the Maritimes, (iii) Newfoundland and Labrador; (c) how many salmon smolts were released in total from these hatcheries, broken down by each of the last five years, in (i) British Columbia, (ii) the Maritimes, (iii) Newfoundland and Labrador; (d) for each of the next five years, how many additional hatcheries are planned for (i) British Columbia, (ii) the Maritimes, (iii) Newfoundland and Labrador; (e) for each of the next five years, how many additional salmon smolts will be released in (i) British Columbia, (ii) the Maritimes, (iii) Newfoundland and Labrador; and (f) for each of the next five years, how much additional spending will be required for the additional hatcheries, broken down by each of the regions in (d)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3002—Mr. Clifford Small:

With regard to information held by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on Northern cod, Greenland halibut and redfish: (a) for Northern cod, what is the average catch rate (i) per net per hour in a 5.5 inch mesh in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization's (NAFO) areas 2J, 3K and 3L in kilograms, (ii) per hook used in NAFO areas 2J, 3K and 3L in kilograms, broken down by area in each of the last five years, based on fish harvester logbook submissions; (b) for Greenland halibut, what (i) is the average catch rate per net per hour in NAFO areas 2J, 3K and 3L in gill nets broken down by area in each of the last five years, (ii) percentage of migratory area is within Canadian waters compared to NAFO waters outside Canada's 200 mile limit, (iii) percentage of the quota is issued to the Canadian fleet vs NAFO allocation, (iv) has the biomass been for each of the last five years for the stock inside and outside Canada's 200 mile limit; and (c) for redfish, what is the biomass in NAFO areas 2J and 3K in each of the last seven years, broken down by area and year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3004—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the government providing financial aid to the Palestinian Territories (Gaza): (a) what is the total amount of financial aid given to the Palestinian Territories (Gaza) (i) between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2022, (ii) between January 1, 2023, and September 30, 2023, (iii) since October 1, 2023; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by specific federal program through which the aid was administered; (c) what are the details of each grant, including the (i) website where the grant is applicable online, (ii) date of the application, (iii) department or agency administering the aid or grant, (iv) purpose of the federal aid or grant provided to the Palestinian Territories (Gaza), (v) date of the provision of aid, (vi) recipient, (vii) file number; (d) was federal aid given directly to the Palestinian Territories (Gaza) or a third-party organization, and, if so, how much was given to each; and (e) if aid was given to third-party organizations, what (i) are the names of each organization, (ii) are the dates on which the aid or grant was provided, (iii) is the rationale for selecting each organization, (iv) is the total amount given to each organization, (v) reporting obligations were required from each organization on the use of the aid, if any?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3005—Ms. Niki Ashton:

With regard to the government's response to Order Paper question Q-2695 concerning individuals who were made to repay or whose COVID-era benefits such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, the Canada Emergency Student Benefit, the Canada Recovery Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit, the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit or the Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit were clawed back by the CRA: (a) what is the number of individuals with a COVID-19 benefit "repayment or clawback", broken down by (i) income group, (ii) province or territory of residence; and (b) what is the total number of individuals who were affected and the total amount which was repaid or clawed back by the government?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3006—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regard to the government's refocused spending initiatives in departments and agencies, broken down by item and year: what programs and initiatives from the (i) Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, (ii) Department of National Defence, (iii) Department of Veterans Affairs, (iv) Department of Health, (v) Public Health Agency of Canada, are expected to see funding refocused?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3007—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to board of directors' meetings at the Canada Infrastructure Bank in which a declaration, conflict, potential perception of conflict, abstention or recusal was noted in the meeting minutes from December 1, 2022, to April 30, 2024: what are the details of each instance noted in the meeting minutes, broken down by director, including (i) the decision in question, (ii) the amount of funding tied to the decision, (iii) the name of the entity receiving funding related to the decision, (iv) the name of the board member for whom a declaration, conflict, potential perception of conflict, abstention or recusal was noted, (v) the reason for which the declaration, conflict, potential perception of conflict, abstention or recusal was divulged by the board member, (vi) whether the board member held a private interest in the decision?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3008—Mr. Rick Perkins:

With regard to on-the-water and dockside enforcement patrols carried out by Fisheries and Oceans Canada enforcement officers in lobster fishing areas 34 and 35 from July 1, 2024, to September 20, 2024: what are the details of each patrol, including the (i) date it occurred, (ii) number of enforcement officers present, (iii) duration, (iv) lobster fishing areas covered, (v) number of tickets with fines issued, (vi) number of arrests, (vii) number of individuals detained, (viii) number of lobster traps confiscated?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 3009—Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to firefighter garments held, or purchased, by the government: (a) how many firefighter garments purchased by the government since 2015 contain per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) or finishes; (b) what are the details of each purchase in (a), including the (i) year of the purchase, (ii) company name of the supplier, (iii) company name of the producer, (iv) location of the producer, (v) total number of garments purchased, (vi) total cost of the purchased garments; (c) how many firefighter garments that contain PFAS or finishes have been disposed of by the government at any point since 2018; and (d) for each disposal in (c), what was the (i) total number of garments disposed of, (ii) method of disposal, (iii) entity or vendor that disposed of the garments, (iv) date of the disposal, (v) location of the entity responsible for the disposal?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3011—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to the Giant Mine remediation project: (a) how much of the over \$800 million that Public Services and Procurement Canada has received for the project has been spent (i) internally, (ii) on outside contractors, (iii) on consultants; (b) what are the names of the consultants in (a)(iii) and their organizations; and (c) how much has been spent to date on the project, in total and broken down by (i) purpose, (ii) recipient of the funding, (iii) date of the expenditure?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3012—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to the new General Purpose Sleeping Bag System (GPSBS) contracted by the Department of National Defence: (a) what are the details of the contract, including how much money was allocated for the (i) development, (ii) manufacturing, (iii) distribution, of the GPSBS; (b) which companies were contracted with regard to the GPSBS, broken down by the (i) contracting parties, (ii) value of the contract, (iii) nature or description of the work, (iv) start and end dates; (c) in which country were the GPSBS products manufactured; (d) how many of these GPSBS were manufactured in total; and (e) how many of these GPSBS were distributed to the Canadian Armed Forces?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3013—Mr. Robert Kitchen:

With regard to employment at the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) since January 1, 2019: (a) how many new jobs or full-time equivalent positions have been created at the PHAC, broken down by year; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by (i) type of position, (ii) location, (iii) Treasury Board classification level, or occupational group level, and associated salary range; (c) has the PHAC eliminated any positions, and, if so, what is the breakdown by year of how many jobs or full-time equivalent positions were eliminated; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by (i) type of position, (ii) location, (iii) Treasury Board classification level, or occupational group level, and associated salary range?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3014—Mr. Larry Maguire:

With regard to the production and printing of passports in Manitoba since 2015: (a) how many passport printers are active in Manitoba; (b) where are the printers in (a) located; (c) what is the total number of passports printed in Manitoba, broken down by year, at each location; (d) how many printer breakdowns have occurred, broken down by year, at each location; (e) on average, for how long did breakdowns disrupt printing operations; and (f) how many passport applications have been received at the Gatineau-Hull Service Canada Centre and Passport Services from Manitoba?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3015—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regard to federal health care investments, since October 1, 2021: (a) how many personal support workers have been trained as a result of federal funding, broken down by province or territory and by year; and (b) broken down by province or territory, what is the total number of personal support workers (i) currently working, (ii) earning at least \$25 an hour as a result of federal investments, (iii) earning under \$25 an hour?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3016—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regard to the Canadian Dental Care Plan, broken down by federal electoral district: what is the total number of oral health care providers who participate in the Canadian Dental Care Plan?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3017—Ms. Elizabeth May:

With regard to the Trans Mountain Corporation's management of the Trans Mountain pipeline and related spill hazards: (a) is the Trans Mountain Corporation prepared to contain diluted bitumen that will both float and sink depending upon conditions; (b) where will beach clean-up workers come from; (c) will the workers in (b) be trained for clean-up of hazardous materials; (d) is there a plan to protect citizens who want to assist in clean-up; (e) when will the fiber optic spill detection system be fully operational; (f) what length of the pipeline will not be equipped with dual leak detection at the time in (e); (g) where are the sections in (f) located along the pipeline; (h) how will the sections of the pipeline without dual-leak detection be monitored; (i) regarding Transport Canada's suggestion that, in the event of a spill in Burrard Inlet or English Bay, some people may require evacuation, what plans are in place to care for them; (j) how many people in the potential evacuation zone (i) have asthma or other chronic lung conditions, (ii) cannot tolerate fumes from a diluted bitumen spill, (iii) will need special care due to other disability during an evacuation; (k) how many evacuees are expected in the case of a marine spill; (l) has there been an assessment of local hospitals' capacity to handle casualties, including burn victims; (m) has there been an assessment of local emergency fire and rescue services' capacity to respond to such an event; (n) are response exercises being performed regularly, and, if so, how often; (o) do the fire services, who would be called in the event of tanker contents catching fire, have previous experience fighting the kind of wildland fires and structural conflagrations that would follow a large ignition in Burrard Inlet; and (p) have any studies been completed to confirm the feasibility of cleaning up diluted bitumen when spilled in various marine environments, and, if so, what are the details, including the (i) date of publishing, (ii) summary of its contents and conclusion?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3018—Ms. Elizabeth May:

With regard to the Trans Mountain pipeline in British Columbia (BC): (a) in the event of a diluted bitumen tanker spill requiring evacuations, does Transport Canada have guidelines for a response plan that would allow the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) to protect human health in BC; (b) can the federal government confirm the legal, environmental and human health liabilities that will affect the province as a result of the pipeline's operations; (c) what support is the federal government offering BC to ensure a response plan is in place in the event of a spill; (d) was the federal review of the Trans Mountain pipeline harmonized with the BC EAO's process, specifically in relation to human health and spill response; (e) if the review in (d) was completed, what steps were taken during this process; (f) were the steps in (d) documented and are the results available; and (g) is the federal government aware of the reason the pipeline operations have moved forward, sending diluted bitumen and increased tanker traffic ten-fold, despite the BC government not approving the final environmental certificate on marine response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3020—Mr. Tako Van Popta:

With regard to entities that owe tax to the CRA for unpaid excise tax on cannabis: (a) how many have filed for creditor protection or bankruptcy, broken down by year since the legalization of cannabis; (b) how much excise tax has been written off, in total, and broken down by the province or territory of the entity owing tax; and (c) for each entity which owed unpaid excise tax on cannabis and had their amount owing written off by the CRA, what are the details, including the (i) name of the entity, (ii) location, (iii) amount written off, (iv) date of the write-off, (v) reason for the write-off?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 3021—Mr. Philip Lawrence:**

With regard to government spending allocated towards port infrastructure projects in Canada since 2019, broken down by year and by department, agency, or other entity which provided the funding: (a) what was the total amount of funding provided to each port, including, for each, the (i) port's name, (ii) amount of funding, (iii) project description or purpose of the funding; and (b) for each instance in (a) where the funding was for a specific project, what was the (i) location, (ii) description, (iii) cost breakdown of the federal funding contribution and all other known funding contributions, (iv) total project cost?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3022—Mr. John Williamson:

With regard to on-the-water and dockside enforcement patrols carried out by Fisheries and Oceans Canada enforcement officers in lobster fishing areas 38, 37 and 36 from July 1, 2024, to September 20, 2024: what are the details of each patrol, including the (i) date it occurred, (ii) number of enforcement officers present, (iii) duration, (iv) lobster fishing areas covered, (v) number of tickets with fines issued, (vi) number of arrests, (vii) number of individuals detained, (viii) number of lobster traps confiscated?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3023—Mr. Michael Kram:

With regard to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program: (a) what has the government identified as the particular (i) engineering, (ii) geological, (iii) environmental, (iv) social, challenges of the Faro Mine remediation project; (b) what has the government identified as the (i) environmental, (ii) economic, (iii) social, costs and impacts of not undertaking remediation of the Faro Mine site; (c) what is the projected budget of the Faro Mine remediation (i) for the complete remediation, (ii) broken down by year until the project is completed; (d) have the consultants contracted by the government to date recommended any ongoing site maintenance after the projected remediation completion date of 2036-37; (e) what, if any, is the estimated duration of ongoing post-completion site maintenance; (f) what are the estimated annual costs for post-completion maintenance; (g) what were the total expenditures on (i) consultants, (ii) construction and maintenance, (iii) materials, each year from 2020-21 to 2024-25; (h) what are the details of all consulting contracts signed related to the program, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of the goods or services, (v) issues consulted on, (vi) manner in which the contract was awarded (sole-sourced or competitive bid); (i) has the government held any public consultations on the program since January 1, 2020, and, if so, what are the details of each consultation, including (i) the date, (ii) the location, (iii) the form (town hall meeting, online questionnaire, etc.), (iv) who conducted it, (v) the total associated expenditures, broken down by type of expense, (vi) the summary of the feedback received from the consultation; and (j) how many people does the government estimate are currently affected (i) directly, (ii) indirectly, by the mine site?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3025—Ms. Lori Idlout:

With regard to contaminated sites and waste sites in Nunavut: (a) what is the full list of all contaminated sites and waste sites for which the Government of Canada is responsible, broken down by (i) location, (ii) responsible federal department or agency, (iii) date on which the site was first added to the inventory of sites, (iv) priority level, (v) stage or status of remediation; and (b) what are the processes, formulae, methods, and any other considerations involved in the (i) determination of a site's priority level, (ii) reassessment of a site's priority level, including any factors that trigger reassessment and any timelines associated with regular reassessment?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3027—Mr. John Barlow:

With regard to the carbon tax or price on carbon: (a) what were the annual costs to administer the (i) collection of the carbon tax, (ii) rebate program, during the 2023-24 fiscal year; (b) how many employees or full-time equivalents were assigned to work on the (i) collection of the carbon tax, (ii) rebate program, during the 2023-24 fiscal year; and (c) what are the projected costs to administer the (i) collection of the carbon tax, (ii) rebate program, broken down by year between now and 2030?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3028—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to government employees and full-time equivalents at the executive (EX) level or higher: (a) what was the number of such employees during the (i) 2015-16, (ii) 2023-24, fiscal year, in total and broken down by department, agency, or Crown corporation; and (b) what was the amount paid in salaries and other financial compensation to such employees during the (i) 2015-16, (ii) 2023-24, fiscal year, in total and broken down by department, agency, or Crown corporation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3029—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since April 1, 2024: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or an estimate, (viii) amount spent on fuel?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3030—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Airbus and Polaris aircraft since April 1, 2024: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including the (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of the passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight, (vii) volume of fuel used, or an estimate, (viii) amount spent on fuel, (ix) type of aircraft?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3032—Mr. Kyle Seeback:

With regard to the processing of applications at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) how many employees or full-time equivalents have been processing applications at IRCC, broken down by month since January 1, 2024; (b) how many applications were processed by IRCC, broken down by month since January 1, 2024; and (c) what is the daily target or quota of processed applications for those IRCC employees who process applications?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3034—Mr. Jeremy Patzer:

With regard to government dealings with Brookfield Asset Management and Brookfield Global Integrated Solutions: (a) what measures, if any, are in place to ensure that Brookfield and its subsidiaries do not receive any special or favourable treatment when it comes to government procurement as a result of Mark Carney's appointment as an advisor to the Prime Minister; (b) are measures in place to remove the names of companies who submitted a bid from documents that go to those who award government contracts to ensure that government procurement managers or ministers who make procurement decisions do not give favourable treatment to Brookfield, and, if not, why not; and (c) on what date did each measure in (a) and (b) come into effect?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3035—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to contracts and agreements that the government has with Brookfield Asset Management, Brookfield Global Integrated Solutions, or any subsidiary of Brookfield, since November 4, 2015, and broken down by department, agency, or Crown corporation: what are the details of all contracts or agreements, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) original amount of the contract, (iv) current or final amount of the contract, (v) description of the goods or services provided, (vi) manner in which the contract was awarded (competitive-bid or sole sourced)?

(Return tabled)

*Privilege***Question No. 3037—Mr. Matthew Green:**

With regard to the implementation and enforcement of the Canada Labour Code's Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations, broken down by year and by individual department, agency, Crown corporation, including Canada Post, and federally regulated business: (a) how many notices of occurrence have been reported, and what is the breakdown of the notices by gender, ethnicity, and age; (b) how many assurances of compliance have been reported; (c) what is the number and individual value of fines that have been issued by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) for failure to comply with the Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations; and (d) what are the criteria used by ESDC to determine when to issue a fine for non-compliance?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3038—Mr. Matthew Green:

With regard to the Canadian Dental Care Plan, broken down by federal electoral district since the program's inception: (a) what is the total number of applications (i) received, (ii) approved; and (b) how many people have been enrolled in the Canadian Dental Care Plan, broken down by age group and by Disability tax credit certificate status?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[English]

PRIVILEGE

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

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

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canadians are getting poorer while Liberal insiders are getting richer. That is not my opinion; that is a fact. Per capita GDP is declining. It is lower now than it was nine years ago when the Liberal government was first elected. The total value of all the goods and services produced in Canada, divided by all the people in Canada, is shrinking. It is not shrinking in the United States. It is not shrinking in the rest of the G7 or the G20, but it is shrinking in Canada.

It is a fact that Canadians are getting poorer under the Liberal government. However, well-connected Liberal insiders have been getting richer over the last nine years under the Liberal government. That is also a fact; it is not an opinion. Canadians are getting poorer while well-connected Liberal insiders are getting richer.

I rise again to speak about the government's refusal to comply with an order of the House to deliver unredacted documents to the RCMP related to the \$400 million that Liberal insiders misappropriated and, in a staggering number of cases, voted to give money to themselves.

It is true that while we are debating Liberal corruption, we are not moving forward on solutions for Canadians like axing the tax,

building the homes, fixing the budget and stopping the crime. If the government continues to insist on acting in contempt of Parliament by ignoring a vote of Parliament, there can be no other business of Parliament. It is a matter of basic democratic accountability.

Therefore, I continue to demand that the government comply with the order of Parliament and release the documents. If it will not do so, it should call an election. That way Canadians can decide whether these documents should be released and whether they should choose a common-sense Conservative government to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Until then, we continue to debate this motion.

We need not look any further on the government's agenda, or lack thereof, about the business proposed if we suddenly allow them to get away without tabling the documents and shuffle the problem off to a committee to languish there.

One of the things that they had planned in their legislative calendar was to introduce a motion, not a bill but a motion, to further implement their long-announced but not actually legislated capital gains tax increase. We have had expert testimony at the finance committee, witness after witness, who have said all this tax would do is drive away investment, kill jobs, stifle innovation and further reduce productivity. It would not actually result in further revenue for the government because it would suppress Canadian GDP and reduce income taxes collected by the government.

Every day the NDP-Liberal government is unable to implement this tax is a good day. It is a good day for Canadian workers, a good day for Canadian entrepreneurs, a good day for Canadian investors and a good day for Canadians who rely on the services supplied by Canadian governments and who rely on the tax base and an increasingly productive economy rather than the one that is shrinking per capita under the government.

We heard testimony thoroughly debunk the government's claim that this tax would only affect 0.13% of the population. We heard expert testimony that hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of small businesses would be adversely affected. We heard expert testimony at the finance committee confirming that the tax the Liberals want to propose would kill 400,000 jobs. We heard expert testimony that the tax would reduce Canadian GDP by \$90 billion. How much tax revenue do they lose in suppressing \$90 billion of economic activity?

We are not interested in allowing the government to simply move on and not disclose the documents that have been voted on, the production order, which was supported by the House of Commons, move on to the rest of its so-called agenda. We have watched as the middle-class aspiration of home ownership has come to an end under the government. We have watched how rents and mortgage payments have more than doubled. Under the government's watch, we have seen how tent cities have proliferated every major city and town. Therefore, the government has had over nine years to deal with Canada's problems, and it has only made things worse.

Statements by Members

● (1355)

We are going to keep debating the motion until the government releases the documents to account for the \$400 million that the government's friends squandered and gave to themselves. We know that the government will not fix the budget. We know that Liberal insiders voted to give money to their own companies right under the nose of the minister.

Navdeep Bains went out of his way to appoint a new board of insiders, and then he sent his own senior staff to be present in the room when they voted to give themselves money. What kind of governance is this? The level of mismanagement and lack of proper governance that took place under Navdeep Bains, and also under the current minister, is amazing. We heard testimony at the public accounts committee yesterday, excuse-making by officials who did not know that this was happening right under their noses. It is nonsense. These were concrete choices and decisions made by the government.

I will insist that we continue to raise these points in the House of Commons until we get answers from the government and until it tables the documents. We will continue with this.

I move:

That the amendment be amended by adding the following:

“except that the order for the committee to report back to the House within 30 sitting days, shall be discharged if the Speaker has sooner laid upon the table a notice from the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel confirming that all government institutions have fully complied with the Order adopted on June 10, 2024, by depositing all of their responsive records in an unredacted form”.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The sub-amendment is in order.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

*[English]***UKRAINE**

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today marks 1,000 days since Russia began its further invasion of Ukraine. This is much longer than the three days Vladimir Putin thought it would take, but frankly it is 1,000 days too long. It should have never happened, and it would not have happened if the world had stood up to Russia when it invaded Georgia or when it invaded Ukraine in 2014. It would not have lasted this long if the world had provided Ukraine with the aid it needs to win the war.

Our government has said that Canada will stand with the Ukrainian people until they win and that victory is the only option. Victory is the only option because Ukraine's victory is essential to Canada's security. If Russia wins, it will not stop at Ukraine, and we know that because Vladimir Putin has told us so. If Russia wins, Canadians will be next in defending ourselves against Russian aggression, whether that is in Europe, in the Canadian Arctic or somewhere else.

Therefore on this anniversary, I urge MPs of all parties to ensure that Canada provides the help needed to ensure Ukraine's victory so we stop commemorating the days of Ukrainian courage and start

commemorating the days since Ukraine's victory, since it regained its freedom and its security, and since we regained ours.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

CROW'S NEST OFFICERS' CLUB

Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the tireless work of the Crow's Nest Officers' Club in downtown St. John's. It is a living museum that overlooks the National War Memorial, where Newfoundland's unknown soldier was recently laid to rest.

The Crow's Nest is sharing stories and artifacts on the role that St. John's played in the victory of the Battle of the Atlantic, the longest continuous battle of the Second World War, beginning at the opening days of the war in 1939 and ending almost six years later with Germany's surrender. The struggle for control of the North Atlantic came at a cost of over 1,600 Canadian and Newfoundlanders' lives lost.

The Crow's Nest is preserving and promoting the history of those brave men and women who fought so valiantly to defend and preserve freedom, all while remaining a welcoming place for all and a safe haven for allied navies.

* * *

*[Translation]***BATTLE OF VERTIÈRES**

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour the memory of former slaves who became soldiers during the Battle of Vertières in 1803. This was a major event in the history of the resistance to colonial oppression, yet it has never been mentioned in the House.

On November 18, 1803, the Battle of Vertières in northern Haiti dealt the final blow to Napoleon Bonaparte's army. It was the last battle of the Haitian Revolution. To this day, it remains the only example of slavery being abolished as the result of an uprising of former slaves.

On January 1, 1804, after troops were mobilized and the battle was won, Haitian independence was proclaimed. The whole world witnessed the birth of a new nation known as Haiti.

On this, the 221st anniversary of the Battle of Vertières, let us offer the Haitian community our respect and applause.

* * *

● (1405)

*[English]***CANADIAN CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION**

Mr. Parm Bains (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome the Canadian Construction Association to the House today.

*Statements by Members***CREDIT UNIONS**

Canada's construction industry is widely known to be about building structures and developing critical infrastructure, but it is important to recognize that construction is at the heart of our nation's economic strength, shaping communities like my hometown of Richmond, British Columbia and building the foundation of our nation's future. The sector employs 1.6 million people nationwide and contributes approximately \$164 billion to the economy annually, accounting for 7.5% of Canada's GDP.

With over 18,000 member firms across the country, the Canadian Construction Association is the national voice for the construction industry on public policy and legal and standards development goals, along with contractors, suppliers and allied business professionals working in or with the sector. I ask all members to find some time to meet with the CCA and discuss the future of construction in Canada.

* * *

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal job-killing oil and gas cap is a war on energy workers and powerful paycheques. The radical Prime Minister has failed to reach every climate target. He wants to shut down Canadian resources, trillions of resources that would fuel, feed and secure the world and bring home paycheques for our people.

The EU, Germany and Japan all want more Canada. Our allies are forced to spend billions overseas on dirty dictator oil from the Kremlin and from the genocidal, theocratic, unstable regime in Iran. Here at home we have the worst per person income drop in the G7, with one in four people skipping meals and with two million people at food banks. With the NDP-Liberals it is chicken today, feathers tomorrow. They scrape our cupboards bare.

Conservatives will axe the cap, axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, stop the crime and restore the promise.

* * *

WORLD DAY FOR THE PREVENTION OF AND HEALING FROM CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence, a day that demands our unwavering commitment to protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. As a member of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights, I heard devastating testimonies from hundreds of NGOs. These organizations are working in over 190 countries and territories worldwide, and they have revealed the brutal realities that children face in conflict zones.

Today we continue working together to advocate for children facing crisis around the world, including in Sudan, Palestine, Ukraine and too many more. Since 2016, Canada has contributed millions in humanitarian funding, but financial support alone is not enough. We must strengthen international protocols, enhance legal protections and create better support systems for children at risk. Every child in Canada and across the world deserves safety, dignity and an opportunity to dream.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since 2015, I have had the privilege of working closely with the Canadian Credit Union Association and its members, including IC Savings and Meridian Credit Union, which have locations in Vaughan. Credit unions are a cornerstone of Canada's economy. These 100% Canadian-owned institutions contribute \$8 billion annually and employ over 60,000 hard-working Canadians.

Today I rise to welcome over 40 credit union leaders to Parliament Hill for their annual advocacy day. Serving more than 11 million Canadians, credit unions are transforming communities, making home ownership attainable, empowering small businesses and making life more affordable for Canadians.

Through Bill C-59, we are supporting credit unions by modernizing the Income Tax Act, saving them hundreds of millions of dollars in future tax liabilities. We are also expanding membership eligibility in Payments Canada to better integrate credit union locals.

United by their values, credit unions are driving economic growth and empowering Canadians. I thank Canada's credit unions.

* * *

UKRAINE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 1,000 days we have witnessed Russia's unprovoked and unjust invasion of Ukraine. For 1,000 days we have witnessed horrific war crimes and atrocities committed by Russian soldiers. For 1,000 days Ukrainian civilians have been subjected to indiscriminate attacks by Putin's war machine and forced to endure violence and fear. For 1,000 days our hearts have been broken by all the innocent blood that has been spilled on Ukraine's fertile lands.

However, over these 1,000 days we have seen the incredible resilience and bravery of the Ukrainian people. For over 1,000 days Ukraine's armed forces have valiantly outperformed all expectations as they stood firm defending their homeland and Ukraine's very identity. For 1,000 days they have bravely fought for human rights, the rule of law, liberty and their right to self-determination.

Statements by Members

As Canadians and as Conservatives, we stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine. Ukraine's future is at stake. We must continue to support it.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

● (1410)

LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after hearing the outcry about his plan to cut billions in funding for more housing and silencing his Conservative MPs from advocating for their communities, we know that the Conservative leader had a rough week last week. It is hard to believe he is barring his own MPs from doing the most foundational part of their job, which is advocating for their communities.

MPs should be representing their communities in Ottawa, not imposing their leader's agenda back at home, but the Conservative leader won't even let his MPs do the job they were elected to do. One Conservative MP even told CBC that MPs are being stopped from helping their cities, for partisan reasons. It is clear their leader has no confidence in them, and they have no confidence in his leadership. When will they do the right thing, stand up for their communities, stand up to their leader and tell him he is not fit to lead?

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal government has made Canadians unsafe. Its catch-and-release policies have caused violent crime to increase by 50%. Such legislation as Bill C-83 makes life even easier for violent offenders in prison; now, they must be incarcerated in the "least restrictive environment". What that means is that an individual who abducted and then assisted her boyfriend in the sexually motivated killing of an eight-year-old girl in 2009 is now allowed to be in the presence of children through a mother-child program in a federal prison.

The Liberals have broken our justice system so thoroughly that sex offenders and killers, including those serving sentences for killing children, now have access to children in prison. Let us think about that. The government must be held accountable for its egregious failures.

A common-sense Conservative government will prioritize the rights of victims and the safety of all Canadians.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Liberal-NDP government, it has broken our immigration system. It ignored warnings from its own government officials, dropped security checks and even skipped vetting. This has caused chaos.

We have seen the fastest population growth since the 1950s; the Liberals now admit that this has put pressure on housing, health care and jobs. We have seen the highest surge in refugee claims ev-

er. We have seen tens of thousands of fake acceptance letters. The Liberals even let in alleged ISIS terrorists twice. The Prime Minister has made immigration a playground for fraud and abuse. Even his own ministers admit that the system is now out of control, yet he blames everyone but himself. He calls them bad actors. Maybe he is experiencing it differently.

After nine years, it is the Prime Minister who is the bad actor. He is in charge, and he is responsible; he has caused this chaos in our immigration system, and only common-sense Conservatives will fix what he broke.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HOUSING

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the Conservative leader had a tough week because of the scandal caused by his plan to cancel the housing agreement with Quebec.

Yesterday, we announced a major new investment in housing under this agreement. These investments will help fund several building projects over the coming years. This will add 8,000 affordable and social housing units to Quebec's existing supply.

Quebeckers cannot afford the Conservative leader's irresponsible plan to eliminate more than 8,000 social housing units in Quebec. I know that in Saint-Laurent, people understand that we need to do everything we can to build more, much-needed housing.

I will keep pushing for that.

* * *

● (1415)

[*English*]

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, November 20, is Universal Children's Day.

This is a day we recognize annually to promote and celebrate children's rights in Canada and worldwide. On this day, we recognize the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These rights include the right to be protected from violence and discrimination and the right to life, health and education.

Statements by Members

Today, there are delegations from UNICEF visiting parliamentarians, and I would like to salute the work of UNICEF and all child-focused organizations that take the time to educate us, as parliamentarians, about how to meaningfully improve children's lives. Over the last several years, we have seen absolute devastation for children in worldwide conflicts, including those in Ukraine, Palestine, Sudan and now Lebanon. International law and human rights are under attack, and children bear the brunt of these conflicts.

New Democrats will always stand for the rights of children. We will make space for children and young people to raise their voices on the issues that matter to them.

Happy Universal Children's Day.

* * *

[*Translation*]

UKRAINE

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as Jacques Brel sang, we never forget anything, we just get used to it.

After 1,000 days, it unfortunately seems that people are getting too used to the horrific war that is decimating Ukraine. No one can forget the massacres in Bucha. No one can forget the bodies of civilians lying in the streets. No one can forget the bombing of the children's hospital in Mariupol. We will never forget any of that.

However, as terror continues to stalk the streets of Ukraine, where no civilian is safe, as women continue to be raped, as children are casually murdered by an army that has abandoned its humanity and is using every means possible to instill fear, as the words “third world war” once again become a reality, the sad truth is that we are getting used to all of it. We never forget anything, we just get used to it.

Not forgetting is not enough. We must refuse to get used to it. Let us commend the extraordinary courage of the Ukrainian people. Let us support them and repeat today, with the same conviction as 1,000 days ago, “*Slava Ukraini*”.

* * *

[*English*]

ETHICS

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, Cree lawyer Leah Ballantyne, who is a survivor of the sixties scoop, was quoted as saying:

Identity fraud is fraud.... I think that somebody who has taken an oath of office to represent people in a level of government has an ethical duty to be honest to all constituents and all people in Canada, which in this case, [the Minister of Employment] has not done....

She is right. The Liberal minister falsely claimed indigenous identity. His company received government contracts using that stolen identity, apparently while consorting with cocaine dealers, and all while he was a sitting minister of the Crown. What kind of message is the government sending by allowing him to sit in cabinet? As Jody Wilson-Raybould said today, the Prime Minister is making a mockery of reconciliation and enabling “white people play[ing] ancestry wheel of fortune.” The fraudulent minister must resign, or the Prime Minister must fire him.

The Speaker: Order, please.

I was listening very attentively to the hon. member's statement, and most of the statement was within the bounds. The last sentence impugned a member directly, which is not permitted in this place. I am going to ask the hon member to withdraw that word so we can move on.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I was quoting a Cree lawyer who called the minister a fraud. He is a fraud, and I do not withdraw.

• (1420)

The Speaker: Order.

I am going to invite the hon. member to reflect on this. I see that she does not have questions coming up, and I will come back to the hon. member immediately following question period.

The hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

* * *

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Barbara McNish, who retires from her role as executive director of Samaritan House Ministries next month. For 28 years, Barbara has served in some way, shape or form with Samaritan House. Originally joining the organization in 1989 as a women's counsellor and coordinator, Barbara worked to support women and children escaping domestic violence. Over the years, she continued to serve in a variety of ways, ultimately becoming the executive director in 2020.

Under Barbara's guidance, Samaritan House grew to meet the rising needs of our community, from providing thousands of food hampers to offering critical services that empower individuals to have independence and hope. As Barbara steps into her well-earned retirement, her legacy of compassion and community advocacy is an inspiration to many. I am thankful to Barbara for her remarkable service. I send her my best wishes for rest, joy and new adventures in this next chapter.

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the Conservative leader had a rough week. While he is busy defending his plan to cut housing funds, Conservative members got an earful from their mayors and their constituents about their leader's reckless plan. We know this because we spent the whole week reading about it in the media. It is no wonder that Conservative MPs are going behind their leader's back to plead for funding and complain to the CBC about the gag order he has imposed on them when it comes to representing their communities.

Oral Questions

Meanwhile, in London, we added an extra 638 units for the people of London West who need it most. Conservative MPs are lucky to represent those who sent them here. They have a responsibility to stand up to their leader and to do it right in the House.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

ETHICS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, day after day brings new sordid details about the employment minister's scandal. Yesterday, we learned that his company shares a mailing address with an international drug trafficker who has been busted for cocaine not once but twice. The minister has been caught out in falsehoods, caught faking indigenous identity to try to secure government contracts meant for real indigenous people, and his company is under investigation for nine fraud-related counts. Why on earth has the Prime Minister not fired this man?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, I do not know the person referred to in that article. I have never met that person. It is stated in the article.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us recap the scandal so far. The minister said he was indigenous, even though he is not. He said his great-grandmother was Cree, even though she was not. He said there was another Randy working at the company, even though there was not. He said that he had nothing to do with the company while he was in cabinet, even though he did and his company got a contract while he was sitting around the cabinet table. In a normal government, any one of those scandals would be cause for dismissal. Therefore, why, in the current wacko Liberal government, does this man still sit in cabinet?

The Speaker: I ask members to be very judicious in their use of words.

The hon. Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has already answered this question multiple times.

However, there is one question we have not yet received an answer to. Why is the Conservative leader refusing to get his security clearance in order to protect himself and his MPs and future candidates in the next election? What does the Conservative leader have to hide? What is behind his refusal to be briefed on the risk of foreign interference in the next election, which he spends his days preparing for?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1425)

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier not to speak until he has been recognized by the Chair.

[English]

The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do not know what it would take for this guy to get fired by this Prime Minister. We do know what will get someone fired. Let us remember Jody Wilson-Raybould. She was fired for telling the truth about the Prime Minister's attempts to interfere in a criminal case. Here is what she had to say: "A Prime Minister committed to true reconciliation would have removed [this minister] (and the other Randy) from Cabinet long ago. Instead we get to watch white people play ancestry wheel of fortune."

How come, under this Prime Minister, a strong indigenous woman gets fired for telling the truth when a weak, fake-indigenous man gets to keep his job after lying?

The Speaker: Again, I am going to ask the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, who once sat in this chair, to withdraw that one word, which was directly used to another member, which would not be considered parliamentary.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw the word "lying" and replace it with "telling falsehoods".

The Speaker: I am going to ask the hon. member to withdraw the word "fake", please.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Just for the Speaker to clarify, is it the word "fake"? The minister is now admitting that he is not indigenous, so he admitted to be someone very—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, yesterday, a member was asked to withdraw that very same word, and the member did. Therefore, I am going to ask the hon. member if he could please do so.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw the word "fake" and replace it with either "sham", "imitation", "counterfeit"—

The Speaker: The hon. member—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to ask all members, please, not to take the floor while the Speaker is addressing Parliament.

It has been the tradition of this place to ask very tough questions to keep government accountable. It is important for government, of course, to provide very clear answers, but we try to do this in a way that allows people to treat each other with decorum and respect.

Oral Questions

The hon. member has sat in this chair in this position once before. Yesterday we asked a number of members to, when they were referring to a particular member, withdraw that same word that I am just asking for today. I just asked the hon. member to withdraw that word so we could just move on.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, when I sat in that chair, I heard the word “fake” being used many, many times—

• (1430)

The Speaker: I will come back to this issue at the end of the question period.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has the floor.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that little display of disrespect for that place is ubiquitous in how Conservative members treat this place. It is the very fact that they are trying to distract and make a mockery—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am going to ask the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston to please not take the floor when he is not recognized to do so.

I do not know if the hon. minister had finished her answer, because I was not able to hear her, so I am going to ask the hon. minister to start from the top.

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, I think this shameful display of disrespect from the Conservative members of Parliament for this place is on display today. It is exactly how they have been operating for the past couple of weeks. It is time for them to stop filibustering and obstructing the work of Parliament. It is time for them to start respecting this place and respecting the work we do here on behalf of Canadians. We have deposited up to 29,000 pages' worth of documents. The Conservatives need to stop these games and let everybody get back to work on behalf of Canadians.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets to please not take the floor. To all colleagues, we are wasting a fair bit of time. To make sure that members get going, we might have to cut a couple of questions from today, so let us make sure that we follow up very carefully and we listen to the instructions.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what time is it? It is time for the Prime Minister to fire the official languages minister. He claims to be indigenous, but he is not. His claims about his Cree great-grandmother are false. He says he is not the Randy from the text messages, the one who runs Global Health Imports, but we now know there is only one Randy in the company. What is worse, the company in which he is a shareholder received a government contract while he was in cabinet. The official languages minister must do the only honourable thing: resign in shame.

Will the Prime Minister fire this fraudster?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has answered these questions. He said that what the member opposite is saying is completely false.

It is time for the Conservatives to put an end to these partisan political games that go nowhere. They need to respect the House and let it get back to work. We need to make sure we can all do the job Canadians sent us here to do.

The Speaker: Again, I encourage everyone to be very judicious in their choice of words.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Official Languages is not just a fake, he is a chameleon. He lets nothing get in the way of advancing his own interests. All of a sudden, he is a journalist and political commentator for Radio-Canada and Les Affaires, even though he has only ever written a single article, and then there are all the other Randys: the indigenous Randy, the Randy who is not him, the Randy who is a business partner, the Randy—

• (1435)

The Speaker: I do not want to interrupt the hon. member, but he is skating on thin ice by using a minister's first name. I know he is referring to that hon. person. Referring to him five times is not okay.

I invite the hon. member to find another way to ask his question.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, there is a very simple way to get us to stop using the name Randy in the House of Commons and to use the name of the other Randy. The Prime Minister just has to fire the Minister of Official Languages.

When will the Prime Minister put an end to this charade and fire all the Randys? He can actually get rid of them all in one fell swoop by firing just the Minister of Official Languages.

Will the Prime Minister fire this fake, the Minister of Official Languages?

The Speaker: You are putting me in a very difficult position.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the Conservative members are doing today is unbelievable. They are demonstrating their total lack of respect for this place, for Canadian democracy and for what you are saying as the Speaker of the House.

Canadians see the circus that the Conservatives are creating in the House. They know that the Conservatives are turning this very important place into a joke. This is the seat of our democracy. What they are doing and how they are acting today is shameful.

*Oral Questions***CANADA REVENUE AGENCY**

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Radio-Canada obtained documents proving that the Canada Revenue Agency has known for months that, when it comes to fraud, it is about as watertight as a sieve. It has known since November 2023 that scammers were receiving bogus tax refunds. Instead of sounding the alarm, the CRA is covering up the problem. The CRA is hiding it from taxpayers, who have been robbed of more than \$100 million this year. It is keeping them in the dark about the fact that 31,000 of them had their personal information stolen.

Instead of trying to fix this, it decided to investigate its own employees to silence the whistle-blowers.

Will the minister clean house?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what my colleague is saying is false. We did not hide anything whatsoever.

I can assure the House that as soon as a tip comes in about potential fraud, we take the situation very seriously. The people concerned are called immediately. Their account is frozen immediately. Checks are done to identify the fraudsters, and our systems are tightened up accordingly.

We duly report all incidents to the Treasury Board, to the Privacy Commissioner and in the public accounts.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is impressive.

When it comes to crisis management, the Canada Revenue Agency is an example of what not to do. Here is the CRA approach to not solving a fraud problem. First, cover up the crisis until it makes the news. Second, conceal thefts of personal information from the Privacy Commissioner. Third, hunt down the whistle-blowers, not the scammers. I could not make this up.

In short, the CRA directors are more interested in avoiding blame than solving the problem. Their number one priority is to cover their butts.

Is the minister going to set them straight on their priorities?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am willing to do whatever it takes. We are already doing that. My colleague's claims are false. They are completely false. We did not cover up anything.

As soon as the system is breached or an attempted fraud is detected, the account is frozen. The affected individuals are notified. We find the scammers and report the incident. Yes, we report the incident in accordance with our procedures. We now provide quarterly reports to the Treasury Board, to the Auditor General and in the public accounts.

* * *

● (1440)

TAXATION

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is going up, rents are going up and the price of groceries is going up. The Liberals have let ev-

eryone down. The Conservatives are going to make cuts everywhere, and that is going to make life even more expensive.

Quebeckers deserve better. They need a break. The NDP is proposing that we get rid of the tax on groceries, children's clothing, heating bills, the Internet and cell phones. For once, we are going to make rich CEOs pay.

Will the Liberals have the guts to do it?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for once we agree with the NDP. It is true that the Conservatives' economic plan is to make cuts. They will cut health care, day care and the help we have provided for businesses. We know the Conservative plan.

If there is one thing people watching from home know, it is that, on this side of the House, we believe in investing in Canadians. We believe in investing in families. We believe in investing in health care, because confident countries invest in their citizens.

We will continue to invest in Canadians.

[English]

Ms. Leila Dance (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Manitoba families are paying more and getting less at grocery stores. Prices are going up on everyday items, and the size of packaging is getting smaller. Families need a break. They need relief now.

The Liberals are letting people down, and people in my riding know that Conservatives will cut and gut the important things we need, costing families thousands of dollars. The NDP will help families by removing the GST off essentials like groceries, kids' clothing and diapers.

Why will the government not give families the break they need and remove the GST now?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our Liberal government has been working to help families put food on the table and in their kids' lunch boxes. We know the Conservative leader would pursue dangerous cuts. The difference could not be more stark. While Liberals work to ensure kids have food, Conservatives would cut the programs that Canadian families are relying on. I do not know what the Conservative leader's obsession is with these dangerous cuts.

* * *

ETHICS

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems that either the employment minister or the other Randy may be moonlighting as a magician. We know he says he is indigenous, even though he is not. We know he stole from indigenous Canadians. We know he said he was not involved in his company when he was in cabinet, but he was.

Oral Questions

Today, perhaps as a magician, he has made his business partners disappear. Shawna Parker and Felix Papineau have disconnected their phone numbers and deactivated their emails and are nowhere to be found, to avoid the scrutiny of Parliament.

Will the minister stand up, wave his magic wand and tell his business partners to show up here?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a real shame to hear so many falsehoods uttered in so little time in the House. It is a real shame that the Conservatives are investing so much of their energy in falsehoods that lead the House astray, skew opinion and distract the House from what really matters, which is working for Quebeckers and Canadians.

One thing we still do not have an answer to is why the Conservative leader, who is usually seated next to the member, did not go get his security clearance so he could protect her and all members of Parliament in time for the next federal election.

[*English*]

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the minister does not know where to find these individuals, perhaps he can ask the other Randy, who is still very much in contact with those partners.

Even the Liberals are taking note of this humiliating and fraudulent affair, Liberals like Jody Wilson-Raybould, who called it, “So shameful and extremely destructive!” The Prime Minister fired the first indigenous attorney general, but kept the first fake indigenous employment minister. That is some version of reconciliation.

When is the Prime Minister going to fire the employment minister and the other Randy?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has addressed those issues. He has stated that what the member opposite said is false.

What we want to know is why the Leader of the Opposition is silencing his members of Parliament. Why will he not allow his members of Parliament to speak on behalf of their constituents and advocate for their communities? All we hear from the Leader of the Opposition is the silencing of his own members of Parliament. Why will he not just let them speak?

● (1445)

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Employment is embroiled in allegations of fraud. He almost certainly violated the Conflict of Interest Act. He got caught pretending to be indigenous in an effort to steal government contracts from legitimately indigenous-owned businesses. We have now learned that the minister has a business connection to a cocaine trafficker.

In the face of all that, why is he still in cabinet?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the member is cobbling together all sorts of falsehoods in an attempt to make this story

make sense. The minister has repeatedly responded to these questions and false allegations. What we still do not know is how the member who just asked the question is going to protect himself from foreign interference in the next election if the Conservative leader refuses to get his security clearance.

How will he know that he is protected from foreign interference in the next federal election?

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one must ask why the Prime Minister has not seen fit to fire the minister. Could it be that the Prime Minister violated the Conflict of Interest Act not once but twice? Could it be that the Prime Minister is a cultural appropriator, having worn blackface more times than he can remember?

Is it not the case that if the Prime Minister were to fire the minister, he would have to fire himself?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians are witnessing today is very disturbing. On many occasions, questions were asked and answers were provided, but the real issue that Canadians are asking at home is why the leader of the Conservatives will not get a security clearance, will not get a briefing and will not do his job. That is what Canadians are concerned about.

Get the clearance, get the briefing and do your job.

The Speaker: I would invite all members to ensure they speak through the Speaker, whether they ask questions or give answers.

The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Official Languages said he was indigenous so he could get money from programs for indigenous businesses, even though it is clear that he is not indigenous. He also says that he is not the notorious Randy who runs his own business, but we know that only one Randy works there. This minister is a fraud and a fake. He is corrupt.

Beyond all the smiles at the G20, is—

The Speaker: I have asked all members several times to be very careful about the language they use. This time, the language being used is aimed directly at another member of the House. I invite the hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles to withdraw his comments and ask his question again.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Official Languages said he was indigenous so he could get—

The Speaker: I would ask the member to first withdraw his comment, which contained offensive words. Then he can ask his question again.

Oral Questions

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: I can withdraw my comment about the minister being a fraud and a corrupt person. Instead I will say that he committed fraud and engaged in corruption.

Does that work?

The Speaker: No, that does not work.

I invite members to follow the lead of the other members who asked questions yesterday that were entirely acceptable.

I invite the hon. member to withdraw his comments. Then he can reword his question. Otherwise, I will move on to the next question.

• (1450)

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that the minister was a fraud and that he was corrupt. I will instead say that there were allegations of fraud and corruption against this minister and I am calling on the Prime Minister to kick him out of cabinet.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles seems to be having a hard time expressing himself today. There is something we would like his thoughts on, and that is the narrative of his Conservative leader, who claims that the agreement we have with the Government of Quebec seeking to build 8,000 social housing units is not currently allowing any social housing to be built. There are several dozen units in his own riding, including those in the Monterosso project, that are being built right now.

When will he invite his Conservative leader to go see for himself that the housing projects in his riding do actually exist?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not having a hard time expressing myself today; the minister is simply trying to create a huge diversion. What we do know is that the official languages minister pretended to be a successful businessman and journalist during the 2015 and 2019 elections. He even claimed to work for CBC/Radio-Canada and a newspaper called *Les Affaires*. We know this is not true. What is more, he made people believe he is indigenous in order to try and get funding from programs for indigenous businesses. This minister no longer deserves to be in cabinet.

Will the Prime Minister show him the door?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has already responded to this slew of falsehoods.

What we still have not heard is the opinion of the Conservative MP for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles. The Monterosso project is in his riding. Dozens of affordable housing units are being built thanks to the agreement we signed with the Quebec government exactly one year ago. However, his Conservative leader says these units do not exist.

When is he going to invite me and his Conservative leader to visit the magnificent Monterosso housing project, which, according to his leader, does not exist?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[English]

The Speaker: I am going to ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, for the second time today, to not take the floor when he is not recognized. I would not like to remind him a third time.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has once again dropped the ball when it comes to passports. Just as the federal government is being questioned about its border plan in response to Donald Trump's deportation threats, Radio-Canada is reporting that the federal government issued a passport to a criminal human smuggler known to the authorities, a repeat offender involved in human trafficking at the border. He was involved in the deaths of nine migrants in the river last spring. This is the man Service Canada issued a passport to.

How can the government be so dangerously incompetent?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the allegations are true, that passport should not have been issued. I am checking internally with Service Canada and the security agencies. I will be happy to report back to the House at the appropriate time.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ): Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that we are worried about the federal government being unprepared to deal with Trump's deportations? The federal government says that everything is just fine at the border, but we have learned that it issued a passport to a notorious human smuggler. Again, when it comes to border management, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. It is maddening.

How many human smugglers with brand new passports are freely crossing the border?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said very clearly in my previous response, I will be pleased to address the House in due course and explain exactly what happened. If the allegations are true, that passport should not have been issued. We will conduct internal checks before speaking about this issue publicly.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the human smuggler in question was arrested in 2008 for possessing two Canadian passports that were not in his name. He was arrested again in 2017 for human trafficking. He was arrested again in 2021, and that is when the federal government confiscated his passport. After all that, he applied for a new passport and the government issued him one in 2023.

How has no one noticed that these human smugglers are calling the shots at the border right under the federal government's nose?

• (1455)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has invested a lot in protecting our border and will continue to do so. We reversed the cuts that the previous Conservative government made to the Canada Border Services Agency. We gave the RCMP the tools it needed to work with its U.S. partners to keep the border secure.

I am very proud of the operation that the RCMP carried out a few weeks ago with its U.S. partners. Thanks to that operation, several human traffickers and drug traffickers are now facing criminal charges.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to get government contracts, the Liberal minister from Edmonton said that he was indigenous, but he is not. He said that he was not the Randy who was involved in the ongoing operations of the company that was applying for government contracts, but text messages show that he was. He also said he was not directing his company from the cabinet table, but we now know that is not true. These things are not true, not true and not true.

We do not know which minister the Liberals are going to stand up, but what we want to know from the minister is this: Do they think this behaviour is appropriate, and do they think that he should remain in cabinet?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has already responded to those questions, but what I find really interesting is that today marks a thousand days since Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine began, and we have not heard a single question about this from the Conservative members of Parliament. This is unsurprising from them, given the fact that, when it comes to their support for Ukraine, it has been wavering over the past year. On this side of the House, we stand for Ukraine. Do the Conservative members of Parliament?

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the minister showed up for work, but she must have been late enough to not hear our statement, in which we of course expressed our support for Ukraine.

Let us focus on the facts. The facts are that the Liberals' cabinet colleague is involved with cocaine traffickers and that their cabinet colleague is pretending to be indigenous in order to disenfranchise indigenous-owned companies and indigenous people. That is who they are in league with.

The minister cannot seem to tell the truth to save his own life, so Randy or other Randy or pretend indigenous Randy, none of them should be in cabinet. Why will they not fire this fraudster?

The Speaker: For the second day in a row, the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, in the very last part of his question, is using language which just cannot

Oral Questions

pass in this place. Will the hon. member just simply withdraw that word? Then we can move on.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, the word “fraudster” is withdrawn.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has the floor.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I guess the member opposite was not paying attention to my answer, because I said we were halfway through question period and I had yet to hear a question from the members opposite about the war of aggression by Russia on Ukraine.

Let us look at the facts. This time last year, Conservatives were holding up and voting against the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, an agreement that Ukraine had asked us for as an ally. When it comes to meaningful action, they do everything they can to hold back support from Ukraine, and we are seeing that today too.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I ask the member for Battle River—Crowfoot to please not take the floor when not recognized by the Chair.

The hon. member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock has the floor.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, reports continue to reveal one false statement after another about the employment minister's claim of indigenous heritage. The fact that he is still in cabinet has laid bare the reality that truth and reconciliation mean nothing to Liberals. We found out today that the company co-owned by the minister, GHI, is in fact greenlit to bid on government contracts. This is the same company that falsely claimed to be wholly indigenous owned while inventing this fictional other Randy and sharing a mailbox with an alleged cocaine smuggler.

Will the Prime Minister just end the charade and fire the minister?

• (1500)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems apparent that the Conservatives only want to talk about reconciliation when it is an allegation. They do not want to talk about reconciliation when we are talking about investing in first nations housing or helping indigenous people ensure their opportunities to have economic success or procure from the government in Canada. Why do they not want to talk about that? Their record is shameful. In fact, they have continually cut services for indigenous people when they were in power. We will do the opposite.

Oral Questions

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during committee and just now, the Minister of Indigenous Services refused to defend her colleague, the pretend-indigenous Minister of Employment. The Minister of Employment pretended to be indigenous so that his company could steal contracts from indigenous communities and businesses. While the Prime Minister continues to be the defender of the pretender, even his cabinet colleagues are losing faith.

This question is for the Minister of Indigenous Services: Will she stand up and defend her cabinet colleague, or should he be fired?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just moments ago I was speaking with the national chief about the shenanigans that are happening at INAN committee as the Conservatives attempt to undermine the study of the water legislation that so many first nations have poured their heart and soul into. They are preventing it from getting to this place and hopefully eventually to Senate. They talk about standing up for first nations people, but when they have the chance to be allies, they completely drop the ball.

* * *

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is up, and Canadians cannot keep up. Meanwhile, oil and gas CEOs pollute our planet and gouge Canadians, all while raking in billions in profits. The Liberals have let Canadians down.

This past week in Victoria, Common Horizon hosted a Make Them Pay town hall, calling on the government to make rich CEOs pay what they owe.

Will the Liberals listen to Canadians and finally put an excess profits tax on big oil and gas?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would say that the government has been listening to the voices of Canadians, who are concerned about climate change. They are also concerned about building an economy that will thrive in a low-carbon future. We have put into place a plan that is cutting carbon emissions, which were accelerating under the Harper government. It is just a shame that the NDP has abandoned its commitment on climate change and is walking away from the price on pollution. There are over 100 million tonnes of excess emissions because of a decision they made to collaborate with the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada. On this side of the House, we believe climate change is real and we are going to fight it.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, nobody believes the fauxgressive Liberal government, because they bought a pipeline. However, back to the question at hand. Just 10 kilometres from this place, the Ottawa Food Bank is overwhelmed. Last month, like food banks across the country, it saw a higher number of visits than ever before. The cost of living is up, and more and more people who never thought they would need a food

bank need one now. The Liberals have let people down, and the Conservative cuts are only going to make things worse. It is our NDP plan to remove the tax on grocery items, diapers and kids' clothing, which will finally bring some relief.

Will the Liberals finally act for Canadians?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I visit food banks and speak to volunteers here in Ottawa and across the country, they share with me not only the pride and the importance of what they are doing but also the importance of the Canada child benefit and how it impacts the families they serve. It is not only the Canada child benefit but also moving forward with the national school food programming, ensuring that kids at school have access to food when they need it. I will not be lectured by the Conservative MPs when time after time—

● (1505)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kings—Hants.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been widely reported that Conservative MPs have written to the Minister of Housing, advocating—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will ask the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake to please not take the floor unless recognized.

The hon member for Kings—Hants can start again.

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, it has widely been reported that Conservative MPs have written to the Minister of Housing, advocating that their communities should receive federal housing money, and that is exactly what MPs should do. However, what is shocking is that the Conservative leader has banned them from advocating for their communities and imposed a gag order on them for even talking about these initiatives. This is just because he wants to cut housing funding.

Can the Minister of Housing encourage Conservative MPs to find their voice or provide them a witness protection program so they can keep communicating, and can he explain what the Conservative leader's cuts would do to homebuilding in this country?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will start by thanking my hon. colleague for advocating on behalf of his communities; that is indeed the role that members of Parliament play. In fact, his advocacy has helped secure millions of dollars for communities such as Wolfville, East Hants, West Hants and Kings County.

I was shocked to learn that the Conservative leader planned to cut these investments, which are going towards building more homes in my province of Nova Scotia. By the way, it is working, with a 23% increase in home starts this year. However, I was more stunned to see Conservative members of Parliament abiding by their leader's instruction, refusing to advocate for their communities. If they need witness protection, I would be happy to speak to the Minister of Public Safety on their behalf.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, eight-year-old Tori Stafford was brutally and viciously murdered by Terri-Lynne McClintic and her boyfriend in a sexually motivated killing. Currently, McClintic lives in a townhouse-style jail in Ontario in medium security. That jail also houses a mother-child program. When I visited there, I was appalled to see that there were children in that jail at that security level in the townhouse-style complex.

How could the Liberal government allow child killers in the same jail as children?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the safety of children who participate in this long-standing mother-child program is obviously a top priority for the Correctional Service. There are rigorous eligibility criteria in place to participate in this program. It includes child welfare screening completed by provincial family services, as well as ensuring that people residing in the mother-child living unit have not been convicted of any offence against a child. My colleague knows that this program has been in existence for 24 years, and no child has ever been harmed in any way during this program's implementation.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these living units are townhouses literally right next to each other. If they are going to screen people, why are they not screening the sex offender and killer who lives next door?

This is the time to show courage and not cowardice, and the minister is doing the complete opposite. This comes back to Bill C-83, which allowed people such as McClintic, Bernardo and Rafferty to serve their sentences with the least restrictive measure.

Victims are owed an apology. Is the minister going to reverse these failed policies and get rid of allowing children to live with sex offenders?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this member does a disservice to and is disrespectful of the victims of these very people he keeps naming in the House of Commons.

The persons the member just named are inmates in federal correctional facilities. He pretends that the most important criterion for their incarceration is not the public safety of Canadians. He knows that is false, and he does victims a disservice by continually naming these people in the House of Commons. We are thinking of the victims of these horrible people and do not think that he should continually drag their names out in the House.

Oral Questions

• (1510)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Tori Stafford was eight years old when she was lured from school by a monster. Tori never made it home. She was beaten, tortured, sexually assaulted and murdered by Terri-Lynne McClintic and Michael Rafferty. Today, Terri-Lynne McClintic lives in a cosy townhouse with free access to a mother-child program. Yes, colleagues heard that correctly: a child killer has free access to children in prison.

In what universe is this okay?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the facts that she just alleged are entirely fabricated. She asked in what universe would that—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I am going to invite the hon. minister to withdraw that comment because saying that someone has told a deliberate falsehood in this place is not considered parliamentary.

I will invite the hon. minister to withdraw those comments and to start from the top.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to withdraw those words.

I think it is important that hon. members in this House who allege a series of circumstances be sure that they are accurate. When the hon. member asked in what scenario that particular conduct that she alleges would be appropriate, the answer is in no scenario in Canada. So, she can wonder why she keeps talking about issues that she knows are entirely inaccurate.

The Speaker: For the second time today, I am going to ask the hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo to please not take the floor unless recognized by the Speaker, which he has been, for questions.

The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, dangerous criminals are granted bail and get to serve their sentences at home. The mind boggles.

Here is another upsetting example from a sick system. Terri-Lynne McClintic abducted eight-year-old Tori Stafford and then helped her boyfriend kill her, yet she is allowed to be in the presence of children, courtesy of this government, which passes laws that make no sense.

Why is this Liberal government allowing child killers to come into contact with children in prisons?

Oral Questions

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at no time will any government allow that kind of thing to happen. My colleague is well aware that the program she referred to has been in place since 2011. It was in place throughout the Harper government years.

The most important criterion is, of course, the children's safety. I have full confidence that the correctional service will rigorously apply these criteria.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump is doubling down on his plan to deport millions of people. Yesterday, he floated the idea of declaring a national state of emergency to free up the necessary resources.

Once again, we have every reason to fear a wave of migrants heading for our borders. Once again, we get the impression that criminal smuggling networks are one step ahead of the federal government at the borders.

The federal government says that there is a plan and that it is ready, but does it understand that, without seeing even the slightest hint of that plan, it is very hard to take the government's word for it?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course we share the concerns of all Canadians when it comes to securing the border. Our government has stood by this commitment from day one. We have made significant investments to ensure that the CBSA and RCMP have the resources they need to make absolutely sure our border is safe and secure.

Here is the good news. The RCMP commissioner and the CBSA president give our government regular updates, and I have every confidence in their work.

• (1515)

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is interesting. While we are wondering whether the federal government has sufficient resources at the border to deal with immigration, while we are wondering whether human smuggling networks are one step ahead of the federal government, yesterday, the Liberals announced that hours of service are being reduced at 35 border crossings, including 10 in Quebec.

The federal government says that it has all the necessary resources in place, but at the same time, it is cutting its hours of service. It is obviously sending very mixed messages, which is very worrisome.

Is the federal government aware of the message it is now sending to human smugglers?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we worked with our American partners to harmonize the hours of operation at certain border cross-

ings. Obviously, that also allows us to reassign resources, as needed, to other areas that might be under pressure.

This is a discussion that we have been having with the U.S. government for several years now, and it will enable us to apply the safe third country agreement. If, for example, the border is open in Canada and closed in the United States, we do not have the ability to return people to the U.S.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that paying his carbon tax is more important than buying groceries or paying rent. He obviously believes that feeding his obese bureaucracy is more important than Canadians feeding their family. Documents reveal that just to administer the carbon tax will cost Canadians more than \$800 million by 2030, an increase of 163%. This is at a time when more than two million Canadians were forced to visit a food bank in a single month. If the Prime Minister really believes that for Canadians it is more important to pay the carbon tax than feed their families, he should call a carbon tax election now and let us find out.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every time the Conservative Party of Canada talks about the issue of climate change, it never talks about how it is costing Canadians, just for the month of July and August of this year, \$7 billion in climate damages, which is a record, and the year is not yet over. Conservatives may have decided to let Canadians down and let the planet burn, but on this side of the House, we are here for Canadians, we are here to fight climate change and we are here to build the economy of the 21st century.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the documents reveal just how much pain the carbon tax inflicts on Canadians. They will be paying more than \$800 million just to administer the carbon tax. Not only have the costs skyrocketed, but the number of bureaucrats just to manage this scam has doubled. Let us put that in perspective. Farmers will pay \$1 billion in carbon taxes by 2030, so the Prime Minister is putting the family farm at risk just to feed his bloated bureaucracy. If he really feels that Canadian families want to pay the carbon tax over feeding their own kids, he should call a carbon tax election and let us find out.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that when my hon. colleague and the Conservative Party of Canada were in power, the way they dealt with agriculture was to slash half a billion dollars from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. They slashed \$200 million from the business risk management program. If that is the track they want to be on, it is a track of destruction, and we are not on that path as a government.

*Oral Questions***INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the radical environment minister continues to hold a financial interest in Cycle Capital, which benefited the most from the billion-dollar Liberal green slush fund. Today, once again, the Liberals are refusing to produce the uncensored documents for the House and the RCMP on the slush fund. The Liberal cover-up, the obstruction of justice, has been going on for six months. When will the Prime Minister come clean and send the uncensored documents to the RCMP, including everything the corrupt environment minister is involved in?

• (1520)

The Speaker: This is not going to be a surprise to members. I am going to ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets to remove that word, which he knows, when talking about the hon. minister. I am going to ask the hon. member to simply withdraw those words.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw those words.

Then he stuffed his pockets with the—

The Speaker: I am going to ask the hon. member just to simply withdraw the words and we will move on.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, he stuffed his pockets with the money. I am sorry, he is not corrupt, he stuffed his pockets.

The Speaker: I would ask the member to withdraw those comments, but this has been delayed too long.

The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the level of disrespect the Conservative members of Parliament are not just showing this place but also showing you is completely unacceptable.

We, as of November 8, have deposited nearly 29,000 pages of documents with regard to this matter. It is only Conservative members of Parliament who are filibustering and obstructing this place. They are not standing on moral grounds, they are not standing on principle, they are simply trying to hold back the good work that we need to do for Canadians. Their disrespectful behaviour is just one more example of their inappropriate behaviour here in this place.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week we found out the Conservative leader was silencing his members from supporting any federal funding for housing in their communities. It must have been very difficult for Conservatives to oppose funding for much-needed housing projects in the communities that sent them here to advocate for housing, not to do the opposite. Imagine how difficult it must have been for the member for Toronto—St. Paul's who represents a city that will receive \$471 million just because he was being muzzled.

Can the minister responsible for housing please update this House on what could happen if the leader of the Conservatives actually got his way?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his tremendous advocacy for the city that he calls home.

The member has asked a question about the member for Toronto—St. Paul's, who, I will acknowledge, is a new member, but I have watched him in question period and when we review the tapes, we are going to see that he seems to believe the role of a member of Parliament is to mimic the slogans and talking points that he hears his leader put on the floor of the House of Commons.

While we believe the role of a member of Parliament is to advocate for their communities, he will sit idly by, supporting his leader's position to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from his city. His constituents deserve an MP who will stand up to his leader and stand up for his city.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost of housing. In December 2023, the incompetent Liberals gave the City of Toronto \$471 million in the so-called housing accelerator. What was the result? In October 2024, housing starts, versus October 2023, are down 33%. The only thing this housing accelerator is accelerating is bureaucracy.

When will the NDP-Liberals get it through their thick heads that we actually need to build houses for Canadians, not bureaucracy?

The Speaker: All members can be more judicious in the words they choose.

The hon. Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities.

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, something is interesting. Over the course of the last couple of days, the few times that Conservatives have actually shown any interest in the housing file, they have manipulated statistics to try to paint a false picture. If we look at the report from CMHC that came out this week, we will see that housing starts are up this month. They are up this year due to the investments that we are making directly in communities.

What is fascinating is the member has been banned by his leader from advocating for his community. His constituents have sent him to this House, and his response is to ignore their needs and, instead, do whatever his leader asks him. That is not representation.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians actually need a minister who will build housing.

Despite what the minister is saying, the facts are very clear. The housing accelerator does not accelerate anything but bureaucracy. Here are some statistics. Housing starts in Nova Scotia are down 54% October 2024 compared to 2023. In Ontario, for the same period, they are 35% down. In British Columbia, for the same period, they are 30% down. In Halifax, for the same period, they are 75% down.

Oral Questions

The housing accelerator is a scam. Liberals know it. When will they actually get the houses built that Canadians need?

• (1525)

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of many of the conversations that have taken place today, I will not impugn the motivations of any particular member, but I am reminded of a famous quote attributed to former British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, who supposedly said, “There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics”.

The statistics that he is using right now dramatically misrepresent the situation. This year compared to last year, housing in my home province of Nova Scotia is up 23%. This year compared to last year, the city of Halifax is on pace to build more homes than it ever has in our history.

The plan is working. Conservatives are advocating for cuts; we will make investments.

The Speaker: Today has been a particularly tough day with members using language that would not be considered judicious. I hope this is just an anomaly. The Speaker will come back to the House later on some of these issues.

The hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston has the floor.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last weekend, it was reported that David Lavery from Perth, Ontario, had been detained by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Mr. Lavery is the hero known as “Canadian Dave” who rescued hundreds during the fall of Kabul. After all other Canadian officials had already been evacuated, Canadian Dave and his team stayed on in Kabul to ensure the safe passage of Canadians and others on the final flights out of the country. Now he is in Taliban custody, and we worry for his well-being.

What steps is the government taking to bring Dave Lavery home?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question is very important. Of course, we are very aware of Mr. Lavery's case. I cannot give more information due to confidentiality issues, but what I would like to suggest to the member that I work with him to make sure that Mr. Lavery comes home. We will take every measure to bring him home.

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks a thousand days since Russia began its unprovoked, illegal, full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. Since then, we have seen the heroism and resilience of the Ukrainian people on full display as they face Russia's repeated, brutal and criminal attacks.

Canada has committed over \$4.5 billion to support Ukraine, and we stand steadfast with Ukraine until its victory. As we mark a thousand days of this war, could the Minister of National Defence please tell the House what we can do to help Ukraine win?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important question. For a thousand days, the Ukrainian people have paid a terrible price for brutal Russian aggression, and throughout that time, Canada has been steadfast in its support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in the face of Russia's unjustified and illegal invasion.

Just yesterday, the supplementary estimates were tabled in the House, and these supplementary estimates contain \$763 million in military aid to Ukraine. That is money for munitions, training and the tools Ukrainians desperately require to win. I hope that this year, unlike last year, every member of the House can find the courage to support this desperately required funding.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, mental health care is health care, but the Canadian Mental Health Association tells us that over 2.5 million Canadians cannot get the help they need while others are forced to use their credit card to get it. The Liberals have let people and families struggling with mental health down, and the Conservatives will cut health care and mental health supports. Canadians will have to pay more or be left behind.

When will the Liberals finally make mental health care a true part of Canada's universal health care system so no one has to use a credit card to get the care they need?

• (1530)

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member across the way that mental health is in fact health, and that is why we made sure to put in 200 billion dollars' worth of agreements with every province and territory in this country where mental health and substance use services were a key principal priority. It is time for the provinces and territories to step up. It is time for them to work with us.

That is exactly why we announced yesterday the opening of the youth mental health fund, which is \$500 million to invest in young Canadians and their mental health. We are doing the work. We are happy to have the provinces and territories step up with us.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Remembrance Day is a sacred day. It is the one time we put aside our differences to pay tribute to our veterans. We mourn, we celebrate, and yes, we pray for the fallen.

This past week, the Conservative leader whipped up misinformation and rage for political gain by falsely claiming that prayers have been banned at the cenotaph. On the one hand, we have the Conservatives, who will exploit Remembrance Day and cut veteran services, and on the other hand, we have the Liberals, who continue to fail veterans

When will these two tired old parties stand up for the men and women who have served our country?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the member for raising this important issue because there is no greater obligation for all of us than to express our solemn remembrance and our respect for the service of all members of the Canadian Armed Forces. They have sacrificed so much. Many of them have lost their lives, and others chose to serve and survived. For someone to take the opportunity, on that particular day, to try to score some cheap political points with a deliberate falsehood is a real shame.

The Speaker: The hon. minister has mentioned a particular member and has said that there was a deliberate falsehood. That is not acceptable. Therefore, I would ask the hon. minister to withdraw that language because of its unparliamentary nature.

Hon. Bill Blair: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw it due to the fact that the falsehood was perhaps not deliberate.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. minister.

* * *

[Translation]

ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF WAR IN UKRAINE

The Speaker: Colleagues, following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence to commemorate the 1,000 days that have gone by since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

I invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

* * *

[English]

UKRAINE

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties, and I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion, which has been seconded by the member for Montarville.

I move:

That, given that,

(i) the House unanimously adopted the motions of April 27, 2022, on the recognition of the fact that the Russian Federation is committing acts of genocide against the Ukrainian people, of September 21, 2023, to condemn the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation, and of February 15, 2024, on the condemnation of the continuation of Russia's unjustified massive aggression against Ukraine,

(ii) 1000 days after Russia's unjustified aggression against Ukraine, there is clear and abundant evidence of the continuation of the crime of genocide against the Ukrainian people, on the territory of Ukraine, by the armed forces

Oral Questions

of the Russian Federation, under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin and others in the Russian government and parliament,

the House:

(a) condemn Russia's continuing massive and unjustified aggression against Ukraine and recognize that Ukraine is on the front line of the free world, defending the values of freedom, democracy, global security and human rights;

(b) honour those who have given their lives in defence of these shared values, and reaffirm Canada's unwavering commitment to the sovereignty of Ukraine;

(c) recognize that Vladimir Putin has launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, resulting in daily atrocities against the Ukrainian people, including genocide, crimes against humanity and violent crimes of aggression;

(d) call on Russia to completely cease hostilities against Ukraine and to withdraw all its troops and armed forces from the territory of Ukraine;

(e) call on the federal government to continue to provide substantial military and humanitarian support to Ukraine in order to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace;

(f) call for a ban on all forms of Russian state media in Canada;

(g) support Ukraine's future membership of NATO;

(h) call for the strengthening of sanctions against Russia, including accountability for the circumvention of sanctions in the energy, military and technology sectors; and

(i) call for all possible efforts to be made to ensure the return of Ukrainian prisoners of war, illegally detained civilians and children forcibly deported to Russia, and to support efforts to bring to justice those responsible for crimes of aggression and war crimes.

• (1535)

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)

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INTERPRETATION ACT

(Bill S-13. On the Order: Government Orders:)

February 26, 2024—The Minister of Justice—Second reading and reference to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights of Bill S-13, An Act to amend the Interpretation Act and to make related amendments to other Acts.

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): 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.

I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order, or usual practice of the House, Bill S-13, An Act to amend the Interpretation Act and to make related amendments to other Acts, be disposed of as follows:

(a) the bill be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights immediately after the adoption of this order;

(b) a minister be ordered to appear before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to the bill for one hour, no later than Friday, November 29, 2024, and, immediately after, the bill shall be deemed considered and reported without amendment; and

(c) at the opening of the next sitting day following the minister's appearance at the committee, the bill shall be deemed concurred in without amendment at report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. minister'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 read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Speaker: Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Earlier you issued an admonishment stemming from a quote in the National Post from a Cree lawyer who noted that the Minister of Employment committed identity fraud when he falsely claimed indigenous heritage. The minister's company falsely claimed indigenous ownership and subsequently received government contracts.

What word would you suggest indigenous persons use to describe the minister?

The Speaker: I am not certain that is a point of order.

I was going to come to the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill because she used a term that is not appropriate in this place, calling another hon. member fraudulent. As it happened, during question period, another hon. member did the same thing and withdrew the comment.

I invite the hon. member to please simply withdraw the use of that word in reference to a member of Parliament, a colleague of all of ours.

● (1540)

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, as recorded in Hansard on February 9, 2023, the member for Mirabel referred to the Prime Minister as a fraud. No admonishment was issued. Why are you admonishing me today?

The Speaker: This is not a debate. I am asking the hon. member to please withdraw her use of that word in reference to another hon. member.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I was quoting an indigenous person as it pertained to identity fraud by the minister—

The Speaker: One last time, I am going to ask the hon. member to please withdraw the use of that word in reference to a member.

I do not see the hon. member rising.

* * *

NAMING OF MEMBER

The Speaker: Ms. Rempel Garner, I have to name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Pursuant to the authority granted to me by Standing Order 11, I order you to withdraw from the House and from any participation by video conference or by electronic voting system for the remainder of this day's sitting.

[*And Ms. Rempel Garner having withdrawn:*]

The Speaker: I want to refer to an issue raised earlier today by the Chair, when the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle used these words: “weak, fake-indigenous man gets to keep his job after lying”. Upon reflection and after some research, I am prepared to let “fake” slide, but will insist, as I did during question period, to not allow “lying” to be used.

I invite the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle—

An hon. member: Mr. Speaker, he already withdrew it.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for having done that. We will move on.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER**ORAL QUESTIONS—SPEAKER'S RULING**

The Speaker: I wish to return to a point of order raised yesterday concerning language that was alleged to be used by the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. While the comment does not appear in yesterday's Debates, the member seemed to acknowledge having made the remark, in response to a point of order.

It is possible to ask pointed questions and criticize the government's actions without resorting to personal insults. I would therefore ask the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes to please withdraw that comment.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Employment has said there is more than one Randy, and I maintain that I was referring to the other Randy as cocaine Randy.

The Speaker: The whole lead-up to that point would not lend credence to that, and the Chair interpreted it as being referenced to a particular member.

Out of respect to this Chair, and by extension to all members of the House, I am going to ask the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes to please withdraw that comment.

I will ask the hon. member for a third time, if he would please do the honourable thing and withdraw that comment in reference to an hon. member.

* * *

● (1545)

NAMING OF MEMBER

The Speaker: Mr. Barrett, I have to name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Pursuant to the authority granted to me by Standing Order 11, I order you to withdraw from the House and from any participation by video conference or by electronic voting system for the remainder of this day's sitting.

[*And Mr. Barrett having withdrawn:*]

The Speaker: I have one more issue to raise from question period.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am not certain if this is the level and standard of behaviour that Canadians expect us to have. It is important for us to respect this place, to respect the Speaker on behalf of yourselves and to ensure that we do this in an appropriate fashion.

I am going to ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, who earlier today had used the word “corrupt” in regard to a particular member, to please withdraw that comment and rephrase his question. He partially did that, and I would like to invite the hon. member to make a simple withdrawal of that comment so that we can proceed with the rest of the day.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, I rephrased my question. Can I ask it again?

The Speaker: I ask the hon. member to please stand in this place to just withdraw the word so that we can move on and continue with the day. I will ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets to do so.

* * *

NAMING OF MEMBER

The Speaker: Mr. Perkins, I have to name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Pursuant to the authority granted to me by Standing Order 11, I order you to withdraw from the House and from any participation by video conference or by electronic voting system for the remainder of this day's sitting.

[*And Mr. Perkins having withdrawn:*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order due to the lack of respect that I have been witnessing. You had indicated to members that they should show respect. The member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake loudly heckled, saying that you, Mr. Speaker, needed to show respect. I clearly heard that, and it is very disrespectful for members to be doing that and reflecting on you as Speaker. Whether we agree or disagree, it is disrespectful. I believe the member should apologize, not to you but to the House.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary. I did not hear that comment, and I will take a look at the Hansard and come back to the House if necessary.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. When the member for Calgary Nose Hill indicated that it was a quote, that has happened in the House before, and in that circumstance you ruled that in light of the fact that it was within a quote, it needed—

Some hon. members: Debate.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: No, it is not debate. It is a comparison of his behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, you need to go back and look at whether this was done in the past, because it happened in the House where you made a different ruling on this same issue.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville for raising this point of order. This point of order, as a matter of fact, was raised before the break to one of the assistant Speakers.

Routine Proceedings

There was a ruling that came out of it. Of course, members should not do indirectly what they cannot do directly. That was a ruling that came from this chair just very recently.

As members know, even when quoting from stories, members still have to ensure that they do not do indirectly what they cannot do directly. For example, and I will give this as an example to the hon. member, if members were to get up and cite a newspaper quotation that referred a member by name, even though it is in a quotation, members would have to use the name of the riding and not the name of the person.

The point that I am trying to make is that, even when quoting, members have to be careful that the language they use still falls within parliamentary standards.

I thank the hon. member for raising that point, and it gives me an opportunity to explain why we were trying to move on this way.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1550)
[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

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

The Speaker: It being 3:50 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division of the subamendment to the motion to concur in the second report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

Call in the members.

● (1615)

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

(*Division No. 883*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultatif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Bachrach	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dance	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell

Routine Proceedings

Desbiens	Desilets	Atwin	Badawey
Desjarlais	Doherty	Bains	Baker
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Battiste	Beech
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis	Bendayan	Bibeau
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Bittle	Blair
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Blois	Boissonnault
Ferreri	Fortin	Bradford	Brière
Gallant	Garon	Carr	Casey
Garrison	Gaudreau	Chagger	Chahal
Gazan	Généreux	Champagne	Chatel
Genuis	Gill	Chen	Chiang
Gladu	Godin	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Coteau
Goodridge	Gourde	Dabrusin	Damoff
Gray	Green	Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Hallan	Hoback	Diab	Dong
Hughes	Idlout	Drouin	Dubourg
Jeneroux	Jivani	Duclos	Duguid
Johns	Julian	Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Kelly	Khanna	Erskine-Smith	Fisher
Kmicic	Kram	Fonseca	Fortier
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Fragiskatos	Fraser
Kusie	Kwan	Freeland	Gaheer
Lake	Lantsman	Gainey	Gerretsen
Larouche	Lawrence	Gould	Guilbeault
Lehoux	Lemire	Hajdu	Hanley
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)	Hardie	Hepfner
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert	Holland	Housefather
Lloyd	Lobb	Hussen	Hutchings
MacGregor	Maguire	Iacono	Ien
Majumdar	Martel	Jaczek	Joly
Masse	Mathyszen	Jones	Jowhari
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Kayabaga	Kelloway
McLean	McPherson	Khalid	Khera
Melillo	Michaud	Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Moore	Morantz	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Morrice	Morrison	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Motz	Muys	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Nater	Normandin	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Patzer	Paul-Hus	Lightbound	Long
Pauzé	Perron	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Plamondon	Poilievre	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Rayes	Redekopp	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Reid	Richards	Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
Roberts	Rood	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Ruff	Sauvé	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer	McLeod	Mendès
Schmale	Seeback	Mendicino	Miao
Shields	Shipley	Miller	Morrissey
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné	Murray	Naqvi
Singh	Small	Ng	Noormohamed
Soroka	Steinley	O'Connell	Oliphant
Ste-Marie	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)	O'Regan	Petipas Taylor
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)	Strahl	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Stubbs	Thériault	Robillard	Rodriguez
Therrien	Thomas	Rogers	Romanado
Tochor	Tolmie	Rota	Sahota
Trudel	Uppal	Sajjan	Saks
Van Popta	Vecchio	Samson	Scarpaleggia
Vidal	Vien	Schieffe	Sgro
Viersen	Vignola	Shanahan	Sheehan
Villemure	Vis	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Vuong	Wagantall	Sorbara	Sousa
Warkentin	Waugh	Sudds	Tassi
Webber	Williams	Taylor Roy	Thompson
Williamson	Zarrillo	Turnbull	Valdez
Zimmer— 173		Van Bynen	van Koeverden
		Vandal	Vandenbeld
		Virani	Weiler
		Wilkinson	Yip
		Zahid	Zuberi— 146

NAYS

Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the subamendment carried.

The next question is on the amendment as amended.

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

● (1620)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

● (1630)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 884*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Bachrach	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dance	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Jivani
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Khanna
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kwan
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence

Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacGregor	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Masse	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
McPherson	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Sauvé	Savard-Tremblay
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shiple	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)	Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
Zarrillo	Zimmer— 174

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fraser	Freeland
Gaheer	Gainey
Gerretsen	Gould
Guilbeault	Hajdu

Routine Proceedings

Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara
Sousa	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zuberi — 145	

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the amendment, as amended, carried.

The next question is on the main motion, as amended.

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

• (1640)

[*English*]

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

(Division No. 885)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Bachrach	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dance	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Hoback	Hughes
Idlout	Jeneroux
Jivani	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Khanna	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	MacGregor
Maguire	Majumdar
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	McPherson
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Sauvé
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback

Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer— 173

Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Arseneault
Atwin
Bains
Battiste
Bendayan
Bittle
Blois
Bradford
Carr
Chagger
Champagne
Chiang
Coteau
Damoff
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fonseca
Fraser
Gaheer
Gerretsen
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hutchings
Ien
Joly
Jowhari
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lambropoulos
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendicino
Miller

Ali
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Beech
Bibeau
Blair
Boissonnault
Brière
Casey
Chahal
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Dabrusin
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Freeland
Gainey
Gould
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jaczek
Jones
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Miao
Morrissey

Routine Proceedings

Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sorbara
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid

Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Souza
Tassi
Thompson
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zuberi— 144

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

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 Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, Correctional Service of Canada, and the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Oil and Gas Industry.

● (1645)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the previous question to the motion to concur in the 21st report of the Standing Committee on International Trade.

● (1655)

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

(Division No. 886)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bendayan
Berthold
Bezan
Bittle
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault

Aitchison
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Block
Bradford

Routine Proceedings

Bragdon	Brassard	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Brière	Brock	Maguire	Majumdar
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins	Maloney	Martel
Cannings	Caputo	Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Carr	Carrie	Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Casey	Chabot	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
Chagger	Chahal	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
Chambers	Champagne	McGuinity	McKay
Champoux	Chatel	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
Chen	Chiang	McLeod	McPherson
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Melillo	Mendicino
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper	Miao	Michaud
Coteau	Dabrusin	Miller	Moore
Dalton	Damoff	Morantz	Morrice
Dance	Dancho	Morrison	Morrissey
Davidson	Davies	Motz	Murray
DeBellefeuille	Deltell	Muys	Naqvi
d'Entremont	Desbiens	Nater	Ng
Desilets	Desjarlais	Noormohamed	Normandin
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	O'Connell	Oliphant
Diab	Doherty	O'Regan	Patzer
Dong	Dowdall	Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Dreeshen	Drouin	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Dubourg	Duclos	Plamondon	Poilievre
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Rayes	Redekopp
Ellis	Epp	Reid	Richards
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Roberts	Robillard
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Rodriguez	Rogers
Ferreri	Fisher	Romanado	Rood
Fonseca	Fortier	Rota	Ruff
Fortin	Fraser	Sahota	Sajjan
Freeland	Gaheer	Saks	Samson
Gainey	Gallant	Sarai	Sauvé
Garon	Garrison	Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Gaudreau	Gazan	Schiefke	Schmale
Généreux	Genuis	Seeback	Sgro
Gerretsen	Gill	Shanahan	Sheehan
Gladu	Godin	Shields	Shiplely
Goodridge	Gould	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Gourde	Gray	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Green	Guilbeault	Singh	Small
Hajdu	Hallan	Sorbara	Soroka
Hanley	Hardie	Sousa	Steinley
Hepfner	Hoback	Ste-Marie	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)
Holland	Housefather	Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)	Strahl
Hughes	Hussen	Stubbs	Sudds
Hutchings	Iacono	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Idlout	Ien	Thériault	Therrien
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Thomas	Thompson
Jivani	Johns	Tochor	Tolmie
Joly	Jones	Trudel	Turnbull
Jowhari	Julian	Uppal	Valdez
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Kelly	Khalid	Van Popta	Vandal
Khanna	Khera	Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Kmiec	Koutrakis	Vidal	Vien
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Viersen	Vignola
Kurek	Kusie	Villemure	Virani
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Vis	Vuong
Lake	Lalonde	Wagantall	Warkentin
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux	Waugh	Webber
Lantsman	Lapointe	Weiler	Wilkinson
Larouche	Lattanzio	Williams	Williamson
Lauzon	Lawrence	Yip	Zahid
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Zarrillo	Zimmer
Lehoux	Lemire	Zuberi — 317	
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)		
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert		
Lightbound	Lloyd		
Lobb	Long		
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)		
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Nil	

NAYS

PAIRED

Nil

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I declare the motion adopted.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on the motion for concurrence.

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

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

• (1705)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 887*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultarif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Bachrach	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dance	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Hoback	Hughes
Idlout	Jeneroux
Jivani	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Khanna	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche

Lawrence
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Maguire
Martel
Mathysen
Mazier
McLean
Melillo
Moore
Morrice
Motz
Nater
Patzler
Pauzé
Plamondon
Rayes
Reid
Roberts
Sauvé
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer— 171

Routine Proceedings

Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
MacGregor
Majumdar
Masse
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McPherson
Michaud
Morantz
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Perron
Poilievre
Redekopp
Richards
Ruff
Savard-Tremblay
Seeback
Shiplely
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Ali
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Beech
Bibeau
Blair
Boissonnault
Brière
Casey
Chahal
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Coteau
Damoff
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Freeland
Gahey
Gould
Hajdu

Privilege

Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Mendicino	Miao
Miller	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara
Sousa	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zuberi— 145	

PAIRED

Nil

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 62 minutes.

* * *

• (1710)

[*English*]

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-276, An Act respecting Ukrainian Heritage Month.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[*English*]

PRIVILEGE

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I certainly want to thank and acknowledge my good friend across the House on his speech, although he must have drawn the short straw to have to get up and do that for 10 minutes.

However, I do have a question for him with respect to what the commissioner of the RCMP said. He said that:

the RCMP's ability to receive and use information obtained through this production order and under the compulsory powers afforded by the Auditor General Act in the course of a criminal investigation could give rise to concerns under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is therefore highly unlikely that any information obtained by the RCMP under the Motion where privacy interests exists could be used to support a criminal prosecution or further a criminal investigation... There is significant risk that the Motion could be interpreted as a circumvention of normal investigative processes and Charter protections.

I know my friend opposite knows that what is happening in the House right now is a debacle; it is a waste of all of our time. We come up here to do good things for our ridings. I would like my friend opposite to respond to that quote.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my friend, and indeed the member for Saint John—Rothesay is my friend.

The member asked me to comment on the commissioner's views. I disagree with the commissioner, but that is not the point. The time to have made that argument was back in June when we voted on the motion. This is no longer a debate about whether the House should request the documents; the House has requested the documents, and so complying with the order of the House is what this government has failed to do.

I do not agree with the member that this is a debacle; only to the extent that, yes, the House is paralyzed because the government will not table the documents. However, there are several remedies available to the government. The first remedy, and the most important one, would be to call an election. If this place is not functional, we need to elect a new government that can earnestly deal with the important problems facing this country. I think this member is well on the record agreeing that the Prime Minister ought to step down and call an election.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, we are talking about close to \$400 million that was corruptly spent by at least nine directors that the Auditor General identified as having participated in at least 186 corrupt decisions out of a sample size of about 400 that were looked at. I am wondering if my colleague could perhaps describe what we could have done with the close to \$400 million that was corruptly spent. Could we have cut taxes? Could we have reduced the national debt? Could we have put it towards other uses that his constituents would like to see?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely right. The \$400 million was misallocated by Liberal insiders, who were deliberately appointed by the previous minister. The misappropriation of that money could have gone to any of a number of things, including housing our troops. There is a base housing problem, in which our men and women in the armed forces do not have access to housing. That is just one thing that instantly leaps out at me because we have debated that in the House.

The member is right. The Liberals could have lowered taxes by \$400 million. They could have not incurred another \$400 million in debt. Instead, under the government's watch, with the minister's own senior officials present, the Liberal insiders chose to give the money to themselves.

• (1715)

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, as the member likely knows, the Greens supported the original motion back in June and we support the documents being provided, as the House has called for. We also want the House to operate. This is a significant amount of money, \$400 million, but so too is the operation of this place.

The math I have, as recently as the beginning of this week, is that 160 Conservatives have spoken on this motion. If we assume it takes \$70,000 or so per hour for the House of Commons to operate, that adds up to 80 hours, which is \$5.6 million spent speaking on the same motion when many of us, myself included, would like to vote on the motion to send it to committee and have the committee report to the House on doing exactly, as I understand, what the Conservatives want to do, which is to get back to the original motion in June.

Can the member speak to any concerns he has with using this amount of taxpayer money to continue talking about the same motion when we could just vote on it?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, I would be delighted to comment on those things. I would say that the cost to operate this Parliament is a small price to pay if we are debating a motion that goes to the democratic accountability of the government, but that also has the side benefit of preventing the government from introducing more bad laws that will harm Canadians.

I talked about that in my speech. I noted that on the legislative calendar of the government is the imposition of a new destructive tax that expert testimony at the finance committee has said will further erode Canadian productivity and result in less taxes collected for the Crown. I have no problem with using the tools available to parliamentarians to force the government to do what this House has ordered it to do, and that is to produce the documents so that we can absolutely get to the bottom of this \$400-million debacle.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I cannot believe the member's defence. He is saying we found out too late that what the Conservatives are asking for goes against what the RCMP and Canada's Auditor General want and what other legal experts are saying, that we should do it anyway and who cares what they say.

Privilege

Steven Chaplin, former senior legal counsel in the Office of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, said, "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." Whether the member likes it or not, Conservatives are borderline in contempt of Parliament by continuing on this issue. That is something all Canadians should be concerned with.

It is not too late to listen to what the RCMP, the Auditor General and other law experts are saying. When will the Conservatives start to listen to those experts as opposed to the leader of the self-serving Conservative Party?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, there is a bit to unpack there, but I will start with this. If the votes in this chamber are to mean anything, they have to be respected. It is to—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, this is amazing. I am being heckled by the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, who is chirping from the sidelines and telling me they do not have to follow the votes of the House of Commons and that the votes in the House of Commons do not need to mean anything.

That might have been what the Prime Minister was getting at when he admired the dictatorship of the PRC: that parliaments do not matter, that votes do not matter and that the government can act with impunity. Is that really what the member for Winnipeg North believes, that the votes of this Parliament should be just disregarded if the government does not like them?

That is not how democracy works, and yes, he has put forward a couple of fairly tired, at this point, arguments against the disclosure of these documents. The time for that argument was in the spring. The ship has sailed. The RCMP is welcome to make no use or any use of these documents. However, the House has pronounced on this matter, and it is about time the government listened to the people who were elected in the House of Commons, and their vote.

• (1720)

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise, as always, on behalf of the good people of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry in my part of eastern Ontario. Here we are, nearing the two-month mark of the Liberals' refusal to adhere to what they told Canadians when they came in nine long years ago: that they were going to be sunny ways. The number one line I remember them saying was "open by default". They were going to be the most open and transparent government Canadians have ever seen.

Privilege

After nine years, here we are. Rather than the Liberals' listening to the will, the vote, the majority vote of the House of Commons, the Speaker has found them in contempt for refusing to turn over all the documents in their latest spending and corruption scandal. As I have said a few times here now, and as Canadians see this go on and on, it makes one wonder about a stubbornness, a refusal to just be open by default and to provide the RCMP with full, unredacted access to the documents so it can continue and complete a full criminal investigation into this specific case of insiders' getting ahead.

It makes one wonder what exactly is in the documents that the Liberals are refusing to provide, that they are redacting and that they do not want the RCMP to see. The facts are simple. If there is nothing to hide, as they claim; if they want to be fully co-operative; if they want Canadians to be assured that the RCMP cannot be stonewalled; and if they do not want to act as gatekeepers to information, documents and evidence of their own corruption and spending scandal, they would be open by default as they promised and just provide the documents.

It is incredible that a government is, here in the House of Commons, refusing to do so. As a consequence of that, it has been nearly two months now, 25 or 26 House days of the parliamentary calendar at least. We lose track. That is how long it has been that the Liberals do not care about their government business and their government agenda. Private member's bills are not advancing. It just makes one wonder how desperate they are to drag the issue out and avoid accountability.

What we and Canadians do know from the Auditor General and her multiple reports into this issue is that there is a massive amount of corrupt, inappropriate behaviour.

Think about going back a generation. When I first started getting interested in following federal politics, when I was a little political junkie in my teen years in the early 2000s, there was the sponsorship scandal. Think of where we are at now. The definition of insanity, and we have heard the expression before, is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. This is what happens when we elect Liberals. It was 20 years ago that the sponsorship scandal came up; it was \$40 million, not an insignificant amount of taxpayers' money back then.

What happened? There had to be a public inquiry. People went to jail for criminal intent, for stealing taxpayers' money and for Liberal insiders' getting ahead. It was one of the main reasons the Liberal Party of Canada in 2006 was defeated and the Conservative government came in with the accountability act to clean up the unethical mess.

The accountability act was a cornerstone of the Harper Conservative government that was necessary after 13 years of Liberals in office. Here we are; fast-forward to now, at \$400 million, 10 times the size, which has been confirmed by the Auditor General. Over \$50 million in ineligible projects was awarded by Liberal insiders to each other in the green slush fund. There were 186 cases of conflict of interest. That is not an accident. It is not that they did not know the rules; it is blatant corruption.

I have explained before that I served in municipal politics. I enjoyed my 12 years in my hometown of North Dundas serving as a councillor, as a mayor and then as a warden.

• (1725)

The number one thing when it comes to governance of a municipality, a charity, a board of directors or anything is learning about conflicts of interest. We call them pecuniary interests as well. People cannot advance their own personal agenda and financial benefit on the board that they serve. They have to declare a conflict and step away. They cannot put themselves in those situations to benefit themselves. It is Ethical Behaviour 101 and Board Governance 101, particularly in a fund.

For the SDTC fund, the program has existed for nearly a quarter century. It was not until the Prime Minister and his then minister of industry started changing the players and appointing Liberal insiders that problems started. Here we are. Let us talk about being frustrated. Canadians are frustrated. The House of Commons is extremely frustrated because the Liberals refuse to take seriously the magnitude and level of corruption and bad behaviour.

Here are some examples: Not only has the House been paralyzed for the last two months, because the government has refused to provide the documents, but there is also the other part of it. Let us take a look at that. There have been several committees. I am looking at my colleague in front of me, the member for Brantford—Brant. He is on a few different committees, and he asks a few different questions and does a lot of digging.

Since this came out about the green slush fund, we have repeatedly asked officials about the \$400 million in inappropriate payments, where there were conflicts of interest into the hundreds of millions of dollars, and about the projects that were not eligible.

How many dollars, since the Auditor General's first report and second report, have come back to the federal Treasury so far? Not a dollar, not a penny has come back. The Auditor General was very clear. Projects were ineligible, and there were conflicts of interest in 186 cases. Everybody in the House and in this country knows that when there are 186 conflict of interest cases, it is not an accident. It is not, "Whoops, we didn't know." The Liberals knew exactly what they were doing.

Here we are, years after brave whistle-blowers came forward and broke the news. They could not take the blatant corruption and inappropriate behaviour coming from these Liberal-appointed insiders anymore. It was almost an incestuous thing of giving money to each other, left, right and centre. Whistle-blowers came forward, and we have gone on from there. What has to happen at the end of the day is that we need the RCMP to get full access to these documents.

I mentioned the sponsorship scandal before, and a history and a record after nine years. The sponsorship scandal was the story and the issue that brought down the last Liberal government, and it is just going to be the continued stacking that will make the sponsorship scandal look like pocket change in comparison, when things are added up.

Let us think about it. There was the \$60-million ArriveCAN program. Experts said it could have been done for about a quarter of a million dollars, or \$80,000, in one weekend. However, \$60 million later, it went to one company, a couple of people working in somebody's basement here in Ottawa. They had millions of dollars funnelled to them in sole-source contracts. They had nice little whiskey tastings and parties. It was all about who they knew. They did little to no work for any of it. How much of that has been returned? Nothing has been returned.

We have the WE Charity scandal and what happened there during COVID. The Prime Minister's family was benefiting. The Liberals tried to give the WE Charity, friends of the Prime Minister, hundreds of millions of dollars in the name of helping young people get employed and be connected with jobs. Once again, it was an absolute farce and a scandal.

When it comes to the production of documents, there is the waste, the corruption and the inappropriate use of taxpayers' money. The list of many of those examples from over the last nine years goes on.

What we have when it comes to document production, which is at the heart of this matter, is that Parliament has voted and said that Parliament reigns supreme; it has the right to ask for and order the production of documents. That is what we did. Again, what do we do it for and why do we do it? It is because we want the RCMP to have unfettered access to all the documents.

Here is the interesting thing: To know why it is so important, we have to look back at the behaviour of the Liberal government.

- (1730)

It was the Prime Minister when he fired the first indigenous, female Attorney General in this country on the SNC-Lavalin scandal. The RCMP said the case was closed, it was not proceeding and there were no charges. Why? The Prime Minister blocked access to cabinet documents, which were at the heart of the scandal. The RCMP said it closed the case and it did not proceed with the possibility, because it did not have all the information it needed or wanted.

It goes on. During the Winnipeg lab documents scandal in the midst of COVID, we had to call someone to the bar here. This was a very rare use of discipline in the House of Commons because the Liberals refused to provide the documents about how they allowed such a national security breach at the Winnipeg labs in a time of crisis.

I already mentioned the WE Charity scandal. Now we have another question of privilege with the Minister of Employment. I have to be so careful here. He faked being indigenous, but I do not know if we can say that or not. He pretended to be indigenous. We are playing word salad in the House of Commons today about what we

Privilege

can and cannot say about some of the most preposterous, shameful behaviour from the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, the member for Edmonton Centre, who is the first person to lecture anybody about their morals and integrity. Holy mackerel, that man has confidence to stand and lecture anybody. The look of the Liberal members behind him showed they are utterly ashamed at the number of examples of unethical behaviour. This is another example in nine years of unethical behaviour, of not following the will of committee and of this Parliament, and of obstructing the truth and access to information for Canadians to get to the bottom of all of these Liberal scandals. It goes on and on and on.

I see my colleague from St. Albert—Edmonton here. He and I have a good time at the procedure and House affairs committee. Let us talk about blocking the production of documents. Here we are today at the PROC committee trying to get to another question of privilege. Liberals want to send it to committee so they can bury it under the rug. Now we have a question of privilege referred to PROC about members from all parties who had cyber attacks by the People's Republic of China and foreign interference by nefarious actors who were attacking members of Parliament and their personal email accounts. As we were talking about motions and how to move forward on the issue, we casually found out that the Communications Security Establishment, the CSE, said that it was not going to come back to committee because it has given us everything we need. Also, it has a substantial number of documents left, and is not sure it is going to give them to us.

The document production order deadline of the House was in the middle of August. The CSE ignored that. It started dropping documents in September and quietly dropped about seven more sets of documents, then only said today, months after the deadline and months after it came back to answer questions at committee so that could try to wrap up and come to some conclusions, "By the way, there is a substantial trove of additional documents that we have not given yet. We will let the committee know by the end of the week when we might be able to give a timeline for that." That is how seriously the Liberals take document production. They talk about accountability and open by default. They said two months and then they shut down.

The Liberals want to move this to committee and sweep it under the rug. I would say to any Canadian, just watch what happened today at PROC. It is exactly what they did on a very similar question of privilege. The House of Commons and the committee ordered the production of documents. It set a deadline of mid-August to provide all of them. They did not. We only learned today, months and months after the deadline, that there are a bunch more coming, but the Liberals are going to redact them and they said that they are not sure what they are going to give us.

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Now the Liberals want us trust them. They say, “just take this issue on this \$400-million green slush fund.” They have provided all the documents they think the RCMP should have and they redacted what they think should be redacted. They have lost the trust of Canadians. They have lost the right to pretend to have any sort of maturity, trust or judgment.

● (1735)

This is like somebody being in a courtroom accused of a crime and getting to decide what information the jury sees. People laugh; they shake their heads. However, this is exactly what is happening here, and let us be clear that the behaviour the RCMP has been asked to look at for criminal intent in its criminal investigation, which it said is open and ongoing, by the way, is the government's behaviour. That is absolutely right.

If we look at the history and conduct of the Liberals for the last nine years, Canadians do not trust them, so the House of Commons has stepped in, which it has the absolute right to do, and said to provide all the documents, unredacted, to the RCMP. It can take a look at them and make a determination. Only then will Canadians know justice. Once we know that all the documents have been given, with full access, not what the government wants to give and not what is unredacted, Canadians may start to feel like justice is being done in this country.

A full investigation must be done into criminal intent. Why? It is because of the corruption, the insiders being put ahead of others, the 186 cases of conflict of interest and the \$50 million in projects that were ineligible. For a country that had money growing on trees, that still would not be appropriate, but here we are now with massive, endless deficits in this country, and food bank use at a record high of two million visits every month. Housing costs have doubled and our immigration system is in shambles. People are finding it harder than ever before to make ends meet and to have a bit of money left over at the end of the day for Christmas presents. Homelessness and tent encampments, now in the thousands, have exploded in this country. Canadians are worse off undoubtedly after the last nine years.

All that ache, all that pain and all the strain that millions of Canadians are under already is simply from the government's inflationary policies. They have doubled the national debt, caused a 40-year high in inflation and caused record high rent, mortgages, housing costs and down payments. Canadians anywhere in this country are hurting, struggling under the weight of the record of the Liberal-NDP government.

We saw the Liberals take \$400 million of money sent by Canadians to Ottawa, but not to help get people food on their own tables without needing to go to a food bank, not to address the crisis of health care lineups or the mental health and addictions crisis this country is facing, and not to address housing. This \$400 million went to Liberal insider friends.

We saw this at some companies, including the very company the environment minister worked for. They got board appointments and gave themselves money in all these conflict of interest cases, and then saw the value of their companies increase by tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars, putting themselves ahead. Canadians

are frustrated by what has happened under the Liberals' record and by the cost of living they face.

When Canadians see the books, the finances and how little regard the Liberals have for taxpayers' money, instead putting Liberal insiders first, they are disgusted by it and ashamed of the conduct of their government. They are already hurting, and it is another jab, another kick. When Canadians were already down, the Liberals casually blew \$400 million. The Auditor General's first report, the Auditor General's second report and many committees, over and over again, have demanded accountability and demanded that this money, which never should have gone out the door in the first place, come back. It is years later and multiple whistle-blowers later. We have been talking about this for nearly two months in the House of Commons and not a single dollar has even come back yet.

I am proud to stand on behalf of the people of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry to say to the Liberals to be open by default, as they promised to Canadians nine years ago, and give all the documents, unredacted, to the RCMP. It is time for accountability. It is time to put trust not in the Liberals, but in law enforcement in this country to look into their conduct.

● (1740)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is heartening to hear the hon. member talk about some of the problems the nation is facing, but if people are tuning in from home, most of what they see are Conservatives talking and talking. We are going through another round. I hope they all have their second speeches lined up, or maybe their third ones.

The fact is that the RCMP has said it would not want to get documents from the House of Commons because that could easily compromise its investigation. The RCMP has received thousands upon thousands of documents, and it is not asking for any more. If it does want more, it knows how to get them. Why do the hon. member and his party not trust the RCMP to know how to do its job?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, Canadians can trust Conservative members of Parliament to hold the Liberals to account and make sure the RCMP has every single document that it should have, unredacted, for a full investigation. That is completely reasonable because Canadians do not trust the current government. They do not trust the Liberals anymore.

I will read from an editorial in *The Globe and Mail*. We talked about the stalling and the stonewalling that is happening. It is the Liberal government that is causing this. The *Globe and Mail* editorial is called “A Parliament that is dead on the inside”. It states:

It's a farce that needs to end for the good of the country....

There are a few ways this could end. But there is only one right way, and that is for the Liberal government to respect the will of the House and hand over the documents. Anything else would be a disgraceful blow to Parliament's ability to hold governments to account....

It is no way to run a country....

Only the Liberal government, with its refusal to respect the will of the House, is responsible for Parliament's paralysis.

I could not agree more.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, yesterday the government House leader of the Liberal government went on a CBC program and purported that the government had handed over all of the documents to the parliamentary law clerk and that, therefore, this matter could be simply referred to the procedure and House affairs committee.

The member, my colleague on PROC, will recall that the parliamentary law clerk appeared before our committee today. I asked him whether the member's representations were accurate, and he confirmed that they were not. He confirmed that the government continues to withhold documents and has submitted other documents that had been redacted. What does it say about the government when not only is it obstructing the will of the House but also the government House leader is actively and willfully misrepresenting the facts?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, I could not agree with my colleague more. I was at the meeting today when the law clerk did confirm exactly that, which is that what the government House leader told the CBC and media yesterday was absolutely inaccurate.

Members do not need to take my word for it or my colleague's word for it. They can take the words of the Speaker himself. They can think what they want of the Speaker. The Speaker ruled in September that the government clearly did not fully comply with the House order. Even the Speaker has said that the government did not provide all the documents as it should have.

We are not on board with what the Liberals love to do and what we have seen at our committee, which is to send something to committee so they can just shove it under the rug. Then, when we do have the documents produced, the committee might get around to it months after the deadlines.

We have had enough of the games. The government needs to get the information to the RCMP. Canadians expect no less.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, what the member does not say is that the Speaker was also very clear that the matter should go to the procedure and House affairs committee. I find this all a bit hypocritical if we look at the many scandals and the corruption of Stephen Harper.

I want to go to a booklet and quote from it. It states, "For refusing to disclose information on the costing of programs to Parliament, which Parliament was entitled to receive, the Harper government became the first in Canadian history to be found in contempt of Parliament." Gee whiz, he was found in contempt of Parliament for not giving information. Can members guess who his parliamentary secretary was? It was none other than the current leader of the Conservative Party.

The difference is that we are listening to the RCMP, the Auditor General of Canada and other legal experts, who say that what the Conservatives are doing is not right. Who am I to listen to? Is it the Conservative Party or the experts? Well, excuse me, I am going to

Privilege

listen to the experts. I am not going to follow the recommendations and this multi-million dollar game that the Conservatives are playing. What ever happened to Stephen Harper on the contempt charge?

• (1745)

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, the Kool-Aid over there must taste really good to the member, holy mackerel.

Again I will put right here before the House the words of the Speaker with respect to the order and what Parliament has said. The Speaker himself said that the government clearly did not fully comply with the House order. It did not honour it.

Here is the thing. I sit on the procedure and House affairs committee. I do not need to tell Canadians that they should not trust the Liberal government; they already do not. I am on the very committee that the member thinks we should just push the issue over to, the PROC committee, and it will be fine. What is going to happen is the Liberals are going to bury it.

Today, right at the very committee the member is saying to send the issue to, one national security organization, five months after the deadline by which it was ordered to provide all of the documents, was casually dropping them off to the clerk. It said that it had a substantial amount more. It was not sure, but would let the clerk know by the end of the week when it might get it to the clerk.

That is enough of the games. The government should just listen to the House order, give everything to the RCMP and be open by default, if that sounds familiar to the member.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am concerned the Conservatives have spent way too much time inside the House of Commons and not enough time in their communities listening to their constituents. In committee today we heard from seasonal workers, fishers who are about to start the lobster season. We heard from a woman who is desperately trying to pay bills and make ends meet. With climate change, the workers are finding it more difficult to find lobster and to make a living.

How do the Conservatives think that people are supposed to make a living when their government is being held hostage by their desire to listen to itself speak instead of getting the documents to committee as the Speaker has said needs to happen?

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, I think the New Democrats need to take a little more time door-knocking and listening to Canadians. Trust me; I have spent a lot of time this year in many parts of the province of Ontario alone, and I do not know where the New Democrats get the idea that they should have been propping the Liberals up for the last number of years and delaying what Canadians want, which is a carbon tax election. It is so rich for that NDP member to stand up and lecture Conservatives.

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There is a reason we have said it a bit before, and we are going to keep repeating it, which is that it is what Canadians want. They want a carbon tax election. They want to get rid of the tired and corrupt Liberal government. Canadians want an election so they can axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. I can assure the member of the NDP that they do not want the NDP to continue to prop up the tired, out-of-touch and unpopular Prime Minister. She should take no lessons and should maybe talk to some more real people at the doors in her riding and across the country.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Madam Speaker, one of the primary responsibilities of Parliament is to hold the government to account. That is exactly what we did as the loyal opposition of His Royal Highness, working together with the other opposition parties, when we passed an order of the House compelling the government to produce documents relating to its most recent scandal, the green slush fund.

Just a little while ago we heard from the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader that, in his opinion, the government does not have to comply with an order it does not like or agree with. Therefore I would like to ask my hon. colleague, the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, whether he could comment on the future of parliamentary democracy in Canada if the current government stays in power for much longer.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, I am honoured to serve in the House of Commons and have done so for the last five years. The thing we know and Canadians know is that Parliament reigns supreme. When Parliament speaks, it has the right to order persons and papers. In this case, it is the production of documents. We have the right and have exercised that right. Multiple parties have voted in favour of doing it. The Speaker has ruled that the Liberals are in contempt for ignoring that.

At the end of the day, the thing that matters the most is that the Liberals have lost the trust of Canadians after nine years and multiple scandals. It should be common sense that the RCMP should have all the documents, unredacted, for a full criminal investigation. The Liberals have used, for the last two months, every excuse in the book and have failed miserably. They should be open by default, give transparency and, for once, own up for their own corruption and waste.

• (1750)

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a privilege to stand in the House to speak about important matters, not only to my constituents but also to all Canadians. It is always good to be able to do so in great detail, delving into the various areas of importance of a given issue.

Clearly, the House has not yet had ample time to consider the matter of privilege set before us or the full ramifications of the government's failures. We are happy to continue in our quest to help the government understand this issue. We will give it an opportunity to consider its position, and perhaps even reconsider it, and take the steps that the House has been requesting for some time now. That is to stop holding up the House's business and the business of the nation, as well as to turn over the documents so that we can get back to the pressing issues concerning Canadians, rather than the

political issues that appear to be so concerning to the Liberal government.

The passion for secrecy and cover-ups that defines the government is deeply troubling. When we look at the scandals of the government, of the failed and corrupt Prime Minister, it is really quite astounding. We have the Aga Khan island scandal, SNC-Lavalin, WE Charity, billions of dollars in so-called COVID spending that found its way into the pockets of Liberal insiders, the ArriveCAN scam, McKinsey, the green slush fund, foreign interference, and the degree to which China has been allowed to infiltrate this country and put our citizens at risk.

The list goes on and on, and most of that is just from the Prime Minister. If we throw in a few of his ministers, the list gets exponentially longer. Every time, the Liberals seek to cover up the truth from Canadians. They refuse to produce documents, refuse to be transparent and refuse to answer the most basic questions; they cannot even bring themselves to tell us who the real Randy is. It is just sad. It is no wonder that a growing majority of Canadians no longer trust the Liberals and are champing at the bit to throw them out of office.

I had to laugh the other week. The Minister of Innovation is the same minister who was in charge of overseeing Sustainable Development Technology Canada, also known as SDTC, this green slush fund that we are going to keep talking about. He is a nice guy, but he said the other week that the question being asked on every street corner in Canada is why the Leader of the Opposition will not get his security clearance. That just shows how out of touch with Canadians the government is.

It tells me that the minister has not even ventured very far beyond Wellington Street in recent months. I can tell him that this is not the question Canadians are asking. They are not asking that of me in my riding, and I am talking to my constituents. Do members want to know what I hear every single day, often multiple times a day? I am asked when we can get rid of the Prime Minister. People say we need to get rid of him; we need to get rid of the corrupt Liberals who are destroying our country.

It does not matter if I am at a community event, a high school, a farm, a church event or even at Remembrance Day events. I have had the opportunity, as I am sure all of my colleagues have, to attend those Remembrance Day services during our constituency week. It is always a privilege to participate, particularly to meet our veterans and their family members. However, it is always the same. Even at Remembrance Day events, the question is the same: How and when are we getting rid of the Prime Minister? The Liberals are destroying the Canada people knew, loved and fought for. It is a sad indictment of the failed government and its radical, woke policies.

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On the other hand, Canadians like our leader. There is a reason for that. The difference is that the Leader of the Opposition is listening to Canadians. He is not lecturing. We can watch the Leader of the Opposition at a rally or an event with staff. He will stand there, sometimes for hours, and meet every single person. He will take the time to talk to them, to ask them about themselves and their concerns. He takes the time to listen to Canadians.

I have seen the Leader of the Opposition go for three-plus hours at events. He is not telling people what to think, to feel or to believe. He is not talking down to them or going after them if they say something that he disagrees with. He is actually listening to Canadians. He is listening to their concerns and offering up common-sense solutions. Canadians are common-sense people, and they trust him and our great team over on this side of the House, Canada's common-sense Conservatives, to fix the problems that the government has created.

Trust is a big deal. Once that is broken, it is awfully hard to win it back. When someone breaks trust, when they get caught often enough, as the Liberals have, it is broken. When the people cannot trust the government, that spells disaster for a country. In a democracy where the government does not trust the people, that is equally disastrous. The current government does not trust the people.

• (1755)

It refuses to trust them with the truth. It refuses to listen to the growing majority of Canadians who are begging for the Prime Minister to step down, to give them the election they are asking for, a carbon tax election, a referendum on its disastrous record. Speaking of disaster, the government has often been compared to the *Titanic*, particularly when it comes to shuffling some of these failed ministers. The ship is plowing straight ahead toward an iceberg, another scandal. Rather than switch course, the Prime Minister is busy rearranging the deck chairs. This combination did not work for the *Titanic* and it is not going to work here either. However, he continues on with that. He shuffles the chairs. He sees a minister failing in one or two portfolios and he promotes them to a third.

I think there is a secondary way we could look at this comparison, particularly in relation to an iceberg being a scandal, including the scandal of SDTC. When we see an iceberg, 90% of it is under water; it is hidden from view. That is often how scandals work. We only see 10%. We only see a sliver, and there is an indication there is something going on here. Something does not feel right. Something is amiss here, but it is only 10% of the real scandal. There is 90% hidden from view. They want to keep talking about this motion because they want to keep covering it up. They refuse to hand over the documents. It begs the question: what else are they hiding? What else is that 90% that we have not even discovered?

It is dangerous to Canadians, but it is far more dangerous to the government and the Prime Minister to shed light onto that. The sad part is that these Liberals are desperately trying to cover up their latest scandal to protect the Prime Minister who is not worth the cost, the chaos or the corruption. Canadians are hurting and they are afraid. Like I said, I go home every weekend so I can connect with and hear from my constituents. A lot of folks cannot afford to eat, heat or house themselves in Canada. Many of these folks have good jobs, and some of them have more than one job. They work

hard, they work long hours, but they still cannot afford the skyrocketing cost of living under the government.

The government has borrowed, printed and spent money so recklessly as to double the size of our national debt. The Prime Minister has spent more money than every other prime minister and government in our history combined. They are addicted to spending. There are solutions for people who are addicted and that is to get addictions counselling. I think that is what the government needs. As a result of this addiction, everyday Canadians are forced to make sacrifices and they are getting tired of doing it. They are sick of the corruption they see happening here in Ottawa. They are sick of the government having its hand in its pocket. They are sick of being told what to think, feel and believe. They are sick of the arrogant, "I-know-better-than-everyone" attitude that pervades the Liberal government. They are fed up with seeing their hard-earned money that should be going to feed their kids, fix the house, maybe go into a savings account for a rainy day, go into the pockets of wealthy and well-connected Liberals, like what has happened at SDTC.

Here, on the opposition benches, at least Conservatives are saying that we understand, we hear them, we agree. We are standing up for Canadians and their interests in Ottawa. We are here trying to hold the government accountable for the money it has stolen. Yes, I mean stolen. It has stolen it from the taxpayer. SDTC, this green slush fund, where Liberals took taxpayer dollars and gave them to their own companies, that is theft. ArriveCAN was theft. The government and the Prime Minister need to be held accountable. To what extent they must be held accountable we will not know until we actually see the full damage, until we see the documents and until Canadians know what was happening with that 90% under the water.

As I mentioned earlier, the sad reality is we sit here debating what is really undebatable. The folks at SDTC took nearly \$400 million of taxpayer dollars and gave it to themselves. That is indefensible. The sad reality is, while we are here debating this, there are other important issues we are not able to address.

• (1800)

The government's failure to be transparent has bogged us down in process for weeks now. All the Liberals need to do for the House to continue with the good work that it should be doing is come clean and present the documents unredacted, as they have been requested to do by the Speaker of the House. Then we can all get back to important issues. However, they will not do that. They refuse. They are way more concerned with their own plight than that of the people they are supposed to be serving.

Privilege

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about some of the issues that folks in my riding of Provencher are bringing to me, who tell me what could have been done with the \$400 million. I have already mentioned some of the scandals, the Liberal corruption and the desire for the Prime Minister to finally take a hint and resign. I have also mentioned some of the major issues for my people. I think for the country it is about the cost of living, but here are a few more issues.

The abuses heaped by governments at all levels on citizens during COVID still remain a major issue in my riding. Restrictions and vaccine mandates damaged the social fabric of our communities and a generation of young people.

Two years ago, when we were debating Bill C-293 in the House, I raised the troubling reality that some 51,714 documented Canadians had suffered vaccine injuries as a result of their COVID shots. At the time, I reported, based on the numbers available on the government's website, that 10,501 people had suffered severe reactions, including 874 anaphylactic reactions, 1,342 cases of myocarditis, 104 thrombosis cases and 382 reports that had an outcome of death. I also shared that despite all of that, the government's vaccine injury support program had paid out a mere eight claims. Many Canadians do not know this, but the government does have a vaccine injury support program. It is called VISIP. It can be found on the Government of Canada's website.

That was in November 2022. Two years later, in November 2024, where we are today, the number of injuries has risen to 58,712, with 488 reported deaths. After two years, do colleagues know how many claims have been approved? After thousands of injuries and thousands of claims, a mere 183 claims have been approved. There is still a question as to whether compensation has actually been issued. The truly bizarre thing is that back in April, the government added another \$36 million to the existing \$75 million it had allocated to the vaccine injury support program. Why are folks not getting their money? The folks over at SDTC seemed to have had no problem disbursing nearly \$400 million in fairly quick order.

These injured folks did what the government told them to do. The Prime Minister and all of his ministers looked down the lens of a camera and told Canadians to get these shots, that they were safe and effective. Every day, we heard from the Prime Minister. Every day he came out and told Canadians to get the shot; it would prevent them from getting sick. That did not work. It was supposed to prevent them from transmitting COVID to somebody else. That did not work. It was supposed to prevent them from going to the hospital. That did not work. It was supposed to prevent them from being in the ICU. That did not work. It was supposed to prevent them from dying. It did not prevent that either. In fact, the greatest number of deaths from COVID occurred among those who had been triple vaccinated.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, I am rising on a point of order to understand the relevance of the current speech to the motion, which I believe is about SDTC. I wonder if you can give a comment on that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate the input. Some latitude is given, but the hon. member did

clearly link it to SDTC in some form. I am sure that as he continues his speech, there will be more relevance.

The hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Ted Falk: Madam Speaker, the member asks a very interesting question. I wish he had listened to what I was saying, because he would understand the relevance.

The relevance was the misinformation and the disinformation provided by the Liberal government, by the Prime Minister, to Canadians about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines. There have been vaccine injury support program claims made by Canadians who have had negative experiences, and I hear from many of them in my constituency office and in my Hill office. Those claims are not being approved in a judicious manner, and they are not being paid out as they should be. That is the whole point.

SDTC officials had no problem getting \$400 million out the door, but the over \$100 million that has been earmarked for vaccine injuries seems to be lagging significantly. That is my point: The money is not getting out the door. It seemed to get out the door somehow for Liberal insiders but not for people who did what the government asked them to do and suffered negative consequences for it. Those people are not getting reimbursed, and they should be.

In fact, what people are being offered instead of cash is MAID, and that is so incredibly sad. I heard stories from vaccine-injured people who, because of being so frustrated with their injuries and the failure to be recognized for the hardships they have gone through, have been offered MAID. Some have actually participated in that program. That is incredibly sad.

The message I bring to the government from my constituents is to just butt out, provide the basic services government is supposed to provide and then back off and let people live their lives. My constituents want the government to axe the tax, stop the reckless deficit spending, stop the alarmist anti-energy crusade and embrace responsible resource development.

Under the Prime Minister, Canada is going through the worst decline in our living standards in 40 years, the worst drop in income per person in the G7 and the worst economic growth in the OECD. However, the Prime Minister and his radical, woke environment minister just keep making things worse by attacking Canadian energy and energy workers. Their latest scheme is what they claim is an emissions cap. It is not really an emissions cap. This is not a cap on emissions; it is a cap on responsible Canadian oil production. It is a cap on jobs, on paycheques and on prosperity for Canada. Let us label it for what it is rather than as a cap on emissions: The Liberal government wants to cap Canadians.

The government's own analysis admits that the cap is going to cost Canada billions of dollars and thousands of jobs. We would think its members learned their lesson from previous failures in attacking the energy sector; they have missed every single climate target with their carbon tax, and all they have done is make people exponentially poorer.

The Prime Minister and his radical environment minister refuse to accept that Canada's energy sector is the country's single-largest private sector investor in clean technology. Canadian oil and gas is the best in the world. The sector has a clear record of reducing emissions and adhering to the highest standards of environmental protection, not to mention that, in 2022, the oil and gas industry provided \$45 billion in revenue to Canadian governments, funding schools, hospitals, roads and other crucial public infrastructure.

Instead of celebrating this and working with Canada's energy workers to tackle environmental issues, Liberals want to crush the energy sector, putting hundreds of thousands of jobs at risk at the worst time possible. This ideological crusade against Canadian energy must end.

We could be working to fix the budget. We could be working on common-sense energy policies to get Canada's economy booming again. However, we are stuck here instead, talking about another Liberal scandal.

A big one is immigration, which is a significant concern in my riding. My office does a lot of work on immigration files. We help hundreds, if not thousands, of people a year, both Canadians and those seeking to become Canadians. However, our immigration system is broken. It is out of control. The government finally admitted that a couple of weeks ago; I believe it did so again just recently. Its radical, reckless and uncontrolled immigration policies are partly to blame for joblessness, the housing crisis and the health care crisis Canadians are facing.

The Liberals increased population growth by over 200% in the last several years. They did it without ensuring adequate housing, health care or available jobs for newcomers. The government also failed spectacularly to ensure that those flooding into the country were given proper background checks. To add insult to injury, the Prime Minister called Canadians racists if they questioned his reckless policy.

• (1805)

I can say on behalf of the incredibly diverse group of people, including newcomers, that my office has helped and those who have lived here for years that it is not racist to ask why the government is bringing upwards of one million new people each year when there are not even enough homes for Canadians, including many new Canadians who are already here. It is not racist to question the wisdom of bringing in more people who will cause additional strain on an already untenable health care system and social safety net when Canadians are unable to access those programs and forced to wait unacceptably long periods to receive services that they have paid for with their tax dollars. The government's failures on immigration are almost too many to chronicle.

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With that, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I am confident you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 7:32 p.m.

• (1810)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE OF CANADA

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, on November 8, I raised a question regarding newly unredacted briefing notes. To be fair, they are still only partially unredacted. There is plenty still hidden, but they are less redacted than previously. They are notes provided by Correctional Service Canada officials to the minister from 2015 to 2019. They were originally sought in 2019.

The government managed to delay their release by fighting the efforts to have them made public by a very persistent journalist, but after five years, we have the notes. They indicate, which is the point I made on November 8, that Correctional Service Canada recommended against reopening the Joyceville and Collins Bay prison farms, which had been shut in 2010 because the labour done by inmates on the farms would not reduce recidivism but would waste resources, meaning they would cost a great deal of money, and would lead to worse public safety outcomes than a number of alternatives, which were available and recommended by Correctional Service Canada.

I asked that question, and the response of the parliamentary secretary was to say the community supports prison farms. In all fairness, I cannot figure out who he was talking about when he says the community supports the continuation of the prison farms. There is a separate issue with regard to the potential opening of the abattoir that the Liberals shut down about a year or year and a half ago that I think does have community support. There are some practical issues making it difficult for that to go forward. The facility is probably not capable of being rehabilitated, but there is support for that because beef farmers have a serious problem finding an outlet for their beef. Slaughter facilities are in very limited supply in eastern Ontario. That is not the prison farm we are talking about.

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The prison farm is a mixed goat and cow dairy operation involving a multi-million dollar, largely robotic cow milking system for which the government has not acquired milk quota yet, which will cost further millions of dollars. It will be manned and observed by people from McGill University. None of this has anything to do with community support, so I wanted to get that on the record.

The assertion here is that everything the government does, so it claims, is evidence-based and science-based, that it looks to the experts and takes their word on things, but the fact is there is a very different story. The documents reveal that CSC indicated in its briefing notes, “Adapting an employment program that targets the care of farm animals such as cows, would be highly unlikely to produce significant recidivism reduction, even if the risk-need-responsivity principles of effective corrections can be applied to this type of intervention.” There is a lot of emphasis on people getting more humane skills. It specifically mentions that pet therapies are unlikely to produce results and have never been done with farm animals before.

Based on that, I ask why the government is not listening to the advice that has been given over and over again by Correctional Service Canada not to reopen the prison farms.

• (1815)

Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to the many benefits provided by Correctional Service Canada's penitentiary agricultural program. The government remains committed to the implementation of evidence-based policy informed by experts that contributes to offender rehabilitation and safer communities across Canada.

In response to the question from the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, I will say that the Government of Canada consulted widely about whether to reinstate the penitentiary agriculture program. In 2016, Correctional Service launched a feasibility study, which included community consultations, an online forum and a public town hall that featured the participation of more than 6,000 people. The majority of participants in both consultations said that they wished to bring back the penitentiary agriculture program, noting the positive impact on employment opportunities for offenders.

Since 2017, Correctional Service has engaged a number of internal and external stakeholders, including community organizations, to identify opportunities in the penitentiary farm program to represent a variety of types of agriculture activities during the offender employment training, and this includes the expertise of the prison farm advisory panel. The panel works to bring together agricultural and farming leaders to provide informed recommendations and program ideas on how we can better protect our communities through offender rehabilitation.

The government will continue to work to protect the safety and security of our employees while also promoting the safety and security of our communities through evidence-backed rehabilitative programming.

I am proud to highlight that through the programming provided at the farms, Correctional Service is recognized as an international

leader in the development and delivery of correctional interventions. Since their reopening in 2018, the penitentiary agriculture programs at Joyceville and Collins Bay institutions have provided on-the-job vocational training that relates to the agricultural industry, allowing federal inmates to gain employment skills that are also transferable to other industries.

Inmates at the farms perform activities like building and renovating necessary infrastructure and working to repair and rebuild farmland, in addition to crop production. These activities mirror the activities that take place in agricultural lands across the country that employ tens of thousands of people at any given time. One of the ways that Correctional Service works to provide safer communities from coast to coast to coast is through the provision of these employment programs, which build essential skills that will assist offenders in finding employment in the community after their release.

There have been several research documents dating back almost a decade that have noted a connection between employment and positive reintegration results. For example, inmates who participate in the CORCAN employment program while incarcerated are more likely to get a job in the community. Offenders under community supervision who find employment in the community have reduced recidivism rates. Inmates who participate in the CORCAN employment program while incarcerated are more likely to be granted parole.

Furthermore, all revenues generated through the penitentiary agriculture programs are reinvested in the offender employment and employability program, allowing for further programming to aid in offender reintegration.

I would like to thank the members of the advisory panel who have helped to contribute to the success of the farms.

Mr. Scott Reid: Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked about the success of CORCAN programs. Well, then, if she thinks they are so great, she should listen to what CORCAN said in the briefing note that the government kept hidden for five years:

Based on the empirical evidence accumulated by CSC, Public Safety, and international research, prison industrial farming, even if accommodated to include elements of “pet therapy”, are unlikely to lower criminality and are also likely to have negative economic bottom lines. The resources allocated to these types of programs would be better directed towards correctional programs, education programs and social programs that have proven positive returns on public safety and government investments.

That is the advice, which is to focus on re-education and employment that produces results. The prison farm program and the giant cattle barn it has built is not the way to do that.

• (1820)

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Madam Speaker, Correctional Service Canada will continue to implement evidence-based policies and programming to keep Canadian communities safe, all while providing Canadians good value for money.

Programs, such as the penitentiary agriculture program, help offenders become productive, law-abiding citizens and skilled workers when they return to the community. Research dating back to 2014 has noted a direct connection between employment and positive reintegration results upon release. In addition to building safer communities by working to provide offenders with skill sets to find employment, community programming, such as the penitentiary agriculture program, works to save Canadians money. Offenders are better able to financially support themselves when they can find employment upon release to the community and they are required to pay taxes.

Correctional Service Canada will continue to work with our various partners to strengthen our farming operations, which promote offender rehabilitation and safer communities for all Canadians to enjoy.

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I am back tonight to continue calling on the Liberal government to get serious about the climate crisis, specifically with respect to investing in public transit, which it could do by taxing the excess profits being made by the oil and gas industry.

This is particularly timely because this very specific call could be included in the government's fall economic statement, whenever that comes out over the coming weeks. It is one of the reasons why this is one of six calls I have been making to the Minister of Finance over the last number of weeks. The stakes, in my view, really could not be higher when it comes to the climate crisis that we are in.

First of all, we need to recognize that we are the only G7 country whose emissions have gone up since 1990. This is at a time when we have already reached about 1.3°C of warming compared to pre-industrial times.

Back at the 2015 Paris climate conference, world leaders all agreed we would do everything possible to limit the increase to 1.5°C. They did this because climate scientists have told us, if we cross that threshold, it will lead to “leading to devastating and potentially irreversible consequences for several vital Earth systems that sustain a hospitable planet.”

What are we on track for? As of now, current pledges by countries around the world put us somewhere between 2.6°C and 3.1°C in global average temperature rise. We must do so much more as a country to do our fair share, to lead and to demonstrate what is possible when it comes to acting on the climate crisis.

At the same time, when it comes to proven climate solutions, such as public transit, there will be no new funding until 2026. That is after the next election. There is funding available, but operations, like a mechanic who needs to fix a bus, is not eligible. The funding being provided is pretty much the status quo.

However, at the same time, for proven climate distractions, such as carbon capture and storage, we are rolling out the red carpet. The government is giving another tax credit in Bill C-59, which is between \$7 billion to \$16 billion, and most of the Canada growth fund, so there is \$15 billion there. If someone wants to expand the pipeline, there is \$34 billion for them to do that.

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Meanwhile, the oil and gas industry is making out like bandits. In 2022 alone, the five biggest oil and gas companies operating in this country made \$38 billion, and that is after the \$29 billion in dividends and share repurchases. They are doing it by gouging Canadians at the pumps to the tune of 18¢ a litre.

The solution should be pretty obvious. Number one, stop the subsidies. Number two, tax these excess profits by taking the Canada recovery dividend that was applied to banks and life insurance companies in the pandemic and apply it to oil and gas. Even for just 15% of profits over a billion, that would generate \$4.2 billion a year, all of which could be put into proven solutions, such as public transit. They could add more funds, start the fund sooner or direct it towards operating funds. My question to the hon. parliamentary secretary is this: Will they do it?

● (1825)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (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 at adjournment debate with my friend and colleague from the Green Party and Kitchener Centre to discuss how we fight climate change, not just if we fight climate change, which is the conversation we always have with the Conservative Party because it wants to ignore the impacts of climate change.

I will say I was a bit struck by the fact that my friend did not mention that Canada is the first oil- and gas-producing nation to introduce an emissions cap on the oil and gas sector. This is an essential next step, yet we have Premier Danielle Smith spending \$7 million of public money that could have been invested to hire new nurses and teachers in Alberta. Instead, she is actually doing equalization. She has hired a Quebec company to drive trucks around Ottawa with big screens on them that say, “scrap the cap”. Well, we will not scrap the cap because we believe in climate action. We believe that oil and gas companies, while essential, because we need energy and the world needs Canadian energy, should not be entitled to unlimited pollution. That is why we have stepped up to say they need to invest some of their \$66 billion in profits last year into some climate action, efficiencies and making sure we do not have emissions-intensive barrels of oil.

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I would like to congratulate the region of Waterloo and the residents of Kitchener Centre because they have been the recipients of an extraordinary amount of public transit funding over the last couple of years. That is due in part to amazing advocacy from my friends and colleagues here from that region.

I have a couple of quotes to read. The first is from Mayor Berry Vrbanovic, who I have met a couple of times and is a very nice guy. He says that there is now a stable source of funds to help pay for the extension of a light-rail system from Kitchener into Cambridge, and that it is absolutely transformative. He is referring to the \$30-billion investment that we recently made in public transit. It is the largest investment the federal government has ever made in public transit in Canada. That is extraordinary. However, I also have to congratulate Kitchener on being early winners in the public transit game. My colleague said there was no funding available until 2026. That is not true. Kitchener was recently awarded over \$187 million through a \$180-billion fund for public transit, green infrastructure and more social activities and infrastructure in various communities.

We are funding the public transit system the residents of Kitchener Centre need and use regularly. As my colleague said, that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and reduces people's reliance on cars. That is a good thing. People will say, "but buses run on diesel." Sometimes they do, but not the 11 fully electric vehicles the federal government purchased for the Grand River transit, GRT, system with \$6 million through our public transit infrastructure stream. The Waterloo region is extremely well served by our plethora of public transit funding. The website of the region of Waterloo says that GRT is in "collaboration with the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo... thanks to \$5 million total in federal and municipal project funding through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund." It is deploying 11 fully electric buses, which is fun. It is great.

I am an electric vehicle enthusiast; I love seeing vehicles on the road that do not need to rely on fossil fuels. "Investing in modern and integrated networks of multi-use trails and pathways that connect to public transit are essential to building healthy and sustainable communities for all Canadians to live, work, and raise their families". That is from one of my favourite members of Parliament, the hon. member of Parliament for Waterloo. We have worked together a lot. I want to congratulate her on the funding for her region and thank her for her advocacy.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is quite right that this government has made investments. In fact, I

was at the announcement with respect to the electric buses he mentioned. What he needs to also realize is that advocates have been trying to tell this government that if it does not ensure that the funding it proposed also funds operations, we are not going to see the advances we need to increase service and reduce fares because the permanent public transit fund does not start until 2026. From Environmental Defence, for example, "A lack of public transit operating funding means buses don't show up on time, riders spend more time waiting, and fares continue to climb faster than inflation."

Will the parliamentary secretary recognize what transit advocates have been calling for to ensure that we roll out the red carpet the way his government has already for carbon capture, where they have given tens of billions for climate distractions, and put that towards the public transit we need?

• (1830)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden: Madam Speaker, these are really important issues, but I honestly think that my friend and colleague is conflating two issues. We are taking strong climate action, and we are holding big oil and gas companies to account. All of those big profits that I mentioned, and which he referenced as well, are taxed; they are funding these programs. It is important to recognize that we do travel on modes of transportation that require fossil fuels and that the world needs Canada's energy. We have to make sure that it is green, clean, innovative and efficient. That is what we are doing with the first-ever cap on emissions. Again, I am surprised that my friend and colleague refuses to acknowledge that the government has taken really strong action.

We talked earlier today. I mentioned to him that the city of Burlington has made transit free for seniors, kids under 12 and teens. Burlington is a small part of the riding of Milton, not geographically, but from the perspective of population. It has done that with help from our government, with support for these initiatives. I know that the region of Waterloo has that same support. I congratulate those in the region, and I thank the member for his advocacy again.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:32 p.m.)

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